



BIMSTEC

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation



July-September 2019 Issue

NEWSLETTER

Volume 79, Issue No. 03, ISSN 2415-4318

Editorial



During the current quarter, the Secretariat supported the holding of a number of core meetings of the organization, remained in close contact with the governments of Member States and took initiatives to enhance collaboration with other organizations having similar aims and objectives including the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank. In particular, my calls on the Honorable Minister of External Affairs of India H.E. Mr. Subrahmanyum Jaishankar and the Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka His Excellency Mr. Tilak Marapana provided me the opportunity to brief them on BIMSTEC's activities and seek their support and guidance for making further progress.

The BIMSTEC Secretariat wishes to express its appreciation for our valued readers for their positive comments and encouragement and look forward to remaining in touch through the BIMSTEC E-newsletter.

Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam
Secretary General of BIMSTEC

Celebrating 22 Years of BIMSTEC



His Excellency Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, M.P., Hon'ble Foreign Minister, Government of Bangladesh with Ambassadors/ High Commissioners, representatives from the BIMSTEC Member States and Secretary General of BIMSTEC H.E. M. Shahidul Islam attended the reception.

The Secretariat of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) hosted a Reception at the Secretariat premise at Gulshan, Dhaka to mark the Twenty Second Anniversary of the establishment of BIMSTEC. Ambassadors/ High Commissioners of the BIMSTEC Member States and representatives from the Diplomatic Corps, international community, officials of the Government of Bangladesh and friends of BIMSTEC including members of print and electronic media joined the Reception.

His Excellency Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, M.P., Hon'ble Foreign Minister, Government of Bangladesh graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. During his address to the gatherings, Hon'ble Foreign Minister emphasized importance of BIMSTEC in regional integration and as a bridge between South and South-East Asia. He stated that BIMSTEC should focus more on the areas of trade and investment, connectivity, energy and security, agriculture, tourism, climate change and disaster management and people-to-people contacts to garner visible outcome.

Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam, Secretary General of BIMSTEC in his welcome address appraised the guests about BIMSTEC's recent initiatives to promote economic growth and social progress in the Bay of Bengal region. He also expressed deep appreciation for the Government of Bangladesh for its continued support to the BIMSTEC Secretariat since its establishment in 2014.

IN THIS ISSUE

- ✓ [Celebrating 22 Years of BIMSTEC](#)
- ✓ [BIMSTEC Events](#)
- ✓ [Secretary General's Activities](#)
- ✓ [BIMSTEC on NEWS](#)

National Mourning Day Observed



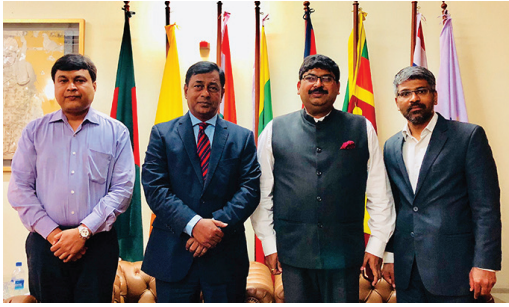
BIMSTEC Secretary General Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam placed floral wreath at the Mausoleum of **Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** on 15 August 2019, Tungipara, Gopalganj.

Secretary General of BIMSTEC called on H.E. Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister of India



Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam, Secretary General of BIMSTEC called on His Excellency Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister of India in New Delhi, India on 23 July 2019.

Secretary General's Activities



Deputy High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Mr. Bishwadip Dey called on to the Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam on 04 July 2019.

The Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam attended the First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 11-12 July 2019.



Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam met Her Excellency Ms. Vijay Thakur Singh, Secretary (East) Ministry of External Affairs of India on 24 July 2019 in New Delhi.

The Secretary General of BIMSTEC, Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam addressed the Panel Discussion on "Future Orientation of BIMSTEC" organized by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) at the RIS Office in India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 24 July 2019.





Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam addressed at the Inaugural Session of the Second Meeting of the Track 1.5 BIMSTEC Security Dialogue Forum held on 30 July 2019 at BISS in Dhaka.

His Excellency Mr. Robert Chatterton Dickson, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh met the Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam at his office on 06 August 2019.



Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam paid a visit to the office of Institute for Policy, Advocacy and Governance (IPAG) in Dhaka on 20 August 2019. Syed Munir Khasru, Chairman of IPAG, Pankaj Hazarika, Director of Connectivity & Security Division and Mujtoba Ahmed Murshed, Adviser of Media & Outreach of BIMSTEC Secretariat are seen in the picture.

Her Excellency Mrs. Arunrung Phothong Humphreys, Ambassador of Thailand to Bangladesh called on Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam, Secretary General of BIMSTEC on 25 August 2019 at BIMSTEC Secretariat, Dhaka.



Secretary General's Activities



Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam met H.E. Ms. Pornpimol Kanchanalak, Adviser to Foreign Minister, Kingdom of Thailand in the sideline of the 4th Indian Ocean Conference on “Securing the Indian Ocean Region: Traditional and Non-traditional Challenges” held in Maldives on 03-04 September 2019.

Secretary General of BIMSTEC Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam, called on the Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka His Excellency Mr. Tilak Marapana in Dhaka on 07 September 2019.



BIMSTEC Events

Fourth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Network of National Centres on Coordination in Traditional Medicine



H.E. Mr. Zahid Maleque, M.P, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Bangladesh (centre)

The Fourth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Network of National Centres on Coordination in Traditional Medicine (BNNCCTM) was held on 16-17 June 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh at the invitation of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Delegations from all BIMSTEC Member States attended the Meeting.

The Meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Mr. Zahid Maleque, M.P, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Bangladesh. Among others, the Secretary of Health Services Division of Bangladesh and the Ambassadors of Bhutan and Myanmar to Bangladesh were present. The Minister, in his Keynote Address, stated that despite excellent development in synthetic chemistry and biotechnology, plants are still an indispensable source of medicinal preparations, both preventive and curative. He added that the Government of Bangladesh is keen to work with the Member States to adjust curriculum and courses in Unani and Ayurvedic Systems of medicine and underscored the importance to expand cooperation in the areas of education, research, technology and development of international standard pharmacopoeia in traditional medicine in the region.

Delegations to the 4th BNNCCTM Meeting emphasized on the need to establish alliances for both traditional and non-traditional medicines in holistic manner. The Meeting also reviewed the role and mandate of the BNNCCTM and need to explore the possible expansion of cooperation among the Member States on non communicable diseases and trans-national public health issues that threaten the economic and social progress of the peoples of BIMSTEC region. Towards this end, the Meeting directed the Secretariat to circulate the presentation of Thailand on expansion of the regional cooperation in the area of public health sector beyond traditional medicines for views and comments of the Member States, considering other regional mechanisms in place to take care of the concerns raised by the BIMSTEC Leaders during the 4th Summit in Kathmandu, Nepal in August 2018.

The Meeting welcomed the offer of India to host the next BNNCCTM Meeting in 2021 and requested India to expedite convening of the Workshop on Harmonization of Curricula for Mutual Recognition of Traditional Medicine Degrees, as agreed during the Second Meeting of BIMSTEC Task Force on Traditional Medicine (BTFTM) held in January 2019 at Nay Pyi Taw in Myanmar.

Second Meeting of the Track 1.5 BIMSTEC Security Dialogue Forum



Second Meeting of Track 1.5 BIMSTEC Security Dialogue Forum was held in Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Dhaka, Bangladesh on 30-31 July 2019. Officials and Scholars from the BIMSTEC Member States participated in the Dialogue. The Dialogue deliberated on both traditional and non-traditional security threats to the BIMSTEC Member States and made recommendations to deal with these threats in a collective manner.

The First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture



The First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (1st BMM) was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 12 July 2019 at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Delegations from all BIMSTEC Member States attended the Meeting. The Meeting was chaired by His Excellency Dr. Aung Thu, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation of Myanmar. Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, Secretary General of BIMSTEC also attended the Meeting and delivered the Special Remarks at the opening session.

The Ministers and Heads of Delegation delivered their Statements under the theme of “Way Forward on BIMSTEC Agricultural Cooperation”.

The Meeting adopted the Joint Statement of the First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture. The Joint Statement called upon BIMSTEC Member States for deepening cooperation in the agricultural and allied sector in the region.

The Meeting agreed to convene the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture once in two years and tasked the Secretariat to coordinate with the Member States to finalize date and venue of the Second BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture. The Ministers expressed appreciation to the Government of Myanmar for holding of the First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture in Nay Pyi Taw.

Eleventh Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism



The Eleventh Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (SGAML-CFT) was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 03-04 September 2019. Delegations from all the Member States attended the Meeting. The Meeting discussed to finalize an Action Plan to prevent the Illicit Flow of Funds (IFF) among the BIMSTEC Member States.

8th Asian Tourism Fair



Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam, Secretary General of BIMSTEC addressed the inaugural session of 8th Asian Tourism Fair in Dhaka on 26 September 2019 as special guest. In his inaugural remarks, the Secretary General underscored the need for collaboration between the public sector and private sector tour operators, travel agents and hospitality managers to promote tourism in BIMSTEC region.



The Secretary General of BIMSTEC, Ambassador M Shahidul Islam as special guest in the middle. His Excellency Mr. Md. Mahbub Ali, M.P., Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh as chief guest (left) and Her Excellency Mrs. Rina P. Soemarno, Ambassador of Indonesia to Bangladesh and Nepal (right) as guest also addressed the inaugural session of the 8th Asian Tourism Fair 2019.

Seminar on Tourism Connectivity in BIMSTEC Region



In order to promote regional tourism, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) held a seminar on "Tourism Connectivity in BIMSTEC Region" in collaboration with 8th Asian Tourism Fair (ATF) 2019 in Dhaka on 28 September 2019. The Secretary General of BIMSTEC, Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, as the chair of the seminar, highlighted the steps taken by BIMSTEC to promote tourism in the Bay of Bengal region and underscored the need for closer cooperation between government agencies and private sector tour operators and hospitality industry entrepreneurs.

On behalf of the BIMSTEC Secretariat, Director for Social Affairs Division, Dr. Damaru Ballabha Paudel presented the keynote paper. Seminar panelists were CEO of Bangladesh Tourism Board, Dr. Bhupon Chandra Biswas, Chairman of Indian West Bengal Chapter of IATO, Mr. Debjit Dutta, General Manager of Radisson BLU Dhaka Water Garden, Mr. Alexander Haeusler and Director General (SAARC & BIMSTEC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Md. Shamsul Haque. Mr. Mohiuddin Helal, Chairman of Asian Tourism Fair (ATF) and Editor, Parjatan Bichitra moderated the seminar.

Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Working Group on Trade Facilitation



Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Working Group on Trade Facilitation was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 29-30 September 2019. Delegations from all the Member States attended the Meeting.

In the opening session, the Secretary General underscored the importance on trade facilitation measures to boost regional trade and expressed hope that this Meeting would be able to finalize the text of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation for the BIMSTEC FTA.

Dr. Md. Jafar Uddin, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh was the Chief Guest in the opening session of the meeting while Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam, Secretary General of BIMSTEC delivered special remarks. Ms. Sharifa Khan, Additional Secretary (FTA), Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh delivered the welcome remarks and Mr. Md. Shamsul Haque, Director General (SAARC & BIMSTEC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh also delivered his remarks.

The Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Working Group on Trade Facilitation, chaired by Ms. Sharifa Khan, made significant progress in finalizing the draft text of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation for the BIMSTEC FTA.

BIMSTEC on Media

Dhaka for making Bimstec more effective

Daily Sun



June 26, 2019



Financial architecture as the underpinning for BIMSTEC policy

The Economic Times



July 20, 2019



"Modi" initiative to hold BIMSTEC meeting in Goa infused fresh life into bloc"

Outlook India



July 24, 2019



India to continue its support to BIMSTEC

UNB



July 24, 2019



India sees 'virtue' in Bay of Bengal grouping BIMSTEC

bdnews24.com



July 24, 2019



Bangladesh for Cooperative Security model in the Bay of Bengal Region-

The Daily Kaler Kantho



July 31, 2019



Bangladesh for Cooperative Security model in Bay region

The Asian Age



July 31, 2019



Experts for developing BIMSTEC security model

The Financial Express



Sept 17, 2019





Chief Editor



Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam
Secretary General of BIMSTEC

Associate Editors



Pankaj Hazarika
Director
Connectivity & Security Division



Han Thein Kyaw
Director
Development Division



Dr. Damaru Ballabha Paudel
Director
Social Affairs Division



Mujtoba Ahmed Murshed
Advisor (Media & Outreach)