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SASEC NODAL
OFFICIALS' MEETING
2017



SASEC PROJECTS
COOPERATION
TO BOLSTER MALE
DEVELOPMENT



SASEC NEWS
INDIA BEGINS WORK ON
MYANMAR ROAD FOR
IMT TRILATERAL
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OUTLOOK



SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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SASEC Nodal Officials' Meeting 2017

6 May 2017: Yokohama, Japan

SASEC Nodal Officials met at the sidelines of the 49th Annual General Meeting of the Asian Development Bank in Frankfurt, Germany, to discuss key achievements of the SASEC Program over the past 12 months and provide overall strategic guidance on future activities. Progress of the SASEC Program in the areas of transport, trade facilitation, and energy was actively discussed, and next steps decided for SASEC in 2016. Myanmar attended its first Nodal Officials' Meeting as a full member of the SASEC partnership, having formally joined in February 2017.

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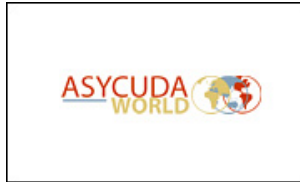
SASEC EVENTS



EVENT
YOKOHAMA
SASEC Nodal Officials'
Meeting 2017



EVENT
DHAKA
Workshop on the
Authorized Economic
Operator Program



EVENT
NAGARKOT
ASYCUDA World
Implementation Workshop

Workshop on the Authorized Economic Operator Program

23 May 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Bangladesh National Board of Revenue, the Asian Development Bank, and the United States Agency for International Development held a workshop on the Authorized Economic Operator for the private sector. It discussed how AEO accreditation can benefit companies, and presented the planned AEO pilot program in Bangladesh, set for November 2017.

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CALENDAR

June

Sixth SASEC Customs Subgroup Meeting

14-15 June 2017: Thimphu, Bhutan

Bilateral Negotiation Meeting on the Electronic Cargo Tracking System between India and Nepal

6-7 June 2017: Mumbai, India

ASYCUDA World Implementation Review Workshop

1-3 June 2017: Nagarkot, Nepal

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May 2017



Close #infrastructure gap to realize Asian Century – ADB expert via @ADB_HQ [Read](#)

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SASEC PROJECTS



PROJECT
REGIONAL
COOPERATION
INITIATIVES TO
BOLSTER GREATER
MALE REGION
DEVELOPMENT



PROJECT
ADB AWARDS SASEC
RAIL PROJECT AMONG
BEST PERFORMING
PROJECTS IN
BANGLADESH



PROJECT
ADB FINALIZING THE
BANGLADESH-
SOUTHWEST ECONOMIC
CORRIDOR
DEVELOPMENT STUDY
REPORT



PROJECT
INDIA'S FIRST COASTAL
CORRIDOR TO DRIVE
MANUFACTURING,
GROWTH

Regional Cooperation Initiatives to Bolster Greater Male Region Development

24 May 2017: Male, Maldives

Mr. Wencai Zhang, Vice President, Asian Development Bank (ADB), encouraged the active participation of Maldives in regional cooperation programs, in his two-day visit to Male, Maldives. ADB plans to increase support for Maldives in 2018-2019 through its indicative investment program that focuses on developing the Greater Male region, and also includes the SASEC National Window Project.

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ADB Awards SASEC Rail Project among Best Performing Projects in Bangladesh

22 May 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The SASEC Railway Connectivity Akhaura-Laksam Double Track Project implemented by Bangladesh Railway was recognized as one of ADB's best performing projects in Bangladesh. The project aims to reduce transport costs and enhance inclusiveness of railway services by building inclusive facilities.

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ADB Finalizing the Bangladesh-Southwest Economic Corridor Development Study Report

15 May 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is finalizing a study report on the Bangladesh-Southwest Economic Corridor Development for the Government of Bangladesh. The Study considers Bangladesh's industrial development plans, and examines the challenges, supply chain issues, and policy constraints faced by the country's industry sector. It also includes recommendations on improving Bangladesh's regional connectivity through a multimodal economic corridor.

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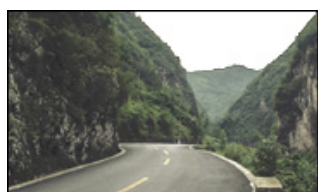
ADB Blog: India's First Coastal Corridor to Drive Manufacturing, Growth

12 May 2017: Manila, Philippines

The Government of India is promoting economic corridors to help unlock India's manufacturing potential. The ECEC will connect India's long eastern coastline and strategically located ports to multiple international gateways. In this ADB blog post, Mr. Hoe Yun Jeong, Principal Economist (Regional Cooperation), South Asia Regional Department, ADB, shares how the ECEC can contribute to South Asia's prosperity by contributing to a regional corridor in Asia.

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SASEC NEWS



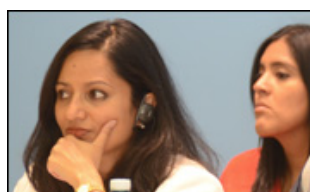
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INDIA BEGINS WORK ON MYANMAR ROAD FOR IMT TRILATERAL HIGHWAY



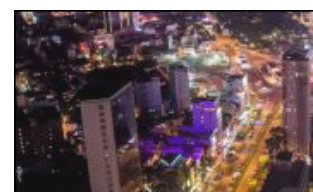
NEWS

SAARC MARKET HOLDS \$24.65 BILLION POTENTIAL FOR BANGLADESH



NEWS

WTO TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE CONVENES FIRST MEETING



NEWS

ADB BLOG: HOW TO BRING ABOUT THE ASIAN CENTURY

Electronic Cargo Tracking System to Improve India-Nepal Cargo Traffic and Security

6 June 2017: Mumbai, India

An electronic tracking system will soon ease traffic-in-transit for cargo traveling by road and rail from Kolkata to four major Customs points of Nepal, including the Raxaul route. Mr. Sandeep Kumar, Customs Commissioner, India, and Mr. Rabi Shanker Sainju, Commerce Ministry Joint Secretary, Nepal, signed a memorandum of intent to pilot the tracking system for a trial period of at least 90 days in late 2017.

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ADB Blog: 6 Ways Asian Economic Cooperation is Changing the Region

30 May 2017: Manila, Philippines

Economic transformations have accelerated regional cooperation and integration in Asia. In this ADB blog post, Mr. Cuong Minh Nguyen, Principal Regional Integration Specialist, Southeast Asia Department, ADB, discusses six paradigm shifts that are reshaping economic prospects in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and other parts of the region. It also highlights the need for governments to work together to build a socially inclusive, environmentally friendly, and economically sustainable region.

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India Drafts Cross-border Energy Trade Framework

28 May 2017: Kolkata, India

India's Ministry of Power is preparing a set of guidelines for cross-border trade of electricity, with draft regulations from the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission. This will regulate cross-border energy trade between India and Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Nepal, by creating a uniform framework.

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India, Bangladesh to Gradually Remove NTBs

24 May 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Mr. Harsh Vardan Shringla, India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh reiterated India's commitment to remove non-tariff barriers (NTBs) through the standard-setting bodies of India and Bangladesh. The Bureau of Indian Standards and the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution have begun cooperating on certification of goods, to resolve NTB-related export restrictions.

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Former FBCCI President: Bangladesh-India Relations Better Now than Any Time in the Past

22 May 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad, former President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, expressed confidence in the business relationship between Bangladesh and India, saying it is better right now than any time in the past. He encouraged the trade and business community to utilize the friendship between the two countries to promote development.

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SAARC Market Holds \$24.65 Billion Potential for Bangladesh

21 May 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladesh export to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region could reach \$24.65 billion by 2020, according to the UNESCAP report "Unlocking the Potential of Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in South Asia." Bangladesh's unexploited potential for exports to SAARC region is estimated at 93%.

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SAARC Collaboration Urged to Attract Foreign Direct Investment

19 May 2017: Colombo, Sri Lanka

The Minister of Industry and Commerce for Sri Lanka, Mr. Rishad Bathiudeen, urged collaboration among SAARC member countries to encourage inflows of foreign direct investment during a press briefing for the SAARC Investment Forum and Trade Fair scheduled for 6-9 September 2017 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

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India Begins Work on Myanmar Road for IMT Trilateral Highway

17 May 2017: Guwahati, India

India's National Highways Authority has begun upgrading the 120-kilometer Kalewa-Yargi road in Myanmar's Sagaing region. It will connect to Tamu, Myanmar, which links to Moreh, India, through a 130-km stretch of road. These roads are part of the of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, which runs from Moreh to Mae Sot (Thailand), passing through Myanmar.

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WTO Trade Facilitation Committee Convenes First Meeting in Geneva

16 May 2017: Geneva, Switzerland

The WTO Committee on Trade Facilitation met for the first time on 16 May 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. The Committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and is tasked to provide a forum for WTO member countries to consult on operationalizing the TFA.

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Need to Improve Bangladesh-India Port Services Highlighted by IBCCI

15 May 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

A delegation of the India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI) met with Mr. Shajahan Khan, Shipping Minister, Bangladesh, to discuss trade bottlenecks in Bangladesh-India land ports. Infrastructural and administrative bottlenecks in land and sea ports of Bangladesh and India slows down the trade process. Long delays for trucks to pass through Customs, for example, results in shortages of warehouses and trucks, and skyrocketing prices in truck rentals.

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"Advancing BBIN Subregional Cooperation" Focuses on Subregional Trade and Investment

14 May 2017: Kolkata, India

A conference organized by the Delhi Policy Group discussed how to improve the trade and investment environment in the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal (BBIN) subregion. Mr. Selim Reihan, Economics Professor, Dhaka University, and Executive Director, South Asian Network on Economic Modeling, a panelist, puts forward that BBIN should work on expanding trade in goods and services as a formal regional platform under the World Trade Organization to prompt tariff liberalization.

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At the Haat of a Border

13 May 2017: Meghalaya, India

The border "haats" (rural markets) have become an additional means of livelihood for vendors from select border areas of Bangladesh and India. The haats have also allowed people from both countries to meet. This commentary, which originally appeared in the Hindu, provides a closer look at the impact of the border haats to the lives of traders and consumers at the border.

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Bhutan's National Council Passes the Indo-Bhutan Trade Commerce, and Transit Agreement

12 May 2017: Thimphu, Bhutan

The National Council of Bhutan endorsed the Indo-Bhutan Trade, Commerce, and Transit Agreement on 12 May 2017, benefiting both countries by promoting a free trade regime, duty free transit of Bhutanese merchandise for trade with third countries through Indian ports; and additional entry/exit points for Bhutan's trade with other countries. It also promotes periodic exchange of trade data.

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India PM Modi Announces Direct Colombo-Varanasi Flights

12 May 2017: New Delhi, India

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that Air India will fly direct between Colombo, Sri Lanka, and Varanasi, India, beginning August 2017. He added that India and Sri Lanka plan to strengthen economic ties and cooperate on connectivity, transport, and energy.

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India to Make Northeast a Gateway to Southeast Asia

7 May 2017: New Delhi and Shillong, India

The Government of India has initiated major infrastructure projects in seven states in its bid to make the northeastern region a gateway to Southeast Asia, according to India Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India is investing INR 40,000 crore (\$6.2 billion) to improve roads and highways in the region.

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SAARC Finance Ministers Meet in Yokohama, Japan

5 May 2017: Yokohama, Japan

Finance ministers and senior officials of member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka met on 5 May at Yokohama, Japan, at the sidelines of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) 50th Annual General Meeting.

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New India Investment Agreements Take Holistic Approach to Spur Infrastructure Growth

5 May 2017: New Delhi, India

India has signed investment agreements worth \$31 million at the Integrated Transport and Logistics Summit in New Delhi, India. The agreements form part of the Government of India's holistic approach to spur infrastructure growth, according to Mr. Nitin Gadkari, Road Transport and Shipping Minister, India.

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Bangladesh, India, Nepal to Redraw BBIN MVA

5 May 2017: New Delhi, India

The Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) will be redrawn by Bangladesh, India, and Nepal, following Bhutan's agreement for the three countries to proceed with its implementation. In June 2017, the BBIN working group will meet to redesign the routes.

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ADB Blog: How to Bring about the Asian Century

5 May 2017: Manila, Philippines

Asian countries need to adjust their growth models to adapt to sluggish demand for Asian exports by relying more on domestic demand and intraregional trade to deliver the growth they need. In this ADB blog post, Mr. Juzhong Zhuang, Deputy Chief Economist and Deputy Director General, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, ADB, proposes bold approaches to secure growth through priority areas including closing the infrastructure gap and increasing use of renewable energy.

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India's Union Cabinet Approves Third Line of Credit to Bangladesh

3 May 2017: New Delhi, India

India's Union Cabinet, chaired by India Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given ex post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the third line of credit of \$4.5 billion to Bangladesh. This MoU aims to support development of infrastructure in Bangladesh.

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India Cabinet Approves Signing of BIMSTEC Power Grid Pact

20 April 2017: New Delhi, India

India's Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the ratification of the MOU for the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection. The MOU is expected to be signed at the next BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting and provides a broad framework for energy trade among BIMSTEC member countries.

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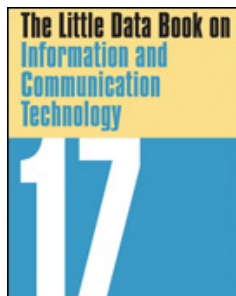
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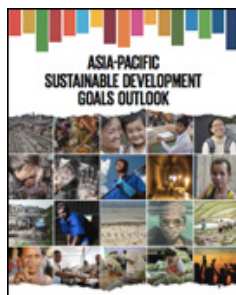
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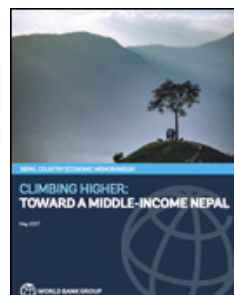
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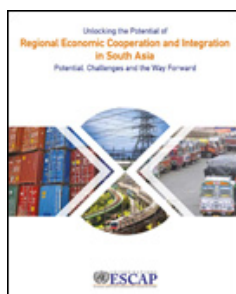
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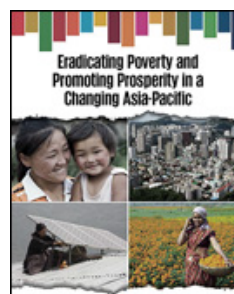
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