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PRESS RELEASE

3RD BIMSTEC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON AGRICULTURE (09 April 2025, Kathmandu)

The 3rd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture was held on 09 April in Kathmandu, Nepal. It was preceded by 3rd BIMSTEC Senior Officials' Meeting on Agriculture on 08 April, 2025.

Chaired by Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Development of Nepal, H.E. Mr. Ram Nath Adkikari, the Meeting brought together Agriculture Ministers from the BIMSTEC member States, both in person and virtual, to review the progress and outline the future course of regional cooperation in Agriculture, food security, fisheries and livestock.

BIMSTEC Agriculture Ministers, in their Statements at the Meeting, expressed their strong commitment to enhancing collaboration in agriculture, food security, fisheries and livestock sectors. They highlighted the importance of adopting innovative and climate-resilient technologies, aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture and enhancing food security of the member States.

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Indra Mani Pandey, in his Report to the Meeting, outlined the progress made since 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture, which was held virtually in New Delhi in November 2022. The Ministers commended the progress outlined in Secretary General's Report and deliberated on the future initiatives to strengthen regional cooperation, as outlined in the Report of 3rd Meeting of Senior Officials on Agriculture, such as establishment of a BIMSTEC food reserve, promotion of regional trade in agricultural commodities, capacity building workshops and programs for sharing of knowledge, technologies, and best practices in agriculture, fisheries and livestock. They also discussed the proposal for establishing a seed bank and cooperation in climate-resilient agriculture. While appreciating India's proposal for setting up a Centre of Excellence in Agriculture, they underlined its swift implementation.

As the key decision-making mechanism, the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (BAMM) guides regional cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors, setting direction and promoting collective action to enhance food security and increase resilience to climate change.

During the Meeting, the Ministers also adopted the Plan of Action on BIMSTEC Fisheries and Livestock Cooperation, which outlines a comprehensive framework to revitalize the fisheries and livestock sector in the region. They also adopted a Joint Statement, calling upon the BIMSTEC member States to strengthen regional cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors, under BIMSTEC.

Established in 2005 and restructured in 2022, the BIMSTEC Food, Agriculture, and Livestock Sector plays a pivotal role in advancing regional food security and promoting sustainable rural development. The institutional framework comprising the Expert Group (EGMAC), the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM-A), and the Ministerial Meeting (BAMM), provides a structured platform for policy coordination and initiatives. Under the BIMSTEC Plan of Action (2023–2027), 17 targeted initiatives are being implemented, including scholarship programmes, capacity building workshops, promotion of good agricultural practices, and sustainable fisheries development.

BIMSTEC comprises seven countries of the Bay of Bengal region: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It pursues regional cooperation in 7 broad sectors: Agriculture & Food Security; Connectivity; Environment & Climate Change; People-to-People Contact; Science, Technology & Innovation; Security; and Trade, Investment & Development. The cooperation also covers 8 sub-sectors: Blue Economy, Mountain Economy, Energy, Disaster Management, Fisheries & Livestock, Poverty Alleviation, Health, and Human Resource Development.