

BIMSTEC summit, 2022

March 31, 2022

In news– The 5th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) summit was held in **Sri Lanka (the current BIMSTEC chair)** recently.

About summit 2022-

- During the summit members signed a treaty on mutual assistance on criminal assistance.
- They also signed an agreement for cooperation between diplomatic training institutes.
- **Theme of the summit was “Towards a Resilient Region, Prosperous Economies, Healthy People”.**
- **The main outcome of the Summit was the adoption and signing of the BIMSTEC Charter, which formalizes the grouping into an organization made up of member states that are littoral to, and dependent upon, the Bay of Bengal.**
- **The Summit also saw considerable progress being achieved in the BIMSTEC connectivity agenda with the adoption of the ‘Master Plan for Transport Connectivity’ by leaders which lays out a guidance framework for connectivity related activities in the region in the future.**
- In his intervention, the Indian Prime Minister called upon fellow leaders to strive to transform the Bay of Bengal into a Bridge of Connectivity, Prosperity, and Security among the BIMSTEC-member countries.
- **During the summit members signed three BIMSTEC agreements which represent progress being achieved in ongoing cooperation activities, the are:**
 - BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.
 - BIMSTEC Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation in the field of Diplomatic Training and

- Memorandum of Association on Establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility.

About BIMSTEC-

- **BIMSTEC is the regional organization exclusive to the Bay.**
- It has **India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand as members.**
- These member countries are located along the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal, constituting a contiguous regional unity.
- **It came into being on 6 June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.**
- **Initially, the economic bloc was formed with four Member States with the acronym 'BIST-EC'** (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation).
- Myanmar joined the group in 1997 during a special Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok, the Group was renamed 'BIMST-EC'.
- With the admission of Nepal and Bhutan at the 6th Ministerial Meeting (February 2004, Thailand), the name of the grouping was changed to 'Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation' (BIMSTEC).
- **The first BIMSTEC Summit was held on July 31, 2004** and the grouping then got its name BIMSTEC or the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.
- **Unlike many other regional groupings, BIMSTEC is a sector-driven cooperative organization.**
- **Starting with six sectors**— including trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism and fisheries—for sectoral cooperation in late 1997, it **expanded to embrace nine more sectors**— including agriculture, public health, poverty alleviation, counter-terrorism, environment,

culture, people to people contact and climate change in 2008.