

# **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)**

## **KOLKATA DECLARATION ON TOURISM COOPERATION**

**23<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY 2005**

We, the Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Tourism of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Minister of State for Tourism (IC) of the Republic of India, the Director General, Directorate of Hotels and Tourism of the Union of Myanmar, the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of the Kingdom of Nepal, the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Vice Minister for Tourism and Sports of the Kingdom of Thailand gathered in Kolkata, India from 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2005 for BIMSTEC Round Table and Workshop of Tourism Ministers;

**Reaffirming** our confidence in 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2004 BIMSTEC Summit Declaration of Bangkok;

**Convinced** of the laudable objective of doubling tourism in the next five years;

**Convinced** that geographical contiguity and primary access to the Bay of Bengal of all our countries presents tremendous opportunities for encouraging, initially short haul travel among ourselves for tourism;

**Recognizing** that existing trends of dependence of our tourism industry on the markets outside our region can be supplemented to our mutual advantage;

**Affirming** that public-private sector partnership is imperative to use tourism as a catalyst to bring about socio-economic development;

**Resolving** to forge strategies for embarking on a proactive joint marketing campaign to promote BIMSTEC as a composite destination for inbound tourists from within and outside the region;

**Do hereby:**

**Agree** to utilize the BIMSTEC for providing a fresh impetus to further development of tourism within the region;

**Recognize** that the future development of tourism in this region will largely depend upon the closer cooperation in transport networks i.e. by air, land and water;

**Agree** to reap the maximum advantage from the plethora of heritage, cultural, adventure, eco-tourism and MICE tourism products that our countries have to offer in a sustainable manner ;

**Agree** to devise attractive and cost-effective thematic, tour packages connecting different tourist destinations among the BIMSTEC member countries ;

*Handwritten signatures and initials:*  
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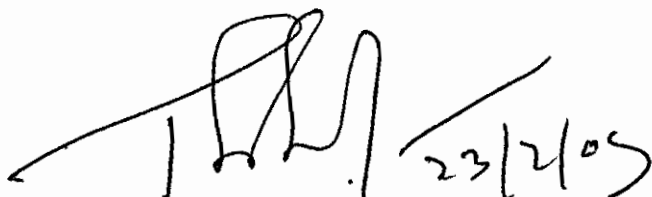
Note that simplification of immigration procedures and other frontier formalities shall facilitate faster movement of people in a hassle free manner ;

Agree to draw up a compendium of recognized tour operators and hotel facilities available in our countries ;

Agree to share our "best practices" on tourism related activities that are currently in vogue in our respective countries;

Agree that we have arrived at a clear, output based proposed plan of action as per annexure attached and have established a formal institutional mechanism as well for overseeing its implementation;

We express our deep gratitude and appreciation to the Government of India for the generous hospitality accorded and the excellent arrangements made for our Round Table and Workshop.



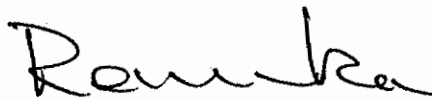
**H.E. Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin**

Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Tourism, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



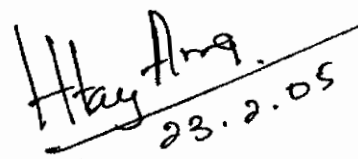
**H.E. Lyonpo Wangdi Norbu**

Minister of Finance, Kingdom of Bhutan



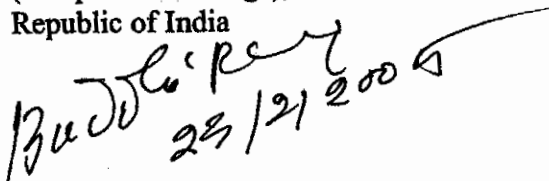
**H.E. Renuka Chowdhury**

Minister of State for Tourism (Independent Charge), Republic of India



**Htay Aung**

Director General, Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, Union of Myanmar



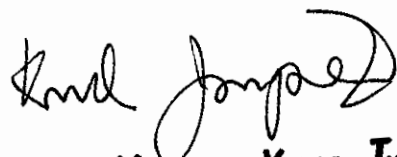
**H. E. Buddhi Raj Bajracharya**

Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kingdom of Nepal



**K.A.D. George Michael**

Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



**H.E. MR KRIRK-KRAI JIRAPAET**

Vice Minister for Tourism and Sports  
Kingdom of Thailand