

BIMSTEC Newsletter

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BIMSTEC Event

BIMSTEC Working Group Welcomed Vice Chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce on 6 October 2008



On 6 October 2008, Director-General Krit Kraichitti of the International and Economic Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, hosted a luncheon at Lin Fa Restaurant, Siam City Hotel in Bangkok. Guests of the luncheon were BIMSTEC Ambassadors in Bangkok: H.E. Mr. Mustafa Kamal, Ambassador of Bangladesh; H.E. Mr. Singye Dorjee, Ambassador of Bhutan; H.E. Ms. Latha Reddy, Ambassador of India; H.E. Mr. Naveen Prakash Jung Shah, Ambassador of Nepal; H.E. Mr. Jayaratna Banda Disanayaka, Ambassador of Sri Lanka and Dr. Savaraj Sachchamarga, Vice Chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce.

Ambassadors from BIMSTEC member countries and Director-General of the International and Economic Affairs Department form the BIMSTEC Working Group and the Group is the main coordinating mechanism of this regional cooperation. The BWG welcomed suggestions by Dr. Sachchamarga on how BIMSTEC could expand trade relations under the umbrella of an FTA. In Dr. Sachchamarga's view, trading partners might start up trade relations by forming bilateral cooperation between private enterprises from any two nations. For trade benefits to be widespread, SME business enterprises should be encouraged to join the cooperation. According to the BWG, private sectors in BIMSTEC could also enhance trade relations through Business Forum mechanisms.

Upcoming

High Level Meetings

11 November 2008:
13th Senior Officials'
Meeting

12 November 2008:
11th Ministerial
Meeting

13 November 2008:
2nd Summit

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Pictures from Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Kingdom of Thailand

BIMSTEC People-to-People Contacts 15 - 18 September 2008, Mumbai, India



The 1st BIMSTEC Summit held in 2004 stressed the importance of the interaction among peoples in BIMSTEC member countries. Since then, Thailand has initiated various exchange programmes, including “Getting to know the new BIMSTEC Member: Trip to Nepal and Bhutan” during 3-10 September 2005 and “BIMSTEC Week Exhibition: 10 Years of BIMSTEC Friendship and Cooperation” during 20-24 June 2007 in Thailand.



This year, Director-General Krit Kraichitti had led a team of Thai film producers to Mumbai, India during 15-18 September 2008 to promote “BIMSTEC People-to-People Contact of Film Industry Stakeholders”. Joining the team were Mrs. Sasisupa Sungvaribud, President of the Thai Film Production Services Association (FIPSA), Mr. Surachedh Kaewthanakarn, Representative from the Federation of National Film Associations of Thailand and other personnel from the film industry. The purpose of the visit was to establish connections between film producers of the two countries. In this occasion, stakeholders in film industry from Thailand and India had exchanged views on future cooperation between the two sides. The Thai team had met with Indian film producers and famous directors and had a chance to visit the well-known Bollywood in Mumbai. Both countries envisaged closer cooperation in film and entertainment sector.



Durga Puja Festival



Durga Puja is the biggest annual Hinduism festival of Bengal that celebrates worship of the Hindu goddess Durga (Puja means 'worship'). It marks the celebration of the triumph of good over evil. Durga Puja is celebrated in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan. The dates of Durga Puja celebrations are set according to the traditional Bengali Calendar. The four days of Puja start from the sixth day of the full moon phase that follows the Mahalaya and ends up with the Dashami or the tenth day.

This year, the festival of Durga Puja was on 6-10 October 2008 when thousands offer prayers to their ancestors at the river banks. The inauguration of the goddess idol starts on Mahashasthi. The main puja rituals last for three days- Mahasaptami, Mahaastami, Mahanavami.

Today's most authentic form of the Durga is that of a ten handed goddess modeled out of clay astride a lion. Her ten arms are holding weapons which were used to conquer the demon, Mahishasura. The weapons, given from gods and

goddess, are Sword, Conch, Discus, Rosary, Bell, Winecup, Shield, Bow, Arrow, and Spear.

The four children of the goddess had also been added to the iconography: Laxmi, the goddess of wealth, Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, Kartik, the god of beauty as well as warfare and Ganesha, the 'Siddhidata' or the starter of everything in good sense.

The drum-beats are an integral part of the Durga Puja. This special variety of the drum, known as 'Dhak,' enralls the hearts of the Kolkata with its majestic rhythm right from the day of 'Sasthi.' This drum is held on the shoulder with the beating side in the bottom and is beaten with two sticks, one thick and another thin.



Sources: <http://www.durga-puja.org>, <http://www.gulfnews.com/world/India/10250293.html>, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Durga_Puja

BIMSTEC Upcoming Activities

Date	Activity	Venue
15-17 October 2008	17 th TNC Meeting	Colombo
22-23 October 2008	4 th JWG on Combating Terrorism and Transnational Crimes	New Delhi
23-24 October 2008	1 st JWG on establishment of BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat	Dhaka
29 October 2008	85 th BWG Meeting	Bangkok
30-31 October 2008	Expert Group Meeting on the establishment of a BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Exchange Facility	Colombo
11 November 2008	13 th Senior Official's Meeting	New Delhi
12 November 2008	11 th Ministerial Meeting	New Delhi
13 November 2008	2 nd BIMSTEC Summit	New Delhi

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