

BIMSTEC NEWSLETTER



BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

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Task Force on Trans Power Exchange holds its third meeting in Dhaka

The 3rd meeting of the Task Force on Trans Power Exchange was held in Dhaka on 23-24 August 2011. The meeting was inaugurated by Mr. Md. Abul Kalam Azad, Secretary, Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources of Bangladesh. Apart from the host Bangladesh, delegations from Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Nepal, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Kingdom of Thailand

participated in the meeting. The meeting held in depth discussion on a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on BIMSTEC Grid interconnection. The MOU would provide a broad framework for the implementation of grid interconnection for electricity trade with a view to promoting rational and optimal power transmission in the BIMSTEC region. Based on the principles of mutual cooperation and

sustainable development, member states aspire to build interconnection for reliable, secure and economic electricity supply in the region under the MOU. The meeting also stressed on the need for early conclusion of the MOU to attain energy security in the BIMSTEC member states. A Work Plan for the implementation of Grid interconnection was also agreed.



Bangladesh



Bhutan



India



Myanmar



Nepal



Sri Lanka



Thailand

BIMSTEC Events and Activities in August 2011

3rd Meeting of the Task Force on Trans-Power Exchange

23-24 August 2011,
Dhaka, Bangladesh

BIMSTEC International Training Program on Aquatic Plants Tissue Culture

29 Aug - 27 Sep 2011,
Bangkok, Thailand



Participants from BIMSTEC Members States at 3rd Task Force Meeting on Trans Power Exchange, Dhaka, 23-24 August 2011

Diplomatic Code of Conduct 2011 unveiled in Nepal

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal unveiled the "Diplomatic Code of Conduct, 2011" on 18 August 2011 which provides that all communications & correspondences with diplomats,

Foreign governments and international agencies must be channeled through the Foreign Ministry of Nepal in accordance with the Rules of Business Allocation of the Government of

Nepal. It aims at making official meetings, communications and negotiations with foreign governments, officials, diplomats and international organizations more systematic and dignified.

Enhanced ties between Myanmar and Sri Lanka

At the invitation of Mr. Neomal Perera, Deputy Minister for External Affairs of Sri Lanka, a Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Mr. U Maung Myint paid a goodwill visit to Sri Lanka on 15-18 August 2011. During the visit, the Deputy Minister Mr. U Maung Myint called on Mr. G L Peiris, Minister

for External Affairs of Sri Lanka. The Deputy Minister of Myanmar also held discussions with Mr. Neomal Perera to further enhance and consolidate relations between the two countries. Both the Ministers discussed a wide range of bilateral issues and also exchanged views on further cooperation on international issues.



Mr. Neomal Perera, Deputy Minister for External Affairs of Sri Lanka greets Mr. U Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Independence Day of India observed



The 64th anniversary of the Independence Day of India was celebrated on August 15, 2011, in India and across the world. The President of India Mrs. Pratibha Devisingh Patil addressed her fellow citizens on the eve of the Independence Day, and her message was conveyed by India's Ambassador to Thailand in a flag hoisting ceremony organized by Indian Embassy, Bangkok, to mark the day.



Bangladesh launches 3G, low cost laptops to meet Vision 2021: Digital Bangladesh



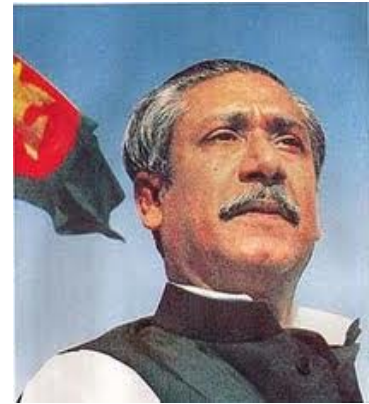
Bangladesh will soon launch a nationwide third-generation mobile telephone network. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the authorities concerned to introduce the third generation (3G) mobile technology in the country within this year with a view to digitalize Bangladesh swiftly. The country currently has six providers with total number

of active mobile subscribers exceeding 76 million as of July 2011. It is estimated that there are over 6 million mobile internet users in Bangladesh with 15 percent of the mobile handsets used are already 3G enabled. In addition, the production of the low-priced "Doel" laptop will also begin around the same time in a government effort to digitize Bangladesh.

Bangladesh observes National Mourning Day on 15 August

The 36th Martyrdom Anniversary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and National Mourning Day was observed on 15 August 2011 in Bangladesh with due solemnity. President Md. Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister Dr. Dipu Moni in separate messages on the occasion paid tributes to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On this day in 1975, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated along

with all but two of his family members. Mujib's daughters – Sheikh Hasina, now the Prime Minister, and Sheikh Rehana – survived the massacre as they were abroad at that time. Embassy of Bangladesh in Bangkok and other Bangladesh Missions abroad observed the day in a befitting manner which included flying the national flag at half-mast, special prayer, discussion meeting and screening of documentary on Bangabandhu.



Bangabandhu
Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
Father of the Nation

BIMSTEC International Training on Aquatic Plants Tissue Culture held in Bangkok



Participating delegates from Member States at BIMSTEC International Training on Aquatic Plants Tissue Culture, Bangkok, 30 August 2011

The Department of Fisheries of Thailand, in cooperation with the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, organized the BIMSTEC International Training on Aquatic Plants Tissue Culture at the Aquatic Plants and Ornamental Fish Research Institute, Inland Fisheries Research and Development Bureau, Dept. of Fisheries from 29th August to 27th September 2011. Seven trainees from six BIMSTEC Member Countries participated in this training programme.

Sri Lanka & India sign agreement to set up railway signaling system in Sri Lanka

An agreement was signed between Sri Lanka and India on 17 August 2011 for supply and installation of signaling & telecommunication system for railway network in Northern Province of Sri Lanka. Under the agreement, India will supply and install a Signaling and Telecommunication system for the

railway network in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka at a cost of US\$ 86.51 million provided by the Indian government at concessional terms as a part of Indian Line of Credit of US\$ 800 million. The signaling work involves provision of centralized control panel, interlocking color

light system with electrically operated points & track detection system. All the level crossings will be interlocked with new signaling system to ensure safety at level crossings. The telecommunication work also has the provision of optical fiber communication system.

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai elected as the Prime Minister of Nepal



Dr. Baburam Bhattarai,
Prime Minister of Nepal

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, member of Constituent Assembly and vice-chairman of the United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has been elected as the Prime Minister of Nepal in the election held at the Constituent Assembly on 28 August 2011. Dr. Bhattarai, was elected the 35th Prime Minister of Nepal with support from the United Democratic Madheshi Front

(UDMF) and some other parties. He secured 340 votes against 235 of his rival at the 594-member parliament. Dr. Bhattarai said his first priority would be to control corruption in the country and to conclude the peace process. He also said that national consensus would be sought to promulgate the new constitution through the Constitutional Assembly within the stipulated timeframe.

Conference on Happiness and Economic Development in Thimphu

His Excellency Prime Minister Jigme Y. Thinley of the Kingdom of Bhutan and Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute and Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, hosted the Conference on Happiness and Economic Development in Thimphu, Bhutan from August 10-12, 2011. The conference brought together over 40 international participants including Chief Minister of Assam Tarun Gogoi, General Secretary of All-India Congress Party Digvijaya Singh, Lord Richard Layard and Professor Peter Singer. The

deliberations will be reported to the Secretary General and the President of the UN General Assembly, as a follow up to Bhutan's resolution of including happiness as the 9th millennium development goal. On 19th July 2011, the United Nation's General Assembly unanimously adopted, without a vote, the resolution, Happiness: Towards a Holistic Approach to Development as a stand-alone resolution to establish the relevance and pursuit of happiness as a universal goal and as a basis for guiding societal change and development.



A dance group from Bangladesh participated in the International Cultural Festival which was organized in celebration of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's Birthday Anniversary in Thailand, 11-17 August, 2011.

Upcoming BIMSTEC Events and Activities

Workshops on IPR issues and regulatory aspects in Traditional Medicine

10-13 October 2011
New Delhi, India

International Research Conference and Symposium in Ayurveda

20-22 October 2011
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Special Senior Officials Meeting on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat

23-24 November,
Dhaka, Bangladesh

4th Expert Group Meeting on Agricultural Cooperation

23-24 November,
Kathmandu, Nepal

5th JWG on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime

24-25 November
Kathmandu, Nepal

2nd Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation

16 January 2012,
Kathmandu, Nepal