



BIMSTEC E-Newsletter

September 2026



Message from BIMSTEC Secretary General

Welcome to September 2026 Edition of our Monthly BIMSTEC E-Newsletter.

September 2026 was a significant month for the BIMSTEC Secretariat, as we celebrated the 12th Anniversary of its establishment in Dhaka, highlighting the Secretariat's contribution to forging regional cooperation for security and sustainable development of its member States under BIMSTEC.

Another key development during this month was the signing of the Host Country Agreement, establishing in Colombo for the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility (TTF), between Sri Lanka and the Secretariat. Simultaneously, the 4th meeting of the Expert Group on Science, Technology and Innovation concurred to hold a virtual start-up Conclave in December 2026 and to establish thematic Groups on food security and vector-borne disease control.

To strengthen cooperation in Security Sector, the 11th Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Joint Working Group was held in New Delhi. Further, India organised a training program on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism for BIMSTEC member States in Ghaziabad. Complementing these initiatives, an Expert Roundtable, co-hosted by the Secretariat and BIPSS, proposed possible initiatives for strengthening security cooperation under BIMSTEC.

A Workshop, funded by ADB, held in Bangkok, brought together policymakers and maritime experts from the BIMSTEC member States to exchange views and experiences on effective implementation of the Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation. The 3rd meeting of the Expert Group on the Himalayan Science Council finalized the Concept Paper, outlining the next steps for early establishment of the Council.

BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC), Bengaluru, organized a five-day capacity building Programme on "New & Emerging Technologies in Power Sector". India hosted the 3rd Conference on Traditional Medicine, proposing a dedicated regional BIMSTEC Centre, while Thailand convened the 4th Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Tourism to plan a series of events in commemoration of the 30th Anniversary Year of BIMSTEC.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation of Myanmar organized a virtual knowledge-sharing workshop on Aquatic Animal Disease Management in the BIMSTEC member States.

I called on Sri Lanka's Foreign Secretary and discussed regional cooperation, praising Sri Lanka's leadership in Science, Technology & Innovation, Health, and HRD Sectors while appreciating its offer to host the inaugural BIMSTEC Health Ministers Meeting in November 2026 in Colombo.

I delivered lectures at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute in Colombo ("BIMSTEC at 30") and IIM Bangalore, addressed VIJIGISHU-2026, organized by Amity University, ICWA, and MGIMO) on Indo-Pacific Strategic Frameworks. I was interviewed by Ada Derana and News 1st on expanding regional trade, security and connectivity in an uncertain world. I also participated in a Round Table Session during the XXI International Conference on Public Policy & Management to discuss the role of BIMSTEC in forging regional cooperation.

With the aim of expanding our academic outreach, the Secretariat organized and interacted with the students at the University of Chittagong. The Secretariat also strengthened multilateral partnerships, including holding strategic dialogue with UNODC, and participated at the Seminar, titled 'Beyond Borders: Tourism Connectivity between South & Southeast Asia'.

BIMSTEC remains a shining example of regional multilateralism and South-South Cooperation and it is firmly committed to realizing the goal of a peaceful, prosperous and connected Bay of Bengal region.

We deeply value your readership and welcome your suggestions both to strengthen regional cooperation under BIMSTEC and to improve this E-Newsletter.

Indra Mani Pandey
BIMSTEC Secretary General

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BIMSTEC Secretariat Marks its 12th Anniversary



The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) celebrated the 12th Anniversary of the establishment of its Secretariat at a reception held on 14 September 2026 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.



The Reception was graced by H.E. Mr. Humaiun Kobir, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as the Chief Guest. The reception was also attended by H.E. Mr. M. Iqbal Hossain, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, together with Ambassadors and High Commissioners of BIMSTEC member States as well as Ambassadors of Embassies in Dhaka along with representatives from diplomatic missions; members from business, media, think tanks, culture and academic communities; developmental partners; and officials of the BIMSTEC Secretariat.

Welcoming the guests, BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, highlighted the progress made by BIMSTEC in strengthening regional cooperation and developing the institutional framework required to function as an effective regional organization. He noted that BIMSTEC's cooperation is guided by its Charter and the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 and supported by an extensive institutional architecture, comprising Summits, Ministerial and Senior Officials' Meetings, sectoral mechanisms and BIMSTEC Centres. He also highlighted BIMSTEC's growing partnerships with international and regional organizations in support of the shared development aspirations of its member States.



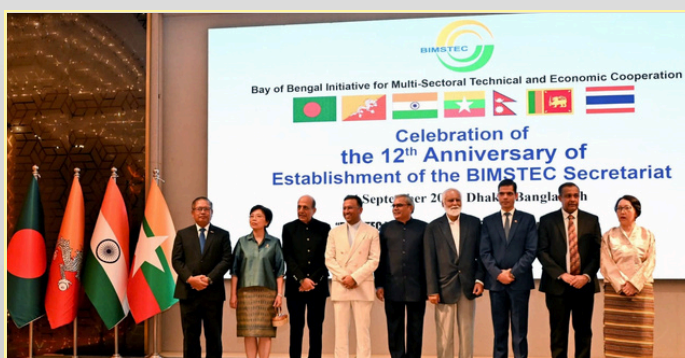


In his remarks, the Chief Guest, H.E. Mr. Humaiun Kobir, urged the BIMSTEC member States to remain committed to regional cooperation despite bilateral differences and tensions, calling for mutual trust, political will and a shared sense of purpose. He said Bangladesh would work closely with the member States and the Secretariat in the coming months to advance implementation across BIMSTEC mechanisms and to prepare for the next BIMSTEC Summit. He highlighted the role of BIMSTEC as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia and stressed the need for Member States to work together in addressing common challenges and advancing shared prosperity.



The celebration also featured a cake-cutting ceremony by the Chief Guest, the BIMSTEC Secretary General and Heads of Missions of BIMSTEC member States, followed by a group photo session, and concluded with a reception dinner.

The BIMSTEC Secretariat was established on 13 September 2014 in Dhaka pursuant to the decision of the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary General. It implements the decisions and directives of the member States and monitors and reports on the progress in regional cooperation under BIMSTEC, contributing to the realisation of the shared vision of a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable Bay of Bengal region.



Signing Ceremony for Establishing BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Sri Lanka



The Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the BIMSTEC Secretariat for establishing the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Sri Lanka was signed, in Colombo, on 11 September 2026, marking a significant milestone in advancing regional cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation.

The Agreement was signed by Mr. M. L. Gammampila, Secretary (Acting), Ministry of Science and Technology, Sri Lanka, on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, and H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, BIMSTEC Secretary General, on behalf of the BIMSTEC Secretariat.

The signing of the Host Country Agreement reflects the shared commitment of the BIMSTEC States to strengthening cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation, including through creating mechanisms to support technology transfer for the benefit of the member States.

The signing of the Host Country Agreement marks the final step towards operationalisation of the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility, realising the long-standing commitment to establishing a functioning regional mechanism for facilitating technology transfer.

A Governing Board of the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility has been constituted and the Board convened its first Meeting virtually on 03 August 2026 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

As the Host Country, Sri Lanka will play the role of anchor in operationalisation of the Facility, in close cooperation with the BIMSTEC Secretariat and the member States.



4th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Working Group on Tourism



The 4th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Working Group on Tourism was held in Nonthaburi, Thailand, on 14-15 September 2026. The Group deliberated on a number of important initiatives, including BIMSTEC Virtual Tourism Information Centre, BIMSTEC Tourism Fund, entrance fee parity across archaeological/tourist sites of BIMSTEC region and organisation of tourism-related events to commemorate the 30th Anniversary Year of BIMSTEC.

4th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation Sector



The Fourth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation sector was held on 11 September 2026 in Colombo, Sri Lanka,.

The Expert Group observed the Signing Ceremony of the "Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the BIMSTEC Secretariat for establishing BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Sri Lanka". It agreed to expedite implementation of the outstanding activities under the BIMSTEC Plan of Action on STI (2023-2027) and complete them by 2027; convene the first BIMSTEC Start-up Conclave virtually in the first half of December 2026; and establish two thematic groups on Food Security and Vector-Borne Disease Control, following the 2nd STI Forum and Boot Camp to develop proposals for capacity building, technology and knowledge exchange and potential joint projects among BIMSTEC member States.

3rd Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on the Himalayan Science Council

The 3rd Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on the Himalayan Science Council (EG-HSC), held virtually in India on 24 September 2026, finalized the Concept Paper for the establishment of the BIMSTEC Himalayan Science Council and discussed the way forward for early establishment of the Council.



The Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime held its 11th Meeting in New Delhi on 28–29 September 2026



The 11th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (JWG-CTTC) was held in New Delhi, India, on 28–29 September 2026. The JWG made necessary preparations for the forthcoming Meetings of the BIMSTEC Senior Officials of Home Ministries and BIMSTEC Home Ministers. It also endorsed the outcome documents of its constituent Sub-Groups, including Action Plans on combating human trafficking, drug control and illicit financial flows as well as the MoU on Capacity Building in AML-CFT.



2nd BIMSTEC STI Forum and Boot Camp on "Food Security and Vector-Borne Disease Control"



The Second BIMSTEC Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Forum and Boot Camp was held virtually on 10 September 2026 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, under the broad theme of "Addressing Food Security to Eliminate Poverty, Combat Climate Change and Achieve the SDGs through Women's Empowerment."

As part of the Second Thematic Series on Food Security and Vector-Borne Disease Control, the Boot Camp focused on the role of STI in strengthening food security and agricultural productivity, while also addressing the growing challenges posed by climate change and vector-borne diseases. It brought together experts from BIMSTEC member States to exchange experiences and explore practical, science & technology-driven solutions to shared regional challenges.

India hosts the Third BIMSTEC Conference on Traditional Medicine Knowledge, Genetic Resources and Intellectual Property Right and the Second Meeting of BIMSTEC Nodal Group on Traditional Medicine



The Third BIMSTEC Conference on Traditional Medicine Knowledge (TMK), Genetic Resources (GR) and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), along with the Second meeting of BIMSTEC Nodal Group on Traditional Medicine, was held on 16-17 September 2026, organised by the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, together with All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) Goa.

The Second Meeting of BIMSTEC Nodal Group on Traditional Medicine deliberated on key areas of regional cooperation, including institutional and policy cooperation; standards and trade; documentation and capacity building; and implementation mechanisms. Member States reaffirmed their commitment to supporting one another in areas of TMK, GR and IPR, providing a strong foundation for continued regional cooperation.



BIMSTEC Charts the Way Forward for Implementation of the Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation



A workshop on operationalisation of the Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation (AMTC) was held from 9-10 September 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Workshop brought together policymakers and maritime experts from the BIMSTEC member States to exchange views on effective operationalisation of the Agreement, including the role of the Joint Shipping Committee, delineation of Standard Operating Procedures, enhancing port-to-port connectivity and digital maritime solutions.

During the discussions, participants from those member States which have not yet ratified AMTC were encouraged to expedite the ratification process and nominate representatives to the Joint Shipping Committee to support the coordinated implementation of the AMTC. Participants also undertook a field visit to Bangkok Port, gaining first-hand insights into port operations and maritime logistics.

From the Shores of the Bay of Bengal: Advancing Regional Cooperation through BIMSTEC



The BIMSTEC Secretariat, in collaboration with the Department of Law, University of Chittagong, organised an outreach Programme, titled “From the Shores of the Bay of Bengal: Advancing Regional Cooperation through BIMSTEC” on 03 September 2026 at the University of Chittagong, Chattogram, Bangladesh.

The Programme brought together students and academics to promote awareness and youth engagement in advancing regional cooperation in Bay of Bengal region. In addition to the keynote address, delivered by Ms. Sonam C. Namgyel, Director of Public Diplomacy and External Publicity, BIMSTEC Secretariat, Young Scholars Certificates were awarded to top three write-ups submitted by students of the University of Chittagong.

Expert Roundtable on “Strengthening the BIMSTEC Security Pillar: Progress, Challenges and the Way Forward”



The BIMSTEC Secretariat, in collaboration with the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), organized an Expert Roundtable on “Strengthening the BIMSTEC Security Pillar: Progress, Challenges and the Way Forward” at the BIMSTEC Secretariat on 15 September 2026.

The Roundtable brought together experts and stakeholders to exchange views on emerging regional security challenges and ways to further strengthen cooperation in Security sector under BIMSTEC. It proposed several initiatives, including preparation of BIMSTEC Security Roadmap 2030, completion of the Legal–Operational Chain, establishment of a BIMSTEC Security Coordination Network, development of a Maritime Resilience Package, a Cyber and Financial-Crime Compact, and enhanced cooperation on Human and Climate Security.

2nd Capacity Building Workshop on Project Proposal Development and Monitoring & Evaluation

The BIMSTEC Secretariat successfully conducted the 2nd Capacity Building Workshop on Project Proposal Development and Monitoring & Evaluation, on 01–02 September 2026. Facilitated by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with external resource persons, the two-day Workshop aimed to enhance the technical and operational capacities of relevant officials in developing high-quality project proposals and establishing effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks.



Training Programme on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism for BIMSTEC Member States

As a result of the decision of the 13th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism, India organized a Training Programme on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism for BIMSTEC Member States from 7–11 September 2026 at the Central Detective Training Institute (CDTI) in Ghaziabad. The Training covered key areas such as money laundering and its impact on society, investigation of money laundering cases, the role of central authorities in AML/CFT, forensic audit and digital evidence, etc.



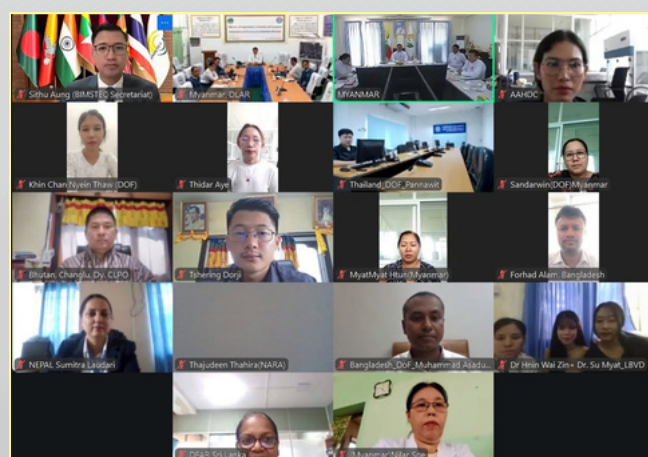
Capacity Building Programme on “New & Emerging Technologies in Power Sector (Generation, Transmission, Distribution & End Use)”



The BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC), Bengaluru, India, organized a five-day Capacity Building Programme on “New & Emerging Technologies in Power Sector (Generation, Transmission, Distribution & End Use)” from 14 to 18 September 2026 in Bengaluru, India. It covered a wide range of areas, including Renewable Energy Technologies, Smart Grid Technologies, Green Hydrogen, Carbon Capture, Emerging Nuclear Technologies, Advanced Transmission Technologies and Planning, and Artificial Intelligence in Power Systems. Participants also visited Kolar POWERGRID HVDC Station and Ohmium International Green Hydrogen Electrolyzer Gigafactory, getting practical exposure to advanced energy technologies and infrastructure.

Virtual Knowledge Sharing Program on Aquatic Animal Disease Management in the BIMSTEC member States

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation of Myanmar organized a virtual Knowledge Sharing Program on Aquatic Animal Disease Management in the BIMSTEC member States on 24 September 2026. It brought together Government representatives from the BIMSTEC member States to exchange information and good practices on aquatic animal disease surveillance systems, monitoring and reporting procedures, laboratory capacity and rapid response protocols. Participants also explored the opportunity for establishment of a regional Laboratory and Expertise Network on aquatic animal disease management to facilitate the exchange of technical knowledge and expertise and support coordinated efforts to prevent, detect and respond to aquatic animal disease outbreaks.



The BIMSTEC Secretariat participated at the Seminar titled 'Beyond Borders: Tourism Connectivity between South & South East Asia'

The BIMSTEC Secretariat participated at the Seminar, titled 'Beyond Borders: Tourism Connectivity between South & South East Asia', which was organised by Bangladesh Outbound Tour Operators Association (BOTOA) at Bangladesh Travel Mart 2026 (BTM 2026) in Dhaka. Director for People to People Relations, Mr. Uttam K. Shahi, highlighted the tourism potential of the BIMSTEC member States and outlined the initiatives undertaken by BIMSTEC to promote Intra BIMSTEC tourism.



BIMSTEC Secretariat Project Management Unit organized a three-day Regional Consultative Workshop in Colombo



The BIMSTEC Secretariat Project Management Unit organized a three-day Regional Consultative Workshop in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 21–23 September 2026, bringing together experts from the member States, the Quadripartite and the World Bank.

The Workshop deliberated on key priorities, including Regional Priority List of Zoonotic Diseases, cross-border surveillance and data-sharing mechanisms, progress on establishment of the proposed BIMSTEC Regional Zoonotic Disease Observatory-Early Warning and Surveillance in Bangladesh and institutionalizing regional coordination and resource mobilization. The Workshop concluded with a day-long visit to the proposed BIMSTEC Center of Excellence on Public Health at the National Institute of Health Sciences in Kalutara, Sri Lanka.



BIMSTEC at 30 : Three Decades of Partnership, Progress and Regional Cooperation



BIMSTEC Secretary General H.E. Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey delivered a guest lecture, titled “BIMSTEC at 30: Three Decades of Partnership, Progress and Regional Cooperation” on 10 September 2026 at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIRSS).

In his address, Secretary General reflected on BIMSTEC's three-decade long journey of partnership and regional cooperation, highlighting the Organisation's achievements, the importance of collective efforts by member States and the need to further strengthen regional collaboration for shared progress and prosperity.



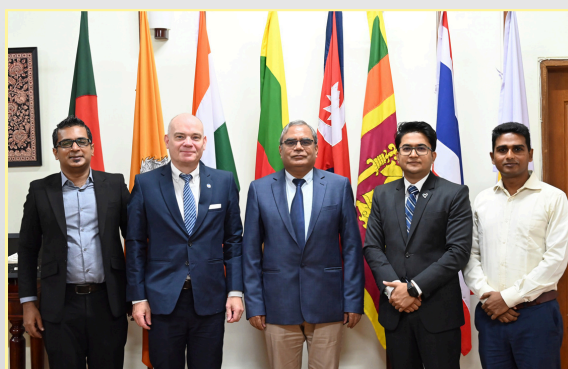
BIMSTEC Secretary General calls on Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, of Sri Lanka

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, called on Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism of Sri Lanka and discussed BIMSTEC's progress in forging regional cooperation. He appreciated Sri Lanka's leadership in Science Technology & Innovation, Health and Human Resource Development sectors. Secretary General also welcomed Sri Lanka's offer to host the inaugural Meeting of the BIMSTEC Health Ministers in Sri Lanka November 2026.



Regional Representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) - South Asia calls on BIMSTEC Secretary General

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, received Mr. Kristian Hölge, Regional Representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) - South Asia, at the BIMSTEC Secretariat on 16 September 2026. They discussed potential areas for cooperation in combating transnational crime, including through implementation of the Action Plan under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between BIMSTEC and UNODC, signed during the 6th BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, Thailand, in April 2025.



Myanmar Ambassador to Bangladesh Calls on BIMSTEC Secretary General

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, held a courtesy meeting with H.E. U Kyaw Soe Moe, Myanmar's Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh, at the BIMSTEC Secretariat on 29 September 2026. During the meeting, they exchanged views on matters of mutual interest, including Myanmar's role in regional cooperation under BIMSTEC.



BIMSTEC Secretary General Participates at a Round Table Session during the XXI International Conference on Public Policy & Management

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, participated at a Round Table Session during the XXI International Conference on Public Policy & Management, organized by the Centre for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, on 3 September 2026. Addressing the Session, Secretary General highlighted the significance of regional multilateralism in advancing sustainable development and security cooperation and the salience of BIMSTEC in forging regional cooperation in Bay of Bengal region.



BIMSTEC Secretary General Addresses VIJIGISHU-2026 in India



BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, participated as a distinguished speaker at VIJIGISHU-2026, organised by Amity Institute of International Studies (AIIS), Amity University, Uttar Pradesh, India, in collaboration with Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and MGIMO University, on 17-18 September 2026.

During the Plenary Session on “Indo-Pacific Strategic Frameworks: FOIP, QUAD, BIMSTEC, IORA & IPOI in Shaping Regional Order,” Secretary General shared valuable perspectives on regional cooperation in the context of the evolving strategic landscape in the Indo-Pacific and highlighted BIMSTEC as a shining example of South-South cooperation, led by India. He also delivered Valedictory Address, offering his insightful reflections about the contemporary world, India’s approach to it and the role of BIMSTEC.





**BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL
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