



41st ABA

**GENERAL MEETING
AND CONFERENCE**

**FINANCING
THE FUTURE:
BANKING FOR
SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH**

September 15-16, 2025

**Dungkar Estate,
Paro, Bhutan**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Messages	1
Program at a Glance	3
Daily Program	5
Speakers	10
Moderators	18
Social Events	20
Activities at the Conference	22
Venue	24
Floor Plan	25
General Information	26
Upon Arrival	27
Sponsors	28
Tour Program	29



Welcome Message

from the ABA Chairman



Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Asian Bankers Association (ABA), it is my distinct honor to welcome you to the **41st ABA General Meeting and Conference**, taking place September 15–16, 2025, in the serene and culturally rich setting of Dungkar Dzong in Paro, Bhutan. Whether you are a first-time attendee or a longtime participant, we are truly grateful for your presence and continued engagement.

As Chairman of ABA, I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to Bank of Bhutan for graciously hosting this year's conference.

Our thanks go as well to our sponsors, members, and partners, whose steadfast support makes this annual gathering possible.

With membership spanning the Asia-Pacific and beyond, ABA remains a vital, member-driven platform for dialogue, collaboration, and shared growth. In an increasingly complex financial landscape, our mission—to foster meaningful connections, advocate for member interests, and promote regional business opportunities—has never been more relevant.

This year's conference theme, ***"Financing the Future: Banking for Sustainable Growth,"*** underscores our shared commitment to shaping a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready financial landscape. Through focused discussions on the digital transformation of sustainable banking, technological advancements in customer and employee engagement, innovations in cross-border payments, and the evolving regulatory environment, the conference seeks to foster greater synergy, identify and address gaps, and strengthen institutional capacity.

We look forward to welcoming you to Bhutan for what promises to be a rewarding and thought-provoking exchange of ideas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Daniel Wu". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Daniel Wu
Chairman, ABA

Welcome Message

from the BoB Chairman



Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the Bank of Bhutan Limited (BoB), it is with great honour and pride that I extend a warm welcome to all the distinguished delegates, speakers and participants to the **41st Asian Bankers Association Conference and General Meeting**.

As the Chairman of BoB, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the ABA for choosing BoB to host the 41st ABA Conference and General Meeting at the prestigious Dungkar Dzong in Paro, Bhutan from 15th to 16th September, 2025.

This Conference marks an important moment in Bhutan's journey towards innovation, sustainable development and technological advancements which are crucial in defining Bhutan's future. In Bhutan, His Majesty the King recognizing the need to balance progress with sustainability announced the establishment of Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) – a special administrative region. It is established to create a vibrant economic hub by providing a conducive business environment. It is a Mindfulness City, encompassing conscious and sustainable businesses, inspired by Buddhist spiritual heritage, and distinguished by the uniqueness of the Bhutanese identity. Therefore, it is only fitting that Bhutan plays the host to this year's conference with the theme ***"Financing the Future: Banking for Sustainable Growth."***

This conference brings together delegates from across the world to engage in exchange of ideas and collaboration among various financial institutions, regulators, investors and fintech companies. It also serves as a platform to foster dialogues connections and commitments to promote business opportunities that promote sustainability and economic growth.

This conference is more than an event to BoB, it is a commitment to the future for Bhutan to thrive and find its place in the global arena where we dare to think differently, working together for a global impact.

On behalf of the Board and Management of BoB, we would like to thank ABA members, our sponsors and participants for making this Annual Conference and General Meeting in Bhutan possible.

We look forward to welcoming you to Bhutan.

Thank you and Tashi Delek.



Mr. Thinley Namgyel
Chairman, Bank of Bhutan

Program at a Glance

Date	DAY 1 September 15			
Time/ Venue	Founder's Hall	Board Room	Press Room	Plenary Hall
08:30 - 09:30	Registration			
10:00 - 11:00	- Traditional Bhutanese welcome ceremony (10:00 - 10:20) - Opening Ceremony & Keynote Address (10:20 - 10:50) - Presentation of Tokens of Appreciation & Photo Session (10:50 - 11:00)			
11:00 - 12:45	- Coffee break (11:00 - 11:15) - Host Bank Session (11:15 - 12:45)		Press Conference (11:00 - 11:30)	
12:45 - 14:00	Lunch			
14:00 - 15:00	ABA Policy Advocacy Presentation			
15:00 - 17:30	- B2B / Networking Session (15:00 - 16:30) - CareEdge Presentation: Driving Sustainable and Smart Credit Risk (15:00 - 15:15) - Q&A Session (15:15 - 15:25) - Modelfin Presentation: mBoB Success Story (15:25 - 15:40) - Q&A Session (15:40 - 15:50) - Coffee Break (16:30 - 16:45)	- Election Committee Meeting (15:00 - 15:30) <i>(Members only)</i> - ABA Advisory Council Meeting (15:30 - 16:00) <i>(Members only)</i> 64th ABA Board of Directors' Meeting (16:00 - 17:00) <i>(Members only)</i>		
17:30 - 19:30				Welcome Dinner

Program at a Glance

Date	DAY 2 September 16		
Time/ Venue	Founder's Hall	Board Room	Plenary Hall
10:00 - 11:00	Plenary Session 1: Digital Transformation in Sustainability Banking		
11:00 - 11:15	Coffee break		
11:15 - 12:15	Plenary Session 2 - Enhancing Customer and Employee Experience Through Technology		
12:15 - 14:00	Lunch		
14:00 - 15:00	Plenary Session 3 - Innovations in Cross-Border Payments		
15:00 - 16:00	Plenary Session 4 - Adapting Regulations for a Changing Financial Landscape		
16:00 - 16:30	ABA Chairman's Report & Report of the Election Committee		
16:30 - 16:45	Coffee break		
16:45 - 17:45		65th ABA Board of Directors' Meeting (16:45 - 17:45) <i>(Members Only)</i>	
18:30 onwards			Farewell Dinner

Daily Program

DAY 1 (September 15)

10:00 - 10:20 **Marchang** (Traditional Bhutanese welcome ceremony)

10:20 - 10:50 **Opening Ceremony (*Founder's Hall*)**

- Welcome Remarks from Mr. Thinley Namgyel, Chairman, Bank of Bhutan
- Opening Remarks from Mr. Daniel Wu, Chairman, ABA and Vice Chairman, CTBC Financial Holding Co., Ltd.

Keynote Address

- Ms. Sonomi Tanaka, Country Director, Bhutan Resident Mission (BHRM), ADB
- Honorable Chief Guest

10:50 - 11:00 **Presentation of Tokens of Appreciation & Photo Session**

11:00 - 11:15 **Coffee Break**

11:00 - 11:30 **Press Conference (*Press Room*)**

11:15 - 12:45 **Host Bank Session (GMC) organized by Bank of Bhutan Ltd. (*Founder's Hall*)**

Bhutan's Next Chapter: Mindfulness, Innovation and the Role of the Private Sector

- Bhutan stands at a bold turning point. With the Gelephu Mindfulness City's transformation agenda, we are reimagining what national development can look like - anchored in values, driven by innovation, and powered by people.
- This session is designed as both a presentation and a plenary conversation. We will walk through the vision behind Gelephu - a city inspired not just by economic ambition, but by a deeper purpose: to be a global hub for well-being, wisdom, and sustainable innovation.
- At the heart of this transformation is the private sector - entrepreneurs, investors, creators, and builders who can help shape and deliver this vision. This session is a chance to bring everyone into the conversation: to ask hard questions, surface big ideas, and identify real ways to collaborate.

Moderator

- Dasho Karma Yonten, Head, Office of Performance Management, His Majesty's Secretariat

Speakers

- Mr. Ujjwal Deep Dahal, Chief Executive Officer, Druk Holding and Investments
- Ms. Tshering Dolkar, Director, Tourism, Gelephu Mindfulness City Authority
- Mr. Ugyen Tenzin, President, DK Bank

12:45 - 14:00 **Lunch (*Founder's Hall*)**

Daily Program

DAY 1 (September 15)

14:00 - 15:00 ABA Policy Advocacy Presentation (*Founder's Hall*)

Moderator

- Mr. Austin Chiang, Chairman, ABA Policy Advocacy Committee and EVP, CTBC Bank

Speakers

- Mr. Reginaldo Carias, President and CEO, RCBC – Open Banking and Customer Data Privacy Protections
- Mr. Shirish Pathak, Managing Director, Fintelekt Advisory Services - Money Mule Account Issues in Banking
- Ms. Rachael Kao, President, CTBC Financial Holding Co., Ltd.– Ethical Banking and Corporate Governance

15:00 - 16:30 B2B / Networking Session (*Founder's Hall*)

- CareEdge Presentation: Driving Sustainable & Smart Credit Risk (15:00 – 15:15)
- Q&A Session (15:15 – 15:25)
- Modelfin Presentation: mBoB Success Story (15:25 – 15:40)
- Q&A Session: (15:40 – 15:50)

15:00 - 15:30 Election Committee Meeting (Members only) (*Board Room*)

- ABA Advisory Council Meeting (15:30 - 16:00)
- 64th ABA Board of Directors' Meeting (16:00 - 17:00)

16:30 - 16:45 Coffee Break

17:30 - 19:30 Welcome Dinner (*Plenary Hall*)



Daily Program

DAY 2 (September 16)

10:00 - 11:00 **Plenary Session 1 - Digital Transformation in Sustainability Banking** (*Founder's Hall*)

Digital transformation is reshaping banking by enhancing financial inclusivity and promoting sustainable behaviors.

By leveraging digital identity technologies, financial institutions can provide accessible services to under-banked populations, inbound immigrants, and outbound overseas workers. Concurrently, innovative solutions like carbon footprint tracking tools and platforms for sustainable investments empower customers to make environmentally conscious financial decisions.

The integration of digital banking with sustainability initiatives not only addresses access challenges but also fosters a culture of environmental responsibility, contributing to a resilient and sustainable future in the banking sector. This involves integrating principles into banking operations and financial products to promote responsible and sustainable development, while also generating profit.

Moderator

- Mr. Reginaldo Carias, President and CEO, RCBC – Open Banking and Customer Data Privacy Protections

Speakers

- Dr. Ashish Kakar, Research Director, IDC Financial Insights
- Mr. Agustinus Nicholas L. Tobing, Security Assurance Country Lead, Indonesia and Vietnam, Amazon Web Services (AWS) Indonesia
- Mr. Abhishek Vishwakarma, President & CEO – Analytics Division, CARE Analytics and Advisory Private Limited

11:00 - 11:15 **Coffee Break**

11:15 - 12:15 **Plenary Session 2 - Enhancing Customer and Employee Experience Through Technology** (*Founder's Hall*)

The integration of technology plays a pivotal role in enhancing both customer and employee experiences in the banking sector. This session invites banks to share innovative practices in customer experience, focusing on hyper-personalization, seamless omni-channel experiences, and conversational banking.

Furthermore, the discussion will extend to the use of AI to enhance employee experience and productivity, highlighting for instance the use of AI copilots that streamline staff training on business and customer service, enhance decision-making efficiency, and accelerate complex analyses. By leveraging AI-driven solutions, financial institutions can not only improve service delivery but also foster a more efficient and rewarding work environment for employees.

Moderator

- Mr. Frederic Cabay, Managing Director/Global Co-Head of Financial Institutions, MUFG Bank, Ltd.

Speakers

- Mr. Rajan Narayan, CEO, Cyberbeat Pte. Ltd.
- Ms. Sunita Kannan, Global AI Strategy Lead, Microsoft
- Mr. Kher Tean Chen, Managing Partner and General Manager, IBM Consulting, Great China Group and Korea
- Mr. Amar Lkhagvasuren, Chief Executive and Secretary-General, Mongolian Bankers Association
- Mr. Dorji Nima, Chief Operating Officer, Druk Holding and Investments

Daily Program

DAY 2 (September 16)

12:15 - 14:00 **Lunch (*Founder's Hall*)**

14:00 - 15:00 **Plenary Session 3 - Innovations in Cross-Border Payments (*Founder's Hall*)**

The cross-border payments landscape is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by emerging technologies that promise to enhance efficiency, security, and accessibility. This session will explore cutting-edge innovations shaping the future of international transactions, including blockchain, Web 3.0 decentralized finance, central bank digital currencies (CBDCs), and Regulatory Technology (RegTech) solutions.

As financial institutions, fintech firms, and regulatory bodies navigate this evolving ecosystem, pilot projects and technology maturity assessments provide critical insights into real-world applications. Industry leaders and technology pioneers will share their experiences, discussing both the opportunities and challenges in integrating these advancements, thereby enabling financial institutions and banks especially in emerging economies to apply them in their cross-border payment business and catch up with industry peers.

Moderator

- Mr. Mohamed Shareef, CEO and Managing Director, Bank of Maldives

Speakers

- Mr. Eric Tan, Senior Director, Head of Banks & Remitters, Visa Direct, Asia Pacific
- Mr. Rajendra Theagarajah, Chairman Emeritus & Member, ABA Advisory Council
- Mr. Amar Lkhagvasuren, Chief Executive and Secretary-General, Mongolian Bankers Association
- Mr. Ugyen Tenzin, President, DK Bank

15:00 - 16:00 **Plenary Session 4 - Adapting Regulations for a Changing Financial Landscape (*Founder's Hall*)**

As financial ecosystems become more complex, regulatory frameworks must evolve to balance innovation, consumer protection, and financial stability. This session will examine how regulators can support banking transformation through progressive policies, including the development of regulatory sandboxes, open banking frameworks, and cross-border compliance standards.

Experts will discuss harmonization of financial regulations across jurisdictions, the role of technology in regulatory compliance, and how banks can navigate shifting policies while fostering innovation. They will share regulatory innovations for new technology implemented in other regions, including those touching on the role of CBDCs and digital assets, as well as evolving regulations for ESG integration and reporting, sustainable financing, and investment.

Moderator

- Mr. Oliver Hoffmann, Managing Director & Head of Asia at Erste Group

Speakers

- Ms. Ee Ling Ooi, Business Development Manager – Asia Pacific, Oberthur Cash Protection
- Mr. Damith Pallewatte, Managing Director/CEO, Hatton National Bank
- Ms. Ugyen Choden, Deputy Governor, Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan
- Mr. Dorji Phuntsho, CEO, Royal Securities Exchange of Bhutan

Daily Program

DAY 2 (September 16)

16:00 - 16:30 **ABA Chairman's Report & Report of the Election Committee (*Founder's Hall*)**

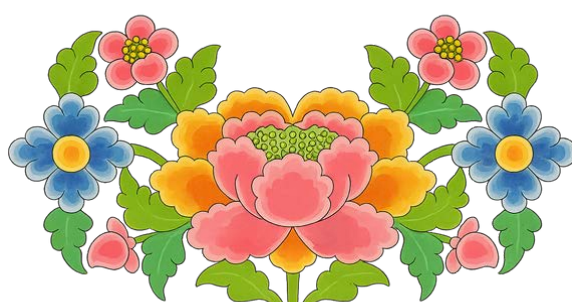
16:30 - 16:45 **Coffee Break**

16:45 - 17:45 **B2B / Networking Session**

16:45 - 17:45 **65th ABA Board of Directors' Meeting (Members Only) (*Board Room*)**

18:30 onwards **Farewell Dinner (*Plenary Hall*)**

- Presentation of Token of Appreciation to BoB
- Installation Ceremony



Speakers



Abhisheik Vishwakarma

***President & CEO, Analytics Division,
CARE Analytics and Advisory Private Limited***

Mr. Vishwakarma is a seasoned leader with over 22 years of extensive experience in banking and financial services sector. With a proven track record, he has consistently delivered growth in transaction banking, digital business, and risk solutions.

Currently serving as the CEO - Analytics of Care Analytics and Advisory Pvt. Ltd., a 100% subsidiary of CareEdge Ratings, Abhisheik spearheads the overall growth and operations of the Analytics Organization. Abhisheik holds a Global Executive MBA from the Indian School of Business.



Agustinus "Nico" Tobing

***CSA Country Lead,
Amazon Web Services***

Mr. Nico is a Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) expert with 20+ years' experience in internal auditing, cloud security, and regulatory assurance. A Chartered Accountant and holder of multiple certifications (CIA, CFE, CAMS, CCP), he brings deep expertise in financial governance and compliance.

As Country Lead for Compliance & Security Assurance at AWS Indonesia, he oversees security assurance across emerging markets, ensuring cloud operations meet local compliance standards. Previously, he held senior roles at AIA, Sun Life, and Commonwealth Life, leading compliance, risk management, and fraud investigations. Nico holds a Doctorate in Strategic Management and a Master's in Finance.



Amar Lkhagvasuren

***Chief Executive and Secretary-General,
Mongolian Bankers Association (MBA)***

Mr. Amar leads policy advocacy, industry coordination, and international engagement at the Mongolian Bankers Association. He brings over 17 years of professional experience, having served as an Economics Officer at the Asian Development Bank and as a Banking Supervisor at the Bank of Mongolia. His career spans central banking, financial sector development, and international finance, making him a key figure in Mongolia's economic and banking landscape.

He holds a Master's degree in Banking and Finance from the Luxembourg School of Finance, in partnership with NYU Stern, and a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Business Administration from the National University of Mongolia.

Speakers



Amit Darda

***Co-Founder & Director,
Modefin***

Mr. Darda is an Indian entrepreneur and the co-founder of Modefin, a leading provider of digital banking solutions. With a background in computer science and an MBA in marketing, he brings a unique blend of technical expertise and business acumen to the fintech industry.

Over two decades, he has been instrumental in executing more than 100 projects across Asia and Africa, driving digital transformation and promoting financial inclusion. A passionate advocate for the fintech sector, he is a respected voice on topics like data-driven personalization and the future of banking.



Damith Pallewatte

***Managing Director & CEO,
Hatton National Bank PLC, Sri Lanka***

Mr. Pallewatte is the Managing Director and CEO of Hatton National Bank PLC (HNB), one of Sri Lanka's leading financial institutions. With 30 years of experience in banking and risk management, he has held key leadership roles at HNB, including Acting CEO, Deputy General Manager – Wholesale Banking, Chief Risk Officer, and Chief Information Security Officer, and previously served as CRO of Nations Trust Bank PLC.

He holds an MBA from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, a BSc (Hons) in Management from the London School of Economics, and is a Fellow of CIMA (UK), CGMA, and a certified Financial Risk Manager. Mr. Pallewatte also chairs HNB Investment Bank, Lanka Ventures PLC, and LVL Energy Fund PLC, and serves on the boards of Lanka Pay and ICC Sri Lanka.



Dorji Nima

***Chief Operating Officer,
Druk Holding and Investments, Bhutan***

Mr. Dorji Nima is the Chief Operating Officer of Druk Holding and Investments (DHI), where he leads portfolio management and drives operational transformation across the Group's companies. He oversees reforms, shared services integration, and digital capability enhancement under the DHI 10X framework, fostering execution, accountability, and strategic alignment.

Mr. Nima holds an MBA from the Australian Graduate School of Entrepreneurship and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Madras University, India.

Speakers



Dorji Phuntsho

***Chief Executive Officer,
Royal Securities Exchange of Bhutan***

Mr. Dorji Phuntsho, a seasoned financial professional from Bhutan, currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Securities Exchange of Bhutan (RSEB). He holds an MBA in Corporate Strategy and Economic Policy from the Maastricht School of Management and a Master's degree in Economics from Fergusson College. With extensive experience at the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, where he oversaw securities regulation and financial institutions supervision, Mr. Phuntsho has been instrumental in shaping the country's financial markets.

Strengthened by a wide range of international certifications in banking supervision, investment banking, financial regulation, and corporate governance, he also serves on several boards and committees within Bhutan and across regional associations, contributing significantly to the advancement of the financial sector.



Dr. Ashish Kakar

***Director (Research),
Financial Insights, IDC Asia/Pacific***

Dr. Kakar has over 20 years of banking and insurance experience and an award-winning doctorate with a thesis in defining asset management algorithms, he heads the Financial Insights practice for IDC across the Asia Pacific. In his career, Dr. Ashish led large transformation projects with investments exceeding \$50 million, standardized systems and operations, and helped launch new retail banking businesses. He was also active in private markets with his risk management startup.

Currently, Dr. Ashish focuses on advising numerous financial services firms on their technology strategies, linking these strategies to the current geopolitical situation. Dr. Ashish is passionate about sustainability and inclusiveness. Dr. Ashish's work in sustainability and inclusiveness includes keynote addresses, briefing banks and regulators on inclusiveness, partnering with academia on sustainability, and advising certain VC funds on the right sustainability bets. Dr. Ashish has also visited the House of Lords, UK, as part of a smart cities project that championed the sustainability cause.



Ee Ling Ooi

***Business Development Manager, APAC,
Oberthur Cash Protection***

Ms. Ooi leads Business Development for the Asia-Pacific region at Oberthur Cash Protection (part of Oberthur Fiduciaire), a global leader in banknote, security printing and sustainable cash protection technologies. With extensive expertise in Intelligent Banknote Neutralization Systems (IBNS), she has played a key strategic role in collaborating with Central Banks across the region to drive policy-level discussions and adoption of innovative, technology-enabled security solutions.

Speakers



Eric Tan

***Senior Director, Head of Banks and Remitters,
Visa Direct, Asia Pacific***

Mr. Tan is Head of Bank & Remitters Business Development for Visa Direct, leading growth initiatives with financial institutions across Asia-Pacific and driving crossborder payment solutions including Pay to Account, Pay to Wallet, and Pay to Card. With over 23 years of banking experience, he has held senior leadership roles in international and regional banks, including Head of Transaction Banking for North Asia & Greater China and Head of Transaction Banking Taiwan at ANZ. Having worked across Singapore, Sydney, Taipei, and Hong Kong, Eric brings extensive expertise in transaction banking, payments, and digital banking innovation.



Kher Tean Chen

***Managing Partner & General Manager,
IBM Consulting, Great China Group & Korea***

Mr. Kher Tean Chen is leading his teams in Hybrid Cloud, AI, and open collaboration to accelerate client transformation. A member of IBM's Global Acceleration Team and Global Leadership Council, he brings 26+ years of consulting experience and expertise across industries including life sciences, consumer goods, automotive, transportation, tourism, industrial products, and infrastructure.

Before joining IBM in 2022, Kher Tean spent 24 years at Accenture in multiple Asia-Pacific leadership roles, including Country Managing Director of Accenture Indonesia. In Greater China, he built the life sciences business into a market leader and led cross-industry transformations. He holds a Business Administration (Hons) degree from Universiti Utara Malaysia and is based in Shanghai.



Mayur Somani

***Head of Credit Risk,
CARE Analytics and Advisory Private Limited***

Mr. Somani brings over 15 years of expertise in credit risk management across Asia and Europe. He is currently Head of Credit Risk at Care Analytics & Advisory Pvt. Ltd., leading Credit Risk Products and Advisory solutions for banks and financial institutions. Previously, he served as Head of Credit Risk at Union Bank of India Group in both the UK and India.

With a background in Statistics and Finance, and multiple certifications in credit risk, Mayur specializes in model risk management, portfolio & capital management, Basel frameworks, and IFRS 9. He has also been closely engaged in digital transformation of risk—leveraging AI/ML, automation, and advanced analytics.

Speakers



Rachael Kao

***President,
CTBC Financial Holding Co., Ltd.***

Ms. Kao is the President and Spokesperson of CTBC Holding, where she is responsible for overseeing company management, enhancing synergy and cross-selling among subsidiaries, driving business development, and advancing corporate sustainability. She holds an MBA from the City University of New York and has more than a decade of leadership experience across CTBC Holding, CTBC Bank, and international subsidiaries.

She previously served as CFO and Acting Spokesperson of CTBC Holding, later taking on the role of Senior Managing Executive Officer at Tokyo Star Bank in Japan, where she led organizational restructuring and talent optimization initiatives. In 2022, she became Chief of Staff and Spokesperson at CTBC Holding, coordinating operations across business and functional units. Since 2023, she has also served as Asia-Pacific Regional Chair of the Partnership for Carbon Accounting and Financials, spearheading sustainability initiatives from development through to execution.



Rajan S. Narayan

***Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer,
Cyberbeat Pte. Ltd.***

Mr. Narayan is a seasoned growth leader with over 20 years of experience driving business growth and digital transformation in the payments and banking technology sector. As CEO of Cyberbeat, he brings deep expertise in helping financial institutions modernize legacy systems, navigate competitive markets, and adopt innovative solutions that enhance both customer and employee engagement.

Under his leadership, Cyberbeat delivers VkenPay, a secure digital payments solution for banks and fintechs. VkenPay enables contactless transactions using dynamic virtual payment tokens that expire upon authorization, keeping card data private and preventing token reuse, thereby ensuring safer and more convenient payment experiences.



Rajendra Theagarajah

***Chairman Emeritus,
ABA Advisory Council Member***

Mr. Theagarajah, a fellow of CA Sri Lanka and CIMA (UK), began his career at PricewaterhouseCoopers and holds an MBA from Cranfield School of Management, UK. With 38 years in banking across the UK and Sri Lanka, he spent 16 years as CEO of three private commercial banks, contributing to key policy reforms including Basel III adoption, corporate governance, and financial inclusion. He has held leadership roles such as Chairman of the Asian Bankers Association, Sri Lanka Banks Association, and Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, and served on the boards of the Colombo Stock Exchange, LankaClear, and the Sri Lanka Institute of Directors. Profiled in Wiley's Asia's 25 Banking CEOs (2008), he is also a two-time recipient of the QFC Outstanding Leadership in Banking Award.

Since retiring from executive roles in 2020, Mr. Theagarajah continues to contribute through board positions across banking, finance, insurance, and manufacturing, while also advising the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and serving as a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Pathfinder Foundation. In 2022, he was named Emeritus Chairman of the Asian Bankers Association.

Speakers



Reginaldo Anthony B. Cariaso

***Deputy President and Chief Executive Officer,
Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation***

Mr. Cariaso has nearly 30 years of experience in institutional and investment banking. He has led innovations in customer experience, digital onboarding, and branch transformation, and serves as Director and Treasurer of BancNet. Before joining RCBC in 2023, he was Senior Vice President at BPI and held leadership roles at J.P. Morgan and Nomura International in Hong Kong.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, he served six years as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Submarine Force.



Shirish Pathak

***Managing Director, Fintelekt Advisory Services,
Money Mule Account Issues in Banking***

Mr. Pathak is the Managing Director of Fintelekt Advisory Services, a firm dedicated to strengthening the fight against financial crime by equipping banks, financial institutions, regulators, law enforcement, and other stakeholders with essential skills and capabilities. With expertise spanning risk management, business strategy, and anti-money laundering, he has been at the forefront of addressing critical issues such as money mule accounts and financial crime compliance. Under his leadership, Fintelekt has become a trusted partner in building stronger, safer financial ecosystems across the region.



Sonomi Tanaka

***Country Director, Bhutan Resident Mission,
Asian Development Bank***

Ms. Tanaka has been the Country Director of ADB's Bhutan Resident Mission since October 2024. With over 30 years of experience, including 25 at ADB, she previously led the Lao PDR Resident Mission and served as Chief of the Gender Equity Thematic Group. Her expertise spans gender and development, poverty reduction, social protection, and sectors including education, health, finance, infrastructure, and urban development.

She holds an MA in Gender and Development from the University of Sussex, a postgraduate diploma in development studies from Japan's Institute of Developing Economies, and a bachelor's in International Relations from the University of Tokyo.

Speakers



Sunita Kannan

***Global AI Strategy Lead,
Microsoft***

Ms. Kannan is the Global Lead of AI Strategy at Microsoft and an Azure Quantum Ambassador, helping Fortune 500 companies advance in AI, Advanced Analytics, and Quantum AI. Previously, she led AI and Responsible AI initiatives at Accenture ASEAN and other top consulting firms.

She holds a PhD candidacy in Quantum Physics from the University of Colorado (Boulder), an MBA from UCLA Anderson, an MSc in Quantum Physics from Colorado, and a BA in Mathematics & Physics (Honors) from Wellesley College.



Tshering Dolkar

***Director, Tourism,
Gelephu Mindfulness City, Bhutan***

Ms. Tshering Dolkar is the Director of Tourism Operations at the Gelephu Mindfulness City Authority (GMCA). She leads the development of tourism and guest experiences that embody mindfulness and sustainability, while being deeply rooted in Bhutanese values. Her work brings partners together, raises hospitality standards, and nurtures the next generation of mindful tourism professionals.

Before joining GMCA, Dolkar worked in the private sector and was part of the team that revived the Trans Bhutan Trail, where she focused on sustainability and destination management. She holds an MBA from the University of Canberra and a BBA from the University of New Brunswick.



Ugyen Choden

***Deputy Governor,
Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan***

Ms. Ugyen Choden was appointed Deputy Governor of the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan (RMA) on 1 December 2023. She joined RMA in 2003 and has held multiple leadership roles, most recently as Director of the Department of Financial Regulation & Supervision. She brings expertise in financial regulation, supervision, and intelligence, along with strong skills in project management, market analysis, and stakeholder engagement.

In her current role, she contributes to financial stability, inclusion, and integrity in Bhutan's financial sector and has advanced key policy and regulatory initiatives.

She holds an MBA from the University of Canberra, a Graduate Diploma in Professional Accounting from Queensland University of Technology, and a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Delhi.

Speakers



Ugyen Tenzin

***President,
DK Bank, Bhutan***

Mr. Ugyen Tenzin is a technology leader at the forefront of Bhutan's digital transformation. Before taking on DK Bhutan leadership role, Ugyen Tenzin served as both the CTO of DK; as well as the Chief for Data Science and AI at the GovTech Agency in Bhutan. He has initiated the nation's first large-scale AI project, spearheaded the development of DK bank's core digital banking platform; implemented the automated risk assessment and secure digital financial services; and collaborated with industry bodies to establish digital banking standards in Bhutan. Recently, he led the integration of Binance Pay for crypto payments for tourism, strengthening the bank's digital asset capabilities.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Statistics and IT from Bharathiar University, India and a Masters Degree in Economics from Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, Japan.



Ujjwal Deep Dahal

***Chief Executive Officer,
Druk Holding and Investments, Bhutan***

Mr. Ujjwal Deep Dahal is the CEO of Druk Holding and Investments (DHI), Bhutan's sovereign wealth and commercial arm. He leads DHI's "10X Journey," driving strategic investments, renewable energy development, and a technology-led innovation ecosystem to accelerate Bhutan's economic growth. His vision focuses on building a sustainable, diversified, and future-ready economy.

He holds a B.E. in Electrical and Electronics Engineering (PSG College of Technology, India), an M.Sc. in Electrical Engineering (University of New Brunswick, Canada), and an Executive MBA (Quantic School of Business), and is a Fulbright Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow at MIT. With over 20 years of experience in project management, energy strategy, innovation, and R&D, he previously led Bhutan Power Corporation and DHI's Innovation and Technology (InnoTech) Department.

Moderators



Austin Chiang

**Chairman,
ABA Policy Advocacy Committee and EVP, CTBC Bank**

Since joining CTBC Bank in 2013, Mr. Austin has led large-sized acquisitions and post-merger transformation in Japan and Thailand, partnership business model development with big tech/ merchants, development of critical competitiveness in selective business lines, and ESG strategy to ensure value-generative to bank and to external stakeholders.

He is a seasoned leader with experiences in strategy, management consulting, and M&As. Prior to joining CTBC, he was Principal at The Boston Consulting Group. His prior role focused on advising Asian financial institutions on growth strategy, value creation in acquisition, and technology-led transformation.



Dasho Karma Yonten

**Head, Office of Performance Management,
His Majesty's Secretariat, Bhutan**

Dasho Karma Yonten heads the Office of Performance Management under His Majesty's Secretariat and is a member of the Core Working Group for the Gelephu Mindfulness City. He was the founding CEO of Druk Holding and Investments and earlier led the Bhutan Electricity Authority and the Basochu hydropower project. He has served as Chairman of the Bank of Bhutan and currently chairs Gerab Nyed Yon, Bhutan Agro Industries, and Bhutan Lottery, while serving on several other boards.

A Fulbright and Monbusho Scholar, he holds an Electrical Engineering degree from the University of Kansas and an MBA from Hitotsubashi University, and was conferred the Red Scarf by His Majesty in 2023.



Frederic Cabay

**Managing Director, Global Co-Head of Financial Institutions,
Global Corporate Banking Division, Asia MUFG Bank, Ltd.**

Mr. Cabay is the Global Co-Head of Financial Institutions at MUFG Bank, based in Singapore, where he oversees client relationships across banks, insurers, NBFIs, sovereign wealth funds, and institutional investors. An experienced banker, he previously held senior roles at JPMorgan as Managing Director of Treasury Services for APAC and at ING Group as Head of Relationship Management for South and Southeast Asia.

A former Brussels Bar lawyer, Mr. Cabay holds a Law degree from the Catholic University of Louvain, a Master's in International Business Law from University College London, and executive training in General Management from Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School.

Moderators



Mohamed Shareef

***CEO & Managing Director,
Bank of Maldives***

Mr. Shareef is a seasoned executive with over 25 years of progressive leadership experience in the banking and financial services sector, primarily with the Bank of Maldives. Currently serving as CEO and Managing Director of Bank of Maldives since October 2025, he has a proven track record of driving digital banking initiatives, financial inclusion, and operational excellence. Shareef has held key roles including Deputy CEO, Chief Operating Officer, and Retail Banking Director, where he pioneered card services, mobile payments, and online banking in the Maldives, achieving significant growth and customer adoption. He is recognized for his strategic leadership, risk management expertise, and ability to inspire large teams.

Shareef holds an MBA in Finance from the University of Manchester and completed the Senior Executive Programme at London Business School. His career also includes consultancy roles and leadership positions in various organizations and banking associations.



Oliver Hoffmann

***Managing Director & Head of Asia,
Erste Group Bank AG***

Mr. Hoffmann is Managing Director & Head of Asia at Erste Group Bank AG, based in Hong Kong. He is a Member of the Board of Directors of the Asian Bankers Association, where he served as Vice Chairman from 2021 to 2023, and also serves as Treasurer and Board Member of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong & Macau. With over 35 years of international banking experience, he previously held senior leadership roles at UniCredit Bank AG, including Hong Kong Branch Chief Executive and Regional Head of the Financial Institutions Group Asia-Pacific, as well as earlier positions at Deutsche Bank and Bayerische Vereinsbank. Having lived and worked in Hong Kong since 1997, Oliver has deep expertise across corporate finance, structured lending, trade finance, and financial institutions business.

He holds degrees in Banking from Friedrich-List-Berufsschule Ulm, Business Administration & Economics from Verwaltungs- und Wirtschaftsakademie Munich, and is an alumnus of the Pacific Rim Bankers Program at the University of Washington.



Reginaldo Anthony B. Cariaso

***Deputy President and Chief Executive Officer,
Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation***

Mr. Cariaso has nearly 30 years of experience in institutional and investment banking. He has led innovations in customer experience, digital onboarding, and branch transformation, and serves as Director and Treasurer of BancNet. Before joining RCBC in 2023, he was Senior Vice President at BPI and held leadership roles at J.P. Morgan and Nomura International in Hong Kong.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, he served six years as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Submarine Force.

Social Events

Welcome Dinner

Date: 15th September 2025

Time: 05:30 PM

Venue: Plenary Hall, Dungkar Dzong, Paro

Performance



Traditional Performing Arts and Music Division

Ministry of Home Affairs

The Traditional Performing Arts and Music Division was formally established under the command of His Majesty the Third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck in 1954 with ultimate objectives to preserve and promote the traditional performing arts (folk songs, music and mask dances). Since then, the division has been playing a pivotal role in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage. The academy actively participates in national celebrations and international cultural exchange events.

Social Events

Farewell Dinner

Date: 16th September 2025

Time: 06:30 PM

Venue: Plenary Hall, Dungkar Dzong, Paro

Performance



Misty Terrace

Bhutanese Musical Band

Misty Terrace is a contemporary musical band from Bhutan known for its unique fusion of traditional Bhutanese sounds with modern genres such as rock, pop, and folk. Drawing inspiration from the country's serene landscapes and rich cultural heritage, the band weaves poetic lyrics with soulful melodies to create a sound that resonates deeply with both local and international audiences. With a growing presence in the Bhutanese music scene, Misty Terrace is celebrated for their heartfelt performances and their role in bringing a fresh, yet culturally grounded, musical voice to the region.

Activities at the Conference



ZORIG CHUSUM

13 Arts & Crafts of Bhutan

(Pop-up store)

Zorig Chusum refers to Bhutan's traditional "Thirteen Arts and Crafts," which are integral to the country's cultural identity and Buddhist philosophy. The National Institute for Zorig Chusum, is dedicated to preserving and promoting these skills, which include painting, sculpting, weaving, wood carving, calligraphy, and more. Delegates explore and purchase handmade souvenirs from the on-site shop, providing an immersive experience into Bhutanese artistry.



MEDITATION

Experience Mindfulness

(On-site)

Meditation in Bhutan is a profound, centuries-old practice deeply rooted in its Vajrayana Buddhist heritage, offering a spiritual way of life and opportunities for transformative retreats at monasteries and dedicated centers. Guided by a meditation teacher, delegates can engage in mindfulness, breathing exercises, and contemplative practices.



MENJONG SORIG

Pulse-reading & Traditional Bhutanese Medicine *(On-site)*

Menjong Sorig, which means "Country of Medicinal Plants," refers to the traditional medicine of Bhutan, a form of Sowa-Rigpa (the science of healing) deeply rooted in Buddhist practices and local knowledge. Pulse reading is a key diagnostic technique within this system, where practitioners analyze pulse characteristics to understand a patient's health and overall wellbeing.

Activities at the Conference



DSP - CHOEGO

De-suung Skilling Programme (DSP)

(Pop-up store)

The De-suung Skilling Programme (DSP) equips Bhutanese youth with global-standard skills through short-term trainings, preparing them for entrepreneurship, self-employment, and meaningful economic participation. A flagship initiative is ChoeGo, a business incubation center in Thimphu built by Desuups, which showcases DSP-founded ventures such as traditional crafts, ceramics, jewelry, bike rentals, and wellness services, alongside business support facilities. ChoeGo also houses the ChoeGo Fab Lab, part of MIT's global network, where youth gain hands-on experience with advanced technologies like 3D printing and laser cutting. Together, DSP and ChoeGo empower young Bhutanese to transform skills into innovation, enterprise, and nation-building.



KELZANG HANDICRAFT

Exquisite Bhutanese Textiles

(Pop-up store)

Kelzang Handicraft has been producing exquisite Bhutanese textiles and crafts since 1995. Founded by Kelzang Wangmo from the renowned weaving village of Khoma in Lhuntse, the shop specializes in Kishutharas, the exquisite "skirt" part of traditional Bhutanese attire. Kelzang designs most of the textiles herself, supported by talented women weavers from Thimphu and Lhuntse. Her exceptional work has earned several awards from the Royal Textile Academy. Delegates are warmly invited to explore and shop unique, award-winning Bhutanese textiles and crafts at their pop-up store.



CHHOM BHUTAN

Bhutanese Clothing Brand

(Pop-up store)

CHHOM is a soulful gift and souvenir clothing brand from Bhutan. Since starting their journey in 2021, CHHOM has dedicated itself to creating joyful and unique gifts inspired by the tradition of sharing memories and experiences from travels. Every CHHOM product is a celebration of Bhutan's rich heritage, designed to bring delight and connection. Delegates are warmly encouraged to visit the CHHOM pop-up and shop from a diverse range of meaningful gifts and souvenirs that truly embody the spirit of Bhutan.

Venue



Dungkar Estate

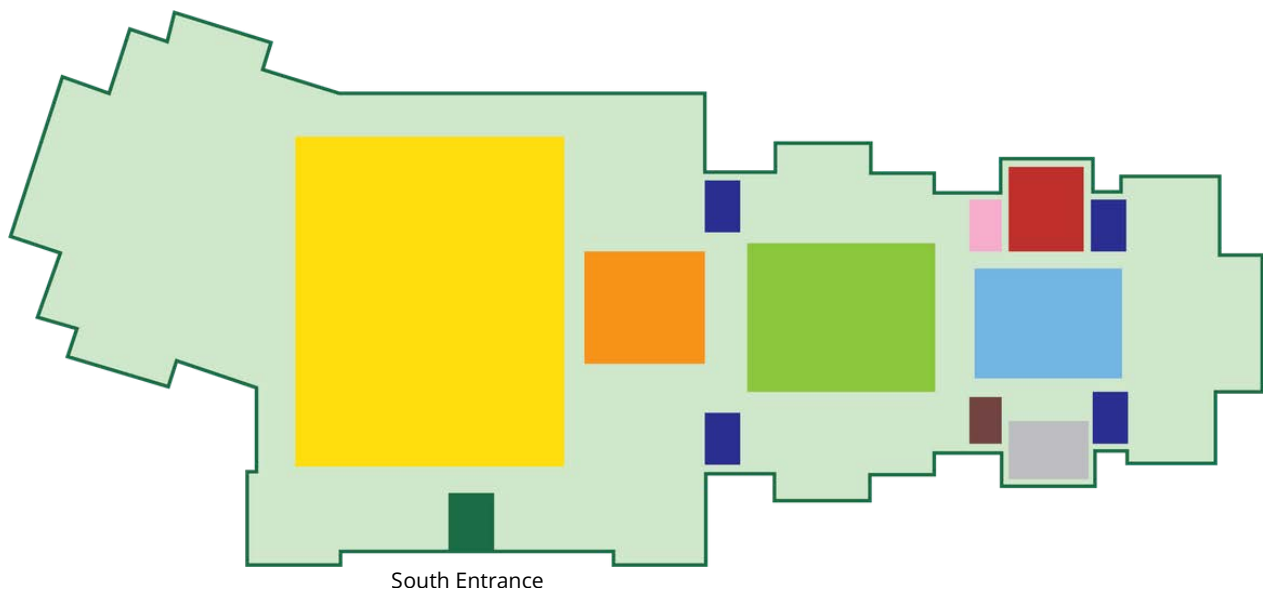
Nestled atop the Pangbisa highlands in Paro, Dungkar Dzong, commissioned by His Majesty The King, is a breathtaking fusion of Bhutanese tradition and 21st century innovation. It stands as the largest dzong in Bhutan, constructed over seven years with local stone and wood crafted by skilled artisans.

As the home of the Druk Gyalpo's Institute, the dzong is a nucleus for education and dialogue: it incorporates the Bhutan Baccalaureate curriculum—designed to nurture critical thinking, mindfulness, and civic responsibility—within its serene courtyards and modern convention wing.

Dungkar Dzong also shines as a venue for global conversation. It has hosted landmark gatherings like the Bhutan Innovation Forum and the Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscapes Conference, positioning Bhutan on the world stage as a beacon of innovation rooted in cultural values.

In essence, Dungkar Dzong is more than a fortress, it is a living monument that bridges Bhutan's spiritual heritage with its aspirations for education, innovation, and global engagement.

Floor Plan



-  Plenary Hall (*Ground Floor*)
- 
 - Zorig Chusum (Arts & Crafts) Pop-up Store (*Ground Floor*)
 - Meditation Room (*Top Floor*)
-  Designated Photo Area (*Ground Floor*)
-  Founder's Hall (*Below Ground Floor*)
- 
 - Dining Hall (*Below Ground Floor*)
 - Pop-up Stores (*Ground Floor*)
-  Press Room (*Below Ground Floor*)
-  Board Room (*Below Ground Floor*)
-  Speaker's Lounge (*Below Ground Floor*)
-  Restroom

General Information



About Bhutan

Bhutan is a small Himalayan kingdom known for its stunning natural landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and unique development philosophy of Gross National Happiness. Nestled between India and China, it is the world's first carbon-negative country, with deep-rooted Buddhist traditions and a strong commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable living.



Language

Dzongkha is the official language but English is widely spoken.



Climate

Bhutan's climate varies by altitude, but is generally temperate with cold winters and warm summers. Thimphu and Paro experience all four seasons, with September marking the autumn and harvest season. A few things to keep in mind before traveling to Bhutan:

- September is the end of the rainy season, so the weather can change quickly — carry appropriate rain gear (an umbrella would suffice).
- Trails may be slippery, wet, or muddy, especially when walking through paddy fields or villages.
- If you wish to hike, take time to study the trail first, as conditions may be challenging in places.
- Bhutan's mountainous terrain means frequent ascents and descents, so expect some physically demanding stretches — particularly important for travelers with leg or mobility issues.



Time Zone

Bhutan time is 6 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT +6)



Currency

Bhutan's currency is the Ngultrum (Nu.) and it is at par with the Indian Rupees. Foreign currencies can be exchanged at the airport and banks. You can also load Nu. into your goBoB wallet app using your personal cards to make seamless payments via QR codes across the country. Most major credit and debit cards are also accepted at many shops and establishments through POS terminals.

Upon Arrival



At the Airport

BoB officials will present at the airport to assist the delegates with queries and immigration process.

At the Hotel

Help Desks will be available at the following hotels:

- Dawa at Hilltop
- Le Meridien, Riverfront
- Tashi Namgay Resort

Registration and handing out of Conference Kits will be done at the respective hotels.

Note: All Delegates and Speakers will require ID Tags to enter the venue, and will be required to complete registration at their respective hotels.

Mobile & Internet

The delegates can obtain a physical SIM or an e-SIM through Bhutan Telecom or TashiCell counters located at the exit point of the airport. Officials at the airport will help to set it up for local connectivity, providing access to mobile and internet services.

Note: International calls will not be available offline.

goBoB (Virtual Wallet)

goBoB is a virtual wallet powered by Bank of Bhutan through which a user can store money in Nu. for local transactions through QR Scan & Pay and recharging/purchasing phone balance and purchasing cellular data packages. It is available for download in the App Store and PlayStore.

Key Contact

Ms. Tashi Chenzom, +975 - 17646941

Sponsors

Host



Host Bank



Main Sponsor



Sponsors



Supporting Sponsors



National Sponsors



Tour Program (Optional)



OPTION 1 -

Hike to Taktshang

(Tiger's Nest Monastery)

The hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery (Paro Taktsang) is a breathtaking journey through pine forests and rugged trails, leading to one of Bhutan's most iconic landmarks.

Perched on a cliffside 3,000 feet above the Paro Valley, the monastery offers stunning views and a deep spiritual atmosphere. The trek takes about 5-6 hours round trip and is a rewarding experience for both nature lovers and cultural enthusiasts.



OPTION 2 -

Visit to Ta Dzong

(Bhutan's National Museum),

& Visit to Paro Town

A visit to Ta Dzong, Bhutan's National Museum in Paro, offers a fascinating glimpse into the country's rich history, art, and culture. Housed in a former watchtower overlooking Rinpung Dzong, the museum features a diverse collection of artifacts, including ancient weapons, religious relics, traditional costumes, and thangka paintings. Its unique circular structure and panoramic views make it a must-visit cultural landmark.

A visit to Paro Town is perfect for souvenir shopping, offering a charming mix of traditional and modern Bhutanese crafts. Stroll through its vibrant streets to find handmade textiles, prayer flags, wooden masks, local jewelry, and other authentic keepsakes. The town's relaxed atmosphere and welcoming shops with plenty of cafes and restaurants make it an enjoyable spot to pick up meaningful mementos of your time in Bhutan.



41st ABA

General Meeting & Conference

September 15-16, 2025
Dungkar Estate, Paro, Bhutan



www.41aba.bt