

BIMSTEC Newsletter

A Monthly Newsletter from BIMSTEC Centre



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BIMSTEC Event

2nd Summit & related meetings

28 August 2008:

Senior Officials' Meeting

29 August 2008:

Ministerial Meeting

11-12 November 2008:

2nd Summit

BIMSTEC SOM and MM on Poverty Alleviation

Bangladesh hosted the 1st Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation in Dhaka on 9 July 2008 pursuant to the decision of the 1st BIMSTEC Summit in 2004 for the need to establish an exclusive forum to address the issue of poverty alleviation. This was preceded by a Senior Officials' Meeting on 8 July 2008.

Mr. Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury, Secretary, Planning Division, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, was elected as a chairperson. The participants included delegates from all BIMSTEC member countries.

The member states made presentations on their national experiences in various areas of poverty alleviation. In their presentations, member states highlighted the policies, strategies and programmes undertaken nationally for poverty alleviation in their respective countries. The meeting observed that there was considerable interest among members to learn from the experiences of the others. The member states of BIMSTEC felt the necessity of creating a network.

The Senior Official Meeting was succeeded by the Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation on 9 July 2008; all member countries participated.

Mr. Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury opened the Meeting. Leaders of delegation of Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand delivered their respective country statements. While expressing concern at the growing incidence of poverty in the region, they reiterated their commitment to poverty alleviation through cooperation among the BIMSTEC Member States. They also shared their national experiences in combating poverty in the Meeting. The Meeting decided that the Second BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation will be held in the second half of 2009 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

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Esala Perahera

Grand festival of Esala is celebrated in many parts of Sri Lanka, especially in Kandy. The Esala Perahera in Kandy is believed to be a ritual enacted to request the gods for rainfall. The Esala Perahera is believed to have begun when the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha was brought to Sri Lanka from India during the 4th Century AD.



The Festival occurs annually from July to August, and has become a unique symbol of Sri Lanka. It is a colourful festival consisting of dances and richly-decorated elephants, usually adorned with lavish garments. There are fire-dances, whip-dances, Kandian dances and various other cultural dances. The festival ends with the traditional 'diya-kepeema'.

The Esala Perahera is known to be the biggest festival in the region and the celebration last for ten nights. This year the Festival in Kandy had started on the 7 July 2008. The best time to see Esala Perahera is the last two nights; you can enjoy the festival magnificent parades anywhere along the route of the city.



India-Thailand Partnership: The Way forward

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) held a FICCI-IIFA Business Forum in Bangkok in early June 2008 to coincide with the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Award events held during 6-8 June 2008. The Thai Chamber of Commerce & Board of Trade, the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) and the Board of Investment of Thailand actively supported the well attended Business Seminar.

The programme included a Panel discussion on 'Enhancing India-Thailand Partnership Opportunities in Investment & Trade' besides parallel sectoral interactive sessions. Noted Indian film actor Amitabh Bachchan presented the Global Leadership Award to the Nobel Laureate Dr. R. K. Pachauri.

H.E. Ms. Latha Reddy, Ambassador of India, Mr. Harsh Pati Singhanian, Senior Vice President of FICCI, Mr. Pramon Sutiwong, Chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade and Mr. Mangkorn Thanasarnsilp, Vice Chairman of FTI addressed the inaugural session.



BIMSTEC Upcoming Activities

Date	Activity	Venue
8 July 2008	Senior Officials' Meeting on Poverty Alleviation	Dhaka
9 July 2008	Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation	Dhaka
30 July 2008	82 nd BWG Meeting	MFA
28 August 2008	Senior Officials' Meeting	New Delhi
29 August 2008	Ministerial Meeting	New Delhi
11-12 November 2008	2 nd BIMSTEC Summit	New Delhi

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