

AIR Spotlight - PRIME MINISTERS ADDRESS AT BIMSTEC SUMMIT - 2022

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio Newsonair. In this program, many eminent panellists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in [IAS exam](#) preparation. In this article, Prime Ministers address at BIMSTEC Summit – 2022 is discussed.

BIMSTEC:-

- A regional multilateral organization, the 'Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)'.
- BIMSTEC is a group of Bay of Bengal countries that aims to act as a link between South and Southeast Asia.
- Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand are among the members.
- BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation) was formed in 1997, then BIMST-EC when Myanmar joined, and BIMSTEC in 2004 when Nepal and Bhutan were added.

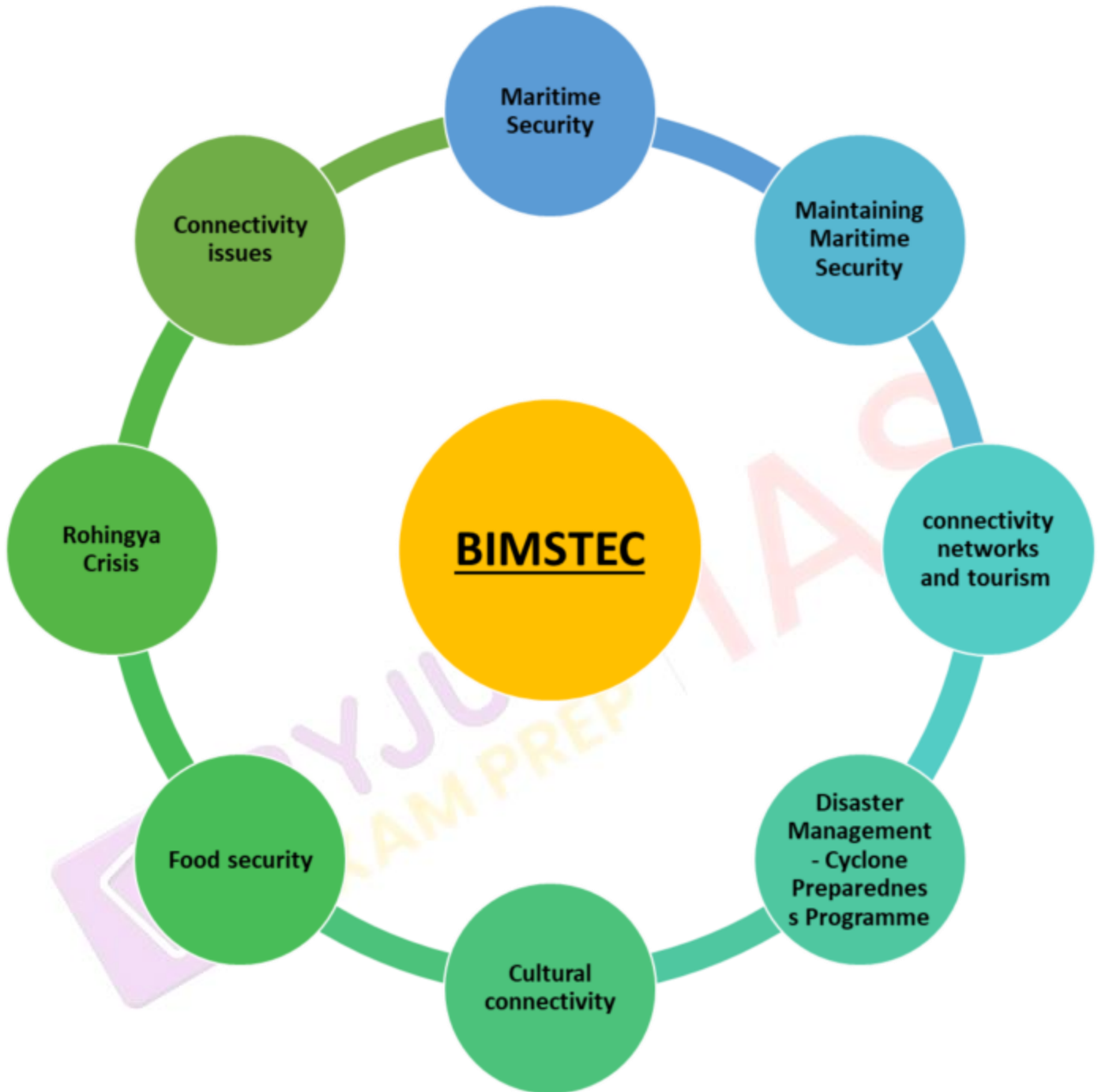
Know more about [BIMSTEC](#)

5th BIMSTEC Summit:-

- Sri Lanka hosted the 5th BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Summit virtually.
- **Summit's theme:** "Towards a Resilient Region, Prosperous Economies, Healthy People"

Key Takeaways from Prime Ministers Address At Bimstec Summit – 2022

- The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of improved BIMSTEC regional connectivity, cooperation, and security, and made several recommendations to that end.
- The Prime Minister urged other leaders to work to make the Bay of Bengal a "Bridge of Connectivity, Prosperity, and Security" for the BIMSTEC countries.
- India has called for greater cooperation among the BIMSTEC nations, stating that "regional security" has become a top priority.
- The Prime Minister stated that it was time to transform the Bay of Bengal into a "bridge of connectivity, prosperity, and security."
- The Prime Minister also emphasized the importance of the BIMSTEC Center for Weather and Climate for disaster management, particularly disaster risk reduction, and asked for BIMSTEC members' help to make it more active.
- He believes that a legal framework is required to establish a "coastal shipping ecosystem" in the Bay of Bengal.
- He believes that establishing a legal framework is critical to improving road connectivity.



Highlights of the 5th BIMSTEC Summit:-

- The **BIMSTEC Charter**, which formalises the grouping into an organisation made up of member states that are littoral to and reliant on the Bay of Bengal, was adopted at the Summit.
- With the adoption of the '**Master Plan for Transport Connectivity**,' which lays out a guidance framework for connectivity-related activities in the region in the future, the Summit saw significant progress in the BIMSTEC connectivity agenda.

- The BIMSTEC member countries' leaders also agreed to a complete reorganisation of the group's cooperation activities.
- The BIMSTEC cooperation activities will be organised into seven pillars, with each member country leading one of them.
- India will lead the **security pillar of the BIMSTEC**.
- India will provide \$1 million in financial aid to augment the operational budget of the BIMSTEC Secretariat.
- Three agreements were also signed during the Summit. They are:
 - BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.
 - BIMSTEC Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation in the field of Diplomatic Training.
 - Memorandum of Association on Establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility.

Significance of BIMSTEC for India:

- BIMSTEC has emerged as a powerful engine of economic growth, with 21.7 percent of the world's population and a combined GDP of \$3.8 trillion.
- BIMSTEC connects not only South and Southeast Asia, but also the Great Himalayan and Bay of Bengal ecologies.
- BIMSTEC is a natural platform for India to implement its key foreign policy priorities of 'Neighborhood First' and 'Act East.'
- BIMSTEC could allow India to promote a positive agenda in response to Chinese investments, allowing it to follow best practices for connectivity projects based on internationally recognised standards.
- In contrast to China's behavior in the South China Sea, the Bay of Bengal can be portrayed as open and peaceful.
- Furthermore, BIMSTEC could halt the region's militarization by establishing a Bay of Bengal Zone of Peace, which would seek to limit any belligerent behavior by extra-regional power.

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