

BIMSTEC Secretary General Indra Mani Pandey Visits Nepal

Secretary General of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), His Excellency, Indra Mani Pandey, is on a visit to Nepal from 19 May 2024. Nepal is one of the seven member States of BIMSTEC, a land of magnificent mountains, lakes and valleys and a multi-religious and multi-cultural nation.

During the visit, the Secretary General called on the Rt. Honourable President of Nepal, H.E. Ramchandra Paudel, on 21 May 2022, at the Presidential Palace, Shital Niwas and acquainted him with the present state of regional cooperation in the Bay of Bengal region within the BIMSTEC framework. While highlighting Nepal's significant contributions to enhancing regional cooperation, the President underscored the importance of BIMSTEC as the forum which links the mountain ecosystem of the Himalayas with the marine ecosystem of the Bay of Bengal.

Later, the same day, the Secretary General called on the Rt Honourable Prime Minister of Nepal, H.E. Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachandra' in Singha Durbar, and solicited Nepal's continued support in strengthening regional cooperation in the Bay of Bengal region through BIMSTEC. The Secretary General underscored the significance of the entry into force of the BIMSTEC Charter on 20 May 2024, hoping that it would usher in a new era of cooperation in the region. The Prime Minister, recalling his participation in the Retreat of BIMSTEC Leaders hosted in Goa in 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, emphasised the important role that BIMSTEC can play in the realisation of peace, security and prosperity of the member States, and reiterated the full commitment of the Government of Nepal towards steering BIMSTEC towards new heights. He hoped the upcoming Summit would add new vigour to regional cooperation within BIMSTEC.

Earlier, the same day, the Secretary General called on the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Narayan Kaji Shrestha, and reviewed with him the present state of cooperation within the BIMSTEC, the way forward, and the vital role of Nepal within BIMSTEC. The Minister underlined the need to implement the decisions taken in the past by BIMSTEC Leaders.

During his call on the Honourable Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, H.E. Hit Bahadur Tamang, the Secretary General discussed the imperative and the significance of Nepal's vital role, as the Lead member State, in strengthening regional cooperation in important areas of culture, tourism as well as poverty alleviation and people-to-people contact.

On 20 May 2024, the Secretary General called on the Foreign Secretary, H.E. Sewa Lamsal; Secretary for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, H.E. Sushil Chandra Tiwari; and Secretary for Home Affairs, H.E. Eaknarayan Aryal.

Besides the official meetings, the Secretary General delivered the keynote address on the theme 'Harnessing Regional Synergies for Development and Prosperity in BIMSTEC Region' organised by the Centre for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA) in Tribhuvan University. The event was attended by eminent persons, diplomats, scholars, researchers, students, and the media.

The Secretary General also visited various cultural sites in and around the Kathmandu Valley.
