

BIMSTEC Newsletter

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(BIMSTEC)

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India hosts the Fourth Meeting of the Sub Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues

Fourth Meeting of the Sub Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime was held on 24th-25th March 2011 in New Delhi, India. The meeting was attended by the legal and law enforcement officials representing all the

BIMSTEC Member States. Signature and ratification of international instruments concerning international terrorism, transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking and new domestic legislation on that subject were among the main issues discussed at the Meeting. A proposal for a

BIMSTEC Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement was also among the matters taken up at this meeting. General Statements were also made by the representatives of the Member States. India is the lead country for the BIMSTEC Sub Sector of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime.

(Source: Embassy of India)

New President of Myanmar sworn-in



(Photo courtesy-AP Photo)

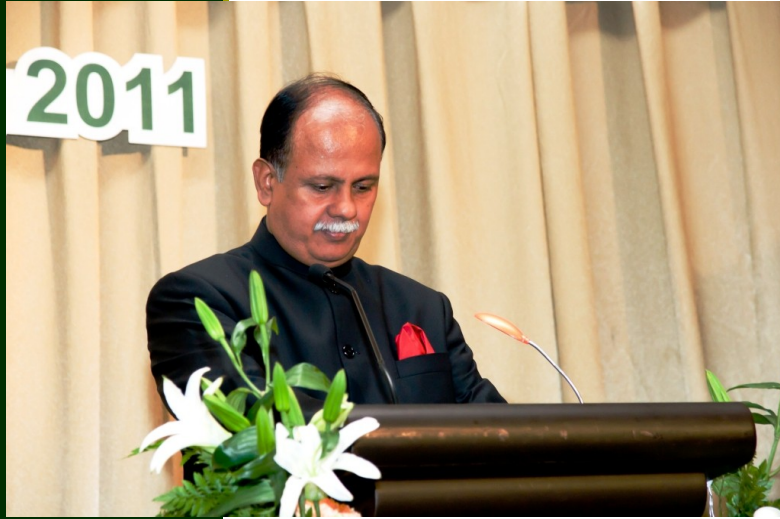
His Excellency U Thein Sein was sworn in as the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

on 30th March 2011. Their Excellencies Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo and Dr. Sai Mauk Kham were sworn in as the Vice- Presidents of the Republic on the same day. Following the swearing-in of the new President, thirty (30) Union Ministers were appointed by President U Thein Sein

in accordance with Section 232 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 12 of the Union Government Law on 30th March 2011. His Excellency U Wunna Maung Lwin was appointed the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

(Source: The Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Bangkok)

Bangladesh celebrates the 40th Anniversary of Independence and National Day



His Excellency Mr. Kazi Imtiaz Hossain, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Thailand hosted a reception on this occasion at the Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel on 28th March 2011. His Excellency Mr. Prasobsook Boondech, President of the Senate, Dr. Noleen Heyzer, UN Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, high officials of the office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, Thai dignitaries including the officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce, Heads of Foreign Missions and International Organizations, Thai media representatives, businessmen and expatriate Bangladeshis attended the reception. Honourable Member of Bangladesh Parliament Mr. Sheikh Selim was also present at the occasion.

Ambassador of Bangladesh to Thailand addressing the distinguished gathering (above) and some of the dignitaries attending the reception (right)



The Embassy of Bangladesh in Bangkok celebrated the 40th Anniversary of Independence and National Day of Bangladesh in a befitting manner.

(Source: Embassy of Bangladesh, Bangkok)

Nepal Energy Scheme for Power Crisis

The government of Nepal has launched a \$275 million initiative to bring an end to the country's energy crisis within five years. It plans to build power plants and give tax breaks

for investors. Finance Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari said the aim was to produce an extra 2,500 megawatts of electricity. Nepal's power supply was badly (ctnd. on page 3)



Bhutan keen to have more Indian tourists



Photo courtesy: Tourism Council of Bhutan

Bhutan, which has constantly won India’s support in its pursuit to achieve high Gross National Happiness, is now looking at its neighbour for an increased flow of tourists to give a boost to its economy. “India is a very close neighbour and friend. Though an increasing number of tourists visit our country every year, we want the numbers to in-

crease and we would like more and more Indians to travel to our country,” says Mr Khandu Wangchuk, Bhutan’s Minister for Economic Affairs. The Royal Government of Bhutan and its national airline Drukair have tied up with a popular online travel company of India to provide tour packages with chartered flights from New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata to Bhutan. Bhutan is aiming to receive about 1,00,000 tourists per annum by the end of 2020.

(Source: The Hindu-Business Line)

Thailand and UNESCAP Cooperate to Expand the Scope of the Tsunami Regional Trust Fund

On 7 March 2011, His Excellency Mr. Kasit Piromya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and Dr. Noleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the ESCAP jointly signed the Agreement between

Thailand and ESCAP on the Expansion of the Scope of the ESCAP Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disasters and Climate Preparedness. The said agreement was aimed at expanding the scope of the Fund to cover projects and activities in handling the effects

of other disasters resulting from climate change such as coastal zone flooding, storm surges, cyclone and other coastal hazards. The Fund was first established in 2005 and Thailand was one of the two primary main donors.

(Source : MoFA/Thailand)

The Scope of Tsunami Trust Fund to cover the effects of other disasters resulting from Climate Change

Nepal Energy ctnnd.

affected after the destruction of electricity transmission lines during the Kosi River floods in 2008. The government says that under its plan, Nepal will be free from load-shedding within five

years. The Government says that it will also waive custom duties for materials related to produce solar power, make better use of existing thermal plants, waive tax on private investors

building new hydroelectric power plants and encourage the private sector to produce power from rubbish. The government also said it would provide special security for investors and introduce

laws to make it a crime to hamper energy construction projects.

(Source: www.bbc.co.uk)



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Contact us:

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Sri Lanka's GDP records three-decades high



against last year's output of Rs.2449.2 billion which registered a 3.5 percent growth rate.

The GDP growth rate is the second highest

recorded post

Sri Lanka's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the year 2010 reached a three decade high, registering an 8.0 percent growth rate which is the second best GDP growth ever achieved post independence, according to the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka.

The economic output of the country at constant (2002) prices is estimated at Rs. 2,645.4 billion with a growth rate of 8.0 percent

-independence while the highest recorded rate was 8.2 percent in 1968 and 1978.

The growth in the industry and services sectors was unprecedented registering growth rates of 8.4 and 8.0 percent respectively making the highest ever growth rates since 2002.

(Source: www.info.gov.lk)

Upcoming BIMSTEC Meetings:

Third Expert Group Meeting on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer/ Exchange Facility- 09th -10th May 2011, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Fourth Joint Working Group Meeting on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat- 30th -31st May 2011, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Twentieth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Trade Negotiating Committee (20th TNC Meeting)- Bangkok, Thailand