



Under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, India hosts first meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers in New Delhi

It's a matter of great pride and privilege for India to host First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting of Home Ministers

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India is moving forward with the spirit of 'Vishwamitra' and has always remained committed to peace, coexistence, and human welfare

In line with vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, it is our responsibility as Home Ministers to make BIMSTEC a model of inclusive development and security

We are committed for full implementation of BIMSTEC Convention on cooperation in combating challenges such as international terrorism, transnational organized crime, and illicit drug trafficking

India has the policy of zero tolerance against terrorism

Our shared resolve must be to ensure that no part of the region provides any scope for terrorist networks to seek shelter, recruit members, undergo training, raise funds, or carry out activities against neighbouring countries

Union Home Minister highlighted the importance of five key areas of cooperation: drug control, counterterrorism and legal cooperation, the repatriation of fugitive criminals, cyber-security and cybercrime investigation, and institutional cooperation and capacity building

Drug trafficking is a form of 'death trafficking', there is nothing 'golden' about drug trafficking

This is not merely a drug trade; it is an attack on the lives of our youth, our society, our culture, and the future of our coming generations

To tackle the drug menace, we must adopt a "Whole-of-Region" approach

The security of one member country strengthens the security of the entire region, guided by this principle, India remains committed to a peaceful, secure, and prosperous Bay of Bengal region

Under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, India hosted the first meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers in New Delhi, today. The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of BIMSTEC member countries to strengthening regional security, trust, and cooperation in the Bay of Bengal region.

In his address, Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah said that it is a matter of immense pride and privilege for India to host the first BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting. He said BIMSTEC has become an essential platform for regional integration, economic cooperation, and collective security. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India is moving forward with the spirit of '*Vishwamitra*' and has always remained committed to peace, coexistence, and human welfare.

Shri Amit Shah said, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi stated during the 6th BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok on April 4, 2025, "For us, BIMSTEC is not just a regional organization. It is a model for our inclusive development and security." Shri Shah said, carrying this vision forward, it is our responsibility today as Home Ministers to translate our cooperation into practical mechanisms that strengthen the safety of our citizens and the capabilities of our agencies.

Union Home Minister emphasized India's policy of 'Zero Tolerance' towards terrorism and called for enhanced cooperation in combating terrorism, cross-border organized crime, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and emerging cyber threats. He stressed the importance of timely intelligence sharing, financial investigations, mutual legal assistance, and extradition to ensure that criminals and terrorists are brought to justice. Union Home Minister stated that our shared resolve should be to ensure that terrorist networks are not allowed to find safe havens, recruit members, provide training, raise funds, or carry out activities against neighboring countries from any part of the region. Shri Amit Shah said that, in accordance with national laws and applicable treaties, cooperation in mutual legal assistance and extradition could strengthen our efforts to bring criminals to justice.

Home Minister highlighted the importance of five key areas of cooperation: drug control, counter-terrorism and legal cooperation, repatriation of fugitive criminals, cyber-security and cybercrime investigations, and institutional cooperation and capacity building. He emphasized the need for a coordinated regional approach to combat illicit financial transactions and terror financing. He also stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation among law enforcement agencies, intelligence agencies, and border management agencies.

Shri Amit Shah said, India believes that drug trafficking is essentially 'death trafficking.' In this spirit, he reiterated that there is nothing 'golden' about the trafficking of narcotics. He said, this is not merely the drug trade, but an attack on the lives of our youth, society, culture, and the future of coming generations. Union Home Minister said, this cannot be tackled by the efforts of a single country alone. We must adopt a 'Whole of Region' approach. Shri Shah said, illicit proceeds from drugs provide

financial power to organized crime and can also be utilized for terror financing. He said the diversion of precursor chemicals and transactions conducted via the dark web further complicate this challenge.

Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah said that cooperation in disaster management across the BIMSTEC region is one of his highest priorities. He recalled that, during the 6th BIMSTEC Summit, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had proposed the establishment of a “BIMSTEC Disaster Management Centre” in India. Shri Shah expressed his pleasure in noting that this centre is planned to be established in Jamnagar, Gujarat. This initiative underscores India's exemplary role as a 'first responder' in the field of disaster management across the entire region. He urged the member countries to actively participate in making the proposed centre operational.

Shri Amit Shah said, the security of one member state strengthens the security of the entire region. He said, India is committed to enhancing trust, respect, and cooperation with all member states for a peaceful, secure, and prosperous Bay of Bengal region, and to achieving concrete outcomes from this meeting.

Union Home Minister of India led the Indian delegation at the Meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers, while the Union Home Secretary led the meeting of senior officials. The delegations of all BIMSTEC member states—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand—participated in the meeting.

The first Meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers, held following the meeting of senior officials, provided a valuable opportunity to review the various initiatives undertaken by BIMSTEC in the security sector and to formulate a future course of action to further strengthen regional cooperation in addressing emerging security threats.

Home Ministers of BIMSTEC member countries approved the following:

1. BIMSTEC Convention against Trafficking in Persons, aimed at enhancing cooperation among member countries in the prevention of human trafficking, criminalization of the offence, and the protection and rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking.
2. BIMSTEC Plan of Action on Drug Control, aimed at combating the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and precursor chemicals.
3. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Capacity Building among BIMSTEC Countries to Combat Money Laundering and Terror Financing, which provides for the training of experts, the exchange of best practices, and extensive cooperation in the areas of financial crimes, financial intelligence, investigations, asset recovery, anti-money laundering measures, countering the financing of terrorism, and countering proliferation financing.
4. BIMSTEC Plan of Action on Illicit Financial Flows and Their Prevention, aimed at identifying the sources, risks, and channels of illicit financial flows among BIMSTEC member countries.

5. A Plan of Action for Enhancing Preparedness and Coordination to Address Natural Disasters in the Bay of Bengal Region, proposing coordinated efforts by member countries in regional risk planning, joint exercises, early warning systems, disaster mapping, training centres, information sharing, research, technological innovation, and tsunami risk reduction.

The First Meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers also adopted the Delhi Declaration, which outlines various principles guiding security cooperation under BIMSTEC. In the Delhi Declaration adopted at the First BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting, member countries reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation for regional peace, security, and development. The declaration emphasized combating cross-border terrorism, terror financing, radicalization, drug trafficking, human trafficking, cybercrime, and organized crime. It prioritized information sharing, mutual legal assistance, extradition, capacity building, and the effective implementation of existing agreements and plans of action. It also emphasized the protection of victims of human trafficking involved in online scams. The declaration appreciated India's leadership in strengthening regional security cooperation.

India reiterated its commitment to sharing its expertise in police training, counter-terrorism operations, and forensic investigations. The meeting also emphasized cooperation in disaster management, including the proposed BIMSTEC Centre for Disaster Management in Jamnagar, Gujarat.

This meeting was an important step towards making the BIMSTEC region safer and more prosperous.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) serves as a vital institutional link between the sub-regions of South and Southeast Asia, promoting multidimensional cooperation, collective security, and economic partnerships among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

During the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in 2018, it was decided to convene meetings at the level of BIMSTEC Home Ministers to strengthen cooperation and coordination. Taking an important step towards further consolidating regional security cooperation, Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi extended India's full support to this initiative during the Sixth BIMSTEC Summit and expressed India's commitment to hosting the First Meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers.

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