

## BIMSTEC SUMMIT

# UPI push, trade in local currency among PM's 21-point action plan

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called for a 21-point action plan that includes linking Unified Payment Interface (UPI) with the payment systems of BIMSTEC nations and setting up a BIMSTEC Chamber of Commerce to boost engagement among member nations. As part of the action plan, Modi mooted a series of initiatives to bring the grouping closer such as holding the first meeting of the Home Ministers' Mechanism in India.

In the space economy, India aims to set up ground stations for manpower training for BIMSTEC countries, manufacturing and launching of Nano Satellites, and use of remote sensing data for regional development and planning.

India has also offered to establish a capacity building programme for cancer care in the region.

Addressing the sixth BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, the Prime Minister said this action plan aims to bring the grouping closer, including holding the first meeting of the Home Ministers' Mechanism in India. "It is imperative we strengthen it and deepen our engagement. In this context, I proposed a 21-point Action Plan covering different aspects of our cooperation," Modi posted on X.

Modi highlighted the newly functional BIMSTEC Energy Centre in Bengaluru, which will train youth in the energy sector. He urged expedited work on electric grid interconnections across the region. "Additionally, I propose linking UPI with the payment systems in the BIMSTEC region. This will benefit trade, industry, and tourism at all levels," Modi said.

## In meeting with Yunus, Modi flags concerns over safety of minorities

PHOTO: PTI



In his first meeting with Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged India's concerns over the safety of minorities, including Hindus, and conveyed that any rhetoric that vitiated the environment was best avoided.

During the 40-minute meeting that took place on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC summit, Modi also underscored India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful,

progressive and inclusive Bangladesh.

At the meeting, Yunus also flagged the issues of the extradition of deposed Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina and border killings. This was the first meeting between Modi and Yunus since Hasina's ouster in August last year.

The Prime Minister told Yunus that the strict enforcement of the law and prevention of illegal border crossings are necessary for maintaining border security and stability.

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