



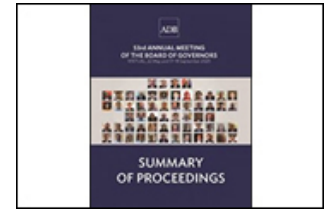
**SASEC EVENTS**  
ADB-NACIN TRAINING  
ON COORDINATED  
BORDER MANAGEMENT



**SASEC NEWS**  
ADB ENDORSES NEW  
5-YEAR PARTNERSHIP  
STRATEGY FOR  
MALDIVES



**SASEC NEWS**  
INDIAN MARKET  
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PRODUCTS



**PUBLICATIONS**  
SUMMARY OF  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
53RD ADB ANNUAL  
MEETING OF THE BOARD  
OF GOVERNORS



# SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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## SASEC Transport and Cross-Border Power Trade Working Group Meetings 7, 14 October 2020: Online

SASEC Working Groups in Transport and Cross Border Power Trade convened meetings in October to discuss the way forward in cooperation as reflected in the draft Action Plan for SASEC Initiatives 2021–2023. The [Transport Working Group](#) presented and reviewed the proposed initiative to leverage digital technology under the “new normal,” in light of economic disruptions caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and the studies on Road Safety and Asset Management. The [Cross Border Power Trade Working Group](#) reviewed the way forward in SASEC Energy/ Power Cooperation, and progress and proposed activities under the SASEC Regional Energy Cooperation.

# SASEC EVENTS



- **ADB-NACIN Training on Coordinated Border Management**
- **Dissemination Workshop on the Port Community System Study**

## EVENTS

### ADB-NACIN TRAINING ON COORDINATED BORDER MANAGEMENT

## ADB-NACIN Training on Coordinated Border Management

**21 October 2020: Online**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB), in partnership with the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN) of the Government of India, held a workshop on Coordinated Border Management for SASEC Customs Administrations. The virtual workshop's aim is to help customs authorities better understand the benefits and impact of coordinated border management in enhancing trade facilitation. Coordinated border management improves regulatory effectiveness, particularly during critical periods.

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## Dissemination Workshop on the Port Community System Study

**12 October 2020: Online**

ADB organized a dissemination workshop on developing a port community system in Maldives. Sessions were held on operational efficiency of Maldives' ports, expected benefits of a port community system, and necessary steps for implementation.

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# SASEC NEWS



## NEWS

### ADB ENDORSES NEW 5- YEAR PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR MALDIVES

- **ADB Endorses New 5-Year Partnership Strategy for Maldives**
- **Webinar Deliberates on Gender Dimensions of Trade Facilitation in the BBIN Subregion**
- **Bangladesh, ADB to Fast-Track Projects**
- **Indian Market Access, Plant Quarantine Center for Bhutanese Agri Products**

## **Webinar Deliberates on Gender Dimensions of Trade Facilitation in the BBIN Subregion**

**30 October 2020: Jaipur, India**

A webinar organized by CUTS (Consumer Unity and Trust Society) International deliberated the findings of the project, 'Gender Dimensions of Trade Facilitation in the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) Subregion.' The project reveals that the absence of gender responsive trade facilitation measures exacerbates gender inequality.

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## **Bangladesh Foreign Minister Expresses Hope for Bangladesh-Bhutan Road Connectivity**

**29 October 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Establishment of road connectivity between Bangladesh and Bhutan would give a boost to bilateral trade between the two countries, emphasized Mr. AK Abdul Momen, Foreign Minister of the Government of Bangladesh, in his meeting with Mr. Rinchen Kuentsyl, Bhutan Ambassador to Bangladesh. The Bhutanese envoy made a call to the Bangladeshi Foreign Minister.

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## **Bangladesh, ADB to Fast-Track Projects**

**23 October 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Bangladesh and ADB have agreed to fast-track projects to help economic recovery and job creation in the country. Bangladesh and ADB have pledged to accelerate approval for large contracts, implement health safety guidelines, and provide virtual training opportunities to project staff members and beneficiaries.

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## **Sri Lanka Customs Offers Efficient, Safe Services during Pandemic with Digital Tools**

**23 October 2020: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka Customs has embarked on several modernization processes that have helped maintain social distancing. Through digital tools, Sri Lanka Customs provides efficient services to its users while maintaining health protocols to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

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## **ADB Endorses New 5-Year Partnership Strategy for Maldives**

**21 October 2020: Manila, Philippines**

ADB has endorsed a new 5-year country partnership strategy for Maldives to support the country's path to development. The strategy, which covers the period 2020–2024, will support Maldives in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also help ADB continue gender mainstreaming in its operations in the country.

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## **Indian Market Access, Plant Quarantine Center for Bhutanese Agri Products**

**21 October 2020: New Delhi, India, and Thimphu, Bhutan**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare of the Government of India has granted market access to Bhutan's areca nut, mandarin, apple, potato, and ginger under the Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) Order 2003. A plant quarantine center was also set up in Jaigaon, India, to ease India–Bhutan cross-border trade of agricultural goods. On the Bhutanese side, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests of the Government of Bhutan has allowed the import of tomato, onion, and okra from India under the Plant Quarantine Rules and Regulations of Bhutan 2018.

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## **Bangladesh, Nepal Negotiate Draft Preferential Trade Agreement**

**9 October 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Governments of Bangladesh and Nepal held a secretary-level meeting virtually to negotiate a preferential trade agreement. Bangladesh has requested zero-duty benefit on the export of 140 products to Nepal. Nepal has proposed duty-free facility for 130 products. The negotiation also discussed important initiatives that can further increase bilateral trade, such as boosting connectivity and removal of tariff and nontariff barriers in trade.

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## **Air Travel Bubble between Bhutan and India**

**5 October 2020: Thimphu, Bhutan, and New Delhi, India**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Bhutan announced an Air Travel Bubble Arrangement with the Government of India. The arrangement makes flight operations possible between the two neighboring countries until normal operations of international flights resume.

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## **India, Myanmar Engagement in Various Sectors Continue**

**1 October 2020: New Delhi, India, and Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar**

The 19th round of India–Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations reviewed various aspects of bilateral relations, including border cooperation and upgradation of border infrastructure, trade and investment ties, and power and energy cooperation. Their continuous engagement amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic reflects the depth of bilateral engagement between the two countries, highlighted the news release.

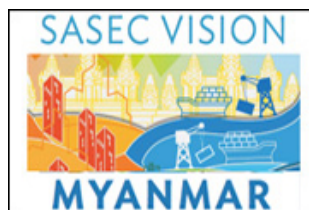
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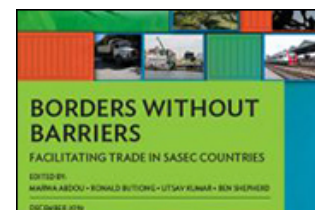
**SASEC VISION**



**SASEC VISION  
MYANMAR**



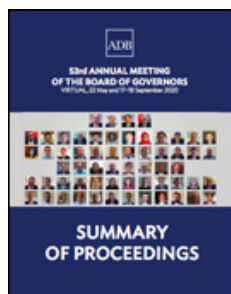
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## Top Tweets for October 2020

Nepal and Bangladesh to sign a bilateral preferential trade arrangement by the end of 2020.

[Read more](#)

Customs administrations in the SASEC subregion to work together to further advance the implementation of trade facilitation reforms in the subregion. [Read more](#)

Border haats as a platform for cross-border value chains [Read more](#)

Trade-in energy a pathway for greater regional cooperation. This opinion piece from the Financial Express presents 3 mutually advantageous opportunities in South Asia [Read more](#)

Bangladesh sought development of port infrastructure to enable exports of Bangladesh into India in recent Joint Coordination Committee meeting. [Read more](#)

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