

BIMSTEC Newsletter

A Monthly Newsletter from BIMSTEC Centre



Volume 10
October 2007

BIMSTEC Event

Award Ceremony of BIMSTEC Postcard Design Competition



The Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon organized the award ceremony for Ma Yuzana Khin, Myanmar national winner of the Discover BIMSTEC Postcards Design Competition, one of the activities organised to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of BIMSTEC.



The attendees included U Soe Win, Deputy Director-General of the Protocol Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, U Tun Hla, Deputy Director-General of Education Planning and Training Department, Ministry of Education of the Union of Myanmar, as well as the teachers and students from the Practicing Middle School Thingangyun.

BIMSTEC Essay Contest – Thailand

On 17 October 2007, Mr. Krit Kraichitti, Director-general of International Economic Affairs Department, presided over the presentation of the essay contest awards on the topic “Knowing BIMSTEC,” at Press Center, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs had organized the contest as part of the activities commemorating the 10th anniversary of the establishment of “Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation or BIMSTEC”. The objectives of the activities are to promote transnational cooperative projects of BIMSTEC, particularly the role and the benefits Thailand would gain from being a member, and better understanding of the government’s policies pursued under BIMSTEC, where Thailand is the prime mover on people-to-people contacts.

Early this year, Ministry of Foreign Affairs had organized various activities such as an exhibition during BIMSTEC week (20 - 24 June 2007) and painting contests in all BIMSTEC member countries, where after the winning entries were made as postcards.



Above : Mr. Krit Kraichitti, Director-general of International Economic Affairs Department, presents the award to the winners.



Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management in the Bay of Bengal



The Inauguration Ceremony of the *BIMSTEC Joint Survey Project on Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management in the Bay of Bengal* on board M.V. SEAFDEC, was presided over by Dr. Somying Piamsomboon, Director-General of Department of Fisheries, at Laem Panwa, Phuket on 30 October 2007. The said project is an initiative under the BIMSTEC framework to enable BIMSTEC member countries to evolve policy for optimum utilization of fishery resources and to manage their fishery resources in a sustainable manner.

Thailand, through its Department of Fisheries, is the lead country in Fisheries Cooperation. The objectives of this project are to assess the potential of fishery resources in the Bay of Bengal; to collect fish biological data (species composition, distribution, catch-ability and its environment) of the potential pelagic fisheries resources particularly on tuna and oceanic squid by using three types of fishing gears namely pelagic long-line, drifted gillnet, and automatic squid jigging; and also to study the oceanographic information. Scientists from Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Nepal are joining the survey to work in collaboration with the Thai scientists on board the research vessel.

This project is financially supported by the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Foreign Missions' Integrated Project. This project focuses on resource survey in the assigned areas in the Bay of Bengal by the research vessel M.V. SEAFDEC from 25 October to 21 December 2007 for 58 days covering the survey area of 115,200 square miles in Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal.

Updated news including developments, initial findings and more photos of the survey can be found in the next issue.

Updates from BIMSTEC Working Group

The latest development from the 73rd BIMSTEC Working Group Meeting are as follows;

Cooperation with ADB : ADB organised the BIMSTEC Transport, Infrastructure and Logistics Study (BTILS) Regional Technical Workshop to 18-19 September 2007 in Bangkok, preceded by the Sub-regional Consultation Meeting with Thailand and Myanmar on 17 September 2007.

BIMSTEC equipped features : In order to disseminate useful information across to the public whose interests lie in different fields of cooperation, various tools / body were established;

- BIMSTEC Information Centre has been activated since 1 July 2007.
- BIMSTEC Energy Centre Website is now activated (www.bimstecenergycentre.org).
- BIMSTEC Official Website with a new look and its intranet facility has been successfully launched.



Durga Puja



In India, the worship of Durga in Autumn is the year's largest Hindu festival in the State of West Bengal and across India. *Durga Puja* is also celebrated in Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh according to local traditions and variations. Puja means "worship," and Durga's Puja is celebrated from the sixth to tenth day of the waxing moon in the month of 'Ashwin', which is the sixth month in the Bengali calendar. In the Krittibas Ramayana, Rama invokes the goddess Durga in his battle against Ravana. Today it is this Rama's date for the puja that has gained ascendancy, although the spring puja, known as Basanti Puja, is also present in the Hindu almanac. The city is adorned with lights.

Today, the culture of Durga Puja has shifted from the princely houses to Sarbojanin (literally, "involving all") forms. During the week of Durga Puja, in the entire state of West Bengal as well as in large enclaves of Bengalis everywhere, life comes to a complete standstill. Devi Pakshya means the period of the goddess. Ritual drummers - 'dhaakis', carrying large leather-strung drums - 'dhaaks' - show off their skills during ritual dance worships called aarati. Today's Puja, however, goes far beyond religion. Durga Puja is also a festivity of Good (Ma Durga) winning over the evil (Maheshasoor the demon).

BIMSTEC upcoming Activities

Date	Activity	Venue
25 Oct - 21 Dec 2007	Joint Survey of the Project "Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management in the Bay of Bengal"	Thailand
12-16 November 2007	16 th TNC Meeting and its Working Group	New Delhi
12-16 November 2007	Workshop on Geoinformatics Applications in Disaster Management for BIMSTEC countries	Dehradun
27 November 2007	3 rd Expert Group Meeting on BIMSTEC Business Visa Scheme	Dhaka
29-30 November 2007	2 nd BTILS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting	Bangkok
3-4 December 2007	2 nd Expert Group Meeting of BIMSTEC on Agricultural Cooperation	New Delhi

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