



The Prime Minister



Kathmandu, Nepal

6 June 2018

MESSAGE

It is indeed a matter of profound happiness that Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-operation (BIMSTEC) is going to celebrate the Twenty-First Anniversary of its founding. On this special occasion, I am pleased to extend, on behalf of the Government and people of Nepal, my best wishes for the continued success of the organization in achieving and furthering regional co-operation and integration for the mutual benefit of the people of the region.

The need for regional cooperation is all the more relevant today with the emergence, persistence and escalation of old and new regional and global problems such as poverty, climate change and widening socio-economic inequalities. No single society and country is capable of dealing with these cross-cutting and complex problems. Our region is more susceptible and vulnerable to these problems owing to various socio-economic constraints. It is therefore, imperative that BIMSTEC countries, home to almost 20% of the global population, join together and make efforts in dealing with these challenges and achieving greater peace and prosperity in the region. I firmly believe that BIMSTEC is capable of and has huge potentials in furthering regional co-operation by ensuring deeper engagement and establishing connectivity among Member States to sustain the momentum achieved so far and going beyond in future.

There is great prospect for regional integration due to prevalence of enormous resources in the BIMSTEC region, as well as its strategic location linking South and East Asia, its diverse topography-from white Himalayas to blue Oceans and rich culture. In particular, there is huge potential for regional cooperation in BIMSTEC in the areas of trade and investment, connectivity and energy co-operation, among others. We need to accelerate our pace of progress in furthering trade and commerce in the region, and facilitating the movement of people, goods and services in order to achieve concrete results. Deeper engagements, enhanced connectivity, frequent interactions and identifying the bottlenecks and removing barriers will help realize the fruits of regional co-operation more effectively. I hope that our current efforts and future initiatives will be able to reap the full benefits of regional integration for our common prosperity.

On the occasion of BIMSTEC Day, I wish to express Nepal's fullest support to regional co-operation and integration in BIMSTEC, and hope that it will serve as a useful forum for attaining greater peace and prosperity in the region.

(K.P. Sharma Oli)