



SAARC AGRINEWS



Afghanistan



Bangladesh



Bhutan



India



Maldives



Nepal



Pakistan



Sri Lanka

January-March, 2026

Bangladesh Prime Minister Visits to SAARC Agriculture Centre Stall at Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2026

The vibrant atmosphere of the Amar Ekushey Book Fair, organized by Bangla Academy, witnessed a notable moment on Thursday, (26 February 2026) as the Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Mr. Tarique Rahman, MP visited the stall of the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC). Dr. AHM Taslima Akhter, Senior Technical Officer and Mr. Md. Abul Bashar, Senior Program Officer (Pub.), briefed Prime Minister about the SAC activities, accomplishments and future strategic partnership, focus areas such as climate-smart agriculture, food and nutrition security, sustainable resource management and knowledge sharing and information exchange in the SAARC region.



The Prime Minister showed his keen interest in books on display, and appreciated SAC contributions to agricultural research, development and regional partnership underlining the vital role of agriculture in ensuring food security and sustaining rural livelihoods across the region. Mr. Prime Minister reiterated Bangladesh commitment to further strengthen regional cooperation for the betterment of the region.

At the end a gift consisting of recent publications, and policy documents were presented to Prime Minister.

Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, expressed his gratitude to the Honorable Prime Minister for visiting the SAC stall at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair and described it a proud moment for the Centre, noting that it provided an opportunity to share SAC's ongoing activities and regional initiatives with the Prime Minister. Dr. Harunur Rashid reiterated the firm commitment of the center in advancing agricultural

SAARC AgriNews

Vol.20, Issue - I

Editors

Dr. Raza Ullah Khan
Senior Programme Specialist (NRM)
Mr. Palash Chandra Goswami
Senior Program Officer (NRM)
Md. Abul Bashar
Senior Program Officer (Publication)
Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid
Director, SAC

Graphics
Ms. Sanjida Akter

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)
BARC Complex, Farmgate
Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh
Tel: 880-2-55027712
Fax: 880-2-55027714
Email: director@sac.org.bd
Website: www.sac.org.bd

development across the SAARC in the area of agriculture, food security, climate change and adaptation, animal health and knowledge sharing.

Books Unveils on Agroforestry, Agricultural Trade and Agroecology for Sustainable Agriculture in South Asia

The SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) always thrive his best in promoting sustainable, climate-resilient agriculture and producing knowledge products and publications. In this regard at Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2026 three books were unveiled. The publication of books on issue of regional and global interested marked SAC ceaseless commitment to conserve natural resources, eradicate poverty and create climate resilience, and ushere economic benefits to rural dweller through regional cooperation.



Book titled “Potentials of Agroforestry for Rural Development and Climate Resilient Farming in South Asia” coedited by Dr. Raza Ullah Khan, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Mr. Palash Chandra and Mr. Abul Bahsar highlighted the agroforestry inventory of SAARC member states, and role of agroforestry in eradicating poverty and promoting rural development through entrepreneurship and value addition, besides promoting climate resilience in SAARC member states. Dr. Md. Abdus Salam, Executive Chairman Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) graced the event as Chief Guest, and chaired by Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Director of SAC. In his remarks, Dr. Abdus Salam highlighted agroforestry as a practical and sustainable solution to address challenges such as climate change, population pressure and limited land resources in South Asia.



On 14 March 2026, two books were unveiled titled “Fostering Agricultural Trade through Harmonized Food Safety Standards in South Asia” and “Promoting Agroecological Approaches for the Sustainable Transformation of Agri-food Systems in South Asia.” Coedited by Dr. Younus Ali, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Dr. Raza Ullah Khan, Mr. Abul Bahsar and Dr. Md. Abdul Razzaque; and Dr. Younus Ali, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Mr. Palash Chandra and Mr. Abul Bahsar respectively. These books focus on enhancing regional trade, strengthening food safety frameworks and promoting sustainable agricultural transitions.

Dr. P. Chandra Shekara, Director General of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) graced the event as Chief Guest, while Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid presided over the event. Dr. Shekara emphasized the importance of harmonized food safety standards and institutional cooperation to boost agricultural trade and build trust in regional markets. The publications, developed through regional expert consultations and collaborative research, bring together country experiences, policy insights and practical recommendations aimed at advancing climate-resilient agriculture, improving trade systems and promoting sustainability across South Asia.

Through these initiatives, SAC continues to play a pivotal role in highlighting core issue and fostering regional collaboration and knowledge sharing, contributing to a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable agricultural future for the SAARC region.

SAC holds webinar on climate change and fisheries in South Asia

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) organized a regional webinar titled “Climate Change and Fisheries in South Asia” on 10 March 2026 moderated by Dr. Md Shariful Islam, Senior Program Specialist (Fisheries), SAC. . Experts from across the region discussed the growing impacts of climate change on marine and freshwater fisheries and possible adaptation strategies. In his welcome remarks, SAC Director Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid said climate change is increasingly affecting fisheries and aquatic ecosystems across South Asia. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, floods and changes in water quality are impending challenges to fishert sector and affecting livelihoods of millions dwellers in the region. Dr. Harnunur Rashid, Director SAC emphasized the importance of strengthening regional collaboration, knowledge sharing and research to build climate-resilient fisheries systems.

Speaking at the webinar, Dr. Sevvandi Jayakody Chair Professor at Department of Aquaculture and Fisheries at Wayamba University, Sri Lanka highlighted that climate variability is also impacting freshwater fisheries by altering river flow and aquatic habitats and emphasized the importance of adaptive management and sustainable resource use.

Dr. B K Das, Director of ICAR-CIFRI, Barrackpore, India talked about the growing temperature and its effect on marine diversity and population.



In concluding remarks, Mr. Tanvir Ahmad Torophder, Director (ARD and SDF) from SAARC Secretariat, emphasized the importance of regional cooperation in addressing the impacts of climate change on fisheries. Dr. Shariful Islam, highlighted fisheries play a vital role in food security, nutrition and livelihoods across South Asia and called for stronger collaboration among SAARC member states to promote sustainable and climate-resilient fisheries management.

He discussed the specific challenges faced by South Asian fisheries, including salinity intrusion in coastal areas, changing hydrological patterns and increasing climate variability. He emphasized the need for integrated management approaches and regional cooperation to support sustainable fisheries and protect the livelihoods of fishing communities.

The webinar observed interactive discussion where participants from different SAARC countries and others shared experiences and perspectives on addressing climate change impacts in the fisheries sector. Experts emphasized that coordinated regional efforts and climate-smart management practices will be key to ensuring the sustainability of fisheries in South Asia.

SAARC Agriculture Centre Book Corner opens at NATA

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) inaugurated Book Corner at National Agriculture Training Academy (NATA), Gazipur on Tuesday (24 February 2026). The initiative aims at strengthening partnership with other institutions. Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim, Director General of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and Mr. Md. Saiful Azam Khan, Director General, NATA inaugurated the book corner.

Dr. Md. Yunus Ali, Senior Program Specialist (Livestock); Dr. Raza Ullah Khan, Senior Program Specialist (Natural Resource Management); Dr. Sikander Khan Tanveer, Senior Program Specialist (Crops); Dr. Md. Shariful Islam, Senior Program Specialist (Fisheries); Mr. Md. Abul Bashar, Senior Program Officer (Publication) from SAC and Dr. Sukalpa Das, Deputy Director (Plant Pathology); Dr. Md. Huzzatul Islam, Deputy Director (Admin and Support Service); Lupu Rahman, Librarian; Mr. Mohamad Anisuzzaman, Senior Assistant Director (Agricultural Extension); and Dr. Muhammad Shahadat Hossain Siddiquee, Senior Assistant Director (Horticulture Crop Disease from NATA attended the event.



Speakers at the program highlighted the importance of accessible, evidence-based knowledge for agricultural development. They noted that training institutions such as NATA plays a central role in field-level extension services and policy implementation. In that context, the SAC Book Corner is expected to serve as a practical resource hub for trainers, officers and agricultural professionals.

The Book Corner will be used to display books, policy documents and other publication materials and journal periodically published by SAC on food security, climate change, animal health and diseases, fisheries and natural resource management. By bringing these materials directly to a national training institution, SAC aims to bridge the gap between regional research and field-level application.

Officials expressed hope that the initiative would further strengthen collaboration between SAC and national institutions, and contribute to building a more knowledge-driven and resilient agriculture sector in Bangladesh.

WOAH and SAARC Hold Strategic Meeting to Strengthen One Health Cooperation

A meeting was held between WOAHP and SAARC on 21 January 2025 to discuss activities of WOAHP and SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) planned for 2026 and strengthen future collaboration. A team from the WOAHP Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific, Japan, including representatives from One Health, TADs, Veterinary Services and Communication, joined the meeting.

Mr. Tanvir Ahmad Torophder, Director (ARD and SDF), SAARC Secretariat, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, Director, SAC, Dr. Md. Younus Ali, SPS (Livestock), SAC and Mr. Amirul Islam, Desk Officer, SAARC Secretariat participated in the program. At this event the outgoing and current Regional Representatives of WOAHP were also present.



The current Regional Representative conveyed her appreciation to the SAARC Secretariat for jointly organizing this important meeting. The meeting reaffirmed the region's commitment to strengthening cooperation on TADs, AMR and Veterinary Services to support the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on livestock.

SAC in Strategic Discussions on Climate-Smart Agriculture in Bangladesh

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) participated in a seminar titled "Climate Smart Agriculture: Strategies to Respond to Climate Change in Bangladesh", organized by the National Agriculture Training Academy (NATA).

The seminar explored practical and policy-driven approaches to strengthening climate resilience in Bangladesh's agriculture sector. Discussions underscored the value of regional collaboration, research-led innovation and sustainable farming practices in responding to the growing impacts of climate change. SAC remains committed to advancing climate-smart solutions and fostering regional cooperation for a more resilient and sustainable agrifood system.



GAIN Leadership Meets SAC to Explore Regional Collaboration on Sustainable Agriculture

Dr. Rudaba Khondker, Country Director, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and Ashek Mahfuz, Portfolio Lead,

Large Scale Food Fortification (LSFF) and Value Chain, GAIN, visited the SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), on 25 January 2026.

During the meeting, constructive discussions were held with the Director of SAC, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid, along with SAC professionals. Dr. Md. Younus Ali, Senior Program Specialist (Livestock), SAC and Dr. Md. Shariful Islam, Senior Program Specialist (Fisheries).



The discussion focused on developing joint agricultural projects for the SAARC Member Countries, with shared priorities in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, food fortification and sustainable value chains to strengthen regional food and nutrition security.

The SAARC Agriculture Centre looks forward to deepening its collaboration with GAIN and working together to implement impactful and inclusive agricultural initiatives across the SAARC region.

Md. Nurul Amin Retires After 35 Years of Dedicated Service

A warm and dignified farewell was accorded to Mr. Md. Nurul Amin, driver of the SAARC Agriculture Centre, marking the end of his remarkable around 35 years. Mr. Md. NuruL Amin joined the Centre on 12 November 1990 and served with commitment until his retirement on 28 February 2026. More than three decades, Mr. Nurul Amin became a familiar and trusted presence within the organization and known for his punctuality, discipline and respectful conduct, carried out his responsibilities with quiet dedication. Colleagues across all levels appreciated his loyalty and steady support to the Centre's activities.

The farewell ceremony was attended by the Director of SAC, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid. Senior Program Specialists: Dr. Md. Younus Ali, Dr. Raza Ullah Khan, Dr. Sikander Khan Tanveer and Dr. Md. Shariful Islam, along with members of the General Service Staff.



Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid expressed sincere appreciation for Mr. Nurul Amin's long and faithful service to the organization and acknowledged his dedication and sense of responsibility, noting that such commitment strengthens the institutional culture of SAC.

Colleagues shared personal memories and conveyed their gratitude and prayers for his good health, peace and happiness. SAARC wish him a happy and healthy after retirement life