



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE BIMSTEC CULTURAL INDUSTRIES COMMISSION (BCIC)
AND
BIMSTEC CULTURAL INDUSTRIES OBSERVATORY (BCIO)**

The Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand:

Recalling that the First BIMSTEC Summit recognized the pluralistic nature of our societies, our shared cultural heritage and the rich diversity of languages, arts, crafts and traditions that provide ample opportunity for multi-dimensional cooperation within our region;

Conscious of the conviction of the Member States that the geographical location of the BIMSTEC countries and their rich natural, cultural and human resources provide a sound basis for mutually beneficial cooperation and collective prosperity;

Bearing in mind that development and promotion of cultural industries can positively impact on the twin areas of community vitalization and poverty reduction for socio-economic progress and cultural development, as enunciated in the Paro Initiative;

Recognizing the need to set up, at an early date, key institutional arrangements, both critical components of the Plan of Cooperation and Action, to realize the goals, as envisioned in the Paro Initiative;

Desiring to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding on establishing the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission and the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory, as mandated by the First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Culture;

Do hereby agree as follows:

Article 1 Establishment

- 1.1 The Governments of the Member States agree to establish a BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory in Bhutan, hereinafter referred to as the 'Observatory', as provided for under this Memorandum.
- 1.2 A high-level BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission, hereinafter referred to as the 'Commission', shall be established as an oversight mechanism for the Observatory.

Article 2 Objectives of the Observatory

- 2.1 Serve as a repository for information on cultural industries, disseminate such information and facilitate its access by the Member States.
- 2.2 Support the Commission in fulfilling its mandate.

Article 3 Function of the Observatory

- 3.1 Carry out directives received from the Commission, including those contained in the Paro Initiative.
- 3.2 Establish BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Database and update it on a continuous basis.
- 3.3 Undertake research, statistical analysis of data and clearing house functions.
- 3.4 Develop indicators for impact of the activities on poverty reduction and community vitalization.
- 3.5 Create and maintain a web-portal on the Cultural Industries profile of the BIMSTEC Region.
- 3.6 Support Member States in need assessment, as requested, and development of cultural industry plans and strategy.
- 3.7 Prepare a consolidated calendar of major cultural industries expositions in the BIMSTEC region.

- 3.8 Network with relevant institutions/stakeholders working in the area of Cultural Industries.
- 3.9 Undertake such activities, as may be assigned to it, by the Commission from time to time.
- 3.10 Receive project based funding, as approved by the Commission.

Article 4

Structure of the Observatory

- 4.1 The Observatory shall function under the supervision of the Commission.
- 4.2 The Director of the Observatory shall be nominated by Bhutan and appointed by the Commission to serve as the executive head of the Observatory, subject to review by the Commission after a period of ten years.
- 4.3 The Commission may engage need-based compact inter-disciplinary professional staff for the Observatory on contract or secondment basis.
- 4.4 A small pool of General Services Staff shall be locally recruited in Bhutan to ensure smooth functioning of the Observatory.

Article 5

Mandate of the Commission

- 5.1 Implement decisions and directives emanating from the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meetings on Culture and other appropriate higher bodies of BIMSTEC.
- 5.2 Act as the Governing Board to provide oversight mechanism and supervision for the Observatory.
- 5.3 Develop plans and programmes to realize the vision, as elaborated in the Paro Initiative.
- 5.4 Oversee the implementation and evaluation of activities of the Observatory.
- 5.5 Submit reports periodically to the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Culture.

- 5.6 Create cooperation modalities for promotion of cultural industries in the BIMSTEC region.
- 5.7 Review proposals and recommendations received from the National Expert Committees.
- 5.8 Institute financial mechanisms to support approved programmes and activities.

Article 6
Composition of the Commission

- 6.1 The Commission shall comprise of one high-level representative nominated by each Member State who shall serve on the Commission ordinarily for a renewable term of three years.
- 6.2 Member States shall have the authority to change their representative at any time.

Article 7
Meeting of the Commission

- 7.1 The Commission shall meet at least once in a year, preferably one month prior to the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Culture.
- 7.2 The Commission shall also meet in extraordinary sessions, when deemed necessary.
- 7.3 The Commission shall, inter-alia, finalize its report at its Meetings for approval by the Ministerial Meeting. The report shall include a review of the implementation of decisions, recommendations on programmes and activities and on identification of financial resources for them. It shall also include the audit report of the Observatory.
- 7.4 The Director of the Observatory shall function as the Executive Secretary to the Commission.
- 7.5 The Observatory shall prepare the draft agenda and related documents for the Meetings of the Commission.

- 7.6 The Meetings of the Commission shall be hosted and chaired by Member States in alphabetical rotation. The Chairmanship of the Commission shall continue until its next meeting.
- 7.7 The Commission Meetings shall be held and conducted as per BIMSTEC practices and procedures.

Article 8 Budget

- 8.1 The Budget of the Observatory shall comprise: (a) Institutional Expenditure; (b) Programme Expenditure; and (c) Capital Expenditure.
- 8.2 The Institutional Expenditure and Programme Expenditure shall be placed before the Commission for approval. The Capital Expenditure will be borne by the host country.

Article 9 Procedures and Rules

- 9.1 The Commission may draw up its own rules of business in accordance with the general norms of BIMSTEC, as necessary, from time to time.

Article 10 Legal Status

- 10.1 The legal status of the Observatory shall be in consonance with the local laws and the prevalent international norms.

Article 11 Amendment

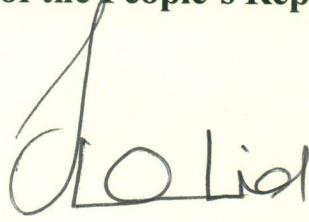
- 11.1 An amendment to this Memorandum will require approval of the Meeting of the Ministers of Culture of BIMSTEC Member states.

Article 12 General

The Observatory shall commence functioning from the date the MOU is signed.

Done at Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on the Fourth Day of March in the year Two Thousand and Fourteen, in eight originals, in English Language, each text being equally authentic.

For the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



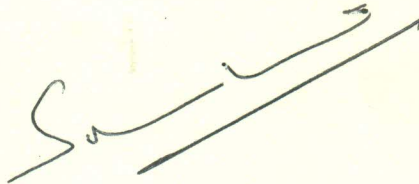
**H.E. Mr. Md. Shahriar Alam
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
People's Republic of Bangladesh**

For the Government of the Kingdom of Bhutan



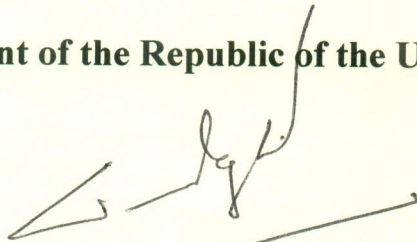
**H.E. Lyonpo Rinzin Dorje
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bhutan**

For the Government of the Republic of India



**H. E. Mr. Salman Khurshid
Minister for External Affairs of the Republic of India**

For the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar



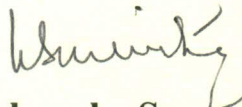
**H.E. U Wunna Maung Lwin
Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of the Union of Myanmar**

For the Government of Nepal



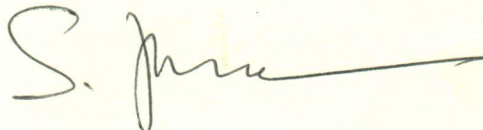
**Honourable Mr. Mahendra Bahadur Pandey
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal**

For the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



**H.E. Mrs. Kshenuka Senewiratne
Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of the
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For the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand



**H.E. Mr. Sihasak Phuanketkeow
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