

**TENTATIVE PROGRAMME**

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| **Day 1 - 13th June, 2023, Hyatt Regency, Kolkata | INDIA** | | |
| **9.30 am – 10.15 am** |  | **Registration for the Inaugural Session:**  **“25 Golden Years of BIMSTEC”- Towards a Peaceful, Prosperous and Sustainable Bay of Bengal Region”** |

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| **10.15 am – 10.20 am** |  | **Lamp Lighting & Felicitation** |
| **10.20 am – 10.30 am** |  | **Welcome Address: Mehul Mohanka**, President, Indian Chamber of Commerce |
| **10.30 am – 10.40 am** |  | **Special Address: Mr Saurabh Kumar,** Secretary East**,** Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India **(confirmation awaited)** |
| **10.40 am – 10.55 am** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour: Chief Minister of a North Eastern/ Eastern State (TBC)** |
| **10.55 am – 11.10 am** |  | **Address by Guest(s) of Honour:** Commerce/ Industry Minister of Thailand /Nepal / Bhutan **[Confirmations expected soon]** |
| **11.10 am -11.25 am** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour; Mr. Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun,** Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Industries, Government of Bangladesh |
| **11.25 am - 11.40 am** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour; Mr. Aung Naing Oo,** Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Commerce, Government of Myanmar |
| **11.40 am -11.55 am** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour; Dr. Ramesh Pathirana, Hon’ble** Minister of Industries, Govt. of Sri Lanka |
| **11.55 am – 12.20 pm** |  | **Address by the Chief Guest: Dr. S Jaishankar, Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India (confirmation awaited)** |
| **12.20 pm – 12.30 pm** |  | **Vote of Thanks: Mr Ameya Prabhu**, Sr. Vice President, Indian Chamber of Commerce |
| **12.30 pm – 12.45 pm** |  | **Presentation of Mementoes & Group Photo** |
| **12.45 am – 1.00 pm** |  | **Inauguration of Expo followed by Exclusive Lunch for Hon’ble Ministers** |
| **1.00 pm – 2.15 pm** |  | **LUNCH BREAK** |

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| **2.15 pm – 4.00 pm** |  | **Special Plenary Session**  **International Trade Forum: Opportunities and Barriers**  **Venue: Ballroom One** |
|  |  | The share of all BIMSTEC countries — that include two ASEAN member-states, namely, Thailand and Myanmar — in world trade is less than 4 per cent. The BIMSTEC intra-regional trade was at $70 billion in 2021, significantly lower than ASEAN's $600 billion. BIMSTEC Members have agreed to establish the BIMSTEC Free Trade Area Framework Agreement in order to stimulate trade and investment in the parties and attract outsiders to trade with and invest in BIMSTEC at a higher level. BIMSTEC countries’ existing trade and investment profiles are overwhelmingly influenced by their levels of economic development, geographical proximity, cross-border logistic facilities and different regional co-operation agreements. This session aims to chart out an actionable agenda to augment intra-regional trade in BIMSTEC. The focus will also be on the scope of development of regional value chains. The session will also deliberate on the prevalence of various non-tariff barriers to trade like quotas, import licenses, sanitary regulations, prohibitions etc among others.  **Session Chair: Secretary, DPIIT, GoI (TBC)**  **Panelists:**   * **Mr. Md. Mosharaf Hossain, Director, BIMSTEC Secretariat** * **Mr Tandy Wangchuk, President, Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bhutan** * **Mr. Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President, FNCCI, Nepal** * **Presidents of Chamber of Commerce of BIMSTEC Countries** |
| **2.15 pm – 4.00 pm** |  | **Special Plenary Session (Concurrent)**  **Bimstec Investment Forum: Challenges and Opportunities**  **Venue: Ballroom Two** |
|  |  | The BIMSTEC region brings together 1.67 billion people and a combined GDP of around US $ 2.88 trillion which offers a huge market to investors. Inspite of close proximity and historical linkages, the region has not witnessed major flow of FDI among BIMSTEC countries. There are several policy and procedural challenges which are discouraging regular and significant investments, although are several success stories. To achieve sustainable growth, employment and deeper engagement, it is important to rationalize and encourage investments. The Session would discuss various challenges, opportunities and way forward.  **Session Chair: Mr Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Additional Secretary & Director General, Director General of Foreign Trade (TBC)**  **Panelists:**   * **Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad, President, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry** * **Mr. Vishnu Kumar Agarwal, President, Confederation of Nepalese Industries** * **Ceylon Chamber of Commerce** * **NRL/ World Bank** * **Chambers of Commerce of BIMSTEC Countries** |

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| **DAY 2**  **14th June, 2023** | | |
| **10.15 am – 12.45 pm** |  | **Concurrent Sessions**  **Venue: Ballroom One** |
|  |  | **BIMSTEC Agri & Food Forum**  **Agriculture & Food security: Role of PPP in the Agri Value Chain**  Agriculture is the mainstay of most of the BIMSTEC member nations, with primary commodities dominating the trade basket. The sector is of critical importance for the purpose of food security. Strategic investment in processing, traceability, safety & quality of products, inventory management and cost reduction approaches can make the agri supply chain robust in the region. As countries are increasingly focusing on sustainable agriculture and agri export diversification, PPPs can be the game changer for the development of agri value chains & market infrastructure, research, innovation and technology transfer and business development services.  **Panelists:**   * **Govt. representatives of BIMSTEC Countries** * **Minister of Agriculture /Food Processing of Eastern / NE States** * **State Representation on Agriculture** * **National Horticulture Board / APEDA** * **Industry Representatives** |
| **Concurrent Session**  **10.15 am – 12.45 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Connectivity Forum**  **Enhancing Infrastructure, Logistics and Connectivity in BIMSTEC**  **Venue: Ballroom Two**  BIMSTEC member countries have developed a master plan for maritime communication and have marked Kolkata as the focal point for such connectivity. The BIMSTEC Master Plan on multimodal connectivity is in sync with concerted Governmental efforts at promoting ease of doing business and skill development. As BIMSTEC focuses on building green and resilient supply chains, maritime and road connectivity in the region can generate important growth synergies through the adoption of trade facilitation measures like standardized and digitized documentation & Maritime Single Window clearance. With improved regional integration through transport connectivity, BIMSTEC intra-regional trade can benefit from increase in trade volume, reduced transportation costs and higher participation in Global Value Chains, thereby enhancing wealth creation for its South and Southeast Asian member nations. BIMSTEC aims to create an environment for rapid economic development through identification and implementation of specific cooperation projects in infrastructure and transportation. The session can deliberate on the state of transport and logistics environment both regionally and nationally in BIMSTEC, identifying planned multimodal infrastructure developments designed to enhance regional connectivity. It will also focus on transport policies and strategies designed to achieve trade, development and investment goals, highlighting the priority infrastructure investments needed in member countries and concerned institutional framework for implementation of these strategies.  **Panelists:**   * **Representatives from BIMSTEC Countries** * **IWAI** * **ADB** * **Infrastructure and Logistics Companies** |
| **11.15 am – 12.45 pm** |  | **Concurrent Session** |

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| **11.15 am – 12.45 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Health Forum**  **Universal Health Coverage- working towards Accessibility, Affordability and Quality in BIMSTEC nations**  **Venue: Topaz & Sapphire, 1st Floor**  The BIMSTEC region faces several challenges in the health sector, including inadequate healthcare infrastructure, a shortage of healthcare professionals, limited access to essential medicines, and a high burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases. The Covid 19 pandemic has further exposed the loopholes in the public healthcare delivery system and the need to adopt PPP models for delivery of healthcare solutions. While increased focus on digitization has enhanced healthcare delivery, the core issues of concern are accessibility and affordability. The need of the hour is to align the private sector with country specific public health agenda of universal health coverage, focus on knowledge-sharing and human capital exchange and discuss prospects for partnership and collaboration. Ensuring sustainable financing for primary health care and universal health coverage in BIMSTEC nations is also necessary.  **Panelists:**   * **Healthcare Companies from BIMSTEC Region** * **WHO** * **Representatives from Eastern and NE States of India** * **Department of Ayush, GoI** |
| **11.15 am – 12.45 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Gems & Jewellery Forum**  **Enhancing Co-operation in Gems & Jewellery sector**  **Venue: Guchhi**  The global Gems &Jewellery Market is set to reach $608.1 million by 2030, while the global online Jewellery Market will be worth $92.7 billion by 2030. With a rich cultural heritage, BIMSTEC countries are known for their gems and jewellery sector. Thailand has evolved over the last few decades into a major player in the global gems and jewellery industry. India ranks first among the top exporters in cut & polished diamonds, and second in gold jewellery, silver jewellery and lab-grown diamonds. Nepal is known worldwide for its traditional and contemporary jewelleries. Sri Lanka is among the five most important gems‐bearing nations of the world. Myanmar is known for its high quality gemstones. Bhutan has successfully championed the cause of sustainable tourism offering to sell gold at duty free rates to tourists visiting Bhutan, who pay a ‘sustainable development fee’. This session aims to look at the scope for boosting intra-regional trade and commerce for the vibrant gems and jewellery market in BIMSTEC.  **Panellists:**   * **Min of Commerce, GoI** * **Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council, India (+ similar agencies Bimstec countries)** * **Industry representatives** |

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| **1.00 pm – 2.00 pm** |  | **LUNCH BREAK** |

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| **2.00 pm – 4..00 pm** |  | **Concurrent Sessions** |
|  |  | **BIMSTEC Women Forum – Exploring Opportunities for Collaboration among Women Entrepreneurs**  **Venue: Ballroom One**  As per the Global Gender Gap Index (World Economic Forum), in 2022, the country offering the most gender equal conditions in the world was Iceland, with a score of 0.91. BIMSTEC member nations scored from 0.63 to 0.71. India, the largest economy in BIMSTEC (in terms of GDP) ranks 4th among 51 Countries in having *Quality Entrepreneurship Ecosystem*, as per the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) National Entrepreneurship Context Index (NECI) report. However, only 18 % of startups in India are led by women and women comprise only 20.3% of MSMEs in the country. In Thailand, the rate of entrepreneurship among women is higher than men, with total entrepreneurial activity rates of women and men being 21% and 17% respectively. Women entrepreneurship figures for Bangladesh, Sri Lanka (SME), Nepal, and Myanmar are 7.2%, 25%, 29.8 % and 34% respectively. With these varying inter country dynamics, the underlying challenges for women entrepreneurs in BIMSTEC broadly remain the same –lack of capital, social constraints, lack of awareness, and limited time and skill. Gender equality is a fundamental human right and we hope going forward this session will help to charter a roadmap for boosting women entrepreneurship in the region, which will translate into greater economic prosperity.  **Panelists:**   * **Women Entrepreneurs from Business Chambers from BIMSTEC Countries** * **State Departments** * **Incubation centres for Women Entrepreneurship/** * **Women Chambers of Commerce** |

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| **2.00 – 4.00 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Tourism Forum**  **Discover the wonders of BIMSTEC: Create unforgettable experiences**  **Venue: Ballroom Two**  Tourism has rich potential in the BIMSTEC region, courtesy its natural splendor and rich historical and cultural ties. BIMSTEC Tourism Information Centre was established in July 2007 in Delhi to create a Network of Tour Operators among the BIMSTEC Member States to promote tourism in the region including the Buddhist Tourist Circuit and luxury cruise. The Conclave can deliberate on creation of BIMSTEC specific products in tourism, promotion of Public Private Partnerships in tourism and development of common safety protocols, BIMSTEC tour circuits and cruise tourism. The BIMSTEC region has the capability of earning USD 200 billion in tourism revenue by 2024.  **Panelists:**   * **Ministry of Tourism, GoI** * **Tourism operators** * **Dept. of State Tourism from Indian States** * **Tour Operators, Airlines** * **International Tourism Organisations** |

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| **2.00 pm – 4.00 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Tea Forum**  **Revamping the Value Chain for boosting exports**  **Venue: Topaz & Saffire**  Tea is an exotic product grown in the BIMSTEC region. Northeast India and West Bengal, the primary tea producing regions in India have high potential for increasing trade with BIMSTEC member nations. Sri Lanka is famous for its Ceylon tea. Countries like Nepal and Bhutan are known for their exotic herbal teas. Both Thailand and Myanmar grow their own varieties of tea. With the global tea market size slated to reach US$ 31.6 Billion by 2028, exhibiting a growth rate (CAGR) of 5.4% during 2023-2028, there is unmatched scope for increasing intra-regional cooperation in tea trade in BIMSTEC.  **Panelists:**   * **Representatives from BIMSTEC Countries** * **Tea Board** * **Industry representatives** * **E-commerce Companies** * **Large Buyers** |
| **2.00 am – 4.00 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Education Forum**  **Harnessing Demographic Dividend to boost Economic Growth**  **Venue: Guchhi**  Education sector plays a very crucial role in the BIMSTEC region. The BIMSTEC initiative was conceived as a regional alliance to “provide a fertile ground for cooperation” and be “a source of sharing and learning among members of the group, for which educational cooperation remains the essential condition (“sine qua non”). Education is not only the bridge of co-operation between the seven BIMSTEC members rather it is also the basis for soft power for this alliance as well. Since 1947, India became the globe’s second-largest provider of higher education and has continued to attract students from the BIMSTEC nations. The highest number of students comes from Nepal followed by Bangladesh and Bhutan. Encouraging educational cooperation within the BIMSTEC region could play a transformative role in enhancing person-to-person contact, as well as knitting closer and more constructive regional links. Educational links would contribute to sustainable development within the region and also help in cultural reconnection.  **Panelists:**   * **HRD Ministry, GoI** * **Industry representatives** * **Ed-techs** * **Indian Universities** * **State Governments** |

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| **DAY 3**  **15th June, 2023** | | |
| **10.15 am – 12.15 pm** |  | **Concurrent Sessions** |
| **10.15 am – 12.15 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Textiles & garments Forum**  **Weaving the Tapestry of Economic Development**  **Venue: Ballroom One**  India and Bangladesh are global leaders in the textile industry, with countries like Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar being significant contributors in the value chain. Nepal and Bhutan are known for their rare hand woven textiles. The global textiles market is anticipated to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.0% from 2022 to 2030 and BIMSTEC countries can stand to gain if they can increase their market share or successfully engage in value chain integration. Textiles being a labour intensive sector, development of this market will generate strong forward and backward linkages for the member countries. This session will deliberate on the scope for FDI, trade on the basis of comparative advantage, cross border trade and the role of technology in the development of these sectors.  **Panelists:**   * **DC Handicrafts** * **Officials from BIMSTEC Countries** * **State directorate of Textiles** * **NEHHDC** |
| **10.15 am – 12.15 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC BFSI Forum**  **Financial Inclusion, Technology and Regulatory Framework**  **Venue: Topaz & Saffire**  Banking and Finance sector is the foundation of any economy. The BFSI sector witnessed significant transformation over last decade due to reforms and tech enablement. Fintech has revolutionized the business models, customer engagement and practices.  BIMSTEC countries need to have closer co-operation and integration of BFSI sector across the region. There are several success stories, best practices which can be emulated. The Session would deliberate on related issues, regulatory framework, trade issues and way forward.  **Panelists:**   * **Leading Bankers** * **Fin-Techs** * **Insurance Companies** * **Consulting Firms** * **Regulators** |

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| **10.15 am – 12.15 pm** |  | **BIMSTEC Start-Up Forum**  **Creating value for Consumers, Investors and the economy**  **Venue: Guchhi**  BIMSTEC currently accounts for 22 % of the world's population. Member countries like India and Thailand exhibit fairly well developed startup ecosystems in Asia. Startups in Nepal excel in sectors like Education, Software and Data and Transportation. Myanmar’s startup ecosystem has been slowly, but steadily, growing with a young population and high smartphone adoption (80%).  The startup ecosystem in Bhutan provides opportunities for funding and scope for co-creation with experienced entrepreneurs. The Bangladeshi startup ecosystem has seen remarkable growth in the past few years across sectors like  fintech, logistics, healthcare, tourism, agriculture and education. Sri Lanka’s Startup Development Strategy boasts of startup-friendly policies, non-collateral based debt finance, and the development of state-of-the-art technology parks. The Covid 19 pandemic has accelerated the need for digital solutions and catalyzed the growth of startups in BIMSTEC countries, in the post pandemic era. As we are look forward to scalable business models, exit strategies, out of the box ideas, robust ecosystems, the crux of entrepreneurship lies in building oneself up in challenging times. To foster a thriving startup ecosystem, policy-makers should prioritize reforms that streamline regulation, ease compliance and invest in essential infrastructure.  **Panelists:**   * **Ministry of IT/Commerce/Economic Affairs** * **Successful Statrups from BIMSTEC Countries** * **DPIIT** * **Incubators** |
| **10.15 – 12.15 pm**  Boardroom Session |  | **BIMSTEC Climate Change Forum**  **Challenges & Mitigation, the Policy Perspective**  **Venue: Ballroom Two**  Climate change is a global emergency that goes beyond national borders. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Without drastic action today, adapting to these impacts in the future will be more difficult and costly. BIMSTEC member nations are articulating climate action plans to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts through national policy commitments. The Asia- Pacific region is more vulnerable to climate change risks than other parts of the world, because of its dependence on the natural resources and agriculture sector, densely populated coastal areas, weak institutions, and poverty among a considerable proportion of the population. This session aims to discuss on the policy and implementation level challenges for meeting SDG goals on climate change for BIMSTEC and the scope for intra-regional cooperation in environment and climate change.  **Panelists:**   * **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** * **NGO** * **United Nations** * **Corporate** |

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| **12.30 pm – 1.30 pm** |  | **Valedictory Session** |
|  |  | **BIMSTEC Business Co-operation: Way Forward**  **Venue: Ballroom** |
| **12.30 pm -12:35 pm** |  | **Welcome Address: Mr Mehul Mohanka ,** President, ICC |
| **12.35 pm -12.45 pm** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour:**  **Mr Cherdchai Chaivaivid,** Director-General, Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand **(TBC)** |
| **12.45 pm- 12.55 pm** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour:**  **H. E. Mr Tenzin Lekphell,** Secretary General, BIMSTEC Secretariat |
| **12.55 pm -1.05 pm** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour:**  Bangladesh Foreign Minister (TBC) |
| **1.05 pm – 1.15 pm** |  | **Address by Guest of Honour:**    Hon’ble Chief Minister, East & NE States **(TBC)** |
| **1.15 pm -1.25 pm** |  | **Address by Chief Guest:**  **Indian Union Minister of State for Commerce (TBC)** |
| **1.25 pm – 1.30 pm** |  | **Summing Up & VOT:**  **ICC** |