



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

Press Release

BIMSTEC Secretariat Marks its 12th Anniversary

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 15 September 2026

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) celebrated the 12th Anniversary of the establishment of its Secretariat at a reception held on 14 September 2026 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The Reception was graced by H.E. Mr. Humaiun Kobir, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as the Chief Guest. The reception was also attended by H.E. Mr. M. Iqbal Hossain, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, together with Ambassadors and High Commissioners of BIMSTEC member States as well as Ambassadors of Embassies in Dhaka along with representatives from diplomatic missions; members from business, media, think tanks, culture and academic communities; developmental partners; and officials of the BIMSTEC Secretariat.

Welcoming the guests, BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, highlighted the progress made by BIMSTEC in strengthening regional cooperation and developing the institutional framework required to function as an effective regional organization. He noted that BIMSTEC's cooperation is guided by its Charter and the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030, and supported by an extensive institutional architecture comprising Summits, Ministerial and Senior Officials' Meetings, sectoral mechanisms and BIMSTEC Centres. He also highlighted BIMSTEC's growing partnerships with international and regional organizations in support of the shared development aspirations of its member States.

The Secretary General underscored that, since its establishment in Dhaka in September 2014, the BIMSTEC Secretariat has emerged as the anchor for implementing regional cooperation initiatives, facilitating consultation, communication and coordination among member States and monitoring the implementation of their decisions. He reaffirmed the Secretariat's commitment to supporting member States in expanding and deepening cooperation under BIMSTEC and expressed appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for hosting the Secretariat and providing continued support, as well as to the Embassies and High Commissions of BIMSTEC member States in Dhaka for their continued support.

In his remarks, the Chief Guest, H.E. Mr. Humaiun Kobir, urged BIMSTEC member States to remain committed to regional cooperation despite bilateral differences and tensions, calling for

mutual trust, political will and a shared sense of purpose. He said Bangladesh would work closely with member States and the Secretariat in the coming months to advance implementation across BIMSTEC mechanisms and to prepare for the next BIMSTEC Summit. He highlighted the role of BIMSTEC as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia and stressed the need for Member States to work together in addressing common challenges and advancing shared prosperity.

The State Minister also underscored the importance of strengthening regional economic integration, connectivity and people-to-people contacts, while emphasising the need to translate BIMSTEC decisions into practical outcomes. He reaffirmed Bangladesh's continued support to BIMSTEC and the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka, particularly during its Chairmanship, towards building a more functional, inclusive and people-centred regional organisation.

The celebration also featured a cake-cutting ceremony by the Chief Guest, the BIMSTEC Secretary General and Heads of Missions of BIMSTEC member States, followed by a group photo session, and concluded with a reception dinner.

The BIMSTEC Secretariat was established on 13 September 2014 in Dhaka pursuant to the decision of the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary General. It implements the decisions and directives of the member States and monitors and reports on the progress in regional cooperation under BIMSTEC, contributing to the realisation of the shared vision of a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable Bay of Bengal region.

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 the following areas: Agriculture & Food Security; Blue Economy; Connectivity; Culture; Disaster Management; Energy; Environment & Climate Change; Fiscal & Monetary Policy; Health; Human Resource Development; Fisheries & Livestock; Mountain Economy; People-to-People Relations; Poverty Alleviation; Security; Science, Technology & Innovation; Tourism; Trade & Investment; and Women Development.

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