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ICRISAT Hosts Meet to Tackle Fall Armyworm

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Eight nations have come together at the **ICRISAT** (International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics) to understand the challenges and find solutions to tackle the rapidly growing problem of Fall Armyworm (FAW).

- Representatives from **Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India and some other South and South-East Asian countries** are attending a regional workshop on 'Fall Armyworm management in Asia'.
- The U.S. is working to address the FAW in several African countries. As the FAW has emerged in South and South-East Asia, collaboration is urgently required to manage its spread and minimise crop loss.

Fall Armyworm

- First reported in **West Africa in 2016**, the FAW pest quickly assumed epidemic proportions and spread to over 44 African countries. In India, its infection was first reported in **Karnataka** and also parts of **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat**.
- FAW (scientifically known as **Spodoptera frugiperda**) is a lepidopteran pest that feeds in large numbers on the leaves and stems of more than 80 plant species, causing extensive damage to crops such as **maize, rice, sorghum and sugarcane**. **It also attacks** vegetable crops and cotton.
- The pest — its female moth lays eggs and the caterpillars hatching from these eat parts of the host crop plants, before pupating and turning into new moths — has been detected mainly in maize fields.
- The adult moth of the pest **migrates very fast** — almost 100 km every night and nearly 500 km before laying eggs. It can, therefore, invade new areas quickly. Also, each female moth is capable of laying 1,500 eggs on an average.