



Message from BIMSTEC Secretary General

Welcome to the June Edition of our Monthly BIMSTEC E-Newsletter.

On 08 June 2026, we celebrated the 29th Anniversary of establishment of BIMSTEC. We also commenced year-long celebrations leading to the 30th Anniversary of BIMSTEC, which will be a significant milestone in our journey as a regional organisation.

The celebration was an occasion to remember that BIMSTEC has made significant progress since its inception through the Bangkok Declaration in June 1997. Guided by the BIMSTEC Charter and the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030, BIMSTEC's diverse regional cooperation agenda has expanded to cover 18 sectors, supported by a strong institutional framework of Summits, Ministerial Meetings, Senior Officials' Meetings and Working and Expert Group Mechanisms. I am happy to note that BIMSTEC has emerged as a shining example of South-South cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Further, our BIMSTEC Day celebration reflected both the diversity and unity of our region. The esteemed presence of distinguished leaders, diplomats, representatives of international organizations, members of diplomatic community, academia, think tanks and media highlighted the salience of BIMSTEC in promoting regional cooperation. The awesome vibrant cultural performances, exhibitions and traditional cuisines showcased the rich heritage of our member States and reinforced people-to-people connections that underline our regional identity. The celebration was echoed across all the member States including messages from our leaders and foreign ministers, reaffirming their shared commitment to foster regional cooperation to realize the goal of a secure, developed and prosperous Bay of Bengal region.

During my official visit to Myanmar, I had the honour to call on the Honourable President of Myanmar, H.E. Min Aung Hlaing, as well as Myanmar's senior leadership to discuss ways to deepen cooperation under BIMSTEC including agriculture, food security, fisheries and livestock, which are led by Myanmar. Our discussions reaffirmed Myanmar's commitment to BIMSTEC and the importance that it attaches to BIMSTEC for addressing the shared security and developmental challenges faced by our member States.

Hosted by Thailand, the 4th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Human Trafficking took forward regional efforts to address the challenges of trafficking in persons through better coordination, development of common procedures and use of digital platforms. The BIMSTEC Energy Centre engaged during the month in capacity building for planning modern power transmission systems, supporting BIMSTEC's objective of enhancing regional energy security.

During the month our focus was on knowledge exchange and capacity building through our engagement with academia and think tanks. I had the opportunity to discuss Sustainable Development Goals at the seminar titled "Young Leaders, Sustainable Futures: Advancing the SDGs Together" organised by BIIS. I spoke about regional cooperation in Blue Economy and maritime security domains at the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies at the Independent University, Bangladesh.

As we look ahead to celebrate BIMSTEC's 30th Anniversary on 06 June 2027, we aim to work together to build a peaceful, prosperous, resilient and sustainable Bay of Bengal region.

This month we are enclosing to this Newsletter a brief on the growing cooperation in Connectivity sector under BIMSTEC for your information.

We deeply value your readership and welcome your suggestions both to strengthen regional cooperation under BIMSTEC and improve this E-Newsletter.

Indra Mani Pandey
BIMSTEC Secretary General

Inside this Newsletter:

BIMSTEC Celebrates its 29th Anniversary

In Focus: BIMSTEC Sectoral Meetings

Regional Capacity-building Initiatives and Workshops

In Focus: BIMSTEC SG's Engagements

Sectoral Snapshot: Advancing Regional Connectivity among the BIMSTEC member States

BIMSTEC Celebrates its 29th Anniversary, Reaffirming its Commitment to Regional Cooperation



The BIMSTEC Secretariat celebrated on 8th June 2026 the 29th Anniversary of the establishment of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation). Established through the Bangkok Declaration on 6 June 1997, BIMSTEC has emerged as an important platform for fostering regional cooperation among the countries of the Bay of Bengal region and as a vital bridge between South and Southeast Asia.

The Reception was graced by H.E. Abdul Awal Mintoo, MP, Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, H.E. Shama Obaed Islam, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and H.E. M. Iqbal Hossain, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

Welcoming the guests, **H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General of BIMSTEC**, noted that this year's BIMSTEC Day celebration held special significance as BIMSTEC commemorates its 29th anniversary and begins the year-long celebration leading to its 30th anniversary.

The Secretary General highlighted that, over the years, BIMSTEC has made significant progress in fostering regional cooperation in various sectors and has established the necessary institutional framework to function as an effective regional organization. He referred to the BIMSTEC Charter and the BIMSTEC Vision 2030, and noted that the organization's agenda now covers a wide range of priority sectors supported by ministerial meetings, senior officials' meetings, joint working groups, expert groups, and other mechanisms.

The Secretary General further underlined that BIMSTEC is working with like-minded partners, including observer States, international organizations, regional organizations, and UN agencies, to support member States in implementing their decisions and advancing their shared development aspirations. He expressed the Secretariat's gratitude to the Government and people of Bangladesh for hosting the Secretariat and providing continued support, and thanked the Ambassadors and High Commissioners of BIMSTEC member States in Dhaka for their support, including in organizing the BIMSTEC Day Reception.

In her remarks, H.E. Shama Obaed Islam, MP, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, congratulated BIMSTEC and its member States on this auspicious occasion and reaffirmed Bangladesh's strong commitment to regional cooperation. She stated that Bangladesh attaches high importance to regional cooperation as a cornerstone of its foreign policy and highlighted BIMSTEC's role as a unique bridge connecting South and Southeast Asia. She underlined that, as the current Chair of BIMSTEC, Bangladesh remains committed to fostering trust, inclusivity and collaboration among member States and to advancing an open, prosperous, and connected Bay of Bengal region.

BIMSTEC Celebrates its 29th Anniversary, Reaffirming its Commitment to Regional Cooperation Contd..



The Chief Guest also emphasized the importance of seamless multimodal connectivity, enhanced trade and investment, technology transfer, stronger supply chains, and people-to-people contacts. She noted that cultural exchange, education, tourism, sports diplomacy, youth engagement, and professional exchanges can bring the peoples of South and Southeast Asia closer through trust and friendship. She further stressed the need to strengthen BIMSTEC's institutional foundations, operationalize the BIMSTEC Charter and ensure that sectoral cooperation mechanisms are properly resourced and effectively coordinated.

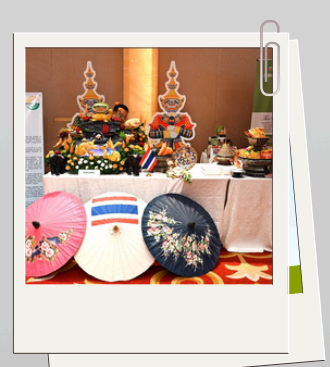
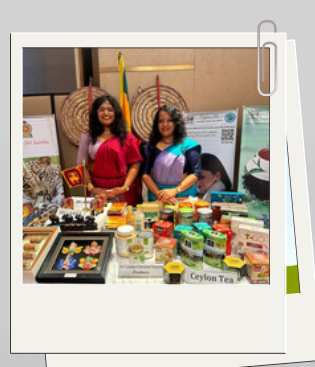
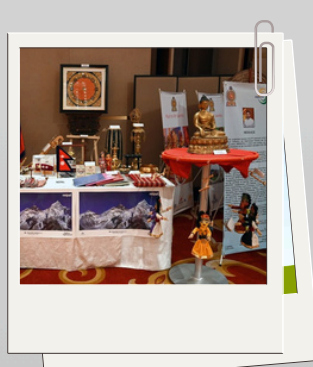
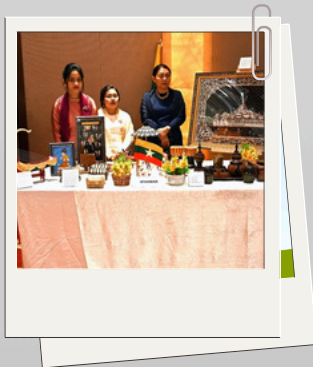
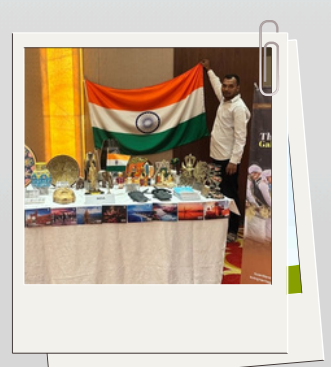
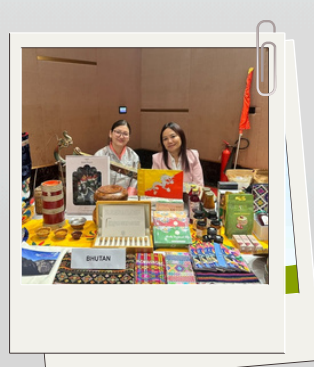
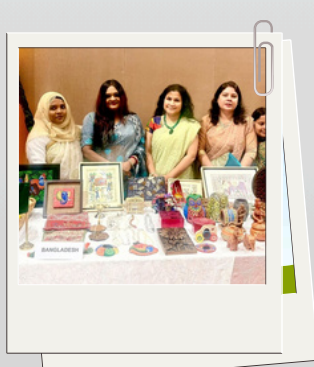
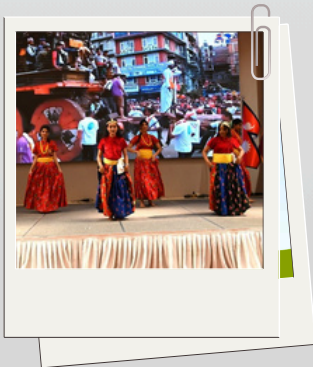
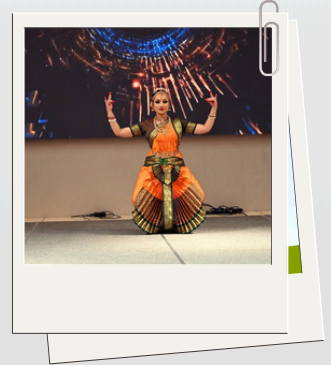
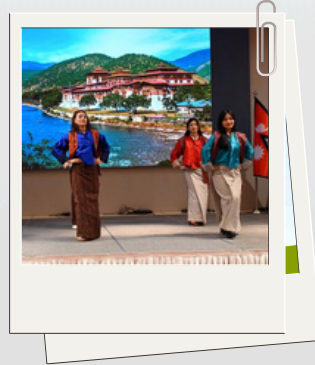
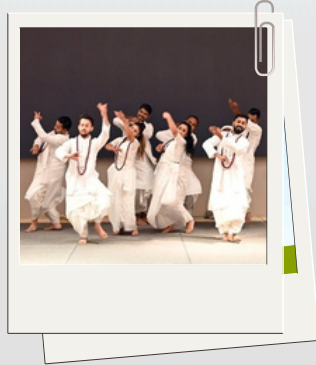
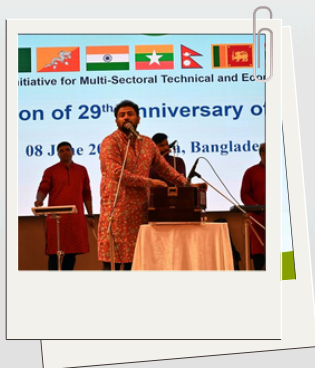
The Reception brought together senior government officials, Ambassadors and High Commissioners of BIMSTEC member States, representatives of international organizations, members of the diplomatic corps, media representatives, members of think tanks, and other distinguished guests.



BIMSTEC Celebrates its 29th Anniversary, Reaffirming its Commitment to Regional Cooperation Contd...

The highlight of the celebration was the vibrant display of the **cultural richness and diversity of the BIMSTEC member States**. Representatives of the member States participated in a symbolic parade carrying their national flags, dressed in traditional attire, reflecting the spirit of friendship and solidarity that binds the BIMSTEC community. Cultural performances and exhibitions of cultural artefacts, handicrafts, textiles and other distinctive symbols from all member States further showcased the heritage and unique identities of the peoples of the region. Culinary traditions of the member States were reflected in the range of dishes in the large spread for the dinner.

Beyond the primary Reception in Dhaka, BIMSTEC Day was also commemorated across all member States and featured congratulatory messages from Heads of State, Heads of Government, and Foreign Ministers.



Bhutan commemorates BIMSTEC's 29th Anniversary with prayers and a thousand butter lamps, celebrating three decades of regional cooperation and shared commitment towards a peaceful and prosperous Bay of Bengal region



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Royal Government of Bhutan observed the 29th anniversary of the founding of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) on 6 June 2026 by offering prayers and lighting a thousand butter lamps at Tara Lhading Zhingkhams Lhakhang in Thimphu. The event also marked the commencement of the commemoration of BIMSTEC's 30th Anniversary.

H.E Lyonpo D.N. Dhungyel, Foreign Minister graced the event as the Chief Guest. The event was also attended by members of the diplomatic community, officials from the Ministry and representatives of various RGoB agencies. Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Minister highlighted BIMSTEC's evolution into an important bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia and welcomed the growing momentum to deepen cooperation across BIMSTEC's priority sectors, including trade and investment, energy, transport and connectivity, technology and innovation, agriculture, public health, disaster management, environmental conservation, and climate action. He also reaffirmed Bhutan's steadfast commitment to working closely with fellow Member States to advance the goals and objectives of BIMSTEC and to contribute constructively towards a peaceful, prosperous, sustainable, and inclusive Bay of Bengal region. He further acknowledged the valuable contributions of Member States, the BIMSTEC Secretariat and other stakeholders in advancing the BIMSTEC process over the past three decades.

BIMSTEC is a regional organization comprising seven Member States (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand). Established in 1997, BIMSTEC aims to foster regional cooperation and promote socio-economic development through collaborative efforts in various sectors. Bhutan joined the organization in 2004.





**PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

MESSAGE

On the auspicious occasion of the 29th anniversary of the establishment of BIMSTEC, I extend my warm greetings and felicitations to the governments and peoples of all BIMSTEC Member States.

Bangladesh takes pride in its long-standing association with BIMSTEC since its inception, reflecting a deep-rooted belief in regional cooperation as a pathway to peace, stability and economic progress. This early engagement was underscored by the participation of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the First BIMSTEC Summit in 2004.

This year's observance comes at a defining moment for both our region and Bangladesh. As the current Chair of BIMSTEC, Bangladesh envisions a regional organisation that is politically relevant, economically integrated and strategically connected, capable of addressing shared challenges and unlocking collective opportunities.

The Bay of Bengal region holds immense strategic and economic significance. Home to nearly a quarter of the world's population, it offers vast potential in trade, connectivity, energy, technology, maritime cooperation and the blue economy.

At a time of profound global transformation, BIMSTEC has the opportunity to emerge as a strong regional voice representing the aspirations of the peoples of South and Southeast Asia.

Our region also shares a rich historical and cultural legacy shaped by centuries of interaction across the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh believes that strengthening people-to-people connectivity through education, tourism, cultural exchange, youth engagement and academic collaboration is essential to building lasting regional solidarity.

On this important occasion, let us renew our collective resolve to build a stronger, more resilient and more effective BIMSTEC. May the spirit of friendship and cooperation among our Member States continue to grow.

Long live the spirit of BIMSTEC.

(Tarique Rahman)

Prime Minister
of the Government of the
People's Republic of Bangladesh

Dhaka, 08 June, 2026



PRIME MINISTER
Royal Government of Bhutan

MESSAGE

Esteemed Leaders and Partners,

I bring to you the warm greetings and heartfelt felicitations of His Majesty The King, Her Majesty The Queen, and the government and people of Bhutan on the joyous occasion of the founding day of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

This year's celebration carries special significance as we commemorate 29 years since the establishment of BIMSTEC and formally begin a year-long observance leading to our historic 30th Anniversary milestone. Over the past three decades, the BIMSTEC region has steadily evolved into an important platform for collective action, united by our shared geography, history, and cultural ties.

As we look toward the future, Bhutan remains steadfast in its commitment to our shared vision of a prosperous, peaceful, and open BIMSTEC region. Bhutan firmly believes that the true measure of progress lies in the wellbeing of our people, the resilience of our communities, and the responsibility we uphold toward future generations. Our region's development must therefore be sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally conscious.

In an era marked by global uncertainty, regional solidarity and mutual trust are more important than ever. As we enter this landmark 30th year, let us renew our collective resolve to strengthen our friendship and ensure that our cooperation continues to advance the aspirations of our peoples.

With my best wishes for the continued success of our esteemed organization.

Tashi Delek.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tshering Tobgay'.

(Tshering Tobgay)
Prime Minister of the
Royal Government of Bhutan

Thimphu, 06 June, 2026



प्रधान मंत्री
Prime Minister

MESSAGE

I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all the Member States of the BIMSTEC family on the occasion of the 29th BIMSTEC Day.

The Bay of Bengal has served as a civilizational bridge over millennia, facilitating the exchange of peoples, trade, beliefs, and traditions. Over the past 29 years, BIMSTEC has served as the key enabler of our joint efforts towards enhancing connectivity, institutional capacity, and cooperation across priority sectors and achieve our shared vision of a peaceful, resilient, and prosperous Bay of Bengal region.

As the BIMSTEC approaches BIMSTEC@30, India remains steadfast in its endeavor to enhance regional cooperation. Over the last year, it has been India's privilege to organize several important initiatives across diverse sectors towards strengthening our partnership. These include several youth leadership exchanges and capacity building programs in areas such as trade, disaster management, maritime and health. These efforts would further contribute meaningfully to our common goals for the region.

On this important occasion, I also extend my congratulations to all the people of the region. I am confident that, together, we will continue to advance our aspirations of sustainable development, regional well-being, and inclusive prosperity in a spirit of partnership and mutual trust.

(Narendra Modi)
Prime Minister of India

New Delhi
May 30, 2026



President
The Republic of the
Union of Myanmar

MESSAGE

On the auspicious occasion of the 29th Anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), I, on behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, extend my warm greetings and best wishes to the Governments and Peoples of the BIMSTEC Member States as well as the BIMSTEC Secretariat.

Since its establishment through the Bangkok Declaration, BIMSTEC has served as an important platform for promoting regional cooperation and advancing economic growth and social development in the Bay of Bengal region, guided by the principles of equality, mutual respect, and partnership.

For twenty-nine years, BIMSTEC has made steady progress in strengthening its institutional framework and expanding cooperation across priority sectors. These collective efforts have enhanced its effectiveness and reinforced its role as a meaningful platform for regional collaboration.

As we approach the 30th Anniversary of BIMSTEC next year, there is a need to set a more ambitious path forward based on the achievements, Let us work together to ensure that BIMSTEC continues to evolve into a more effective, results-oriented, and responsive regional organization that delivers tangible benefits to our peoples.

BIMSTEC Day serves as a timely reminder of the vast potential within our region and the importance of unity in harnessing it. Together, we can build a more resilient, dynamic, and people-centred BIMSTEC community for the benefit of present and future generations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Min Aung Hlaing', written over a horizontal line.

(Min Aung Hlaing)
President of the
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Nay Pyi Taw
June 06, 2026



The Prime Minister of Nepal

MESSAGE

On the occasion of the Twenty-ninth Anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). I extend, on behalf of the Government and people of Nepal, warm greetings and best wishes to the Governments and peoples of all Member States.

As BIMSTEC approaches three decades of existence, it has emerged as a dynamic platform for regional cooperation, reflecting the region's diversity, vitality, and shared potential. Our proximity within the Bay of Bengal region offers not only significant opportunities but also a collective responsibility to ensure that cooperation translates into prosperity for our peoples.

For Nepal, BIMSTEC holds clear and practical relevance. As a landlocked country, strengthening regional connectivity across transport, trade, and digital networks remains central to our development priorities. Enhanced linkages will not only facilitate the seamless movement of goods and services but also foster deeper integration of our economies.

Equally, BIMSTEC's enduring strength lies in its people. We must prioritize initiatives that directly improve livelihoods whether through expanding regional tourism, promoting sustainable economic activities or creating opportunities for youth and entrepreneurs. Building resilient communities, particularly in the face of climate change and natural disasters, must also remain at the forefront of our cooperation.

On this occasion, I would like to reiterate Nepal's unwavering commitment to working closely with all Member States to further strengthen our regional partnership. By harnessing our complementarities and reinforcing our cooperation, we can build a connected, resilient, and prosperous BIMSTEC region.

(Balendra Shah)
Prime Minister of Nepal

Kathmandu
June 06, 2026



President
of the Democratic Socialist
Republic of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE

On the auspicious occasion of the 29th Anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), I extend warm greetings and sincere congratulations to the Governments and people of the BIMSTEC Member States.

During the past three decades, BIMSTEC has emerged as a vital bridge between South and Southeast Asia, promoting regional cooperation, connectivity, and shared prosperity across the Bay of Bengal region. It stands today as a dynamic platform that reflects the Member States aspiration for peace, resilience, and sustainable development.

As Lead Country for Science, Technology and Innovation, as well as for key subsectors including Technology, Health, and Human Resource Development, Sri Lanka remains dedicated to advancing the overall BIMSTEC agenda and has actively contributed to strengthening regional collaboration. In the past year, Sri Lanka has had the privilege of hosting and organizing several important BIMSTEC engagements and multiple Expert Group Meetings across various sectors such as Science, Technology and Innovation, Human Resource Development, Cultural Cooperation, Poverty Alleviation, and Traditional Medicine. These Initiatives reflect Sri Lanka's continued dedication to promoting practical cooperation and delivering tangible outcomes through BIMSTEC. We look forward to the operationalization of the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Colombo, which will serve as a foundation for innovation-driven growth and knowledge sharing across our region.

As BIMSTEC approaches its 30th anniversary, it is imperative that we consolidate our efforts to enhance Institutional capacity, accelerate project implementation, and deepen regional Integration. Sri Lanka stands ready to work closely with all Member States to realize a more connected, Innovative, and resilient BIMSTEC community.

I take this opportunity to reiterate Sri Lanka's commitment to BIMSTEC and extend my best wishes for the continued success and prosperity of our partnership.

(Anura Kumara Dissanayaka)

**President of the
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

Colombo 15.4.2026



**Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of Thailand**

MESSAGE

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government and the people of Thailand, I extend my sincere congratulations to all Member States on the occasion of the 29th anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

For nearly three decades, our organisation has served as a vital bridge between South and Southeast Asia, transforming our shared geographic proximity into a dynamic community founded on common purpose and shared prosperity.

We commemorate this anniversary at a pivotal moment. Amid profound geopolitical shifts, economic fragmentation, and escalating non-traditional security threats, the resilience of the global community is being tested as never before. In this increasingly volatile environment, the solidarity of the BIMSTEC family stands as our most valuable strategic asset. Unity is no longer merely an aspiration; it is an imperative for safeguarding our regional interests and ensuring sustainable growth.

The 6th BIMSTEC Summit, held in Bangkok last April, infused our cooperation with renewed and transformative momentum. As we build upon this aspiration, the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 remains our guiding compass. With 2030 fast approaching, we must act with urgency and collective determination to realise our shared vision of a Prosperous, Resilient, and Open BIMSTEC region.

Thailand remains firmly committed to translating dialogue into tangible outcomes. We stand ready to play a proactive role in advancing our common agenda and ensuring that our cooperation delivers concrete and measurable benefits to the 1.8 billion people of our region. In this endeavour, we look forward to working closely with the Government of Bangladesh in its capacity as Chair, as well as with all Member States.

As we begin the countdown to BIMSTEC's auspicious 30th anniversary next year, let us use this BIMSTEC Day to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to one another. Together, we will continue to chart a path towards a brighter and more prosperous future for our region and beyond.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Anutin Charnvirakul'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

**(Anutin Charnvirakul)
Prime Minister of the
Kingdom of Thailand**

**Bangkok
June 06, 2026**



MINISTER
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade,
Royal Government of Bhutan

MESSAGE

On the auspicious occasion of BIMSTEC Day 2026, I join the Member States, partners, and stakeholders in celebrating the enduring spirit of friendship and cooperation that has united the Bay of Bengal community for nearly three decades. As BIMSTEC begins commemorating its historic 30th Anniversary, we take pride in the remarkable growth of our organization into an important bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia, guided by our shared commitment to dialogue, mutual respect, and understanding.

For Bhutan, the vision of a prosperous, peaceful, and open region is firmly grounded in the values of trust, solidarity, and collective wellbeing. This landmark anniversary provides an important opportunity to reflect on our shared journey in advancing resilience, connectivity, and practical cooperation. We are encouraged by the growing momentum to deepen collaboration across priority sectors, including trade, energy, technology, connectivity, and environmental stewardship, thereby strengthening BIMSTEC as a dynamic and vital platform for regional cooperation.

At a time of growing global uncertainty and division, our solidarity and mutual trust remain our greatest strengths. Bhutan remains steadfast in its commitment to contributing constructively to a peaceful, resilient, and inclusive BIMSTEC region that reflects the aspirations of our peoples while safeguarding the interests of future generations.

May the bonds of friendship among our Member States continue to flourish as we celebrate thirty years of working together towards a prosperous future.

Tashi Delek and best wishes for the continued success of BIMSTEC.

(D.N. Dhungyel)
Minister
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade
Royal Government of Bhutan

Thimphu
June 06, 2026



Union Minister For Foreign Affairs
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

MESSAGE

On the occasion of the 29th Anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), I convey my warm greetings to the Governments and Peoples of the BIMSTEC Member States.

As BIMSTEC continues to mature as a regional organization, our collective priority must be to ensure effective implementation of the decisions and commitments undertaken by our Leaders.

In this regard, enhancing coordination among sectoral lead countries, strengthening the role of the BIMSTEC Secretariat, and improving inter-sectoral linkages will be essential to advancing cooperation across priority areas. Greater emphasis should also be placed on monitoring progress and ensuring that our initiatives deliver measurable outcomes,

Myanmar attaches importance to advancing practical cooperation in key areas, including connectivity, maritime transport, food security and disaster management. Strengthening resilience in the face of evolving regional challenges, including climate-related risks and public health, also remains a shared responsibility of all Member States.

As we mark this anniversary, I encourage continued engagement at all levels to maintain momentum and to translate our shared vision into concrete benefits for our peoples. Myanmar stands ready to work closely with all Member States and the BIMSTEC Secretariat in advancing a more effective and responsive BIMSTEC.



(Tin Maung Swe)
Union Minister For Foreign Affairs
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Nay Pyi Taw
06 June 2026



Minister For Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Singha Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal

MESSAGE

On the occasion of the 29th Anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), I wish to extend sincere congratulations to the Governments and people of BIMSTEC Member States.

Since its establishment in 1997, BIMSTEC has made steady progress in developing an institutional and cooperative framework that connects South Asia and Southeast Asia. The entry into force of the BIMSTEC Charter marked important milestones in strengthening the organization's foundation and enhancing its effectiveness. Sustained political commitment and deepening collaboration among Member States have further advanced the process of regional integration.

As BIMSTEC moves forward, it is important to focus on consolidating its gains while exploring new avenues of cooperation. Strengthening partnerships, enhancing resource mobilization, and fostering greater synergy among sectors will further elevate the organization's role and relevance in the region.

Nepal attaches high importance to BIMSTEC as a vital platform for regional cooperation. We remain committed to actively engaging in its priority areas and stand ready to contribute to strengthening institutional mechanisms, improving coordination, and enhancing implementation efficiency.

As the lead country of People-to-People Contact sector, Nepal stands ready to play a proactive role in promoting tourism and culture, while further deepening people-level contacts and social linkages among our Member States.

On this anniversary, I reaffirm Nepal's firm commitment to the objectives and principles of BIMSTEC. I am confident that, through collective efforts and shared resolve, BIMSTEC will continue to grow as an effective and vibrant regional organization.

(Shisir Khanal)
Minister For Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nepal

Kathmandu, 06 June 2026



**Minister For Foreign Affairs
Foreign Employment and Tourism
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

MESSAGE

It is with great pleasure that I extend warm congratulations to the Member States of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) on the occasion of its 29th Anniversary.

Sri Lanka underscores BIMSTEC's increasingly significant role in advancing regional cooperation across a wide spectrum of sectors, providing a pragmatic and action-oriented platform that connects South and Southeast Asia. Its growing relevance is evident in the tangible progress achieved under the seven priority areas.

During the past year, Sri Lanka has remained actively engaged in BIMSTEC's work, particularly in its capacity as Lead Country for Science, Technology and Innovation, as well as in the subsectors of Technology, Health, and Human Resource Development. In this regard, Sri Lanka has taken concrete steps to advance regional collaboration by hosting several Expert Group Meetings and technical workshops across multiple sectors. We attach particular importance to the establishment of the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Colombo by the end of this year, which we believe will significantly enhance regional cooperation in innovation, research, and capacity building. Sri Lanka remains dedicated to supporting its operationalization and ensuring that it delivers meaningful benefits to all Member States.

As we look ahead, it is essential that BIMSTEC continues to strengthen its institutional mechanisms, promote effective implementation of agreed initiatives, and further deepen collaboration among Member States. Sri Lanka stands ready to work in close partnership with all Member States and the Secretariat to advance our shared vision of a prosperous, resilient, and interconnected Bay of Bengal region.

I wish BIMSTEC continued success in the years ahead.

**(H.M. Vijitha Herath, M.P.)
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

Colombo, 06 April 2026



**Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister For Foreign Affairs
of the Kingdom of Thailand**

MESSAGE

As we celebrate the 29th anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), I am pleased to join our Member States in honouring a partnership that has become a recognised relationship among seven of the Member States. Since its inception in Bangkok, our organisation has consistently proven that the Bay of Bengal is a vital bridge uniting the trajectories between South and Southeast Asia.

The strategic convergence of South and Southeast Asia through the BIMSTEC framework represents a unique collaboration of economic potential and cultural interconnectedness. In celebrating the harmonisation of the strengths of the two regions, we are building a corridor of mutual prosperity that serves as an unified force in an increasingly complex world.

At the heart of this mutual bond lies Thailand's commitment as the Lead Country for the Connectivity Sector, where we view transport infrastructure as the very foundation of BIMSTEC's shared future. The recent entry into force of the BIMSTEC Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation stands as a landmark achievement. Through our steadfast determination towards its early implementation, this pivotal instrument empowers us to fully harness the potential of the regional maritime routes and unlock new opportunities. Driven by this success, Thailand is pressing forward to extend this momentum across all transport modalities and economic corridors.

I wish to commend every Member State for the spirit of solidarity that has guided BIMSTEC's success over the past twenty-nine years. The milestones we celebrate today are proof of what we can achieve together. As we look to the future, our journey towards closer regional integration will continue to be propelled by our lasting partnership and open dialogue.

I wish all Member States and the BIMSTEC Secretariat a successful BIMSTEC Day.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Phuangketkeow'.

**(Sihasak Phuangketkeow)
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Kingdom of Thailand**

**Bangkok
06 June, 2026**



Secretary General

MESSAGE

On the occasion of 29th Anniversary of establishment of BIMSTEC, I extend, on behalf of the BIMSTEC Secretariat, my warm greetings and best wishes to the Governments and Peoples of the 7 BIMSTEC member States (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand).

7 BIMSTEC member States, located contiguous and close to Bay of Bengal, the largest Bay of the world, face similar developmental and transnational security challenges, which, they realize, they cannot deal with alone. Hence, they are keen to forge regional cooperation under BIMSTEC. Their shared historical experiences, cultural linkages and civilization legacies provide a strong foundation for forging regional cooperation.

BIMSTEC is an Inter-Governmental Regional Organisation, with its Permanent Secretariat located in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Established in June 1997 by its 4 founding members - Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand - as a non-political platform to facilitate cooperation amongst the countries of South Asia and South East Asia, BIMSTEC has emerged as a vibrant regional organization. 7 BIMSTEC member States are home to 1.8 billion people; they had in 2024 a combined GDP of over \$5.0 trillion and a combined external trade of almost \$3.0 trillion. A significant part of global trade and energy flows through the waters of Bay of Bengal.

Since its inception, 29 years ago, BIMSTEC has made significant progress. It has adopted its own Charter and has institutionalized the requisite core and sectoral mechanisms for forging regional cooperation. It has its vision enshrined in BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030, which provides a roadmap for expanding and deepening regional cooperation. As a non-political organization, BIMSTEC has focused on promoting tangible cooperation, based on shared priorities of the member States.

BIMSTEC has a comprehensive agenda, comprising 18 sectors of cooperation, clubbed in 7 Groups with designation of 7 member States as the Lead member State for one of the 7 Groups. Bangladesh leads Trade & Investment, Women Development and Blue Economy Sectors; Bhutan leads Environment & Climate Change and Mountain Economy Sectors; India leads Security, Energy and Disaster Management Sectors; Myanmar leads Agriculture & Food Security and Fisheries & Livestock Sectors; Nepal leads Culture, Tourism, People-to-People Contact Forums and Poverty Alleviation Sectors; Sri Lanka leads Science, Technology & Innovation, Health and Human Resource Development Sectors; and Thailand leads Connectivity Sector. The Agenda of BIMSTEC has been developed with consensus amongst the member States and is fully aligned with the UN SDGs Agenda 2030.

BIMSTEC has held numerous Summits of Heads of the Government and Ministerial and Senior Officials Meetings, including Sectoral Ministerial and Senior Officials Meetings. There are numerous sectoral Joint Working Groups, Expert Groups and their Sub-Groups to identify areas of cooperation in various sectors, delineate Plans of Action and monitor their implementation.

In order to institutionalize cooperation in various sectors, BIMSTEC has established Centres of Excellence, such as BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and and Climate and BIMSTEC Energy Centre, both in India. Further, BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory has been set up in Paro, Bhutan, and BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility is being set up in Colombo, Sri Lanka. 8 more Centres of Excellence are being set up in order to enhance regional cooperation in areas of agriculture, culture and tourism, disaster management, sustainable maritime transport, skill development, tropical medicine, traditional medicine, Supreme Audit Institutions etc.

BIMSTEC has already concluded two Conventions: BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking, which has entered into force since March 2021, and BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, which has not yet entered into force. 3 more Conventions on Extradition; Human Trafficking; and Transfer of Sentenced Persons are being concluded. The BIMSTEC Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation, which was signed in April 2025, has entered into force for the 4 member States, which have ratified it. Besides, a number of MoUs and MoAs have also been concluded.

BIMSTEC has been seeking developmental partnerships with the non-Members as well as the UN, International and Regional Organisations. It has signed MoUs for cooperation with ADB, IFPRI, IORA and UNODC. It has been engaged in forging cooperation with WB, WIPO, WHO, ITU, UNDRR, UNESCAP, UN Women, ISA and CDRI etc. BIMSTEC is open to engage in partnerships with other regional organizations as well as UN and International Organizations.

With measures being taken to reform and revitalize it, including through implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Eminent Persons' Group, BIMSTEC is poised to emerge as a dynamic and successful platform for forging regional cooperation and to play a crucial role in realizing security and sustainable development of its member States. It is also emerging as a shining example of South-South cooperation.

I express my deep gratitude to the BIMSTEC member States for their continued guidance and support to the BIMSTEC Secretariat. The Secretariat remains fully committed to carrying out the tasks entrusted to it in a timely, efficient and effective manner and supporting the member States in translating their shared vision for regional cooperation into tangible outcomes.



(Indra Mani Pandey)
BIMSTEC Secretary General

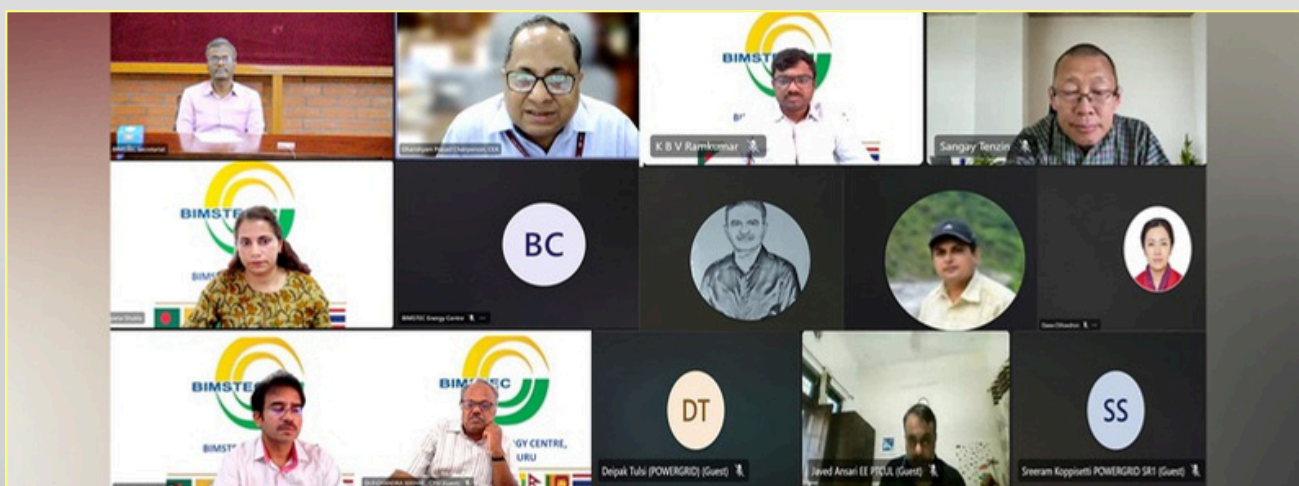
BIMSTEC Secretariat, Dhaka
June 06, 2026

4th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Human Trafficking



The 4th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Human Trafficking was held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 11–12 June 2026. It reviewed progress made since the previous meeting and discussed key initiatives, including establishment of the BIMSTEC Digital Platform on Human Trafficking and development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on Assistance and Repatriation of Victims of Human Trafficking. It also deliberated on the evolving trends and emerging challenges in trafficking in persons and reiterated the necessity of enhanced regional cooperation and coordinated action to effectively combat this important transnational issue.

Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Best Practices in Planning of New Power Transmission System



BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC), India, organized a **webinar titled “Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Best Practices in Planning of New Power Transmission Systems”** on 10 June 2026. The webinar highlighted the importance of strengthening regional cooperation and fostering a collaborative approach towards planning and development of new power transmission systems in the BIMSTEC member states. The BIMSTEC Energy Centre has taken initiatives to enhance knowledge exchange and promote best practices in the energy sector. Over 90 participants from BIMSTEC Member States joined the webinar.

BIMSTEC Secretary General visits Myanmar



BIMSTEC Secretary General, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, undertook an official visit to Myanmar from 22 to 24 June 2026. During the visit, he called on **Honourable President of Myanmar, H.E. U Min Aung Hlaing**, who reiterated Myanmar's abiding commitment to expanding regional cooperation under BIMSTEC, underlined its non-political character and expressed Myanmar's desire to enhance its contribution in BIMSTEC's success.



Secretary General also called on **Honourable Foreign Minister H.E. U Tin Maung Swe**. Their discussion focused on strengthening regional cooperation under BIMSTEC and vital role of Myanmar in expanding cooperation in Agriculture and Food security as well as Fisheries and Livestock sectors that Myanmar leads as well as other Sectors on BIMSTEC's Agenda. Honourable Foreign Minister reiterated the high importance Myanmar attaches to BIMSTEC.

In a separate call on **Honourable Home Minister, H.E. Lt Gen. Nyunt Win Swe**, the two sides discussed progress in regional security cooperation under BIMSTEC in dealing with the transnational security challenges faced by the member States. They welcomed the opportunity being offered by the forthcoming Inaugural Meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers to review and expand regional security cooperation under BIMSTEC.

Besides, Secretary General called on **Honourable National Security Adviser and Union Minister of President Office, H.E. U Tin Aung San**. They reviewed progress in regional security cooperation since the 4th Meeting of BIMSTEC National Security Advisors, which was hosted by Myanmar in July 2024 in Nay Pyi Taw, and preparations for the 5th Meeting of BIMSTEC National Security Advisors, which is being hosted by India and is scheduled to be held in New Delhi on 16th July 2026. They underlined Myanmar's vital role in regional security in Bay of Bengal region, including in combating organised crime and terrorism as well as in ensuring maritime security, food security, climate security and energy security.

BIMSTEC Secretary General visits Myanmar Contd...



Secretary General called also on **Honourable Union Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, H.E. U Min Naung**. Their discussion focused on advancing regional cooperation in Agriculture & Food Security as well as Fisheries and Livestock Sectors, including implementation of the decisions made at the 3rd BIMSTEC Agriculture Ministerial Meeting, held in April 2025 in Kathmandu, Nepal, and the ways to further strengthen regional cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors under BIMSTEC.

Secretary General attended a dinner hosted in his honour by Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The dinner was attended by Senior Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.



Secretary General also met with **Chairman of the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS), H.E. U Thant Kyaw**, and the two sides exchanged views on further strengthening regional cooperation under BIMSTEC framework.

Myanmar is one of the seven Member States of BIMSTEC and leads regional cooperation in Agriculture and Food Security as well as Fisheries and Livestock sectors. Myanmar joined as a member of the BIMSTEC in December 1997.



BIMSTEC Secretary General Highlights Youth Leadership for Advancing the SDGs



H.E. Mr. Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General of BIMSTEC, addressed the seminar "Young Leaders, Sustainable Futures: Advancing the SDGs Together" as Guest of Honor, which was held on 9 June 2026 at the BISS Auditorium, Dhaka. In his remarks, the Secretary General underscored the vital role of youth in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals and reaffirmed BIMSTEC's commitment to fostering regional cooperation for a more prosperous, resilient and sustainable future.

BIMSTEC Secretary General visited the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies (CBoBS) at Independent University, Dhaka



H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General of BIMSTEC, visited the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies (CBoBS) at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) and met Ambassador Tariq A Karim, Advisor, Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies, Independent University, Bangladesh; Rear Admiral M. Khurshid Alam, Director, Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies at the Independent University, Bangladesh; Prof. Dr. Daniel W. Lund, Pro Vice Chancellor, Independent University, Bangladesh and Prof. Bokhtiar Ahmed, Professor and Dean, SLASS, Independent University, Bangladesh. The deliberations underscored the opportunities for cooperation between BIMSTEC and IUB in maritime domain, to promote and protect the interests of the BIMSTEC member states in Bay of Bengal, including in Blue Economy and maritime security domains.

Advancing Regional Connectivity among the BIMSTEC member States

Connectivity is one of the seven priority sectors of BIMSTEC, playing a central role in deepening regional integration and enhancing trade and people-to-people linkages among Member States. The sector encompasses transport, maritime cooperation, and multimodal connectivity, working towards the seamless movement of goods, services, and people across the Bay of Bengal region. Connectivity is led by Thailand, with progress primarily driven through the BIMSTEC Transport Connectivity Working Group (BTCWG) as the principal institutional mechanism, alongside two dedicated Working Groups negotiating the BIMSTEC Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation (AMTC) and the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) respectively.

A landmark development in the sector was the signing of the AMTC on 3 April 2025 during the Sixth BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, Thailand. Following ratification by Bhutan, India, and Thailand, Myanmar's ratification on 13 May 2026 met the required threshold of four Member States, bringing the Agreement into force - marking the first major instrument to be operationalized under the Bangkok Vision 2030.

Addressing Emerging Challenges

The Bay of Bengal region has a huge potential for connectivity to prosper but the region continues to face structural challenges in achieving seamless connectivity, including gaps in harmonized maritime regulations, port procedures, and technical standards in implementing the multi modal transports across Member States.

For Maritime Cooperation, three Member States - Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka - have yet to ratify the AMTC, which limits the Agreement's region-wide reach and underscores the uneven pace of implementation across the bloc.

Beyond maritime cooperation, the long-pending negotiation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) reflects the broader challenge of enabling seamless cross-border movement of goods and people by land.

Transport and connectivity must serve as the foundational mechanism to catalyse and propel growth within this sector. The 5th Meeting of the BTCWG, to be hosted by Thailand, has been repeatedly deferred since March 2023-a gap of over three years-due to difficulties in reaching concurrence among Member States; however, resolving these delays is critical, as the core mechanism of transport and connectivity remains the key to propelling this sector forward.

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mechanisms are gaining momentum, with growing private-sector interest in port-linked industrial zones, regional Port Community Systems, and multimodal logistics parks - signalling an opportunity to accelerate connectivity outcomes if matched with stronger institutional follow-through and timely ratification of pending instruments.

Key Achievements at a Glance

BIMSTEC has made notable progress in strengthening regional cooperation on Connectivity. Key achievements include:

- Signing of the BIMSTEC Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation (AMTC) on 3 April 2025 at the Sixth BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, providing the region's first comprehensive framework for harmonizing port operations, customs procedures, and maritime transport cooperation.

Advancing Regional Connectivity among the BIMSTEC member States Cont..

- Entry into force of the AMTC on 13 May 2026 among Bhutan, India, Myanmar, and Thailand, following Myanmar's ratification - the headline deliverable of the Bangkok Vision 2030's first year.
- Successful convening of the Second BIMSTEC Ports Conclave in Visakhapatnam, India in July 2025, which advanced discussions on operationalizing the AMTC, customs and logistics streamlining, and cruise tourism development.
- Announcement of the BIMSTEC Sustainable Maritime Transport Centre, to be established under the Indian Ocean Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Maritime Transport (IOCE-SMaT) in Mumbai, India, in support of AMTC implementation and maritime workforce capacity building.
- Continued advancement of the Draft Concept Note on the BIMSTEC Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Maritime Transport (BSMaTC), with concurrence received from Bhutan, Myanmar, and Thailand, and comments from Bangladesh and Nepal.
- Completion of two Midterm Review Workshops (March and August 2025) on the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity (2018–2028), identifying key achievements, challenges, and a roadmap to accelerate implementation of 267 identified transport projects.
- Ongoing negotiation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA), with the 2nd Meeting of the Working Group proposed to be hosted by India.
- Adoption of the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity (2018–2028) at the Fifth BIMSTEC Summit in Colombo in 2022, encompassing 267 identified transport infrastructure projects across road, rail, maritime, and aviation sub-sectors, developed in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as the sector's principal strategic framework for guiding investment, policy coordination, and implementation among Member States.
- Active engagement with multilateral development partners, particularly the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to mobilize financing for priority transport infrastructure projects under the Master Plan, including through blended finance mechanisms, public-private partnerships, and bilateral investment arrangements to bridge the region's infrastructure financing gap.

Through sustained cooperation, institutional dialogue, and the operationalization of key legal instruments, BIMSTEC continues to advance a connectivity agenda aimed at harmonizing standards, reducing logistical bottlenecks, and building a seamlessly linked, trade-resilient Bay of Bengal region.



**BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL
TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

BIMSTEC SECRETARIAT

📍 HOUSE: N.W.(I)-06, ROAD: 53,
GULSHAN 2, DHAKA-1212, BANGLADESH

✉ COMMUNICATIONS@BIMSTEC.ORG

☎ +880-2222290096-98, FAX: +880-2222287565

🌐 WWW.BIMSTEC.ORG

FOLLOW US ON

