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THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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11th Meeting of the SASEC Customs Subgroup

28-29 August 2023: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Bangladesh National Board of Revenue hosted the 11th SASEC Customs Subgroup (SCS) meeting on 28–29 August 2023 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which brought together senior customs officials of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) countries.

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- **Is the Akhaura-Agartala Railway Capable of Becoming a Milestone in India-Bangladesh?**
- **Bangladesh Economic Corridors Promote Inclusive and Sustainable Development**
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Nepal Starts Selling Energy in India's Real-Time Market

30 September 2023: New Delhi, India

India has allowed Nepal to sell electricity in its real-time energy market. According to the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), the Central Electricity Authority of India has allowed the trading of 44 MW of electricity generated from the 19.4 MW Lower Modi and 24.25 MW Kabeli B-1 hydropower projects in the real-time market.

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Bangladesh, India Look Forward to CEPA Negotiations, Express Satisfaction on Implementation of Development Projects

9 September 2023: New Delhi, India

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina highlighted their eagerness to begin negotiations on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and satisfaction over the implementation of development cooperation projects.

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India Earmarks Financing for Railway Connectivity with Bhutan

9 September 2023: New Delhi, India

The Government of India has committed to finance the expansion of railway infrastructure in the country's northeastern region toward Bhutan. It has earmarked around INR 120 billion (around \$1.4 billion) for the project, which includes completion of a 57.5-km railway line that will connect Assam, India, to Sarpang, Bhutan.

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India, Nepal Leverage Technology, Launch Cross-border QR Payment Service

8 September 2023: Kathmandu, Nepal

India and Nepal signed an agreement for the cross-border QR payment service at the Global Fintech Fest 2023, a global gathering of fintech visionaries, thought leaders and innovators. The collaboration promises to empower millions of consumers and merchants from both countries to securely and conveniently transact through QR codes.

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Bangladesh-India Joint Venture to Boost Bangladesh Logistics Infrastructure

5 September 2023: Mumbai, India

Pristine Logistics & Infraprojects of India, a rail terminal operator, has entered a joint venture with Summit Alliance Port of Bangladesh, which handles over 25% of export cargo and 15% of import cargo of Bangladesh's containerized volume.

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India Council of Ministers Gives Nod to Long-term Power Purchase Agreement with Nepal

5 September 2023: Kathmandu, Nepal

The long-term electricity trade agreement between the Governments of India and Nepal has formally received approval from the Council of Ministers of India. This paves the way for Nepal to export up to 10,000 megawatts of electricity to Nepal over a period of 10 years.

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Cargo Movement from India's Northeastern Region to Kolkata via Bangladesh to Commence Soon

23 August 2023: Kolkata, India

Regular cargo movement from India's northeastern region to the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (SMP) in Kolkata through Bangladesh is set to commence soon.

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Bangladesh Economic Corridors Promote Inclusive and Sustainable Development

23 August 2023: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The ADB study on Bangladesh Economic Corridor Development assesses the economic potential of the northeast and southwest Bangladesh regions to propose the holistic development of the country to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.

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Five Mega Rail Projects to Expand India's Rail Connectivity to Bangladesh and Nepal

23 August 2023: New Delhi, India

India's Ministry of Railways is working on five mega rail projects that will make adjacent borders along Nepal and Bangladesh and certain areas between Bangladesh and Nepal accessible by rail.

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Bangladesh, India, Nepal Give Nod on Trilateral Energy Deal

23 August 2023: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Governments of Bangladesh, India, and Nepal have agreed in principle to allow the supply of electricity to Bangladesh from Nepal via India's transmission line. A formal agreement among the three nations will be signed soon, according to NEA officials.

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14th Bangladesh–India Joint Group of Customs Meeting Held

22 August 2023: New Delhi, India

The Governments of Bangladesh and India held their 14th Bangladesh–India Joint Group of Customs (JGC) meeting on 21–22 August 2023 in New Delhi, India. The meeting discussed several matters of bilateral importance, including the opening of new land customs stations, easing port restrictions, development of road and rail infrastructure, pre-arrival exchange of customs data, and a bilateral agreement on customs cooperation.

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Commentary: Is the Akhaura-Agartala Railway Capable of Becoming a Milestone in India-Bangladesh?

16 August 2023: Guwahati, India

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to inaugurate the Akhaura-Agartala rail line in September 2023. The railway will reduce travel time between Agartala and Kolkata from 31 hours to 10 hours, opening up opportunities for trade, tourism, and cultural exchange.

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Nepal Trade Integration Strategy 2023 Expands Promising Export List to 32

3 August 2023: Kathmandu, Nepal

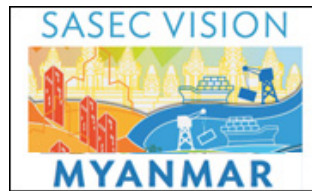
The new Nepal Trade Integration Strategy (NTIS) 2023 expands the list of promising export products and services from Nepal to 32, from 12 in the NTIS 2016. Implemented in July, the new products in the latest trade strategy include electricity in the service export category. NTIS 2023 aims to increase the country's trade-to-GDP ratio to 55% by 2026.

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India and Bangladesh are set to discuss an annual fixed quota for importing six commodities and food-grains from India to Bangladesh [Read more](#)

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