BIMSTEC Workshop on Seasonal Prediction and Application to Society was held in New Delhi on June 22-23, 2011. Participants from BIMSTEC Member Countries attended the Workshop. The themes of workshop were:

(i) Observed Variability in Seasonal to Inter-annual timescales;
(ii) Dynamic Modeling and Seasonal prediction;
(iii) Dynamic Downscaling;
(iv) Statistical Methods & Statistical Downscaling; and
(v) Climate Risk Management in Agriculture and Water Resources.

Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MOES), Government of India opened the Workshop in the presence of Dr. Ajit Tyagi, Director General of Meteorology, India Meteorological Department. Dr. Tyagi affirmed that India Meteorological Department would work together with other National Meteorological Services to strengthen and improve seasonal prediction capabilities. In the discussions, it was noted that BIMSTEC neighboring countries could share developments in this field through mutual interaction.

Several application sectors demand prediction in seasonal timescales. Hydrology applications need precipitation, snowmelt runoff, surface temperature forecasts etc. while agriculture applications need precipitation, temperature forecasts.

Source: Embassy of India, Bangkok
Supreme Commander of Royal Thai Armed Forces Visits Myanmar

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar H.E. U Thein Sein received the high-level goodwill delegation led by Supreme Commander of Royal Thai Armed Forces General Songkitti Jaggabatara at the President Office on 8 June 2011 in Nay Pyi Taw. General Songkitti Jaggabatara also met General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Myanmar Defense Services, to discuss matters for promoting friendly relations and cooperation between the two armed forces.

Source: Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok & Royal Thai Armed Forces website

India’s High Growth Path Expected

H.E. Mr. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the vibrancy of Indian entrepreneurs, strong services sectors, emerging knowledge spheres and sunrise sectors and growing number of engineers and scientists. Moreover, the Indian Finance Minister highlighted the ongoing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy reforms, including the consolidation of all prior regulations guidelines into one comprehensive document, which would make FDI policy more user-friendly. He said that this has been done with the specific intent of enhancing clarity and predictability of India’s FDI policy to foreign investors.

The growth is driven by the increase in the savings and investment ratios, India’s young working age document, which would make FDI population, buoyancy in domestic policy more user-friendly. He said demand driven by growing middle that this has been done with the class incomes, and rapid progress in specific intent of enhancing clarity infrastructure and better access to and predictability of India’s FDI cutting edge technology.

He also pointed out that there are many other drivers of the Indian growth story including the energy and

Source: www.pib.nic.in

Bhutan PM Welcomes Delegates from Thailand

Hon. Lyonchhen Jigme Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan, welcomed a delegation from King Prajadhipok’s Institute of Thailand on 6 June 2011 at the Terma Linca Resort & Spa, Thimphu. The Prime Minister shared his thoughts and had an exchange of views with the executives and students of King Prajadhipok’s Institute in important issues, such as the Gross National Happiness (GNH) and decentralisation of power to local communities. The delegation from King’s Prajadhipok’s Institute, led by Dr. Sumet Tantivejkul, was on a study field trip in Bhutan between 4 - 8 June 2011.
**Kandy International Film Festival A Success**

Sri Lanka organised the Kandy International Film Festival (KIFF), the first international film festival in Sri Lanka, between 22 - 26 June 2011. KIFF was conceptualised with the objective of showcasing the Sri Lankan identity in cinema while promoting inter-cultural harmony.

The event featured screenings of short films and documentaries from various countries, including some BIMSTEC Member Countries, as well as panel discussions with the directors and workshops at three different venues, namely the Kandy City Centre, the Open Air Theatre at the University of Peradeniya, and Sigiri Theatre, Katugastota.

The film festival attracted many film enthusiasts and was deemed a “landmark event in the history of the Sri Lankan film industry” by Sri Lankan actress Malini Fonseka, who was presented with the award for Outstanding Achievement in film for her exceptional contribution to Sri Lankan cinema.

*Source: [http://www.priu.gov.lk](http://www.priu.gov.lk)*

**Thai Ambassador to Nepal Presents Awards at 9th Tenzing-Hillary Everest Marathon**

On 29 May 2011, Mr. Maris Sangiampongsa, Thai Ambassador to Nepal, was invited as chief guest to present the awards to the winners of the 9th Tenzing-Hillary Everest Marathon at Namche Bazaar, Nepal. 110 athletes - 45 Nepalese and 65 foreigners - participated in this marathon event, which started from Everest Base Camp located at an altitude of 5,356 meters and finished at Namche Bazaar at an altitude of 3,446 meters, covering a total distance of 42.195 km.

This event is organised by the Royal Thai Embassy in Nepal, in cooperation with the Royal Thai Monastery in Lumbini and the Nepali private sectors. Many participants, both Buddhists and interested people from around the world, are expected to join in the event.

*Source: [www.mfa.go.th](http://www.mfa.go.th)*

**India and Myanmar to Establish Industrial Training Centre**

India’s Minister of External Affairs H.E. Mr. S.M Krishna paid a courtesy call on Myanmar Vice-President H.E. Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo on 21 June 2011 in Nay Pyi Taw. The Indian Minister held meeting with his counterpart, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. U Wunna Maung Lwin on bilateral relations. The MoU between Myanmar and India on Setting up of Indo-Myanmar Industrial Training Center at Myingyan was signed and the Minister handed over paperwork on 500-ton Food Security Shelter built under India-Myanmar Friendship Programme and cash to Tahlay earthquake victims.

*Source: Myanmar Embassy, Bangkok*
**Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway**

Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway, on 30 April 2011, in Dhaka. His Excellency Mr. Kiat Sittheeamorn, President of the Thai Trade Representative was present during the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway, as a special Representative of the Thai Prime Minister.

The Dhaka Elevated Expressway Project is part of the Bangladeshi government’s efforts to ease the capital’s traffic problems. Italian-Thai Public Development Company Ltd, signed a deal on 19 January 2011 to build and operate a $2 billion elevated expressway across Dhaka for 25 years. The signing ceremony was attended by Mr. Alongkorn Ponlaboot, Deputy Commerce Minister of Thailand, Mr. HT Imam and Mr. Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Advisers to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Mr. Kiat Sittheeamorn, President of Thailand Trade Representative.

*Source: Bangladesh Embassy, Bangkok*

**India and Thailand Join Hands to Develop Educational Networks**

On 12 – 17 June 2011, the Royal Thai Embassy in New Delhi led a delegation comprising executives from educational agencies of the Government of India and educators from leading universities in New Delhi to visit the Office of Higher Education Commission, Chulalongkorn University, Thammasat University and Mahidol University in Bangkok.

The delegation from India met the Deputy Secretary-General of the Higher Education Commission to discuss about possible cooperation and educational networks between Thailand and India, particularly to materialize the intergovernmental MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Education which the two countries signed in 2005.

The delegation also met executives of the Thai universities to discuss about the establishment of intercollegiate academic exchanges including faculty/student visits, joint research and co-developed long-distance/online learning programs.

*Source: Royal Thai Embassy in New Delhi*
Thai Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. Apirath Vienravi, handed over relief items from the Thai Red Cross Society for victims of the earthquake in Shan State of Myanmar at the Second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge (Mai Sai – Tachilek) on 19 May 2011. The relief items were received by U Tu Maung, Shan State’s Minister for Transport and Communication and President of the Committee of Relief Work for Earthquake Victims. The humanitarian assistance presentation ceremony was also attended by representatives from the Thai Red Cross Society and Myanmar Red Cross Society, and other concerned authorities.

Source: Department of East Asian Affairs,

The Institute of Asian Studies, Chula Global Network, Indian Studies Centre of Chulalongkorn University, in conjunction with Indian Embassy and Indian Council for Cultural Relations, organised an international conference titled ‘Tagore’s Vision for Asia: Human Solidarity beyond Nationalism’ at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok between 16 - 17 June 2011 to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. An exhibition of digital reprints of Tagore’s paintings and a photo exhibition “Tagore and the Romance of Travel” was also inaugurated on June 16 and would remain for public viewing till July 16.

Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali poet, novelist, musician, painter and playwright who reshaped Bengali literature and music. He was the first non-European and the only Indian to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

Source: Embassy of India, Bangkok

Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore

This issue of the BIMSTEC Newsletter has been compiled on behalf of the BIMSTEC Working Group by the Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

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WWW.BIMSTEC.ORG

Upcoming BIMSTEC Events and Activities

International Research Conference and Symposium in Ayurveda
15 - 17 July 2011, Colombo, Sri Lanka

3rd Meeting of the Task Force on BIMSTEC Trans-Power Exchange
23 - 24 August 2011, Dhaka, Bangladesh

5th Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime
TBC, Kathmandu, Nepal