BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory

The First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Culture was held in Paro, Bhutan on 23-25 May 2006. The Meeting adopted the Paro Initiative that proposed the establishment of BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission (BCIC) and the BIMTEC Cultural Industries Observatory (BCIO) in Bhutan.

Accordingly, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of BCIC and BCIO was signed during the Third BIMSTEC Summit, held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 4 March 2014.

As per the MoU, a high level BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission was established as an oversight mechanism for the Observatory.

The Commission held its first meeting virtually on 20 September 2021. The Meeting negotiated and finalized the draft text of the Procedures and Rules of BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission and recommended for its submission through BIMSTEC Permanent Working Committee (BPWC) to the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Culture for approval.

The First Meeting of the Commission also recommended Bhutan to prepare a draft Organogram of BCIC including the Terms of References (ToR) for appointing Director, Professional and General Service Staffs as well as their emoluments and other administrative and financial matters. The draft Organogram and Terms of References received from Bhutan were circulated to the Member states on 07 August 2023.

**Function of the Observatory**

- Carry out directives received from the Commission, including those contained in the Paro Initiative.
- Establish a BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Database and
update it on a continuous basis.
- Undertake research, statistical analysis of data and clearing house functions.
- Develop indicators for impact of the activities on poverty reduction and community vitalization.
- Create and maintain a web-portal on the Cultural Industries profile of the BIMSTEC Region.
- Support Member States in need assessment, as requested, and development of cultural industry plans and strategy.
- Prepare a consolidated calendar of major cultural industries expositions in BIMSTEC region.
- Network with relevant institutions/stakeholders working in the area of Cultural Industries.
- Undertake such activities, as may be assigned to it, by the Commission from time to time.
- Receive project based funding, as approved by the Commission.

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