



Embassy of India Bangkok

PRESS RELEASE

On the occasion of “**Gandhi Jayanti**”, the 138th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, three functions were held in Bangkok today to commemorate this important event in a befitting manner.

H. E. Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar, Hon’ble Minister for Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs & Sports and Development of North-Eastern Region of India presided over the programme organized by the United Nations ESCAP office in Bangkok to mark the first “**International Day of Non-Violence**”. A sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled and presented to ESCAP by the Hon’ble Minister which was followed by a visual presentation on Mahatma Gandhi’s message on non-violence, rendition of his favourite Hindi inspirational hymns and a message from Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of United Nations was read out. In his keynote address, the Hon’ble Minister highlighted the relevance of Gandhian philosophy in present times and its recognition as such by the United Nations which recently declared 2nd October, Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday, as the “International Day of Non-Violence”. The Minister dwelt upon length on the importance of principles lived and followed by Gandhiji during his lifetime – truth, courage and non-violence – to be adopted by all human beings in our own lives to make the world we live in a more peaceful and harmonious one. In her remarks, Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, also emphasized the importance of non-violence and other Gandhian principles in today’s world environment which is full of tensions all around.

In the second programme, Thai-Bharat Cultural Lodge (TBCL), which is the oldest friendship society in Bangkok established in the year 1930, organized a one-day “**International Seminar on Mahatma Gandhi**” to celebrate “Gandhi Jayanti” as well as to commemorate the 80th birth anniversary of H. M. The King, 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Thailand and the centenary of Mahatma Gandhi’s *Satyagraha* movement. The event was organized in collaboration with the Embassy of India. H. E. Ms. Latha Reddy, Ambassador of India inaugurated the seminar by paying floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

In another programme held in the afternoon at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre, Bangkok H. E. Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar, Hon’ble Minister for DONER alongwith H. E. Mr. Piyabutr Cholvijarn, Deputy Minister of Industry of Thailand paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi before the opening session of the “Sectoral Meetings for Investment in North-East India”. The Hon’ble Minister is currently visiting Thailand from October 1-4 leading a multi-sectoral high-powered delegation to organize “North-East India Trade & Investment Opportunities Week” consisting of over 350 delegates comprising business

entrepreneurs, CEOs of various public sector undertakings and senior government officials to invite Thai business community to take advantage of special investment opportunity offered by the Government of India and various state governments of the North-Eastern Region of India. H.E. Mr. Ashwani Kumar, Minister of State for Industries, Government of India and Chief Ministers of five North-Eastern states and senior ministers from the other three North-Eastern states are also part of this important delegation.

Place: Bangkok

Date: 2nd October, 2007