



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

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## Sri Lanka Flood Relief



*A flooded area in Kalutara, Sri Lanka, on Friday. Credit Sri Lanka Air Force European Pressphoto Agency*

The beginning of the monsoon season has not bode well for Sri Lanka. The Disaster Management Center of Sri Lanka reports that 202 people were confirmed dead, more than 77,000 displaced and over 1,500 homes destroyed since floods and mudslides after the worst torrential rains since 2003. According to the Sri Lanka Consumer Cooperatives Societies Federation Limited (COOPFED), many houses, factories, co-operative outlets and belongings of people have been destroyed, and people left stranded in relief shelters. COOPFED and other ICA members in Sri Lanka have started providing relief and are planning for short and medium term support.

The Alliance has initiated an appeal to support our member's efforts in Sri Lanka. Please send your donations to the following account:

Beneficiary account: ACI Solidarité

Bank address: KBC **BRUSSELS** - Place Dailly 3 - 1030 Brussels – Belgium  
IBAN: BE28 7340 3825 7920

BIC: KREDBEBB

**Important! Include this mention with your contribution: SRI LANKA**

We will discuss with our members and determine the best way to channel the support received.



### State of Co-operatives in Mizoram



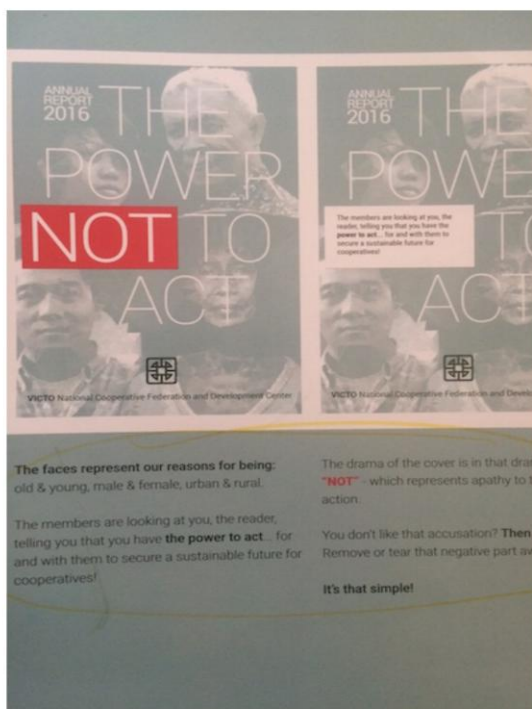
During a National Seminar organized by the National Federation of State Co-operative Banks Limited (NAFSCOB) in Mumbai, on “Roadmap to Enhance the Share of Cooperatives in Agricultural Credit,” it was decided that a study visit to understand the state

chosen, as the Mizoram Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd (MCAB), was an active member of NAFSCOB.

Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director was on his maiden study visit to the north east of India and was accompanied by Mr. Bhima Subrahmanyam, Managing Director (NAFSCOB) who was visiting the state after a gap of 26 years. High level meetings with with Pu Lalsawta, Minister of Finance, Planning and Law, Pu Lalmalsawma, Chief Secretary, and Pu Sang Dingliana, Secretary and the meetings with the co-operative department and heads of co-operative sectoral federations were all facilitated by Pi.T. Lalmuanpuii, Chairperson of the MCAB. Pi. Lalnuntluangi Hrahsel, Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Chief Executive (in-charge) of the Mizoram State Co-operative Union, also accompanied the team and provided useful perspective on co-operatives in the State. [Click here](#) to read the report of the visit by Mr. Bhima Subrahmanyam and Mr. Balu Iyer.



## VICTO National Co-operative Federation and Development Center (VICTO National) celebrates 47<sup>th</sup> year



VICTO National's journey moved from organizing households into co-operatives in the 70s



to building the capacity of these co-operatives to be effective and efficient instruments of development. In its 4<sup>th</sup> decade, VICTO National has devoted its programs and services to enterprise development for individual members, the co-ops, and between and amongst co-ops. VICTO National has a collective strength of 270 affiliates nationwide owning aggregate assets of upwards PHP 30 billion. The theme of the 47<sup>th</sup> General Assembly was 'the Power to Act'. The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP on Co-operatives: the Power to Act for a Sustainable Future.

The report brought out to celebrate the occasion had a dramatic statement – The Power **NOT** to Act. The drama of the cover was in the red NOT to show the apathy towards the call to action. The 700 member audience was asked to look at the faces - old and young, male and female, urban and rural – and ponder on the reasons for their 'being'. The audience tore away the red NOT and read out the statement underneath, "The members are looking at you, the reader, telling you that you have the power to act... for and with them to secure a sustainable future for co-operatives."



## NATCCO network Ruby celebrations



The National Association of Training Centers for Co-operatives (NATCCO) Network began

as a training center for co-operatives to equip Filipino co-operators with knowledge on how to make their organization a sustainable enterprise that will help members “achieve their social, economic and cultural needs and aspirations.” Forty years later, the Network has grown into a federation that provides a wide array of services and advocacies that help co-operatives remain relevant in society, resilient in times of difficulty, and robust in times of opportunity.

The keynote speaker, Hon. Vilma Santos-Recto, District Representative, 6<sup>th</sup> District, Batangas, extolled the role of co-operatives in meeting basic needs and ensuring socio-economic dividends to people. She recognized the role played by NATCCO and its network in expanding the pool of financial inclusion. This was earlier reflected in the keynote speech by 11-year-old Ms. Roselyn Dagsi, an Aflatoun saver of NATCCO. She highlighted the benefits of savings, financial literacy and the role of laboratory co-ops. During the celebrations, youth, women, and NATCCO partners were recognized

The Story of NATCCO: A Walk Down memory lane with Board Chairs and Chief Executives showed the challenges each board and management encountered and how the transformation was effected. Starting in 1972 with President Marcos's Presidential Decree that required farmers to be organized into “Samahang Nayan” to the EDSA Revolution in 1986 where President Cory Aquino mandated the government to promote co-operatives as instruments of social justice and economic development. Further from the formation of COOP-NATCCO party list to contest elections and safeguard the interests of co-operatives, to the internal restructuring in 2004 where NATCCO moved from a three-tier to two-tier structure. In all the transformations, the core of NATCCO's beliefs was always kept central – member first, adherence to co-operative principles, ensuring sustainability and growing the movement



## **International Labor Organization Research Travel Award**

We are pleased to announce that the International Labor Organization (ILO) will support one travel award to attend the 12th International Cooperative Alliance - Asia and Pacific Regional Cooperative Research Conference in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from November 11 to 12, 2017! We are grateful to the ILO for this generous support and encouragement to researchers in the Asia Pacific region.

The theme of the Conference is, **Cooperatives: The key solution for Social Innovation** (<http://www.ica-ap.coop/icanews/12th-ica-ap-regional-cooperative-research-conference>).

The travel award for the best submission on a *World of Work* topic will cover the costs of travel (economy fare ticket and room and board for the duration of the conference). The choice of topics should be around the theme of the conference and around areas relating to co-operatives and labor laws (legislation, compliance, regulation, statistics), organization forms (trade unions, employers' organizations), employment creation (decent work, youth, gender, value chains), transformation (formalizing workers in the informal economy, enterprise restructuring and labor in transition economies), and social concerns (social protection, social dialogue, child labor, forced labor).

The ILO would like to especially encourage submissions from the Global South, Arab States, and lesser represented countries in the research conference.

All abstract should be sent by 28 July 2017 to Mr. Ashok Kumar Taneja, Secretary, ICA-AP Committee on Cooperative Research at [taneja@icaroap.coop](mailto:taneja@icaroap.coop). A committee of eminent researchers will decide on papers to be presented from among the abstracts received and the travel grant awardees.

The ICA-AP Research Committee will award the Dr. Mauritz Bonow Young Researcher Award to two young researchers (not over 35 years of age), presenting their papers in the conference. The first prize will be for \$500 and the second for \$300.



## **17th Exhibition of Building and Construction Material, Tehran**

The Tehran international exhibition of construction industry is among the biggest and most significant fairs in Iran and in the region in terms of the number of participants and its diversity. The objectives of the exhibition are:

- To introduce the latest technologies on innovative building material to reduce environmental cost and time of construction
- To exchange technical knowledge

- To create business opportunities, explore and maintain new markets

The 17th Tehran international exhibition of the construction industry is a four-day event from August 12 to 15 at the Tehran International Fair ground in Tehran, Iran. The exhibition last year attracted more than 40,000 visitors, showcased by 1,195 domestic and foreign companies from more than 24 countries. For more information please contact Alireza Banaeifar of Iran Chamber of Cooperatives at:

[alireza.banaeifar@iran.coop](mailto:alireza.banaeifar@iran.coop).



### **Palestine Launches National Strategy for the Co-operatives**

The Palestinian national co-operative sector strategy was launched by Prime Minister, Mr. Rami Hamdallah in February. The national strategy was led by the General Directorate of Co-operatives (GDC) and was supported by the ILO and key national stakeholders. Mr. Hamdallah recognized the role of co-operatives in providing livelihoods to people and communities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). He highlighted the need for improved regulatory environment to strengthen the co-operative movement. The PM also called upon co-operatives to be an “enterprise model that promotes democratic values and that reaches out to the youth and women”. The national strategy is built around three main pillars - 1) promotion of the institutional environment to enable co-operatives to grow and develop, 2) improvement of financial and organizational performance of co-operatives and 3) expansion of co-operatives into new and emerging sectors such as the recycling, renewable energy etc. The strategy also highlights the need to invest in co-operative education and literacy among youth and explore the potential of technology. The OPT’s co-operative history dates back almost a century when a tobacco co-operative marked the beginning of the national movement.

In 2016, there were 957 registered co-operatives, including 785 in West Bank with 46,000 members and 172 co-operatives in the Gaza Strip. The main areas of co-operative business in Palestine are agriculture, housing, services, handicrafts and consumer stores. ICA member, The Economic and Social Development Center of Palestine came out with a strategic objectives document based on the launch of the national strategy, with a vision to ensure a *socially just Palestinian society in which individuals are economically independent* and the mission to *enable disadvantaged and vulnerable groups to engage in competitive*



*economic activities.*



## ICA-EU partnership on Co-operatives in Development [People Centered Businesses in Action]

#COOPS4DEV



International  
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Co-funded  
by the  
European Union

## Workshop on Promoting evidence based policies for cooperatives within United Nation 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



The Division for Social Policy and Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) organized a capacity-building workshop on promoting evidence based policies for cooperatives within United Nation 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda acknowledges “the role of the diverse

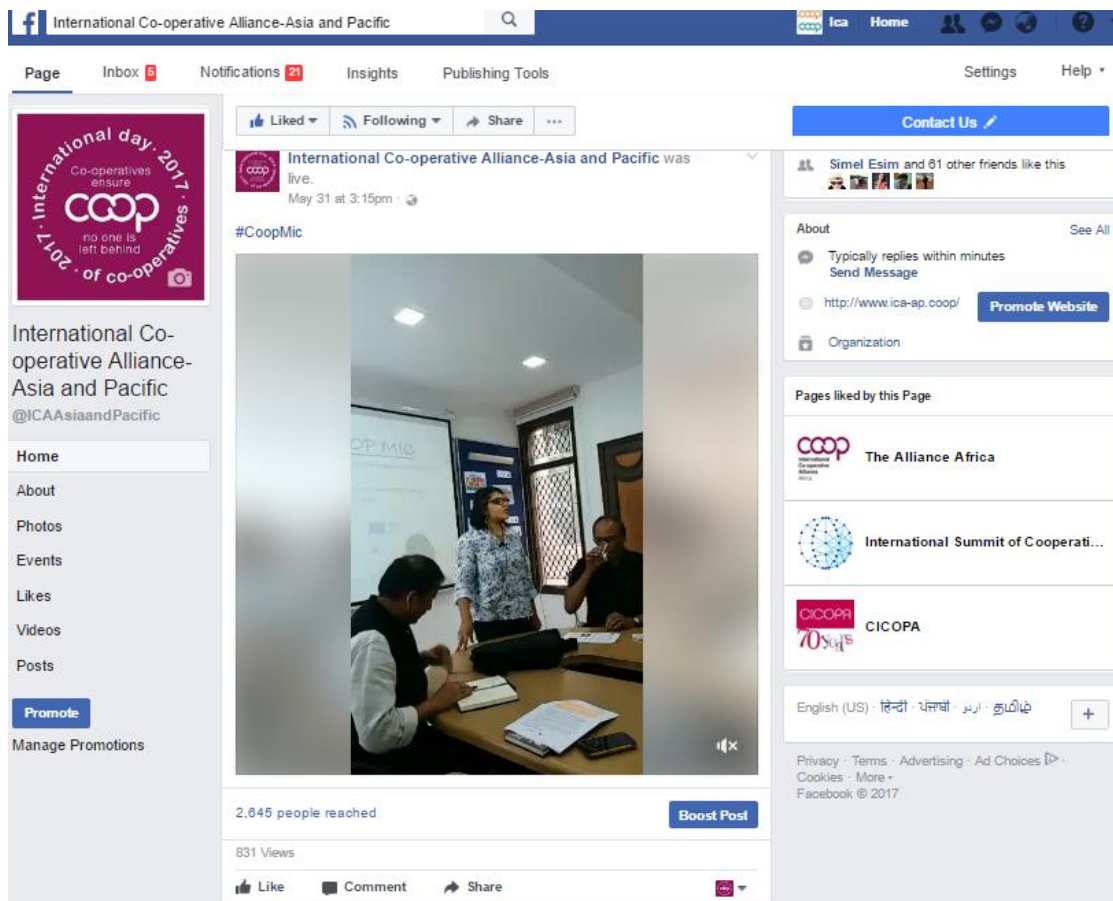
private sector, ranging from micro-enterprises to cooperatives to multinationals, and that of civil society organizations and philanthropic organizations in the implementation of the new Agenda.” The collection and synthesis relevant and quality data and related research on statistical information are keys for formulating and monitoring evidence-based policies that promote economically viable and socially responsible co-operative enterprises. Cooperation among co-operatives at local, national, regional, and global levels is seen to facilitate the promotion of common initiatives such as the collection of relevant social and economic data.

The workshop held from 23–25 May 2017 at the UN ESCAP conference centre in Bangkok, brought together government officials responsible for promoting entrepreneurship and cooperatives, representatives of international and regional organizations, UN Agencies as well as members of co-operatives from Mongolia, Thailand, Cambodia, Bhutan, Bangladesh, South Africa, Kenya, Botswana, Dominica, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. Mr. Mohit Dave and Mr. P. Santosh Kumar represented the Asia Pacific Unit of the ICA-EU Partnership.

The workshop provided an opportunity for strengthening capacity of co-operative practitioners for implementing the SDGs and for the exchange of ideas on the role of co-operative data in helping to achieve the United Nations SDGs. An outline for guidelines on generating such basic information and data by co-operatives will be drafted and shared by UNDESA. The results will serve to raise awareness on the challenges faced by the co-operative enterprise model to generate, manage, and use data on the contributions of the co-operative enterprise model. The ICA-AP will engage with the workshop participants from the region in addressing the pressing need for co-operative data and research, and building capacities of movements on the subject.



## CO-OP MIC



Co-op Mic is an initiative of ICA-AP to highlight the impact co-operatives, as value-based enterprises, bring to members and the communities within which they work. Co-op Mic is a platform where experts, entrepreneurs and friends of the cooperative movement, share their experiences, ideas and thoughts on mainstreaming cooperatives within the development discourse. The fulcrum of Co-op Mic is to create and spread co-operative consciousness and show how co-operatives can address multiple concerns of financial stability, education, health and overall welfare of communities.

The format of Co-op mic involves an hour-long talk to an audience in New Delhi followed by a brief Q&A session. The talk is aired live using Facebook to an online audience.

The first Co-op Mic was organized on May 31 and the invited speaker was Dr. Gopi Ghosh. He spoke on the topic on 'Cooperatives in India and their potential in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Dr.

Ghosh is a strategic consultant in agriculture, sustainable development, knowledge management, cooperatives and creativity. A Fulbright scholar, he has extensive experience working with a variety of co-operatives in India and abroad.

In his presentation, Dr. Ghosh spoke of how despite phenomenal progress and transformation in the global economies, we are still witnessing extreme poverty and glaring disparities. He made a case for the role co-operatives can play in improving this situation. He gave the example of Amul as a successful cooperative that imbibes the values of member-centrality, innovation, diversity in products and marketing strategies. He reflected on the problems ailing cooperatives today like poor understanding of the concept of co-operatives, poor communication strategies, local challenges and lack of institutional support. These challenges need to be addressed for cooperatives to successfully operate. The future of cooperatives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century lies in making them attractive and appealing to the youth. In the specific context of India, co-operatives can tie up with government livelihood, water and biodiversity conservation initiatives as well as change the structure of traditional co-operatives by forming hybrid joint ventures.

The talk was followed by an interactive Q&A session moderated by Mr. Balu Iyer, ICA-AP Regional Director. The live video on Facebook garnered close to 831 views (the video reached 2645 people across) and generated simultaneous comments. We had a team in place which was also tweeting important snippets from the talk on Twitter.

Co-op Mic is supported by the ICA Domus Trust and the ICA- EU partnership on 'Cooperatives in Development- People centred businesses in Action.'





International Co-operative Alliance

## Global Conference and General Assembly

Co-operatives: Putting People  
at the Centre of Development

13-17 November 2017 - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



[www.malaysia2017.coop](http://www.malaysia2017.coop)

Register for the global  
**COOP** Marque and  
a .coop domain name at  
[www.identity.coop](http://www.identity.coop)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 2017

- Co-operative Financial Services and Rural Development, Hangzhou, China, June 22-26, 2017
- Forum on Development of Co-operatives in Central Asia, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan,



June 29-July 2, 2017

July 2017

- Global Board meeting, Sofia, Bulgaria, July 4-5
- 17<sup>th</sup> ICA-AP Regional Workshop for Managers on “Management of Consumer Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific,” Singapore, July 25-28, 2017
- Training Course on “Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives, Thailand and Japan, July to August 2017

August 2017

- ICA-AP and DAMC Training of Trainers for “Building Management Capacity of Women for Co-operative Development,” Bhutan
- Development Seminar in Philippines

September 2017

- Workshop on credit and banking, Korean Federation of Community Credit Coops, Korea, September (tbc)

October

- 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of ICA-AP Committee on Forestry, S. Korea, on October 20 in conjunction with “2017 Korea Culture Forest EXPO”, at Yeongju-city, Gyeongsang-province (between October 20 to 29)
- Development Seminar in Mongolia

NOVEMBER 2017

- 12<sup>th</sup> ICA-AP Cooperative Research Conference, “COOPERATIVES: *The key solution for Social Innovation.*” Organized with the 'Department of Management of Cooperatives at the Graduate School in Sungkonghoe University, November 11-12, 2017. Abstracts should reach Mr. Ashok Kumar Taneja, Secretary, ICA-AP

Research Committee at [taneja@icaroap.coop](mailto:taneja@icaroap.coop) on or before 28<sup>th</sup> July 2017.



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