



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalaivar Kamarajar"

# Regional Cooperation Initiative: India Hosts BIMSTEC Youth Leadership Exchange

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India hosted the BIMSTEC Young Professionals (Youth Leadership) Exchange Programme in Maharashtra (Mumbai and Pune) from 9–15 March 2026. The initiative is part of India's effort to strengthen regional cooperation and youth engagement within the Bay of Bengal region.?

## Core Highlights of the Programme:

First-ever BIMSTEC Young Professionals Exchange Programme

Organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in partnership with the Government of Maharashtra

Participation of around 30 young professionals, including innovators, entrepreneurs, and technology experts from BIMSTEC countries

Conducted across key innovation hubs such as Mumbai and Pune

## Objectives of the Initiative:

Promote knowledge exchange and skill development among youth

Strengthen regional cooperation and connectivity

Provide exposure to India's startup, research, and technology ecosystem

Encourage innovation-driven collaboration among member countries

## Programme Features and Activities:

### Kamaraj IAS Academy

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Interaction with industry leaders, academic institutions, and policymakers

Visits to innovation hubs, research centres, and startups

**Workshops and discussions on:**

Technology and entrepreneurship

Economic development models

Regional collaboration strategies

**Outcomes and Impact:**

Enhanced understanding of India's development and innovation model

Creation of cross-border professional networks

Strengthening of people-to-people ties in BIMSTEC region

Encouragement of future collaborations in innovation and trade sectors

**Link with BIMSTEC Framework:**

The programme was announced during the 6th BIMSTEC Summit

Reflects India's focus on people-centric regional diplomacy

**Contributes to strengthening:**

Act East Policy

Neighbourhood First Policy

Supports regional integration between South and Southeast Asia

**About BIMSTEC:**

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

Established ? 1997 (Bangkok Declaration)

Members ? 7 countries (India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand)

Objective ? Promote economic cooperation, connectivity, and regional development

**Importance for India:**

Strengthens India's role as a regional leader in the Bay of Bengal region

Promotes soft power diplomacy through youth engagement

Enhances innovation partnerships and economic cooperation

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Builds a foundation for long-term regional integration

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