



*Prime Minister of Nepal*

06 June 2016

MESSAGE

As we celebrate the Nineteenth Anniversary of the founding of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-operation (BIMSTEC), I am pleased to extend, on behalf of the Government and people of Nepal, my best wishes for continued success of the organization in its endeavors aimed at furthering regional co-operation and integration. I hope that this day will add further vigor to our collective efforts in BIMSTEC in promoting regional collaboration and partnership for mutual benefit.

The acceleration of a myriad of inter-related global problems, such as environmental degradation, economic vulnerabilities, and widening socio-economic inequalities, has added to the urgency of co-operation in our region. It is imperative that BIMSTEC countries, home to almost 20% of the global population, transcend their boundaries and join together in building a regional order that pools together our common resources for shared prosperity. I believe that BIMSTEC has huge potentials in furthering regional co-operation for the prosperity of all member countries. There is also the need for deeper engagement among Member States to sustain the momentum achieved so far.

There is great prospect for regional integration due to the region's strategic location linking South and East Asia. Tremendous regional cooperation exists in BIMSTEC in the areas of trade and investment, connectivity and energy co-operation. We need to identify the bottlenecks that constrain our efforts in furthering trade and commerce in the region, and facilitate the movement of people, goods and services. Deeper interaction and interface among our peoples are mutually advantageous, and it is incumbent upon us to remove the barriers that stand in the way of realizing the fruits of regional co-operation. I hope that our future initiatives will be geared towards dismantling the existing barriers for reaping the full benefits of regional integration.

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 vehicle for attaining peace and prosperity in the region.

(KP Sharma Oli)