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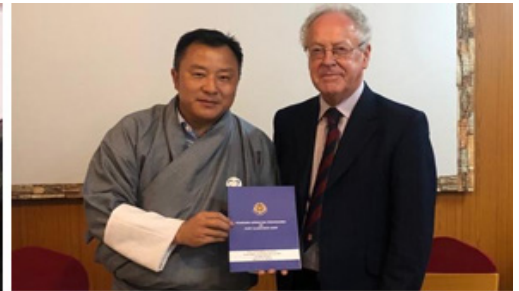


SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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Training on Post Clearance Audit for Bhutan Customs (Second Batch)

26-30 September 2022: Punakha, Bhutan

A post-clearance audit (PCA) training was held at Punakha on 26-30 September 2022 for the second batch of customs officials from the Government of Bhutan's Department of Revenue and Customs (DRC). The workshop was organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and is the penultimate capacity-building training activity held as part of the action plan to take PCA forward in Bhutan. The training covered Principles of Auditing, Audit Planning, Non-Systems Based Controls, Interview Techniques, and Internal Controls.

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SASEC PROJECTS

SASEC Projects in Bangladesh to Facilitate Access to Sea Ports for Landlocked Nepal and Bhutan

19 September 2022: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladesh has implemented at least five projects under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) program that will help landlocked Bhutan and Nepal gain access to sea ports. These projects are financed through ADB.

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SASEC NEWS



- **A Framework for Enhanced Trade Facilitation in the Bay of Bengal Region**
- **Meeting Endorses Bhutan Goods' Transit through Bangladesh**
- **Siliguri-Kathmandu Bus Service Resumes**

Commentary: A Framework for Enhanced Trade Facilitation in the Bay of Bengal Region

29 September 2022: Manila, Philippines

Promote remote processing of cargo clearances and modernize border facilities to improve intraregional trade among Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation countries. Experts weigh in in this article from Development Asia.

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ADB Grant to Boost Maldives' Booster and Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccination Program

27 September 2022: Manila, Philippines

A \$10 million grant from ADB's Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility will help Maldives scale up the continuity of its vaccination program, the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI), for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The grant, Maldives: Responsive COVID-19 Vaccination for Recovery Project, under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility, was committed on 27 September 2022

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Bhutan, Nepal Express Gratitude for India's Vaccine Maitri

27 September 2022: New York City, USA

The Governments of Bhutan and Nepal expressed gratitude and appreciation for the Government of India at the United Nations General Assembly for the supply of COVID-19 vaccines under the "Vaccine Maitri." This is an initiative by the Government of India to provide COVID-19 vaccines to countries around the world, including its neighbors in South Asia.

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Bhutan Reopens Its International Borders

23 September 2022: New Delhi, India, and Thimphu, Bhutan

Bhutan reopened its borders to tourists on 23 September 2022. Bhutan's reopening comes with a renewed focus on tourism sustainability, with priority placed on (i) upgrading infrastructure and services, (ii) elevation of tourists' experiences, and (iii) maintaining carbon-neutral tourism.

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India, Nepal to Jointly Conduct Further Studies on the Sapta Kosi High Dam Project

23 September 2022: Kathmandu, Nepal, and Mumbai, India

The 9th meeting of the Joint Committee on Water Resources between the Governments of India and Nepal have agreed to move forward with the Sapta Kosi high dam project by conducting further studies. The joint team of experts is expected to convene soon.

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Bangladesh-Bhutan Meeting Endorses Bhutan Goods' Transit through Bangladesh

14 September 2022: Thimphu, Bhutan, and Dhaka, Bangladesh

The 8th Commerce Secretary Level Meeting (CSLM) between Bangladesh and Bhutan endorsed the Agreement on Movement of Traffic-in-Transit and its Protocol for signing; the renewal of the memorandum of understanding on the use of inland waterways; and the signing of the amended Standard Operating Procedure with regard to the MoU on the use of inland waterways. The meeting also agreed to proactively enforce the Preferential Trade Agreement between Bangladesh and Bhutan.

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ADB to Strengthen Partnership with India

11 September 2022: New Delhi, India

ADB is set to strengthen its partnership with India and support development priorities for inclusive growth, according to ADB Vice-President Shixin Chen. Mr. Chen affirmed ADB's support to the government's post-COVID-19 economic recovery efforts. ADB incorporates gender equality into the design of ADB-funded projects and enhances regional cooperation through the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation platform, said Mr. Chen.

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Bangladesh, India PMs on Energy Cooperation, BBIN MVA

8 September 2022: New Delhi, India

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and India Prime Minister Narendra Modi's discussions highlighted several developments in bilateral relations in trade and connectivity, power and energy, and people-to-people linkages. Their meeting also agreed to strengthen subregional cooperation in the power sector involving Bhutan and Nepal and expedite efforts for the early implementation of the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement. India also offered Bangladesh free transit via its territory for exporting its products to third countries through identified Land Customs Stations/Airports/Seaports.

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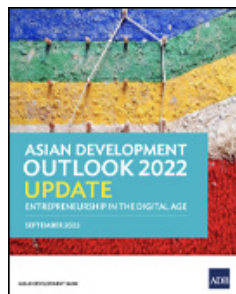
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