



SOUTH ASIA SDG UPDATE



JANUARY 2020



1. UNESCAP Executive Secretary visits Bangladesh



DHAKA, BANGLADESH, 11 December 2019 Dr Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) called on H.E. Ms Sheikh Hasina Wazed, Prime Minister of Bangladesh during her official visit to Bangladesh on Wednesday 11, 2019. The Prime Minister briefed the Executive Secretary on the key priorities of her government and requested support of UNESCAP especially in respect of graduation of Bangladesh from LDC status, for improving transport connectivity and for acceleration of SDGs. The Executive Secretary invited the Prime Minister to deliver a keynote address at the 76th Annual Session of the UNESCAP Commission to be held in Bangkok in May 2020. During her stay in Dhaka, the Executive Secretary also called on a number of dignitaries including the Ministers of Finance, Commerce, Planning, BIMSTEC Secretary-General, the United Nations Resident Coordinator and addressed the United Nations Country Team.

Other references can be found [Here](#) or [Here](#)



2. The Third South Asia Forum on SDGs calls to accelerate sustainable development progress



DHAKA, BANGLADESH, 8 – 9 December 2019 The Third South Asia Forum on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), was jointly organized by UNESCAP and the Government of Bangladesh in Dhaka. With over 100 participants representing governments, think-tanks, international development partners and civil society from all the 8 South Asian countries, the Forum underscored on the need for accelerated action to achieve the SDGs by 2030, including through regional cooperation. Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director, UNESCAP-SSWA, in his opening remarks, noted that with a disproportionately larger share of 36 percent of all people living in extreme poverty and hunger globally, the world could not achieve SDGs if South Asia fails to do so. Citing the ESCAP's *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2019*, he said that South Asia was lagging behind in 15 out of 17 goals, despite a sustained and robust economic growth rate. Hence, business-as-usual was not an option. A sub-regional preparatory for the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) and the High-Level Political Forum, the Forum was also addressed by senior dignitaries from Bangladesh including Mr Monowar Ahmed, Secretary-ERD; Mr Khandker Anwarul Islam, Cabinet Secretary; Mr Abul Kalam Azad, Coordinator for SDG Affairs in the Prime Minister's Office; Mr Nojibur Rehman, Principal Secretary to the PM; Dr Shamsul Alam, Member-GED; Ms Mia Seppo, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh; H.E. Dr Puspa Raj Kadel, Vice-Chairman of National Planning Commission of Nepal, H.E. Mr Shahidul Islam, Secretary-General, BIMSTEC, among other dignitaries.

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3. Sustainable graduation challenges of South Asian LDCs discussed in Kathmandu



Kathmandu, Nepal, 14 - 15 October 2019 To assist South Asian LDCs in looking for policy options to overcome the challenges related to LDC graduation, UNESCAP in collaboration with the Government of Nepal organized a subregional workshop on SDGs and Sustainable Graduation of South Asian LDCs in Kathmandu, Nepal, which was attended by policymakers of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and the Maldives. Discussions focused on specific challenges faced by Nepal as well as common challenges facing South Asian LDCs for sustainable graduation. Resource persons, as well as participants, shared their own experiences and best practices in this regard. The work programme for assisting the South Asian LDCs in 2020 was also developed and discussed. Delivering the opening remarks, Dr Nagesh Kumar, Director, UNESCAP-SSWA indicated that the workshop was conducted as a part of UNESCAP's initiative to assist the three South Asian LDCs meet the challenge of graduation in a smooth and sustainable manner. The workshop was inaugurated by H.E. Dr Puspa Lal Kadel, Vice Chairman of the National Planning Commission of Nepal and was also addressed by Ms Valerie Julliand, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Nepal; heads of think-tanks and resource persons drawn from MPFD at the UNESCAP headquarters and SSWA office in New Delhi.

Read more [Here](#)



4. UNESCAP Panel at SDPI Conference focuses on regional cooperation for achieving SDGs



ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN, 4 Dec 2019

UNESCAP organized a Panel Discussion on Promoting Regional Cooperation in South Asia for Achieving SDGs at the SDPI's 22nd Sustainable Development Conference on 4 December 2019. The main objective of the panel discussion was to brainstorm options for creating an inclusive subregional cooperation framework that will help the member States achieve SDGs. The panel was moderated by Dr. Rajan Sudesh Ratna, ESCAP-SSWA and the speaker included

Mr. Abdul Basir Azimi, Research Fellow, Biruni Institute, Afghanistan; Dr. Amitabh Kundu, Distinguished Fellow, RIS, India; Dr. Fatemeh Chemali Chirani, Political Scientist and Journalist, Iran; Dr. Abid Qayum Suleri, ED, SDPI, Pakistan; Ms. Safoora Kawsar Usman, Ministry of Health, Maldives; Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Chairman, SAWTEE, Nepal; and Ms. Hasna Munas, Research Analyst, Verité Research, Sri Lanka. The panel unanimously expressed that regional cooperation and collaboration can play a critical role in achieving the SDG targets in South and South-West Asian countries.

[A side event to launch the EIF-UNESCAP project on E-Commerce Capacity Building for women-led MSMEs in South Asia](#) was also organized.

Read More [Here](#)



5. Bhutan Workshop discusses strategies for Sustainable Graduation of South Asian LDCs



THIMPHU, BHUTAN, 1-2 October 2019 UNESCAP and the Royal Government of Bhutan, organized a workshop on SDGs and Sustainable Graduation of South Asian LDCs in Thimphu, Bhutan. It was second in the series of workshops that UNESCAP organized on the theme to assist three South Asian LDCs namely Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal in their sustainable graduation. The objectives of the Workshop were to identify priorities and developmental challenges facing Bhutan and other South Asian LDCs towards a smooth and sustainable transition to graduation and identified future capacity building needs for effective and sustainable graduation from LDC. The participants included government representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. The workshop was opened by H.E. Mr Dorji Tshering, Minister for Works and Human Settlement, Royal Government of Bhutan and was also addressed by the United Nations Resident Coordinator Mr Gerald Daly. The workshop also had resource persons from the secretariats of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) in Geneva besides those from MPFD and SSWA Office of UNESCAP. A follow-up action plan was drawn focusing on how to address the identified gaps using integrated approaches.

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6. Policy dialogue highlights relevance of South Asian cooperation for achieving SDGs



DHAKA, BANGLADESH, 10 December 2019 The Policy Dialogue on South Asian Cooperation for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) jointly organized by the UNESCAP and the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) in Dhaka on 10 December 2019, aimed at sharing experiences as well as the understanding of stakeholders on the effective utilization of regional cooperation and integration modalities to achieve the SDGs in South Asia. The dialogue provided a platform for sharing of good practices and policy options for South Asian countries for increasing cooperation among stakeholders to strengthen partnerships and identify the way forward to support the implementation of SDGs in the subregion. The dialogue brought in various stakeholders, including heads of policy think-tanks, representatives of governments, academia, private sector and civil society organizations, media, and other key stakeholders from South Asian countries. General A K M Abdur Rahman, Director-General, BIISS, H.E. Dr. Puspa Raj Kadel, Vice-Chairman, National Planning Commission,

Nepal, H.E. Mr. M. Shahidul Islam, Secretary-General, BIMSTEC Secretariat, Dr Nagesh Kumar, Director, UNESCAP-SSWA addressed the opening session.

Read more [Here](#) Other references can be found [Here](#) and [Here](#)



7. Supporting SDG Achievement through building analytical capacity in South Asian LDCs

NEW DELHI, INDIA, 18 - 22 November 2019 At the request of Afghanistan and Bhutan, UNESCAP is supporting their fledgling think-tanks in strengthening their capacity for evidence-based policy research to feed into the policy making process. A workshop was organized at UNESCAP-SSWA for staff of the two institutions during 18-22 November 2019 in New Delhi. At the workshop, the participants were exposed to think-tanks based in New Delhi as well as heads of think-tanks in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, to gain the first-hand experience.



Subsequently UNESCAP team undertook a consultation mission to Bhutan on 23 December 2019 to review the progress made following the New Delhi workshop. The Bhutanese officials reported that the terms of reference and other arrangements for establishing the think-tank have been prepared and were under consideration of the high authorities. UNESCAP team also met with the United Nations Resident Coordinator who appreciated UNESCAP's support to the UN Country Team in Bhutan.



8. The Bangladesh launch of the E-Commerce capacity-building for women-led MSMEs in South Asia



DHAKA, BANGLADESH, 11 December 2019 UNESCAP in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh launched a project to build the capacity of women-led MSMEs in harnessing eCommerce as a tool to expand their businesses and become part of a wider regional and global supply chains in South Asian LDCs. The National Inception Workshop held in Dhaka brought together women entrepreneurs, civil society organizations working on women empowerment, Government Departments/Ministries, Apex Chamber's representatives, experts, etc., to share experiences on entrepreneurship in Bangladesh and other South Asian countries, and the future work plan. The event had the participation of H.E. Ms. Selima Ahmad, Member of Parliament and President, Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Md. Kamal Hossain, Additional Secretary and Director General, WTO Cell, Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh and Ms. Shomi Kaiser, President, E-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB) and Director, FBCCI, among other stakeholders.



9. Dialogue on Harnessing the Potential of South Asian Cooperation for Sustainable Development

NEW DELHI, INDIA, 20 November 2019. [Policy Dialogue on Regional Cooperation for SDGs Achievement in South Asia](#) organized on 20 November 2019 in New Delhi explored opportunities and challenges South Asia faces in strengthening regional cooperation and developing actionable agenda to support the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda through coalition building and partnerships in the region. Organized by UNESCAP jointly with RIS, the Dialogue had the participation of heads of think-tanks and private sector organizations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.



Read more [Here](#)



10. Civil Society Organizations discuss key challenges faced by South Asian countries in achieving SDGs



DHAKA, BANGLADESH, 7 December 2019. The South Asia Peoples Forum on Sustainable Development 2019 was held on 7 December 2019 in Dhaka ahead of the South Asian Forum on SDGs. This meeting reaffirmed the role of civil society organizations in influencing the processes and deliberations at the subregional and regional levels including the [Third South Asia Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals](#), Asia and Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) and the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations, and advancing the shared commitment of CSOs in facilitating the achievement of SDGs in South Asia in 2020. Civil society organizations fully participated and provided their inputs in the Third South Asia Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals on 8–9 December 2019. Mr Chrispin Kapinga represented UNESCAP at the Forum.



11. Asian business leaders told to foster job-creating, inclusive and sustainable growth

SINGAPORE, 8 November 2019 While addressing the Asian Business Leaders Conclave in Singapore, Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director, UNESCAP-SSWA highlighted the relevance of sustainability as a business strategy, directing the new digital revolution like artificial intelligence to material and energy-saving rather than displacing workers, addressing rising inequalities, leveraging regional connectivity and cooperation for the Asian Century. Organized by the Economic Times, the conclave brought together business leaders from India, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar, among others.



SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION AT THE UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP25) IN MADRID, SPAIN



Afghanistan:

Mr. SCHAH-ZAMAN MAIWANDI, Director-General, National Environmental Protection Agency of Afghanistan said that Afghanistan strives to implement climate action towards a low emission development path and has started integrating climate change and sustainable development in its national development agendas despite the challenging situation it faces. In particular, Afghanistan has formulated the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and initiated the process for the revision of its National Adaptation Plan.

He highlighted that in order to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses, Afghanistan has recently approved a Five-Years Action Plan on air pollution to reform the public transport system, instituted a mandatory tree planting scheme starting in 2021, and improved the management of use of coal as an energy source and increase the supply of clean energy sources such as solar and wind power.

Concerning actions to limit global warming to 1.5°C, he stated that substantial changes need to take place to achieve the resilience and sustainable future. He stressed further that all nations must act boldly and ambitiously in helping the most vulnerable and least developed countries. To accelerate efforts to lower emissions and ensure climate-resilient development pathways, we must make sure that access to existing mechanisms governing climate action is streamlined and simplified and the industrialized economies show firm commitments to decarbonize and mitigate future climatic changes as well as show willingness to jointly mobilize USD 100 billion per year by 2020 as agreed in 2010.



Bhutan:

H.E. Mr. YESHEY PENJOR, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Forest, Royal Government of Bhutan, said that the world is not on track to achieving the goal of 1.5°C as required agreed in the Paris Agreement. Significant, bold, and immediate action needs to be taken in this regard as time is running out. He emphasized that his country is committed to remaining carbon neutral and will prepare a long-term low emission climate-resilient development strategy in 2020. He underscored that as a “land-locked” country with a “fragile and mountainous ecosystem,” Bhutan is among the most vulnerable countries to the adverse impacts of climate change conditions.

He stressed that COP25 must deliver concrete decisions on loss and damage and a robust rule for implementation of market and a non-market mechanism that ensure environmental integrity and enhanced financial support for climate action. Bhutan remains committed to the principles and objectives of the Convention and the Paris Agreement and calls on all Parties to be flexible, open and constructive in delivering a strong climate action and the support needed to achieve this goal.



India:

H.E Mr. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), highlighted that India has reduced emissions intensity of GDP by 21 percent and is on track to achieve the goal of 35% emissions reduction. Prime Minister Modi has announced a 175 GW target for renewables, and 83 GW has already been achieved. The Prime Minister has subsequently increased the target to 450 GW at the recent UN Climate Action Summit. A carbon tax on coal production at the rate of Dollars 6 per tonne has been introduced. More actions include blending of 20% ethanol in petrol by 2030, leapfrogging from Bharat Standard IV to Bharat Standard VI for vehicle emission norms from 1st April 2020, fitting 360 million LED bulbs in homes, replacing 10 million conventional streetlights with LED lights, etc. India promised to create additional carbon sinks of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon equivalent to increase its green cover by employing projects like urban forests, school nursery, agroforestry, water, and fodder augmentation in the forest area, etc. As a result, in the last five years, its green cover has ultimately increased by 15,000 sq.km. Furthermore, India had launched the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure to support countries to exchange knowledge and provide technical support in developing disaster and climate resilient infrastructure. He highlighted the fact that India led the countries that are on track in meeting their NDCs. As we approach the end of the Pre- 2020 period, one should reflect on the progress. Unfortunately, annexed countries have not met their Kyoto Protocol targets. Neither their NDCs reflect ambitions nor they have shown willingness to enhance their commitments. In the important issue of finance, developed world promised 1 trillion dollar in last 10 years, and not even 2 percent has materialized. Technology development and transfer at affordable costs is crucial for developing countries. If we are dealing with a disaster, nobody should profit from it. So, he proposed to have more joint research and collaboration, grant finance made available for meeting the targets. He ended by saying that this was the time for ownership and responsible action. India has and will continue to do its bit – expecting commensurate multilateral action with developed countries taking the lead.



Nepal:

H.E. Mr. SHAKTI BAHADUR BASNET, Minister of Forests and Environment (MoEF), raised the concern that the Paris Agreement commitment to maintaining global temperatures below 1.5 degrees Celsius seems untenable as the carbon emission is constantly increasing, with a record of over 55 billion tons of GHGs in 2018. This pattern of carbon emissions growth threatens countries particularly the least developing countries like Nepal. South Asia with a high number of planet's human population, is vulnerable to the effects of global

warming and demands special attention and needs in considering the livelihood of its most poor and vulnerable communities.

Nepal is implementing a climate change agenda with its National Climate Change Policy, which channels over 80% of climate financing to grassroots activities. Vulnerability Risk Assessment and National Adaptation Plan have been introduced and the country is completing its Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans for all its Municipal areas. Finally, to significantly increase the ambition and enhance implementation of the climate change agenda as well as boost Nepal's core portfolio of national climate-resilient and low-carbon investments, access to climate change financing, technology transfer, and bottom-up capacity-building must be a priority.



Pakistan:

H.E Mr. MALIK AMIN ASLAM KHAN, Federal Minister - Climate Change / Advisor to Prime Minister, said that although it contributes less than 1% of the global greenhouse gas emissions, yet, every year, it keeps on climbing up the ladder of climate vulnerability. While facing this daunting challenge, Pakistan remains equally committed to raising its ambition for climate action and lead the response in shaping a new future.

Pakistan has embarked itself on a sustainable development pathway, in line with the spirit of the Paris Agreement. Led by the Prime Minister Imran Khan's green vision, and backed with concerted action, Pakistan has made a shift towards a "clean and green Pakistan." It has introduced the electric vehicle policy, which targets a 30% shift to electric vehicles by 2030. Earlier this month, the city of Karachi in Pakistan launched the world's first "zero emissions" metro line – which incidentally became the first transport project to be financed under the Green Climate Fund. The country has banned single-use plastic bags and is also using innovative initiatives and an eco-system-based adaptation to curb climate change by turning catastrophic floods into an opportunity for recharging aquifers and naturally restoring ecosystems. An "Eco-System Restoration Fund" to facilitate Pakistan's transition towards climate compatible development through targeted initiatives on afforestation, biodiversity conservation, and ecological restoration is also being introduced.

He urged that raising the ambition to deal with climate change must be seen in the context of specific national circumstances and development imperatives of developing countries as well as the unfulfilled commitments about mitigation, technology transfer, and provision of climate finance, all of which need to be met urgently and scaled up significantly.



Sri Lanka:

Ms. S. HASANTHI URUGODAWATTE DISSANAYAKE, Director-General of Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Foreign Relations of Sri Lanka said that the rise of the global mean temperature and the resulting changes have created adverse impacts on key sectors within Sri Lanka, such as agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, marine and fisheries, tourism and energy (hydro-power) sectors, leading to disastrous effects on its people, ecosystems and economy. With this in mind, Sri Lanka recognizes the importance and the role of COP, which highlights the need to take effective and definitive steps for finalizing the follow-up actions of the Paris Agreement as climate change impacts are real, and Sri Lanka experiences them daily.

She highlighted further that Sri Lanka has identified and implements three broad approaches, based on which many projects are implemented to build resilience among the most vulnerable communities, ecosystems and economic sectors of the country - Rehabilitation of ancient reservoir cascade system-ecosystem-based adaptation, to address the prolonged drought situation in the dry zone; rehabilitation and enrichment of watersheds and catchments to ensure perennial water flow with the aim to address the prolonged drought situation in the dry zone; and diversion of excess water in the wet zone to dry zone where prolonged droughts are predicted and control floods in the wet zone. These affirmative actions are also manifested in the country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) with due attention given to vulnerable communities and ecosystems.

Sri Lanka has introduced mangrove restoration to increase the forest cover from 29% to 32% by 2030. In line

with these commitments, Sri Lanka undertook and led the Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Group on Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods in 2018. Sri Lanka is also committed to inclusive and participatory climate actions to ensure that affirmative actions are taken to address the vulnerabilities of climate change. She stated that due to the increasing number and intensity of extreme weather events, vulnerable countries are in urgent need of financial resources for technology development and transfer and capacity building to minimize and compensate for the losses and damages.

She reiterated the need for inclusion and participation of vulnerable communities, and multiple stakeholders - including civil society, private sector, youth, women, academia and strengthening the public participation at all levels as well as the importance of gender responsiveness in climate action and appreciated the review of the Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan at COP25.



SDGs IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

a. SGDs: priorities, actions and means of implementation

Planning Minister, Bangladesh for concerted efforts to achieve SDGs in time: (United News of Bangladesh) 4 November 2019 Planning Minister MA Mannan on Saturday underscored the need for joint efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh Government to ensure 100pc electricity coverage within Mujib Year: (Source: Daily Star) 13 November 2019 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wednesday said the government will be able to provide electricity to every house during the announced 'Mujib Year', which will be celebrated from March 2020 to March 2021. "God willing, we'll be able to provide 100 percent electricity within the Mujib Year. No one will be left in dark," she said. Read more [here](#)

Now that economy is 'stable', Pakistan govt to focus on creating jobs, facilitating investors: (Source: Dawn) 13 November 2019 Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said now that his economic team had "stabilized the economy", the government is focusing on creating job opportunities and facilitating investors. Read more [here](#)

ESCAP sees Bangladesh's positive trade growth in 2019: (Source: The Financial Express) 19 December 2019 Despite sluggish merchandise exports from Bangladesh in the outgoing year 2019, a United Nations (UN) body forecasts positive annual export growth for the country. The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) made the projections in its latest Asia-Pacific Trade in Goods Trends and Outlooks. Read more [here](#)

Modern teaching methodology, vital to tackle poverty, illiteracy, unemployment issues: President Alvi: (Source: Business Recorder) 16 October 2019 President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said that poverty, illiteracy and unemployment could be eliminated through economical goal-oriented education and easy access to knowledge for all. Read more [here](#)

Awami League government transforms country into a Digital Bangladesh: PM: (Source: Daily Star) 14 October 2019 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said the Awami League government has transformed the country into a Digital Bangladesh by making information technology accessible to all, including the marginal people, through efficient, service-oriented and ICT-friendly services in the last ten and a half years. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh's GDP for FY 2019-'20 will be 7.2%: WB: (Source: Daily Star) 10 October 2019 World Bank has forecasted GDP growth rate of Bangladesh at 7.2 per cent for the fiscal year 2019-20, while government's projection for the same fiscal year in the national budget was 8.2 per cent. Read more [here](#)

Asian Development Bank to provide \$2.7bn to Pakistan in 2019: (Source: Dawn) 9 October 2019 ADB on Wednesday announced that the regional bank will provide \$2.7 billion in approved financing to Pakistan during the outgoing calendar year. Read more [here](#)

India's first e-waste clinic to be set up in Bhopal: (Source: The Hindu) 4 October 2019 The Bhopal

International conference on SDGs begins at Dhaka University: (Source: The Daily Observer) 18 December 2019 A three-day long international conference on 'Sampling Methodologies for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goal Indicators' began on Tuesday at Dhaka University (DU) campus. Dr Kazi Shahidullah, Chairman of University Grant Commission (UGC), as the chief guest inaugurated the conference organized by Institute of Statistical Research and Training (ISRT) of DU. Read more [here](#)

Nirmala Sitharaman rules out quick recovery for Indian economy: (Source: Economic Times) 15 November 2019 Despite the global economic slowdown, New Delhi has claimed the growth rate of India and China next year will not be as bad as the current year. In fact, Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said that "India's growth is (expected to be) much better than that of even China". Read more [here](#)

Love of cash hinders India's move to digital economy: (Source: Reuters) 14 November 2019 India's dependency on cash may slow the country's transition to digital payments despite large numbers of internet and mobile phone users. Read more [here](#)

Turkey's plan for a digital tax could lead to other governments following suit: (Source: The National) 13 November 2019 The global debate on innovation and regulation is about to take a new turn with a Turkish plan for an all-encompassing digital tax. The tax, which is expected to be approved by parliament this week, will apply not only to electronic marketplaces like eBay and digital-advertising giants like Google and Facebook, but also to e-commerce platforms involved in the sale of digital goods and services, like Spotify and Netflix. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh's post-graduation challenges worry experts: (Source: The Financial Express) 11 November 2019 Bangladesh will have to address a few core policy challenges to achieve the upper-middle income country status by 2031, economists said. The challenges include ensuring equitable tax system, capital market vibrancy, and export diversification. Read more [here](#)

More than half of South Asian youth are not on track to have the education and skills necessary for employment in 2030: (Source: UNICEF) 30 October 2019 According to the Global Business Coalition for Education, the Education Commission, and UNICEF, 54 per cent of South Asian school leavers do not have the skills necessary to secure a decent job. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh showing tremendous economic growth: (Source News Today) 30 October 2019 Praising the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, new Kosovo Ambassador in Bangladesh Guner Ureya has expressed his views that Bangladesh's economy has been growing tremendously in recent years. Read more [here](#)

Municipal Corporation and the Central Pollution Control Board have joined hands to set up the country's first e-waste clinic here, that would enable segregation, processing and disposal of waste from both household and commercial units. Read more [here](#)

India shows remarkable resilience amid global slowdown: (Source: The Economic Times) 3 October 2019 India, a young economy with lot of potential, has demonstrated remarkable strength and resilience amid global slowdown, a top official of World Economic Forum said. Read more [here](#)

Modi's bold toilet claim in question as India marks Gandhi's 150th: (Source: AFP) 2 October 2019 India is to be declared "open-defecation free" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday evening, although experts question his bold claim that all 1.3 billion people in the country have access to a toilet. Read more [here](#)

World sees with respect those holding Indian passports, says Modi: (Source: The Hindu) 2 October 2019 India's image has gained global prominence and the world expects our country to play a leading role in resolving international problems, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in Ahmedabad on Wednesday. Read more [here](#)

Digital platform Dmoney starts commercial operation in Bangladesh: (Source: Daily Star) 1 October 2019 Digital payments and services platform Dmoney yesterday announced the launch of its commercial operation for the Bangladesh market. "We have come up with a technology platform that will further accelerate the advancement of the people. This is an extremely proud moment for us Bangladeshis," Dmoney Chairman Anjan Chowdhury said. Read more [here](#)

Government Committed to promote sustainable development: Governor Yasinza: (Source: Daily Balochistan Express) November 15, 2019 Balochistan Governor Amanullah Khan Yasinza said the government believes in uniform and sustainable development in the province. "It is our desire and endeavor that all the districts, especially those in the backward areas, receive basic facilities," said Yasinza. Read more [here](#)

A workshop on 'Climate Literacy and Sustainable Development Goal 2019', held: (Source: The Daily Star) 30 November 2019 Aiming for a sustainable eco-friendly planet, the Plastic Initiative Network (organised a workshop on 'Climate Literacy and Sustainable Development Goal 2019', in collaboration with American Centre Dhaka. The session was designed to engage youth in becoming environmental advocates in their communities. Fifty young enthusiasts attended the workshop. Read more [here](#)

Promotion of SMEs in Pakistan: (Source: Business Recorder) 3 December 2019 Authorities in Pakistan have usually been striving to promote small and medium enterprises with a view to accelerating the pace of development and creating new employment

ADB approves \$75m for Sindh education project in Pakistan: (Source: The Dawn) 29 October 2019 ADB approved on Monday a \$75 million loan for a project, which will help improve the quality, accessibility and gender responsiveness of the secondary education system and infrastructure in Sindh. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh among least favourable nations for farmers: (Source: Daily Star) 25 October 2019 Bangladesh has one of the least favourable regulatory environments for farmers although the country is still dependent on the agriculture sector for ensuring food security, poverty reduction and job creation, according to a new World Bank report. Read more [here](#)

Pakistan PM making all-out efforts to make country an Islamic welfare state: (Source: Associated Press of Pakistan) 22 October 2019 Sindh Governor Imran Ismail on Tuesday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was working day and night to provide all possible facilities to the poor and needy people and make the country an Islamic welfare state. Read more [here](#)

UN endorses India's steps to address hunger, malnutrition to achieve SDG: (Source: Business Standard) 21 October 2019 WFP has endorsed India's policy measures for addressing hunger and malnutrition to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Bishow Parajuli, Representative and Country Director to India, UNWFP, told IANS that India has all the ingredients in place to achieve SDG 2, which is to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture prior to the 2030 targets. Read more [here](#)

India expresses disappointment over lack of support for IMF quota increase: (Source: The Hindu) 20 October 2019 India on October 19 expressed its disappointment over the lack of support to increase the quota structure of IMF. IMF quotas, which are the primary source of IMF funds, determine voting shares. Quotas are supposed to be reviewed every five years although these reviews can be delayed. Read more [here](#)

India to build 30 gigawatts of renewable plants along western border: (Source: Economic Times) 18 October 2019 India is considering building 30 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity along a desert on its western border known for its sunny, windy and arid expanse, according to people familiar with the plan. The projects, which will be spread across the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan, are part of efforts to expand the country's renewable capacity and reduce the share of fossil fuels in its energy mix. Read more [here](#)

Prime Minister launches 'Kamyab Jawan Programme' for youth in Pakistan: (Source: Business Recorder) 17 October 2019 Prime Minister Imran Khan has launched the 'Kamyab Jawan Programme' – an initiative for the welfare of the country's youth, in Islamabad on Thursday. He said as part of the 'Kamyab Jawan Programme', one hundred billion rupees will be distributed among

opportunities in the country. However, the results of their efforts have not been up to expectations. Read more [here](#)

President calls for trade, investment promotion: (Source: Business Recorder) 3 December 2019 President Md Abdul Hamid urged the country's business leaders to create new entrepreneurs and explore new business areas for the sake of the country's economy and the people. Terming trade and investment the main component of socio-economic development, he also requested the business leaders to promote it. Read more [here](#)

Turkey adjusts reserve rules to spur loans to production sectors: (Source: Reuters) 9 December 2019 Turkey's central bank on Monday effectively raised the ceiling on loan growth targets needed for banks to qualify for lower required reserve ratios, while introducing regulations aiming to channel loans to production-oriented sectors. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh, Nepal ahead of India as growth in South Asia slows down: World Bank report: (Source: The Economic Times) 14 October 2019 Recent economic developments in Bangladesh have been remarkable. Over the past decade, GDP per capita has almost tripled, reaching USD 1,700 in 2018. The annual GDP growth has averaged 6.5 percent and is forecast above 8 percent in 2019. Good progress is being made towards achieving UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly towards crucial goals such as ensuring that everyone has access to clean water and sanitation and clean and affordable energy. Bangladesh's economic dynamism enabled the country to meet the criteria for graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) status last year. If, as expected, the country meets the criteria again in 2021, Bangladesh will be recommended for graduation in 2024 by the United Nations General Assembly, writes Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana. Read more [here](#)

Pakistan signs \$1.3 billion loan accord with ADB to shore up finances (Source: The International News) 23 December 2019 Government on Monday signed a \$1.3 billion worth of loan agreement with ADB for economic stabilisation program and energy sector reforms. The loan agreements – \$1 billion for reforms support and \$300 million for energy sector – were signed Economic Affairs Division Secretary by Pervaiz Abbas and ADB Country Director Xiaohong Yang. Read more [here](#)

Prime Minister: Focus of all development programmes on rural Bangladesh (Source: Dhaka Tribune) 12 Dec 2019 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the government is implementing all its development programs centering rural areas to provide a better economic status to Bangladesh villages. She made the statement when Under Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of UNESCAP Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana met her at her official residence Ganobhaban on Wednesday. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana highly appreciated Bangladesh for its

youth as loans for their business ventures. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh ranks 88th on hunger index, above India: (Source: Bangladesh News 24) 16 October 2019 Bangladesh ranks 88th out of 117 qualifying countries on the latest Global Hunger Index (), much ahead of India. Bangladesh reduced hunger significantly, but with a score of 25.8, the country still suffers from a level of hunger that is serious, according to the 2019 report. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh Prime Minister vows to make railway profitable: (Source: Dhaka Tribune) 16 October 2019 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Wednesday vowed to make the railway a profitable sector saying that the government is working to bring the whole country under railway network. Read more [here](#)

fastest-growing economy. She also hailed prime minister's strong leadership for women empowerment and development of the ICT sector in Bangladesh. The UNESCAP Executive Secretary invited the prime minister to join the 76th annual session of the UNESCAP to be held in Bangkok. Read more [here](#)

ADB maintains robust growth outlook for Bangladesh (Source: The Daily Star) 12 Dec 2019 Bangladesh is expected to grow robustly in 2019 and 2020 riding on domestic consumption and strong remittance earnings, said the Asian Development Bank as it kept the growth outlook for the country unchanged. Read more [here](#)

E-commerce sales to reach \$3 billion in four years: (Source: The Daily Star) 17 Dec 2019 Bangladesh's e-commerce market stands at \$1.6 billion currently and will double to \$3 billion by 2023 on the back of a digital foundation laid down by the government and a young and tech-savvy population, a German research firm said recently. Read more [here](#)

b. Regional cooperation and other means of implementation

India, Iran agree to speed up of Chabahar port project: (Source: The Asian Age) 27 December 2019 Tehran and Delhi have agreed to accelerate the development of an important Iranian port, India's foreign minister said during a visit to the sanctions-hit Islamic republic on Monday. Read more [here](#)

Cross-border trade under SASEC: ADB to support BD's reform: (Source: The Financial Express) 26 December 2019 The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is expected to help Bangladesh ease transborder and regional trade through facilitating infrastructural development and regulatory reforms, officials have said. Under the South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), the Manila-based lender has assured Dhaka of its technical and financial support to this effect. Read more [here](#)

India Takes a Dig at China in BRICS Summit on Non-Tariff Barriers: (Source: Bunkerist) 13 November 2019 Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has raised concerns about non-tariff barriers a week after India pulled out of the China-led RCEP – a free trade agreement involving ASEAN and six other countries. In a likely reference to China's stubbornness on not providing market access in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Indian Commerce Minister has taken a dig at the nation. Minister Piyush Goyal said the growing trend of non-tariff barriers leads to economic uncertainty. Read more [here](#)

India's trade with its FTA partners: experiences, challenges and way forward: (Source: The Economic Times) 7 November 2019 India failed to benefit from free trade agreements (FTAs) with

Bangladesh keen on funding 20 hydropower projects in Nepal: (Source: Daily Star) 24 October 2019 Bangladesh has expressed willingness to invest in 20 hydropower projects in Nepal during bilateral trade talks held in Kathmandu. Read more [here](#)

At stakeholders' meet, India, Bangladesh call for improved connectivity: (Source: Indian Express) 23 October 2019 India and Bangladesh called for developing better connectivity between the two countries to strengthen economic ties, and for the growth of the region. Speaking at the India-Bangladesh Stakeholders' Meet in Guwahati, Minister of State for Road, Transport and Highways Gen V K Singh (retired.) said that the Union government's new Act East Policy has placed the northeast at the Centre of India's emerging relations with the countries of South and South East Asia. Read more [here](#)

PM Sheikh Hasina reaches Delhi: (Source: Daily Star) 3 October 2019 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reached New Delhi Thursday on a four-day official visit. On October 3-4, Hasina will co-chair the Indian Economic Summit of the World Economic Forum in Delhi. The summit will host more than 800 leaders from 40 countries, including senior public figures and leading representatives from various sectors. Read more [here](#)

Sri Lanka could be only country with preferential access to vast region: (Source: The Daily News.lk) 30 September 2019 Sri Lanka could be the only country in the world with preferential access to China, India and the European Union under GSP plus if the partnership agreement with China ends successfully.

ASEAN, a recent report has stated. In fact, India's trade deficit had increased ever since the country entered into FTAs with ASEAN, the report, prepared by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and released said. Read more [here](#)

India gained \$755 million in additional exports to US due to US-China trade war: UNCTAD: (Source: The Financial Express) 6 November 2019 India gained about USD 755 million in additional exports, mainly of chemicals, metals and ore, to the US in the first half of 2019 due to the trade diversion effects of Washington's tariff war with China, a study by the UN trade and investment body has said. Read more [here](#)

Nirmala Sitharaman, Finance Minister of India tells why Modi 2.0 will see faster reforms: (Source: Financial Express) 6 November 2019 The government may not have ushered in faster reforms in the first term, Modi 2.0 is expected to put in efforts at a faster pace, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. Read more [here](#)

Northeast India gateway to Southeast Asia under Act East Policy: (Source: Economic Times) 3 November 2019 Northeast India is being developed as a gateway to Southeast Asia under Central government's Act East Policy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, and added that the plans are on cards to establish seamless connectivity between Thailand, Myanmar and northeast India in the years to come. Read more [here](#)

India to further ease tax rules to boost investment, Narendra Modi says: (Source: Bloomberg) 3 November 2019 India is committed to further improving its people-friendly tax regime, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, as Asia's third-largest economy seeks to attract more overseas investment to spur growth. Read more [here](#)

India Farmers Plan Nationwide Protest Against 16-Nation Trade Deal: (Source: Bloomberg) 31 October 2019 India's farmers' organizations have planned a nationwide protest on Nov. 4 to demand that the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi keep agriculture out of a 16-nation trade agreement currently being negotiated in Thailand. Read more [here](#)

Two years on, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway line carries 275,000 tons of freight in Turkey: (Source: The Daily Sabah) 27 October 2019 The railway line connecting Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia, establishing a freight and passenger link between Europe and China, has carried 275,000 tons of freight since it was launched in October 2017, Turkey's transport and infrastructure minister said. Read more [here](#)

Central Bank of Sri Lanka Governor, Indrajit Coomaraswamy speaking at the seminar on 'International Trade Agreements: Policy Options for Sri Lanka' last week said that they are trying to renegotiate the bilateral agreement in goods with India to expand it to cover services, investment in technology and training and a similar agreement is to be negotiated with China. Read more [here](#)

Asian Infra Bank to invest \$575 million in suburban rlys, clean energy (Source: Economic Times) 16 November 2019 The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has approved an investment of \$575 million in suburban railways and renewable energy sector, taking to its total commitment in India to nearly \$3 billion. Read more [here](#)

Unprecedented cash flow into Pakistan bonds as rates hit 13%: (Source: Bloomberg) 26 November 2019 Pakistan's bond market is witnessing something unprecedented in November. Global investors have piled \$642.5 million into local-currency bonds this month alone, more than what they invested in the debt in the past four years, according to central-bank data going back to 2015. Read more [here](#)

World Bank supports energy access in Afghanistan (Source: Times of Central Asia) 27 November 2019 The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a \$52.5 million grant for the Afghanistan Gas Project that will provide sustainable supply of natural gas to independent power producers in Northern Afghanistan. Read more [here](#)

Ambassador: North-South Corridor to promote better trade between India and Azerbaijan: (Source: AgriXchange) 29 November 2019 The International North-South Transport Corridor will promote better trade between India and Azerbaijan, Ambassador of India to Azerbaijan Bawitlung Vanlalvawna told Trend Read more [here](#)

Take responsibility for climate migrants: (Source: The Daily Star) 3 December 2019 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Monday urged the international community to initiate discussions on creation of an appropriate framework to address the need of the people who got displaced due to climate change. Read more [here](#)

Pakistan believes in regional cooperation for development of South Asia, says PM (Source: B Recorder) 8 December 2019 Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that Pakistan believes in eliminating poverty from South Asia and the potential of regional cooperation for its development. Read more [here](#)

CASA-1000: Pakistan initiates talks for electricity export to Central Asia (Source: The International News) 16 December 2019 Pakistan has initiated talks for export of electricity to Central Asian States such as Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan by using open access clause which is already part of Master

Agreement under CASA-1000 project. Read more [here](#)

c. Gender equality and empowerment

Women's unpaid work equivalent to 40pc of GDP in Bangladesh: SANEM: (Source: Daily Star) 5 November 2019 Women need recognition for their unpaid work because its monetary value was almost 40 percent of Bangladesh's GDP in fiscal 2016-17, said the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM). Read more [here](#)

Delhi Hands Out Pink Tickets, Rolls Out Free Bus Travel for Women: (Source: VOA) 29 October 2019 New Delhi rolled out free bus travel for women in what the Indian capital's chief minister called an "historic step" for safety and female employment. Female participation in the Indian workforce is among the lowest in the world, while violence against women in the world's second-most populous country is rife. Read more [here](#)

Government plans to train women across villages to combat water crisis in India: (Source: Business Standard) 15 October 2019 Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government plans to employ women across villages to test water quality to combat rising challenges, amid scarcity of the resource across India. Women in villages across **256** water-scarce districts will receive training to ensure clean water supplies, Smriti Irani, the federal minister for women and child development, said in Mumbai. The program will be expanded to cover all of India's **750,000** villages, Irani said. Read more [here](#)

Parliament passes bill to protect rights of transgenders: (Source: The Hindu) 26 November 2019 The Rajya Sabha on November 26 passed a Bill on protection of rights of transgenders after a motion to refer it to a Select Committee of the Upper House was defeated. Read more [here](#)

Govt willing to restore students unions after establishment of code conduct: PM Imran: (Source : Dawn) 1 December 2019 Prime Minister Imran Khan has directed the federal government and the provinces to form a comprehensive strategy for the protection of students' rights and for the speedy resolution to their problems, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan announced on Sunday. Read more [here](#)

TikTok teams up with UN Women to raise awareness about violence against women in India: (Source: SCMP) 2 December 2019 A campaign on viral short video app TikTok to raise awareness about women's safety issues in India has attracted more than 887.5 million views as of Monday. The #KaunsiBadiBaatHai campaign is part of a larger initiative by UN Women called "Orange the World: #HearMeToo" to mark 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. Kaunsi Badi Baat Hai means "what's the big deal" in Hindi. Read more [here](#)

d. Environmental sustainability and disaster resilience

Two (2) killed, and over 65,000 affected by heavy rains in Sri Lanka: (Source: Xinhuanet) 23 December 2019 Two people were killed and over 65,000 affected by days of heavy rains and strong winds which lashed out across Sri Lanka, the Disaster Management Center said in a statement on Monday. Read more [here](#)

Energy sector reforms: \$80 million loan deal signed with EXIM Bank of Korea: (Source: Business Recorder) 21 December 2019 The EXIM Bank of Korea has signed an \$80 million loan with Pakistan to support wide-ranging energy sector reforms in the country, a statement said. Read more [here](#)

Hit by Cyclone Bulbul: Government to help 50,000 farmers recover losses in Bangladesh: (Source: Daily Star) 13 November 2019 The government is considering schemes to help more than 50,000 farmers affected by cyclone Bulbul in southern

India seeks to be leader in Climate Change Action: (Source: Business Standard) 7 October 2019 India seeks to be a leader in the Climate Change Action, as manifested by its initiatives towards reducing fossil fuel dependency and emissions, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said, adding that New Delhi would not limit these efforts to its own soil only. Read more [here](#)

Eighteen (18) chars flooded in Natore as Padma continues to rise in Bangladesh: (Source: Daily Star) 3 October 2019 Eighteen chars in three unions of Natore's Lalpur upazila were submerged as Padma River continued to swell, causing immense sufferings to the residents of the areas. Farmers in the affected areas are counting losses as their sugarcane field and crop land were inundated. Ummul Banin Duti, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, said three shelter homes were opened and the flood victims were asked to move there. Read more [here](#)

Ten thousand people stranded as Padma,

districts, said Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque. Read more [here](#)

Delhi Schools To Be Closed For Two Days As Air Quality Deteriorates: (Source: Press Trust of India) 13 November 2019 Schools in the national capital will be closed on Thursday and Friday, the Delhi government announced even as the air quality hovered close to emergency levels. Read more [here](#)

Twenty-six (26) die as Bulbul batters coasts in Bangladesh: (Source: Daily Star) 12 November 2019 At least 26 people were killed in nine southern districts as Cyclone Bulbul ravaged through those in the past two days. Most of the victims were killed when trees fell on them. Read more [here](#)

Blanket of smoke covers India's capital: (Source: VOA) 11 November 2019 A blanket of smog has once again enshrouded India's capital after a weekend of clearer air and better weather. The morning air quality index at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi was 497. AQI between 301 and 500 is considered "hazardous" for all population groups. Read more [here](#)

As Delhi chokes, 10 power plants in city set to miss emissions deadline: (Source: Business Standard) 11 November 2019 Ten coal-fired power plants near India's capital of New Delhi are poised to miss a December deadline to install pollution control devices that would have curbed premature deaths linked to toxic emissions. Read more [here](#)

4,000-5,000 houses damaged by cyclone 'Bulbul' in Bangladesh: (Source: Daily Star) 10 November 2019 State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Dr Md Enamur Rahman said some 4,000-5,000 houses were damaged by cyclonic storm 'Bulbul' which lashed the country's coastal districts early Sunday. Read more [here](#)

Pakistan beset with serious environmental, climate change challenges: (Source: The Dawn) 7 November 2019 Pakistan is beset with serious environmental conservation and climate change challenges that pose risks to efforts to achieve socioeconomic and poverty reduction goals, Prime Minister Imran Khan said. Read more [here](#)

Magnitude 5 earthquake strikes southern Iran: (Source: Associated Press) 6 November 2019 A magnitude 5.4 earthquake struck Iran's southern province of Hormozgan on Wednesday, according to the country's seismological center. Read more [here](#)

Restrictions Put on Private Cars as New Delhi, India Pollution Stings: (Source: VOA) 4 November 2019 New Delhi has banned half its private cars from being on the roads as the Indian capital continues to battle dense, noxious smog. Pollution levels in the city have hit a three-year high, causing residents to suffer burning eyes, sore throats and shortness of breath. Read more [here](#)

Bangladesh targets 25% tree coverage by 2025: (Source: Dhaka Tribune) 18 October 2019 The

Mahananda water level rises in Bangladesh: (Source: Daily Star) 2 October 2019 At least 10,000 people were stranded in parts of the Chapainawabganj Sadar and Shibganj upazilas Wednesday as the water level of Padma and Mahananda rivers increased further. Low-lying areas, including crop fields, and a number of houses have been flooded, locals said. Read more [here](#)

To save Pakistan, look under its rivers: (Source: Dawn) 2 October 2019 The groundwater system underneath Pakistan's flowing rivers in the Indus plains has at least 400 million acre feet of pristine water. This storage is so large that it is equivalent to more than three years of the mean annual flow of the Indus (or 1,000 days of storage, after excluding polluted areas). This should now be seriously considered in the mainstream planning of Pakistan's water resources. Read more [here](#)

More than 2000 people died during monsoon in 2019: (Source: The Hindu) 19 November 2019 As many as 2,391 people lost their lives and over eight lakh houses were damaged during the monsoon this year, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said. Read more [here](#)

India's Parliament Debates Toxic Air Danger: (Source: VOA) 19 November 2019 India's Parliament debated the toxic air threatening the lives of the capital region's 48 million people, with opposition leaders demanding the creation of a parliamentary panel to remedy the situation on a long-term basis. Read more [here](#)

Rights group draws attention to heavy smog in Pakistan: (Source: AP News) 22 November 2019 Tens of thousands of people in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore are at risk of respiratory disease because of poor air quality related to thick smog hanging over the region, an international rights group said. Read more [here](#)

Prime Minister Launches Clean Green Pakistan Index: (Source: The Dawn) 25 November 2019 Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday launched the Clean Green Pakistan Index as part of his government's efforts to curb pollution and reduce the effects of climate change. Read more [here](#)

Nepal Expects Over 40 Countries To Attend Ocean-Mountain Climate Summit: Minister: (Source : Urdu Point) 26 November 2019 Nepal expects more than 40 mountainous and littoral countries, from China to Russia to France, to attend its climate change summit, the country's foreign minister, Pradeep Kumar Gyawali told Sputnik. Read more [here](#)

Nine countries willing to join India-led global initiative on building disaster resilient infrastructure: (Source: The Times of India) 1 December 2019 Nine countries including Australia, United Kingdom, Italy and Sri Lanka have decided to join India's global initiative on building disaster resilient infrastructure as a key adaptation measure

country's total tree coverage will increase to 25% by 2025 from the existing 22% as the government has initiated different programs to achieve the goal, said a government high up designated for achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Read more [here](#)

India Recognizes Need for Environmentally Sustainable Development Strategy: IMF: (Source: News 18) 13 October 2019 India is fully committed to the Paris agreement. It has made its nationally determined contribution pledges, and that implies reducing emissions of CO2 by a third below 2005 levels that is relative to the energy intensity of GDP and India seems to be on track to deliver on its pledges. Read more [here](#)

Iran calls for further intl. cooperation on climate change: (Source: Iran Daily) 11 October 2019 Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi emphasized that taking any measure on climate change without other countries' cooperation is impossible and called for international and regional cooperation on the issue. Read more [here](#)

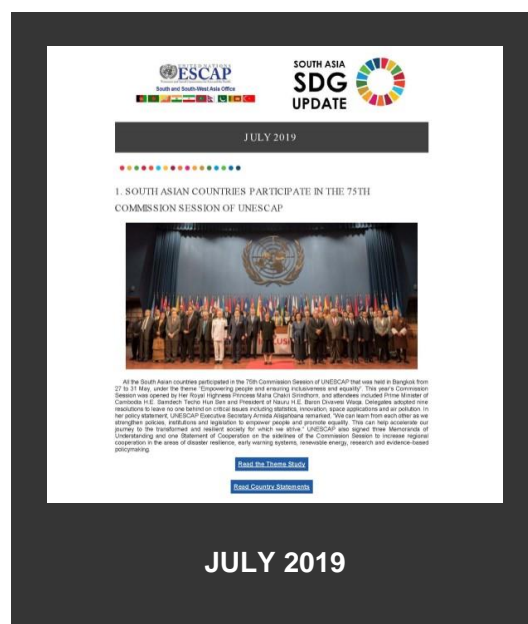
Pakistan to continue taking all possible measures for disaster-resilient: (Source: PakTribune) 8 October 2019 Prime Minister Imran Khan has reiterated that the Government of Pakistan would continue taking all possible measures for a disaster resilient Pakistan through more effective prevention, mitigation and preparedness. Read more [here](#)

to fight the disastrous consequences of climate change. Read more [here](#)

Rise in Sea level may reduce 24pc cropland by 2045 (Source: The Daily Star) 12 December 2019 Bangladesh's agriculture sector is under threat from climate change, as the sea level rise may reduce availability of cropland by 24 percent in coastal divisions across growing seasons by 2045, a new report said. Read more [here](#)

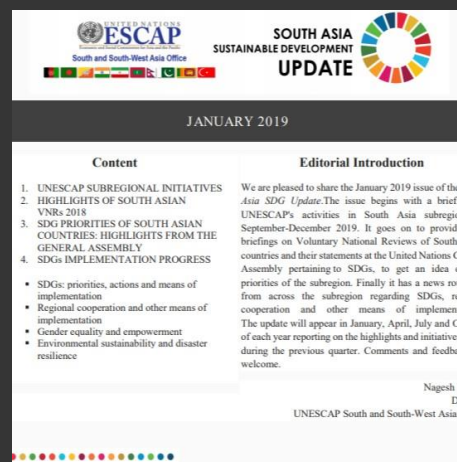
Untreated medical wastes are accumulating at landfills in seven divisional cities, posing serious threat to public health: (Source: The Daily Star) 28 October 2019 Untreated medical wastes are accumulating at landfills in seven divisional cities, posing serious threat to public health. These divisional cities, excluding the capital, have around 1,380 healthcare establishments -- public and private -- which produce over 20 tonnes of medical wastes every day. Read More [here](#)

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APRIL 2019



JANUARY 2019

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