

BIMSTEC Newsletter

A Monthly Newsletter from BIMSTEC Centre



Volume 2
February 2007

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BIMSTEC Event

Updates on Transportation Sector

The 3rd Meeting of the Chief Executive of Railways of BIMSTEC Countries and Greater Mekong Region was held on 6-7 December 2006 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. In addition to all BIMSTEC member countries, Indonesia, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia attended this meeting. Moreover, international organizations such as UNESCAP, Asian Development Bank and AITB also attended. Important issues such as development of the railway system in the member countries, human resources development and technology complementarities were discussed.

BIMSTEC—Japan Economic Cooperation



The Centre for Studies in International Relations and Development (CSIRD) in association with Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) held its second international conference on 'Towards BIMSTEC-Japan Comprehensive Economic Cooperation: Vision of a New BIMSTEC' at Bangkok on 7-8 December 2006. The conference was held in collaboration with Centre for International Economics and Development Studies (CIEDS), NIDA, Bangkok, and Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Dhaka, and supported by Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Tokyo.



The Conference recorded fascinating cooperation, discussion, deliberation and exchange of opinion on the future prospect of BIMSTEC in general and BIMSTEC-Japan in particular by knowledgeable and eminent scholars and experts from Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, and Thailand. Scholars, economists and experts from other developing countries and multilateral development organisations such as UNESCAP, Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation also participated in this Conference.

For More information please see www.csird.org/in.

BIMSTEC Cooperation in Counter Terrorism & Transnational Crime

The Third Meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (JWG-CTTC) was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 16-17 January 2007. The Meeting was chaired by Brig. Gen. Phone Swe, Deputy Minister for Ministry of Home Affairs, Myanmar. Pursuant to the BIMSTEC SUMMIT Declaration, the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crimes was established in 2004 to coordinate as an urgent priority efforts of BIMSTEC member states in the areas of intelligence sharing, capacity building as well as to strengthen joint efforts on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crimes.

The Meeting unanimously agreed on a BIMSTEC Agreement to joint combating International Terrorism, Organized Illicit Drugs Trafficking which was initiated by India and to recommend to the BIMSTEC SUMMIT. Moreover, the Meeting decided to submit recommendation to the forthcoming BIMSTEC SUMMIT for setting up BIMSTEC General Secretariat Office, establishing Border Liaison Office (BLO), creating Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters to enhance cooperation against Terrorism and Transnational Crime. The 4th Joint Working Group will be held in Nepal on December

Cultural Cooperation

The First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on the Cultural Industries Commission and Observatory met in New Delhi on 7-8 December 2006, as mandated by the BIMSTEC Culture Ministers' Meeting held at Paro, Bhutan in May 2006. The objective of this project is to build up synergies between the Cultural Cooperation sector as well as the sectors on People-to-People contact and Tourism.

BIMSTEC Energy Centre

On 21 December 2006, the Meeting to finalise Memorandum of Association for Establishment of BIMSTEC Energy Centre was held in New Delhi. The objective of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre is to coordinate, facilitate and strengthen cooperation in energy sector in BIMSTEC region by promoting experience sharing and capacity building. The Centre would also act as secretariat for energy cooperation activities.

BIMSTEC Business Travel Card

The 2nd Expert Group Meeting on BIMSTEC Business Travel Card was held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 1-2 February 2007. The purpose of BBTC is to facilitate businessperson to traveling within the BIMSTEC region. It would certainly enhance greater cooperation and foster People to People contact, enabling them to interact frequently with various stakeholders across the national border.

The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Purushottam Ojha, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Government of Nepal. The Meeting discussed a wide scope of the Visa scheme including duration of business each stay, eligibility, fee and regulations etc.



Celebrating the National Day



Above : H.E. Mr. Sungye Dorjee, Ambassador of Bhutan to Thailand presided over an opening ceremony.

Right : H.E. U Ye Win, Ambassador of Myanmar to Thailand took a group photo with respective guests.

The Embassy of Union of Myanmar in Bangkok hosted a reception on the occasion of the 59th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar on 5 January 2007 at the Conrad Bangkok Hotel.

The Royal Bhutanese Embassy in Bangkok hosted a reception on the occasion of the National Day on 18 December 2006 at Hotel Conrad.

The National Day of Bhutan is celebrated to mark the historic occasion on the establishment of hereditary monarchy in 1907 during which Tongsa Penlop, Gonsar Ugyen Wangchuck was elected as the First King of Bhutan by the representative of the people, clergy and the government.



BIMSTEC upcoming Activities

Date	Activity	Venue
16-17 Jan 2007	3 rd Meeting of Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (JWG-CTTC)	Nay Pyi Taw
1-2 Feb 2007	2 nd Meeting of Expert Group on BIMSTEC Business Travel Card	Nepal
15-16 Mar 2007	1 st Meeting of the Expert Group on Agricultural Cooperation	Myanmar
20-21 Mar 2007	Inception workshop to discuss initial findings and work plan with ADB	Bangkok
Mar- Apr 2007	Workshop on Fisheries Cooperation	Thailand

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