



**International
Co-operative
Alliance**
Asia and Pacific

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International Cooperative Day

The slogan for the [2016 International Day of Co-operatives and Year](#) is 'Co-operatives: The power to act for a sustainable future'. The slogan was chosen to emphasize [the co-operative contribution to the United Nations' Sustainable Development goals, or SDGs](#). Co-operatives are important partners to achieve the SDGs, because they foster democracy, practice social inclusion and operate with concern for the environment, all while having a significant economic impact on the world economy.

The Alliance called on co-operators worldwide to celebrate the Day and show how co-operative principles and values act in support of the SDGs. Many countries in the Asia Pacific region celebrated the Day with great enthusiasm and fervor. [Click here](#) to read how

the Day was celebrated across the region.

Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar on “COOP: Building a Better World”

An Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar on “COOP: Building a Better World” was organized by the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT), and the Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Royal Government of Thailand, in collaboration with the International Cooperative Alliance, Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP), on the occasion of Centenary Celebration of Thailand Cooperative Movement and the 94th International Cooperative Day Celebration, in Bangkok, Thailand, during 4-8 July 2016.



46 foreign delegates from Bhutan, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam and more than 125 delegates from Thailand attended the event. The program was inaugurated by Mr. Theeraphat Prayurasiddhi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Royal Government of Thailand. Dr. Kouk Donsamran, Chairman of CLT, presented a report on the Thai Cooperative Movement. The two keynote speeches were delivered by Mr. Li Chunsheng, President of ICA-AP, on COOP: Building a Better World and by Dr. Kriengsak Chareonwongsak on “Centenary of Thai Cooperatives and UN SDGs. Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP introduced the ICA Vision of 2020. In the afternoon session, a panel discussion was organized on “Role of Cooperatives and Sustainable Development in Asia”, which was moderated by Dr. Asanee Ratanamalai, former Executive Director, CLT, and the panelists

were Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP, Mr. C.V. Nathan, Chairman of SASCO, Singapore and Dr. Kouk Donsamran, Chairman of CLT. Country papers were presented on July 6 by the representatives of each country present on COOP: Building a Better World for Sustainable Development, which was summarized by Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP. On July 7, a field study visit was arranged to Klong Luang Agricultural Cooperative Ltd. (Rice Milling) – a primary cooperative and to the Bang Sai Royal Folk Arts and Crafts Centre.

NEDAC, Workshop and General Assembly, Kathmandu

The NEDAC workshop on herbal medicinal plants, honey, cold water fish and NEDAC general assembly were held in Kathmandu on July 11 and 12. The meeting organized jointly by the National Cooperative Federation Ltd, National Cooperative Development Board, National Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation Ltd and National Cooperative Bank Ltd drew NEDAC members from Bangladesh, China, India, Philippines, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Iran was admitted as a member during the Assembly. Speaking at the inauguration, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli of Nepal said that “Nepal is a country of mountains and rivers. It can take advantage of the varied geographical features of the country and generate opportunities through fish, honey and other possible agricultural products.” He also spoke of the need to develop agriculture as it could generate immense employment opportunities not only in Nepal but across the NEDAC countries. “Increased agricultural production means we are heading in the right direction towards improving the living standards of the people. Self-reliance in agriculture helps alleviate not only household but `also national poverty.” Among the dignitaries who spoke at the ceremony were, Ms. Vasudha Mishra, NEDAC chairperson; Mr. Saroj Kumar Sharma, Chairman of Nepal chapter of NEDAC; Mr. Keshav Prasad Badal, Chairman of NCF; Ms. Om Devi Malla, Board member of NCF; Mr. K. Baskota, ex-chairman of NCF; and Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP.



Prime Minister Mr. KP Sharma Oli lighting the ceremonious lamp

ICA-AP had a key role in the origin of NEDAC; first when it was proposed as an idea at the Regional Consultation in Singapore (1988) and second, when it was supported and endorsed at the First Minister's Conference in Sydney (1990). The Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Labour Organization Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific supported the setting up of the office.

MoU signed for 10th Ministers Conference in Hanoi

Mr. Vo Kim Cu, Chairman of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA) and Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP signed the MoU for the 10th Ministers Conference at a press conference in Hanoi on July 19. The conference was attended by members from the diplomatic community, national and international development agencies, and government officials. The proposed theme for the conference to be held from April 18-21, 2017 is: "VISIONING AHEAD TO 2020: Creating Stronger Partnerships between Governments and Co-operative Stakeholders." Mr. Cu highlighted the significance of the upcoming conference to the ICA members in the context of extensive regional and global integration. He added the conference also presents opportunities for Vietnam to advertise the beauty of the people and landscapes of Vietnam while strengthening the friendship with international

nations and contributing to the sustainable development of cooperatives and economic cooperation. Mr. Iyer spoke about the intensive Regional Consultations among cooperative leaders, high-ranking government officials, and organizations involved with cooperatives held in Jakarta for the ASEAN ++ Region (October, 2015), Kathmandu for the SAARC ++ Region (December, 2015) and in Kuwait (January 2016) by the Council of Ministers of Labor and Council of Ministers of Social Affairs in GCC States. The uniting voice from the Regional Consultations was that the success of co-operatives relies altogether on healthy member-based cooperatives, as well as good governance, but expansion and further advancement must be grounded in communities and further supported by strong and strategic partnerships with respective governments and international and national organizations in the Asia Pacific Region. Partnership is considered crucial in this day and age. To bring about sustained economic democracy, co-operatives must work in partnership with key stakeholders. This is especially true at a time when inequality is deepening in the region despite the gains created by the capitalist system. Co-operatives offer an alternative model to the capitalist system as sustainable enterprises, which values are to be shared and recognized by their multiple stakeholders.

Sébastien Chaillou to speak at Youth Summit!



Sébastien Chaillou from Solidarité Etudiante.

Sébastien Chaillou is the President of the French multi-stakeholder co-operative, "Solidarité Etudiante." This is France's first national level student owned and led co-

operative. Solidarité Etudiante develops services for students on French campuses and creates an enabling environment for co-operative entrepreneurship. Solidarité Etudiante finds its presence in many universities across France and it promotes an economy Human service. It encourages young people to organize collectively to improve their lives by addressing their student needs and creates new *solidarity spaces* in universities to welcome new students and make them feel comfortable in the challenging years of higher education. The breakaway thinking from traditional consumerism and individualism lies at the core of this co-operative. Sébastien is a former student unionist and is committed for a global social change with the help of the co-operative model of enterprise. He is one the founder members of the Young European Co-operators Network and member of the ICA Global Youth Network. As a young leader, Sébastien is all set to inspire, educate and inform participants of the Youth Summit on what it takes to become a young, successful ethical entrepreneur. Be a part of this one a kind gathering of young minds talking on the co-operative model and [click to register](#).

International Summit of Cooperatives Cooperatives and Mutuals in International Development - a pre-conference event

Cooperatives and Mutuals contribute to sustainable development at international level through projects and programs helping people to organise themselves using the cooperative model and principles. Collectively, the global cooperative movement deploys significant resources to lift people out of poverty, to empower local communities and to improve the lives of billions across the globe. Nevertheless, cooperative development organizations are not yet taking fully advantage of potential synergies and remain often in competition, among themselves and with other organizations, for access to funding to support their initiatives.

The aim of this specific meeting, organized with the support of the U.S. Overseas Cooperative Development Council (OCDC), the International Co-operative Alliance, and SOCODEVI, is to bring Cooperative Organisations active in International Development together and to share achievements, identify courses of action to facilitate collaboration and explore possible partnerships. More information on the Third International Summit of Cooperatives at – <https://www.sommetinter.coop/en>

Apex Driven Registration of Global Co-operative Identity Tools

The .coop domain and Co-operative Marque are symbols of the global co-operative movement and its collective identity. The symbols help differentiate between a co-operative enterprise and investor or privately-owned businesses. The Co-operative Marque is the ethical badge that's for co-ops for use along with a co-operative's own brand. In an attempt to increase the number of registrations for the co-operative marque in the Asia Pacific region, the regional office liaised with the National Co-operative Federation of Nepal, the apex co-operative organization in the country, to initiate a registration drive to include a large number of primary and secondary Nepalese co-operatives. This facilitation from the apex organisation resulted in the successful coop marquee registration of over 300 co-operatives in the country. Earlier, the Japanese co-operative movement spearheaded this drive and facilitated the marquee registrations of a record number of co-operatives. According to the statistics obtained from domains.coop, 2993 cooperatives have successfully registered for the Marque in 105 countries, 49% of which i.e. 1462 organisations are from Asia Pacific and only 496 coop domain names i.e. 6% of the total 8015 .coop domains registered in 90 countries belong in the AP region. The regional office encourages Alliance members to carry out similar initiatives in the countries in the interest of the collective identity of the co-operative movement. To register for the global co-operative identity tools, click here. For queries and contact, please write to santosh.kumar@icaap.coop

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 'Stakeholders Meeting on Collective Entrepreneurship, Kozhikode, August 18-19, 2016
- Youth Summit, Bali, Indonesia, September 20-24, 2016 Please contact Santosh Kumar (santosh.kumar@icaap.coop) for registration details.
- Workshop on enhancing role of women in cooperative business, in cooperation with iCOOP Korea, September. Please contact Savitri Singh (savitrisingh@icaroap.coop) for details.
- [International Summit of Co-operatives](#), Quebec, October 11-13, 2016
- 12th ICA-AP Regional Assembly and 9th Co-operative Forum, New Delhi, India,

November 15-19, 2016. Register at <http://newdelhi2016.coop/>

Register for the global
 Marque and
a .coop domain name at
www.identity.coop

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