



The upcoming 5th BIMSTEC Summit on March 30 in Sri Lanka must respect calls from Myanmar democracy movement

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Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), comprised of seven countries from South Asia and Southeast Asia namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand, is scheduled to hold its 5th Summit on March 30 which will be hosted by Sri Lanka.

The biennial summit is a conference where leaders of member states come together to discuss and make highest policy decisions for peace, prosperity, and sustainability of Bay of Bengal region. The 4th summit held in Nepal in 2018 was attended by Myanmar president U Win Myint.

On 1st, February 2021, Myanmar military attempted to seize power from the civilian government. It has been 387 days since for Myanmar people of all ethnics and religions, who value federal democratic system and rejected the attempt coup, to risk their lives to protect democracy by all means they can and launch resistance against tyranny of the military junta.

The people of Myanmar are organizing the 'six 2s' movement today on 22nd, February 2022. In the day of this movement, India for Myanmar is making the following calls on BIMSTEC.

1. Coup leader Min Aung Hlaing sent his remark representing Myanmar on the 24th anniversary of BIMSTEC in June 2021 and in BIMSTEC's announcement of his message, he was referred to as honorary chairman of the State Administration Council of Myanmar.
2. In December 2021, Myanmar military was invited to take part in military exercises of BIMSTEC countries in India and, in addition, there are records that Myanmar military representatives attended many of BIMSTEC meetings as country representatives.
3. Most of the members of BIMSTEC are democracy countries, yet BIMSTEC have damaged its own reputation by giving recognition to the Myanmar military that seized power by force at gunpoint. Such dishonorable political gestures have been collectively condemned by international organizations, activists and Myanmar people together.



4. BIMSTEC will continue to face strong condemnation from human rights and democracy organizations and activists around the world if it invites and allowed coup leader Min Aung Hlaing as representative of Myanmar to the 5th BIMSTEC summit in 2022. Such action will only cause additional pain and serve as salt to the wound of the people of Myanmar who are already suffering from atrocities by Myanmar military on a daily basis.
5. BIMSTEC must disassociate itself and cut all ties with the military council members which was established by the Myanmar military who have been accused of committing genocide, war crimes and many acts of crimes against humanity.
6. The demands of democracy movement and spring revolution of Myanmar people must be respected and recognized.
7. There cannot be a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable Bay of Bengal region, if democracy and human rights cease to thrive. We call on leaders of BIMSTEC member states to discuss and decide on the issues of Myanmar in consideration of humanity and human dignity.

India for Myanmar

India for Myanmar is an India based people movement for democracy and human rights advocacy and comprised of experts, activists, and human rights organizations from South Asia.

For more information please contact – india4myanmar@protonmail.com