

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1855

ANSWERED ON- 02/08/2024

BIMSTEC

1855. DR. BHOLA SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is fostering cooperation among the seven member countries in South and Southeast Asia;**
- (b) the key areas of collaboration being pursued under the BIMSTEC framework;**
- (c) the recent initiatives taken to enhance multifaceted cooperation among BIMSTEC member countries; and**
- (d) the impact of BIMSTEC on regional stability and economic growth?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI PABITRA MARGHERITA)

(a and b) Yes. The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) pursues cooperation among its member states across seven priority areas namely Security, including Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Disaster Management and Energy; Trade and Economic Development; Transport Connectivity; Agriculture and Food Security; Science, Technology & Innovation; Environment and Climate Change; and People-to-People Relations.

(c) In the recent past several initiatives have been undertaken to enhance BIMSTEC cooperation. The BIMSTEC Charter has come into force in May 2024. India has extended a Grant of USD 1 Million to the BIMSTEC Secretariat for institution building. Several Agreements including the BIMSTEC Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters have been signed. The BIMSTEC Weather and Climate Centre and BIMSTEC Energy Centre have been established in Noida and Bengaluru respectively. The Ministerial Meeting Mechanism has been strengthened through frequent meetings. India has hosted regular BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercises. The BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity has been adopted and the Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation has been finalized. BIMSTEC intra-regional trade has been pushed with

special focus on Trade Facilitation. India has hosted the BIMSTEC Aquatic Championship in February 2024 and will host the BIMSTEC Business Summit in August 2024.

(d) BIMSTEC serves as a vehicle for regional engagement for an open, peaceful, prosperous and resilient Bay of Bengal region. The efforts in this regard have strengthened cooperation among member states in the areas of disaster management, maritime security, dealing with challenges of terrorism, drug and human trafficking, cyber crimes, climate change etc., energy security, food security, increased intra-regional trade and investment, technology and innovation, increased people to people contacts through youth exchanges and cultural exchanges as well as institution building and capacity building.
