



Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation

Press Release

The BIMSTEC Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation (AMTC) enters into force

BIMSTEC (The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Secretariat is pleased to announce entry into force of the BIMSTEC Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation (AMTC), marking a significant milestone in advancing regional maritime connectivity and maritime cooperation among the BIMSTEC Member States.

It may be recalled that the BIMSTEC Member States signed the AMTC on 03 April 2025 during the 6th BIMSTEC Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand. The Agreement stipulates that it would enter into force following the deposit of the Instrument of Ratification, Approval, or Acceptance by at least 4 BIMSTEC member States.

With deposition of the Instrument of Ratification by Myanmar on 13 May 2026, the 4th member State to do so, the condition for entry into force has been met; it may be noted that Bhutan, India and Thailand had earlier deposited their instruments of ratification. In accordance with the provisions of the Agreement, the AMTC is now effective among the above 4 member states that have ratified it.

The entry into force of the AMTC marks an important development in enhancing maritime connectivity in the Bay of Bengal. The Agreement provides a vital framework for strengthening maritime transport cooperation, facilitating smoother movement of goods and services and harmonizing legal and operational procedures among Member States. It is expected to contribute significantly to enhancing regional maritime connectivity, enabling increase intra -BIMSTEC trade, travel and tourism.

BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity, adopted in March 2022, has been under implementation. It is also being updated. Development of a Plan of Action for Connectivity is underway. BIMSTEC is also engaged in negotiation of a BIMSTEC Motor Vehicles Agreement. A Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Maritime Transport is being set up in India.

About BIMSTEC

BIMSTEC comprises seven countries of the Bay of Bengal region: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It pursues regional cooperation in 7 broad sectors: Agriculture & Food Security; Connectivity; Environment & Climate Change; People-to-People Contact; Science, Technology & Innovation; Security; and Trade, Investment & Development. The cooperation also covers 8 sub-sectors: Blue Economy, Mountain Economy, Energy, Disaster Management, Fisheries & Livestock, Poverty Alleviation, Health, and Human Resource Development.

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