

# BIMSTEC nations call for early adoption of regional transport connectivity master plan

**KATHMANDU:** BIMSTEC nations, including India, Friday called for an early adoption of the master plan on transport connectivity in the region to achieve enhanced linkages and sustainable development.

The call came at the conclusion of the 4th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit here with the adoption of an 18-point Kathmandu Declaration.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who attended the summit, had yesterday made a strong pitch for enhanced regional connectivity.

The member nations in the declaration underlined the importance of multidimensional connectivity, which promotes synergy among connectivity frameworks the region, as a key enabler to economic integration for shared prosperity.

They reiterated their resolve to establish seamless multi-modal transportation linkages and smooth, synchronized and simplified transit facili-



**Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other BIMSTEC leaders in a group photograph with the HODs of Ministerial delegations and senior officials, during the 4th BIMSTEC Summit, in Kathmandu, Nepal on Friday** PTI

ties through the development, expansion and modernisation of highways, railways, waterways, sea routes, airways in the region.

They also reiterated their resolve to speed up their efforts to conclude the BIMSTEC Coastal Shipping Agreement and the BIMSTEC Motor Vehicle Agreement as early as possible taking into account the special circumstances and needs of the member states.

They noted with satisfac-

tion the preparation of the draft BIMSTEC Master Plan on Transport Connectivity and called for its early adoption.

BIMSTEC nations also thanked the Asian Development Bank for providing support to prepare the Master Plan and task the BIMSTEC Transport Connectivity Working Group (BTCWG) to work out the modalities for its implementation, giving due attention to the special circumstances and needs of the member states,

annex to the declaration said.

“We agree that the Master Plan would serve as a strategic document that guides actions and promotes synergy among various connectivity frameworks, such as the ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025), the Ayeyawady - Chao Phraya- Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy, to achieve enhanced connectivity and sustainable development in our region,” BIMSTEC nations said. PTI