

CNSS Explainer IV

Bangkok to Bengaluru: 6th BIMSTEC Summit, Thailand



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Summit Overview

Thailand will host the 6th BIMSTEC Summit and related meetings from April 2–4, 2025, in Bangkok.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to attend, marking his second visit to Thailand.

Leaders from the seven BIMSTEC member countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand—will participate, representing South and Southeast Asia.

Role and Scope

BIMSTEC promotes regional collaboration for an open, peaceful, prosperous, and resilient Bay of Bengal region.

The organization includes over 1.7 billion people and has a combined GDP of USD 4.7 trillion.

Under Thailand's chairmanship, BIMSTEC targets a "Prosperous, Resilient, and Open" region, termed "PRO BIMSTEC," by 2030.

Objectives

The summit aims to strengthen cooperation among member states through key initiatives.

A maritime transport agreement will be established to enhance trade between India, Myanmar, and Thailand.

The long-pending free trade agreement will be finalized to boost intra-regional trade.

These efforts seek to accelerate the creation of a regional free trade area among the seven landlocked and littoral nations dependent on the Bay of Bengal.

Key Outcomes

The BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 will be adopted, setting a strategic roadmap through 2030.

The Report of the Eminent Persons' Group on the Future Direction of BIMSTEC will be endorsed.

The BIMSTEC Summit Declaration will be issued, summarizing the summit's commitments and outcomes.

BIMSTEC Energy Centre

Overview

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and leaders of the six other BIMSTEC nations will virtually inaugurate a new energy hub early next month.

The inauguration will take place from Bangkok, on the sidelines of the 6th BIMSTEC Summit, held April 2–4, 2025.

The hub, known as the BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC), is located in Bengaluru, India.

Establishment of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre

The BEC has been established within the premises of the Central Power Research Institute in Bengaluru.

It will formally begin operations following the virtual inauguration by the BIMSTEC leaders.

New Delhi chose Bengaluru for the BEC to enhance regional energy cooperation, an area where the SAARC Energy Centre in Islamabad, set up in March 2006, has underperformed over the past 18 years.

Objectives

The BEC will manage a regional energy database to support data-driven decisions.

It will conduct feasibility studies for intra-BIMSTEC energy projects.

The centre aims to enhance cooperation by creating a framework for networking among national agencies of BIMSTEC member nations.

It will promote energy security through grid interconnections, renewable energy development, and energy efficiency initiatives.

Key Functions and Outcomes

The BEC will foster capacity building, cross-border investments, and infrastructure development for energy sector training.

It will serve as the Secretariat of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee.

According to the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka, the centre will drive regional energy collaboration and infrastructure growth.

BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025

YOUTH SUMMIT

Overview



"YOUTH AS A BRIDGE FOR INTRA-BIMSTEC EXCHANGE"
The BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025 was inaugurated in February 2025 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, to foster regional cooperation among the youth of the Bay of Bengal region.

The event emphasized skill development, entrepreneurship, and regional collaboration under the theme "Youth as a Bridge for Intra-BIMSTEC Exchange."

"YOUTH AS A BRIDGE FOR INTRA-BIMSTEC EXCHANGE"
The 3-day summit brought together young leaders from BIMSTEC nations to discuss regional challenges and opportunities.

Key Initiatives

India proposed a BIMSTEC-wide startup network to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the region.

"YOUTH AS A BRIDGE FOR INTRA-BIMSTEC EXCHANGE"

India's startup ecosystem, the world's third-largest, includes 157,000 startups, with nearly half led by women, showcasing its leadership in this area.

The initiative aligns with India's commitment to regional cooperation, reinforcing its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, 'Act East' policy, and 'Security & Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)' vision.

Objectives of the Summit

The summit focused on youth-centric goals, supporting India's ambition to become a developed nation by 2047 through active youth participation.

Discussions covered entrepreneurship, emerging technologies, digital connectivity, cyberspace, and sustainable development.

A key aim was to forge ties transcending boundaries, strengthening the shared heritage of the BIMSTEC region.

Key Outcomes

The event highlighted opportunities for collaboration in innovation, technology, and sustainability among BIMSTEC youth.

It reaffirmed India's role in promoting regional unity and cooperation through youth engagement.

The summit laid the groundwork for a stronger network of young leaders driving intra-BIMSTEC exchange.

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