



Prime Minister of Nepal

MESSAGE

On the occasion of the 23rd anniversary of the establishment of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), on behalf of the people and Government of Nepal as well as on my own, I wish to extend warm greetings and felicitations to the fellow Governments and Peoples of BIMSTEC Member Countries. Twenty-Three years ago, on 6 June 1997 our leaders signed the Bangkok Declaration with the aim of building a peaceful and prosperous Bay of Bengal region.

BIMSTEC is a home to about 1.5 billion people. It is a region with huge opportunities. Our common desire to delivering better opportunity and economic prosperity to our people has brought us together to establish this regional organization. Today, BIMSTEC represents our collective hope for achieving economic growth, social progress, sustainable development and prosperity in our region.

These days, we are fighting against the Covid-19 pandemic. It has tested our ability and exposed our vulnerability. This trying time demands us to pool our strengths and build a better resilience across the region. We face an increased level of uncertainty in the midst of this invisible enemy. This is a time to stand united and fight the Covid-19 collectively. We must fight collectively and defeat this enemy.

Regional cooperation is one of the salient features of Nepal's foreign policy. The fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in Kathmandu envisions for a better institutional framework for this regional body. The decision taken in Kathmandu Summit will go a long way in strengthening BIMSTEC through a solid legal and institutional basis. The fifth BIMSTEC Summit to be held in Colombo will be a milestone for furthering regional cooperation. Nepal is committed to working together with fellow member countries towards realizing the objectives we have set for this regional body.

May this special Day inspire us more to further deepen our bond of friendship, amity, partnership and cooperation to build BIMSTEC as a genuine vehicle for achieving peace and prosperity in the region!

K P Sharma Oli

Kathmandu, 1 June 2020