



Message from Secretary General

Welcome to the 10th Edition (October 2025) of our Monthly BIMSTEC E-Newsletter!

The month of October 2025 witnessed a series of significant developments and engagements, reflecting BIMSTEC's commitment to advancing regional cooperation.

At the invitation of WHO's South-East Asia Regional Director, I attended the 78th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia held in Colombo, reaffirming BIMSTEC's commitment to strengthening regional health cooperation. On the sidelines, I met Foreign Minister as well as two other Ministers of Sri Lanka, a founding member State and the Lead Country for Science, Technology and Innovation, Health and Human Resource Development. These Meetings reinforced Sri Lanka's strong commitment to advancing cooperation under BIMSTEC, including early action to operationalise the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility. I spoke about the salience of BIMSTEC in Indo-Pacific and its initiatives in domain of maritime cooperation, including maritime connectivity, maritime security, disaster management and blue economy etc. at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue 2025 in New Delhi, hosted by National Maritime Foundation of India.

The 9th Meeting of the Sub-Group on Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and the 4th Meeting of the Expert Group on Poverty Alleviation, both held in Colombo, achieved concrete progress, including finalising the Plan of Action on Narcotic Drugs and reviewing the Poverty Plan of Action.

BIMSTEC's participation at International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s World Conservation Congress 2025 in Abu Dhabi and 7th Berlin Climate and Security Conference underscored its growing salience and role as a regional organisation in global climate action.

It enabled the BIMSTEC Secretariat to make global stakeholders in climate action aware of the challenges faced by the member States due to climate change and the need for enhanced regional and global cooperation with focus on adaptation, climate finance, building resilience in infrastructure and economic systems etc.

BIMSTEC Energy Centre conducted a capacity-building webinar on Transmission Line Maintenance, while the Regional Policy Dialogue on Flood Emergency Response in Bangkok, co-organised by BIMSTEC and Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, emphasised the importance of regional solidarity, knowledge sharing, and coordinated action to enhance preparedness and build resilience.

BIMSTEC's participation at the launch of the Asian Confluence Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies in Shillong reinforced its commitment to promoting regional cooperation in partnership with various stakeholders including media, academia and think tanks. Public outreach through media engagements and think-tank dialogues in Sri Lanka and India further strengthened BIMSTEC's regional visibility.

In this edition, we feature a snapshot on Disaster Management, reflecting BIMSTEC's steady progress and commitment to collective action for a resilient and sustainable Bay of Bengal region.

We highly value your readership and welcome your suggestions on strengthening regional cooperation under BIMSTEC and improving our E-Newsletter.

Indra Mani Pandey
Secretary General

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BIMSTEC Secretary General Meets Sri Lankan Leadership to Strengthen Regional Cooperation

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, met with Key Ministers of the Government of Sri Lanka, a founding member State of BIMSTEC, during his visit to Colombo from 13-15 October 2025. The meetings focused on ongoing initiatives and new opportunities to deepen cooperation in priority areas under BIMSTEC that directly benefit its member States across the region.

On 13 October 2025, Secretary General met with Hon. Vijitha Herath, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and Foreign Employment of Sri Lanka. The discussions covered BIMSTEC's ongoing initiatives, progress and future priorities for regional cooperation. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to advancing shared goals within Bay of Bengal region.



On 14 October, Secretary General met with Hon. Prof. Chrishantha Abeysena, Minister of Science and Technology, and Hon. Dr. Hansaka Wijemuni, Deputy Minister of Health and Mass Media. Discussions focused on strengthening cooperation in Science, Technology, Innovation and Health, with emphasis on knowledge exchange, digital economy, artificial intelligence, research collaboration and capacity building among member States, including the establishment of the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Sri Lanka.

As the Lead Country for Science, Technology and Innovation, Health and Human Resource Development, Sri Lanka plays a pivotal role in driving BIMSTEC's collective efforts to promote innovation, research collaboration, and human development. The Secretary General appreciated Sri Lanka's leadership and commitment to BIMSTEC's objectives and emphasised that the early operationalisation of the Technology Transfer Facility will significantly contribute to strengthening regional innovation networks and accelerating the application of science and technology for sustainable development across the region.



BIMSTEC Participates at IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 in Abu Dhabi

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, participated at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress held from 9-15 October 2025 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The Congress brought together governments, scientists, development partners, Indigenous communities and other stakeholders to deliberate and commit to action on biodiversity, climate change, nature-based solutions and sustainable development.

Secretary General addressed High-level Session on “Harnessing Rivers for Peace and Prosperity: Cooperative Approaches to Resource Governance”. He delivered Opening Remarks at “Glaciers for the Future: Global Partnership for Glacier and Post-Glacier Ecosystem Resilience,” and Closing Remarks at “The Freshwater Challenge: Accelerating Freshwater Ecosystem Conservation and Restoration.”

Secretary General highlighted the challenges faced by BIMSTEC member States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals amidst climate change, biodiversity loss and recurrent natural disasters. He outlined BIMSTEC’s progress in regional cooperation in environment and climate change, mountain economy, disaster management and energy sectors. He stressed the importance of partnerships with BIMSTEC to safeguard the ecosystems in Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal.

On the sidelines, Secretary General held meetings with Ms. Grethel Aguilar, Director General of IUCN; Dr. Dindo Campilan, Regional Director, Asia and Oceania, IUCN; Mr. Henry Gonzalez, Chief Investment Officer of the Green Climate Fund (GCF); Mr. Lorenzo Santucci, Chief of Environment and Development Policy at UNESCAP; Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UNEP; Mr. Pradeep Kurukulasuriya, Executive Secretary to United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF); Dr. Sandeep Sengupta, Global Policy Lead on Climate Change, IUCN; and Ms. Yoko Watanabe, Director (Environment), Asian Development Bank (ADB). The discussions focused on enhancing cooperation in areas such as climate finance, biodiversity protection, resilience and regional adaptation strategies.

Secretary General expressed BIMSTEC’s readiness to deepen collaboration with IUCN and other global institutions, reaffirming the organisation’s role as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia to strengthen adaptation, resilience and sustainable development in Bay of Bengal region.

Media Coverage: [BSS](#) | [The Business Standard](#) | [HT Syndication](#) | [UNB](#) | [Daily Sun](#)



BIMSTEC Secretary General Calls for Regional Cooperation to Deal with Adverse Impacts of Climate Change, Risks to Security at 7th Berlin Climate and Security Conference

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, participated at 7th Berlin Climate and Security Conference 2025, which was held in Berlin on 23 October 2025. The Conference brought together leaders, policymakers and experts from the governments, international organisations and civil society.

Secretary General spoke at the high-level Panel on “Beyond Borders: Regional and Plurilateral Climate Security in Action”. The Panel explored how regional organisations and cross-regional alliances can complement multilateral efforts to address the security implications of climate change through context-specific coordinated action.

In his remarks, Secretary General highlighted the adverse impact of climate change on BIMSTEC member States, such as unpredictable climate and weather phenomena, which have implications for realising their goals of food security, health security and human security. He underlined that addressing climate change is a strategic necessity for peace, stability and sustainable development, requiring coordinated action at national, regional and global levels.

Highlighting the role of regional cooperation, Secretary General noted, “The importance of regional organisations such as BIMSTEC cannot be overstated. BIMSTEC brings together countries that face similar developmental challenges and can find regionally acceptable solutions. BIMSTEC’s work complements global multilateral frameworks and contributes directly to collective resilience.”

Secretary General elaborated on BIMSTEC’s successes in advancing regional cooperation, in particular, in sectors such as disaster management, environment and climate change, mountain economy, energy, agriculture and food security etc. He emphasised BIMSTEC’s growing partnerships with relevant regional and global institutions to strengthen regional climate action. He called for stronger emphasis on adaptation, enhanced access to climate finance and technology, promotion of local and community-based solutions and strengthening of multi-stakeholder partnerships to address climate change-induced security risks. He reaffirmed BIMSTEC’s commitment to forging meaningful partnerships with non-member States and international organisations to realise a secure, sustainable and climate-resilient future for the region.

Media Coverage: [BSS](#) | [The Financial Express](#) | [UNB](#) | [Bangladesh Pratidin](#) | [The Diplomat Nepal](#)



BIMSTEC and Asian Confluence Jointly Launch Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies in Shillong to Bolster Regional Cooperation in Bay of Bengal Region

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and Asian Confluence, one of the leading Think Tanks of Northeast India, jointly launched the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies at the Asian Confluence in Shillong, Meghalaya, on 30 October 2025. The Centre aims to strengthen research, policy dialogue and regional cooperation among countries connected by Bay of Bengal. It will also serve as a platform to promote academic and policy exchanges and facilitate “third-space cooperation” among regional stakeholders.

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, graced the ceremony for inauguration of the Centre, which was attended by representatives from the Ministry of External Affairs and State Government of Meghalaya, senior diplomats, policy experts and representatives from academia, think tanks and youth organisations. In his keynote speech, Secretary General commended Asian Confluence for its timely and visionary initiative to advance research, dialogue, and collaboration on regional cooperation. He underlined the leading role that the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies can play in presenting the interests and priorities of India's North Eastern region, which is considered as a key players as well as a major beneficiary of regional cooperation in the Bay of Bengal region.

Secretary General also commended the commitment of the Centre to engage in studies, analysis and facilitate dialogue amongst various stakeholders in security and development of the Bay of Bengal region, with a view to inform and guide regional cooperation endeavours under BIMSTEC and other regional platforms. He highlighted the vision, goals and priorities of BIMSTEC and the progress made in regional cooperation under BIMSTEC.

Shri C.S.R. Ram, Joint Secretary (BIMSTEC and SAARC) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, underlined India's policy thrust on regional cooperation through initiatives such as Neighbourhood First, Act East Policy and MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) frameworks.

Following the inaugural event, a high-level panel discussion, titled “Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal: Envisioning a Resilient and Prosperous Future,” brought together senior diplomats, policy experts, and media representatives to deliberate on opportunities for deeper cooperation. The discussion centred on BIMSTEC's pivotal role in fostering regional cooperation and promoting resilience and prosperity among its member States, with emphasis on trade and investment, connectivity, climate action, blue economy, and people-to-people exchanges.

Media Coverage: [The Economic Times](#) | [The Shillong Times](#) | [DOT News](#) | [The Policy Edge](#)



BIMSTEC Participates at 78th Session of WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia

The BIMSTEC Secretariat was invited to participate at 78th Session of WHO's Regional Committee for South-East Asia, held during 13–15 October 2025 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

While BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, attended the inaugural Session, Mr. K. K. Yoganaadan, BIMSTEC Director for Science, Technology and Innovation, Health and Human Resource Development, addressed the Session and highlighted BIMSTEC's ongoing efforts to realise regional health security through One Health approach, with focus on surveillance, preparedness, rapid response, and collaboration among Centres of Excellence. He outlined BIMSTEC's key initiatives, including establishment of the Centres of Excellence in Tropical Medicine and Public Health in Thailand and Traditional Medicine in India, as well as a forthcoming World Bank-supported project on pandemic preparedness and response. BIMSTEC reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with WHO to build resilient, inclusive and climate-responsive health systems across the Bay of Bengal region.



BIMSTEC Joins Regional Policy Dialogue on Food Emergency Response

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, opened the Ambassadorial Roundtable on "Cooperation for Disaster and Climate Resilience in the Bay of Bengal Region," which was jointly organised by BIMSTEC and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) as part of the Regional Policy Dialogue on Flood Emergency Response, in Bangkok on 14–16 October 2025. The Dialogue brought together representatives from all seven BIMSTEC member States to exchange experiences and best practices in flood response, with the aim of co-developing a Regional Flood Response Framework for them. Discussions underscored the importance of regional solidarity, knowledge sharing and coordinated action to enhance preparedness, reduce disaster risks and build resilience.



BIMSTEC Participates at Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) 2025

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, participated at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) 2025, organised by Indian Navy, in collaboration with National Maritime Foundation (NMF), from 28-30 October 2025 in New Delhi, India. In his address, Secretary General stated that the Bay of Bengal lies at the heart of Indo-Pacific. He highlighted BIMSTEC's vision, goals and priorities and its achievements in maritime cooperation, in areas such as Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief at Sea, Maritime Domain Awareness, Blue Economy, Maritime Connectivity and Preservation of Maritime Ecosystem. Reaffirming BIMSTEC's agenda and vision of the Bay of Bengal as a common security and prosperity space, SG called for enhanced regional cooperation to tackle shared maritime challenges.

SECTORAL MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS AND WEBINARS



BIMSTEC Expert Group on Poverty Alleviation Meets in Colombo

The 4th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Poverty Alleviation was held from 9-10 October 2025 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. It discussed implementation of the BIMSTEC Poverty Plan of Action with a view to enhance regional cooperation towards reducing poverty and achieving prosperity in the BIMSTEC member States.



BIMSTEC Energy Centre Hosts Capacity Building Webinar on Transmission Line Maintenance

BIMSTEC Energy Centre in Bengaluru, India, organised an online capacity-building programme on Hot-Line Maintenance in Transmission Lines on 14 October 2025. Over 100 experts and participants from BIMSTEC member States joined the session to deepen their knowledge about live-line maintenance and safety in high-voltage power systems. The discussions highlighted the need for capacity building, technology sharing, and regional cooperation to ensure reliable and uninterrupted power transmission across the Bay of Bengal region.



9th Meeting of BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemical Held

The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board of Sri Lanka hosted the 9th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals on 22-23 October 2025, in Colombo. It finalised the BIMSTEC Plan of Action on Drug Control and discussed the establishment of BIMSTEC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk to facilitate cooperation, information sharing and coordination among the member States to combat drug trafficking and related illicit activities in the Bay of Bengal Region.



BIMSTEC and WIPO Jointly Host 2nd Webinar on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge

The BIMSTEC Secretariat, in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), successfully hosted the 2nd Session of the BIMSTEC-WIPO Webinar Series on “WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property (IP), Genetic Resources (GR), and Associated Traditional Knowledge (ATK)” on 28 October 2025.

The Session brought together over 37 participants from BIMSTEC member States and enabled exchange of insights on protecting traditional knowledge and shared cultural heritage through effective intellectual property frameworks, in alignment with the WIPO Treaty on IP, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge.

CALL-ON WITH DIGNITARIES

BIMSTEC Secretary General Meets with German Ambassador to Bangladesh

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, received Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Bangladesh, H.E. Dr. Rüdiger Lotz. Secretary General briefed Ambassador Dr. Lotz on BIMSTEC’s mandate, objectives and ongoing initiatives to strengthen regional cooperation, including collaboration with external partners. Ambassador Dr. Lotz commended the progress achieved by BIMSTEC and underscored its vital role in enhancing regional integration.





BIMSTEC Secretary General Meets with President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, met with Mr. Taskeen Ahmed, President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI), on 21 October 2025 in Dhaka. They discussed potential collaboration among the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the BIMSTEC member States and ways to promote trade and investment opportunities through enhancing B2B exchanges.



BIMSTEC Secretariat Participates at 13th Bangladesh Travel and Tourism Fair (BTTF) 2025

The BIMSTEC Secretariat participated at the 13th Bangladesh Travel and Tourism Fair (BTTF), which was held from 30 October to 1 November 2025 in Dhaka.

The BIMSTEC stall provided visitors an opportunity to explore diverse tourism attractions, cultural heritage and natural wonders of the BIMSTEC member States, celebrating the Bay of Bengal region as a vibrant region for travel and tourism.

Organised by the Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh (TOAB), the Fair brought together tourism organisations, tour operators and stakeholders from across the region to promote sustainable and inclusive tourism development.



BIMSTEC Secretary General Speaks at Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute on BIMSTEC

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, made a presentation on “BIMSTEC: Fostering Regional Cooperation for Realising Security and Sustainable Development in the Bay of Bengal Region” at the Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute (BIDI) on 14 October 2025 in Colombo.

The Session was attended by young diplomats, scholars and faculty members and trainees of the Institute. The interactive discussion enhanced participants’ understanding of BIMSTEC’s role in advancing regional cooperation and integration in the Bay of Bengal region.

Read the full news: bidti.lk/secretary-general-indra-mani-pandey-states-regional-organizations-like-bimstec-have-become-more-relevant-today/



BIMSTEC Secretary General in Conversation with Sri Lanka's Advocata Institute

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, gave an exclusive interview to the Advocata Institute, a leading Sri Lankan Think Tank, where he shared insights on BIMSTEC’s growing role in fostering regional cooperation across the Bay of Bengal. Secretary General highlighted BIMSTEC’s unique position as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia, its achievements in advancing cooperation in key sectors and the opportunities ahead for deepening partnerships with the governments, academia, think tanks and private sector.

Watch the podcast: www.youtube.com/watch?v=yB8nPa79cgY

BIMSTEC Secretary General Shares Insights on Regional Integration with TV1 Sri Lanka's Face to Face Programme



BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, joined TV1, one of Sri Lanka's leading television channels, for an exclusive interview where he shared insights on BIMSTEC's growing role as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia. He highlighted the Organisation's unique non-political framework for cooperation and spoke about BIMSTEC's progress in priority areas of cooperation.

Watch the full interview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GF4RLmS7LmgI>

BIMSTEC Secretary General Shares Views on Regional Cooperation with Sri Lanka's Hiru TV

BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, appeared at Hiru TV, Sri Lanka's leading media platform, where he shared insights on BIMSTEC's growing role as a regional platform for forging cooperation between South Asia and Southeast Asia. Secretary General stressed that Sri Lanka and other BIMSTEC member States should seize the opportunities presented for development during the present era, called Asian Century. He reflected on regional connectivity, technology-driven growth and BIMSTEC's role in fostering shared prosperity and sustainable development across the Bay of Bengal region.



Watch the full interview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-bY4kK1FQE>

Building Regional Resilience: BIMSTEC's Progress in Disaster Management Sector



The Bay of Bengal region is among the world's most disaster-prone areas, frequently affected by flood, cyclones, earthquakes and landslides. These recurrent environmental hazards continue to disrupt livelihoods, damage infrastructure and strain economies across the member States. Recognising the growing importance of regional preparedness and collective response, Disaster Management has emerged as a key area of cooperation within BIMSTEC. Identified as a priority area during the 8th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting held in Dhaka on 18-19 December 2005, cooperation in Disaster Management sector is led by India.

To advance this agenda, BIMSTEC established the Expert Group on Disaster Management Cooperation (EG-DMC) as the primary institutional mechanism for coordination. The First Meeting of the EG-DMC, held virtually on 12 May 2022 in New Delhi, finalised the Concept Note on BIMSTEC Disaster Management Cooperation. The Group is currently working to finalise the Plan of Action on Disaster Management Cooperation, aimed at enhancing preparedness and coordinated responses to natural disasters across the region.

A major initiative has been the BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise (DMEx) - a flagship initiative designed to strengthen interoperability and coordination among national disaster response agencies. The DMEx enables participating countries to identify gaps, test response protocols and develop joint operational strategies. As the Lead country, India has hosted four editions of the Exercise so far, in 2017, 2020, 2021, and most recently the 4th DMEx on 14-15 July 2025, each building regional capacity and collaboration in disaster preparedness.

In support of early warning systems and technical cooperation, BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate (BCWC) has been established in Noida, India. The Centre serves as a hub for research, data sharing and capacity building in weather forecasting and climate modelling, while facilitating dissemination of research outcomes within the BIMSTEC framework. A BIMSTEC Disaster Management Centre is being established in India to anchor cooperation among the member States to provide coordinated response to disasters.

BIMSTEC is also deepening partnerships with leading international organisations such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). These collaborations aim to strengthen institutional linkages, share best practices and enhance the region's overall disaster management capabilities.

As the frequency and intensity of natural disasters continue to increase, BIMSTEC remains committed to advancing regional cooperation, collective preparedness and knowledge exchange. Through sustained coordination, capacity building and strategic partnerships, BIMSTEC is steadily advancing towards its vision of a disaster-resilient Bay of Bengal region.

Key Achievements at a Glance

- Four BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercises conducted (2017-2025);
- BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate operationalised in Noida, India;
- Plan of Action on Disaster Management Cooperation under finalisation;
- Partnerships strengthened with UNDRR, ADPC and CDRI.



**BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL
TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

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