

Speakers urge fast-track implementation of BIMSTEC initiatives to lift millions out of poverty

Porikroma Desk : Experts have urged the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries to minimize internal differences and fast-track the implementation of regional integration initiatives with a more liberal and broader global outlook to lift millions of people out of poverty in the region.

‘Bangladesh is the gateway to regional connectivity within the region, and it now must leverage its strategic advantages to generate meaningful business, economic and political outcomes for the greater benefits of the people in the region, especially of the North-East Indian States,’ they observed during a dialogue held at the Syndicate Hall of North-South University in the afternoon.

Jointly organized by the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG), North South University, and South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM), the dialogue titled: “Bangladesh-India Relations: Outlook 2023 and Beyond; Building on Connectivity and Capacity Building for Prosperous BIMSTEC Region” was chaired by NSU Vice-Chancellor Professor Atiqul Islam. Ambassador Farooq Sobhan, Distinguished Fellow & Board Member of Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI); Former Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Ambassador Shahidul Haque; Professorial Fellow, SIPG, Dr Prabir De, Professor, New Delhi, Mr. Sabyasachi Dutta, Executive Director, Asian Confluence, India East Asia Center, Shillong, Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka;

Dr. Amena Mohsin, Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka, among others, also spoke.

Referring to the rapidly evolving geo-strategic situation, the speakers underscored the need to improve the seven BIMSTEC countries' perception by respecting each other's values in dealing with bilateral and regional interactions. 'China's role at the regional and international levels needs to be considered for the region's greater interest,' it was observed.

Ambassador Farooq Sobhan emphasized improving mutual public perceptions by setting up cultural centers across the region and engaging youth to provide them hope for a better future.

Ambassador Shahidul Haque observed that the world is going through a volatile situation in both security and business prospective. Therefore, collaborative relationship between India and Bangladesh will transform BIMSTEC in to more effective for member countries.

Professor Dr. Prabir De from India suggested a tripartite relation involving India, Bangladesh, and Japan to move forward with regional integration.

NSU Vice-Chancellor Professor Atiqul Islam suggested bringing people in the region more closer through cultural exchanges.