



Secretariat
Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral
Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

Secretary General

06 June 2023

MESSAGE

On the occasion of the Twenty-Sixth anniversary of the founding of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), I extend my warmest greetings and felicitations to the peoples and the Governments of the Member States of BIMSTEC.

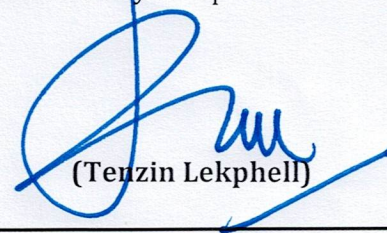
BIMSTEC which began its regional cooperation journey on 06 June 1997 as a sub-regional platform has grown in strength over the years with its membership expanding from four to seven. BIMSTEC has also grown in stature with the adoption of its Charter last year during the Fifth Summit. The Charter provides BIMSTEC the necessary legal personality to build more efficient and effective working methods, strengthen its institutional framework and form meaningful partnerships within the region and beyond to achieve BIMSTEC's objectives.

During the Fifth Summit held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 30 March 2022, the BIMSTEC Leaders resolved to intensify regional cooperation to strengthen economic and physical connectivity to enhance regional trade, investment, tourism, technology, energy and other forms of exchanges. They decided to rationalize and reorganize the sectors and sub-sectors of cooperation in a manner that makes cooperation more effective and focused. The sectors and sub-sectors of cooperation now comprise of Trade, Investment and Development; Blue Economy; Environment and Climate Change; Mountain Economy; Security; Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime; Disaster Management; Energy; Agriculture and Food Security; Fisheries and Livestock; People-to-People Contact; Poverty Alleviation; Culture; Tourism; Science, Technology, and Innovation; Health; Human Resource Development; and Connectivity.

As BIMSTEC marks its twenty-sixth anniversary and approaches its Sixth Summit under Thailand's Chairmanship, BIMSTEC seeks to re-visit and re-examine its working methods to better serve the people of BIMSTEC through the appointment of an Eminent Persons' Group to put forth practical recommendations on the future directions of BIMSTEC. This, combined with the Bangkok Vision 2030 that the BIMSTEC Leaders will adopt under Thailand's Chairmanship at the next Summit will, I am sure, succeed in setting BIMSTEC on the course to achieving its full potential.

On this important occasion, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Thailand for its current stewardship of BIMSTEC, and to the Government of Bangladesh, upcoming Chair of BIMSTEC, for hosting the Secretariat and facilitating its smooth functioning.

Global challenges that we are faced with today make it ever more obvious that regional cooperation is a necessity for seeking solutions and securing sustainable socio-economic development for the people of our region. Therefore, on this special occasion, I wish all BIMSTEC Member States the strength and wisdom required to work collectively to uplift the lives of the people of our region.


(Tenzin Lekphell)