

PRESS Release

BRICS and BIMSTEC together can counter global terrorism – Preeti Saran, Secretary (East)



Ms. Preeti Saran delivering keynote address at the consultation. Also seen in the picture (from left to right) are Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS; Mr. Alok A. Dimri, Joint Secretary (MER), Ministry of External Affairs, GoI; Mr. G. Seetharaman Reddy, Additional Director General, Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce, GoI; Amb. Sudhir Devare, Chairman, RIS Research Advisory Council; Mr. Sumith Nakandala, Secretary General, BIMSTEC; Mr. Seshadri Chari, Member, RIS Governing Council and Prof. Ram Upendra Das, RIS.

New Delhi: India has invited the leaders of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to the Eighth BRICS Summit at Goa in October. India is chair to the Summit. BRICS Summit is a great platform to boost ties between the two.

BIMSTEC since its establishment in 1997 has been successful in a number of areas however it needs to realize its full potential. There is a great synergy between the BRICS and BIMSTEC countries and the BRICS Summit will help explore that – said Ms. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. She was speaking at the meeting on BIMSTEC-BRICS Engagement: The Way Forward, organized by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) and BIMSTEC Secretariat. Ms. Saran also congratulated RIS for holding such extremely timely and opportune event.

Talking about the challenges confronting the region, Ms. Saran said that terrorism is one of the biggest and the whole world is grappling with it. She also talked about enormous opportunities and advantages each BIMSTEC country has in number of areas like trade, blue economy, tourism especially cruise tourism and Buddhist tourism, energy security, among many others.

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS while delivering the Welcome Remarks said that the aim of the consultation is to explore key issues that are important when BRICS and BIMSTEC are coming together. Bilateral and People-to-People connectivity and how global value chains can be strengthened need fresh focus. He also elaborated on the BRICS events hosted by India and said that ahead of BRICS Summit India is the

country that has contributed maximum number of events almost reaching 100 events across various sectors including trade, global security, sustainability, among others.

Amb. Sudhir Devare, Chairman, RIS Research Advisory Council, chairing the session said BIMSTEC is not a substitute for SAARC or any other regional grouping. BIMSTEC is a promising path in the Bay of Bengal region. He also commended BIMSTEC's focus on global terrorism and transnational crime. He also said that BRICS can learn from BIMSTEC experience of fighting terrorism.

Mr. Sumith Nakandala, Secretary General, BIMSTEC said that the consultation is important in terms of reactivating BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks. He expressed concern regarding lacking leadership in BIMSTEC.

Mr. Seshadri Chari, Member, RIS Governing Council also emphasized that with changing geo-political aspects strengthening of BIMSTEC assumes greater importance. He said that the aim of the consultation and summit should be to find out how growth can be achieved together.

Mr. Alok A. Dimri, Joint Secretary (MER), Ministry of External Affairs, spoke about the BRICS engagements and said that there is need to converge the synergies of the two. He said that outreach sentiment has been successful with BRICS, as the pre-BRICS events were held all across India and people learned about the BRICS. This sentiment can be taken to Bay of Bengal region as well. Mr. Dimri expressed great enthusiasm for the coming summit and meeting of leaders of both the groupings.

Mr. G. Seetharaman Reddy, Additional Director General, Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India while delivering the special remarks said that BIMSTEC does not get attention that it deserves. However it has its own flavor; thus it should not be compared with any other regional organisations. He said that we need to identify areas where regional cooperation can take place. India is prepared to engage constructively. He said that understanding of regional value chains can help understand global value chains – an area which Ministry of Commerce is grappling with.

Prof. Ram Upendra Das, RIS while extending the vote of thanks informed that India has always displayed its commitment to BIMSTEC. He said that the entire emphasis of BIMSTEC should be to move to what has not happened and make it happen. He explained the interlinkages of various services sectors, like tourism, being interlinked with services like civil aviation, construction, etc., and thus focus on one or two areas itself can galvanize the entire economic activity in the region.

The day-long meeting would deliberate on issues such as trade, investment and regional value chain, connectivity and people-to-people contact, and BIMSTEC, BRICS and global governance.