

PRESS RELEASE
SASEC Senior Officials' Meeting Concludes in Colombo

The South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held from 29 to 30 September 2026 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Bhutanese delegation was led by Director General Tshering Dorji, Ministry of Finance (MoF), accompanied by Director Sonam Tshering Dorji, Department of Trade, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE), alongside officials from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MoIT), GovTech Agency, and MoF. Delegations from SASEC member states (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) convened with representatives from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to review subregional progress under SASEC Strategy 2035.

Serving as the overarching decision-making forum, the SOM reviewed and endorsed key sectoral deliverables across the Transport, Trade Facilitation, and Energy Working Groups, as well as initiatives in food systems, digital payment ecosystems, and tourism. Building on outcomes from precursor knowledge forums, Senior Officials formally adopted the SASEC Strategy 2035 on Economic Corridor Operational Priorities, authorized the establishment of the new SASEC Economic Corridor Development (ECD) Working Group, and approved the Action Plan for SASEC Initiatives (APSI 2026-2028). The meeting also marked the rollout of the web-based SASEC Project & Knowledge Work Progress Up-dation System and examined alignment with country partnership strategies.

The Bhutanese delegation highlighted the shared imperative of building disaster-resilient infrastructure and mountain climate risk mitigation across regional corridors. Bhutan reaffirmed its commitment to translating upstream knowledge studies into bankable investment projects, advancing digital payment integration, and strengthening regional cooperation to foster sustainable economic resilience.

The outcomes of the SOM reflect a shared subregional vision to accelerate economic transformation, enhance multimodal connectivity, and promote inclusive, sustainable growth across South Asia.

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