India hosts the first BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting; 'Delhi Declaration' adopted

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News

The first BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting was held in New Delhi on 13 Oct 2026, chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Five items were approved – a BIMSTEC Convention against Trafficking in Persons, a Plan of Action on Drug Control, an MoU on capacity building against money laundering and terror financing, a Plan of Action on illicit financial flows, and a Bay of Bengal disaster-preparedness plan – and a 'Delhi Declaration' was adopted. Shah said 'drug trafficking is death trafficking'.

Key facts

Meeting	1st BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting – 13 Oct 2026, New Delhi
Chair	Amit Shah; senior officials' meeting (12 Oct) – Home Secretary Govind Mohan
Adopted	5 documents + 'Delhi Declaration' – terrorism, drugs, human trafficking, cybercrime
Origin	At the 6th BIMSTEC Summit (Bangkok, 4 Apr 2025) PM Modi offered to host the first meeting
Note	All 7 members took part; Bangladesh's Home Minister skipped it – an official delegation attended

Background

- BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation): Bangkok Declaration, 6 June 1997 (BIST-EC – Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand); Myanmar joined in 1997, Nepal and Bhutan in 2004. 7 members – 5 South Asian, 2 South-East Asian.
- Secretariat – Dhaka (2014). BIMSTEC Charter – signed at the 5th Summit in Colombo (2022), in force from 20 May 2024. Secretary General – Indra Mani Pandey (India).
- 6th Summit (Bangkok, 2025) – 'Bangkok Vision 2030'; the PM announced 'BODHI' (training 300 youth a year) and a disaster management centre of excellence in India.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's long Bay of Bengal coast matters for BIMSTEC maritime and disaster cooperation. Curbing drug and gold smuggling across the Palk Strait (Rameswaram–Sri Lanka) ties in with the meeting's drug-control plan.

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