

Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Plan of Action (2019-2022)

This Plan of Action implements the goals and objectives of the MGC Partnership for the next three years (2019-2022) by laying out activities to be undertaken by all parties to further deepen and enhance cooperation in the MGC priority sectors.

1. Cultural Cooperation

1.1 Organize a textile exhibition along with cultural activities to showcase the varied hand-woven fabrics of the MGC countries at the MGC Asian Traditional Textile Museum (ATTM), Siem Reap, Cambodia, involving the National Handlooms Promotion Development Agencies.

1.2 Promote capacity building and exchange best practices in preservation of historical and cultural monuments through exchange of delegations, conduct of workshops and training programmes. In this context, India will continue to offer ten scholarships, two each to Mekong countries for training in museology and conservation techniques at National Museum Institute, New Delhi.

1.3 Establish a Common Archival Resource Center (CARC) at Nalanda University as a repository of information on areas such as archeological sites, world heritages, history of trade, population and religious distribution data, and historical linkages between India and Southeast Asia for the use of academicians, researchers and scholars.

1.4 Invite craftsmen and cultural troupes from MGC countries to participate in prominent cultural fairs and festivals in India like Surajkund Mela of Haryana, Pushkar Mela of Rajasthan, Sangai Festival of Manipur, Hornbill Festival of Nagaland and Bali Jatra of Odisha etc. and conversely, encourage participation of Indian craftsmen and artistes in the cultural fairs and festivals in Mekong countries.

1.5 Cooperate in the field of radio and television broadcasting through exchange of content and programmes, exchange of personnel for training purposes, sharing of technical expertise and joint production of documentaries that enable promotion of cultural tourism among the MGC countries.

1.6 Develop a joint calendar of important Travel Fairs and Cultural Festivals in MGC countries for information dissemination and promotion.

1.7 Organise an MGC Conference on Heritage Conservation Techniques in 2020 at the MGC Asian Traditional Textile Museum at Siem Reap, Cambodia where archaeologists, and conservation agencies could come together to share experiences on conservation techniques most suitable for the climate of the region.

1.8 Organize events and activities to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of MGC in 2020 in a befitting manner, including production of a video documentary capturing salient achievements of the MGC since its formation in the year 2000; organizing an MGC cultural event showcasing music, visual and performing arts, cuisine; and joint inauguration of a QIP in Viet Nam during MGC Ministerial Meeting.

2. Tourism Cooperation

2.1 Organise trips of travel agencies and media familiarization visits to prominent Buddhist sites in MGC countries, and encourage travel agencies and tour operators to come up with tour packages for thematic circuits such as Buddhist Trails with multiple destinations in two or more MGC countries.

2.2 Showcase and popularise the rich culinary traditions of the MGC countries by organising food festivals.

2.3 Encourage exchange of students through offer of scholarships for diploma and certificate courses in tourism and travel management, hospitality management etc. To this end, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India will offer 5 scholarships (one to each MGC country) at Indian Institute of Tourism Management or Indian Institute of Hotel Management.

2.4 Develop institutional contact between National Hospitality/ Tourism Management Institutes or related agencies through exchange of experts, training collaboration and exposure visits of students.

3. Cooperation in Education

3.1 Promote the 50 MGC scholarships offered by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) to enhance utilisation by students from the Mekong countries.

3.2 Promote training in traditional systems of medicine through exchange of faculty and students among national institutions. Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy, Government of India will offer 10 scholarships annually to MGC countries for students interested in pursuing under-graduate/post-graduate/Ph.D in Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy and Yoga.

3.3 Organize workshops and training programmes in digital connectivity and ICT infrastructure development for government officials from MGC countries.

3.4 Launch a website dedicated to MGC which would contribute to branding of the regional grouping and provide useful information on the various joint programs and activities.

4. Cooperation in Public Health and Traditional Medicine

4.1 Organize the 2nd workshop-cum-training for MGC countries' officials in India on eradication of communicable and non-communicable diseases with high incidences at the National Institute of Malaria Research, New Delhi.

4.2 Send Indian Ayurveda specialists under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India to Mekong countries upon request.

4.3 Organize a regional workshop on traditional and complimentary medicine focusing on issues related to regulatory systems and standardization procedures involving traditional medicinal systems of the region.

5. Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Sectors

5.1 Organise a workshop on preservation of rice germplasm and productivity enhancement through mechanization by Crop Science Division, Indian Council for Agricultural Research.

5.2 Organise a workshop on sustainable fisheries and dairy by Fisheries Science Division/Animal Science Division, Indian Council for Agricultural Research.

5.3 Organise training courses/workshops on 'Integral Rural Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' at National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad for MGC countries' professionals, including in the areas of community-based farming and its adaptation to the challenges of climate change as well as rural information technology and rural water supply technology.

6. Cooperation in Water Resources Management

6.1 India will conduct training programmes and workshops to exchange experiences and best practices in community farming and water resource management.

6.2 Undertake collaborative projects in the areas of sustainable water management, water harvesting, water data collection, climate change adaptation and mitigation, integrated water resources management, groundwater management, transboundary basin management, water quality monitoring, flood and drought management and disaster reduction etc.

7. Cooperation in Science and Technology

7.1 Host an Innovation Forum in one of the MGC countries to promote social innovations in agriculture, transport, communication, industrial know-how transfer, e-commerce, information and communication technology (ICT), health, energy and environment, food etc.

8. Cooperation in Transport and Communications

8.1 Examine the feasibility of extending the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, and its development as an economic growth corridor.

8.2 Explore ways and means for the conclusion of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Motor Vehicle Agreement to facilitate seamless movement of goods and passengers across borders, thus leading to greater trade and tourism.

8.3 Organise training programmes for MGC countries on preparation of feasibility studies and detailed project reports for highway projects and construction and maintenance of highways at the Indian Academy of Highway Engineers, NOIDA.

8.4 Promote exchange of experiences and information on policies and management regulations of ICT industry, popularization of public services, development of ICT infrastructure, e-governance, e-commerce, e-education and other related e-services.

8.5 Enhance connectivity and cross-border ICT services to promote e-commerce as well as social and cultural exchanges.

9. Cooperation in MSMEs

9.1 Organize an MGC Trade Fair either in India or any other MGC country in conjunction with a prominent trade exhibition focusing on MSMEs.

9.2 Task the Jakarta-based Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to conduct research studies on 'Integration of MGC MSMEs into a Regional Production Chain: Potential and Challenges'.

9.3 Enhance cooperation in MSMEs sector with special focus on Youth and Women empowerment among the MGC countries.

9.4 Conduct exchange programmes on innovation and market access for MSMEs as well as on software training and online payment system development.

9.5 Organize an MGC Business Forum focusing on MSMEs on the sidelines of ASEAN-India Business Expo and Summit to be organized by Viet Nam in 2020.

10. Skill Development and Capacity Building

10.1 Organise training and scholarship programmes for MGC countries in the areas of national accounts statistics and large scale socio-economic sample surveys.

10.2 Facilitate knowledge sharing through exchange visits by experts from vocational training institutions and skill development authorities.

10.3 Organise annual training programmes on the topics related to MGC areas of cooperation as well as other relevant issues which are in line with the SDGs under Thailand's Annual International Training Courses – AITC.

11. Quick Impact Projects Scheme

11.1 Encourage joint identification of projects, their monitoring and timely implementation of the Quick Impact Projects scheme of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India under the MGC framework.
