

## EAM's address at the First BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival (August 04, 2025)

Namaskar, and a very good evening to all of you.

It is really a very great pleasure for me to join you all this evening for the first BIMSTEC traditional music festival.

I welcome the participants from all member states, and like all of you, I am looking forward to a very enjoyable evening. I also want to underline what Director General, ICCR, has said – that this was a commitment which was made by Prime Minister Modi at the BIMSTEC Summit and I am so glad that like so many of his commitments that has been kept, and kept early.

Now friends, music means different things to different people. It is culture, it is heritage, it is tradition to all of us- individually or as a group. It is an expression of creativity, or sometimes, even of emotions. Music has always been a medium to connect amongst ourselves, and with others.

Now that is indeed what this event is all about, both the shared traditions and the distinct nuances of the music of BIMSTEC member states will be on full display.

In my own case, it was actually through music, and to some extent books, that I developed an interest in the world. There is so much that music is able to convey, that it is understandably regarded as the soul of a society. That is even more so, when it comes to traditional music, like other forms of culture, music serves both as a bridge between nations and a powerful expression of their heritage and identity.

Friends, we live in complicated and uncertain times. A collective desire is to see a fair and representative global order, not one dominated by a few. That quest is often articulated as political or economic rebalancing. But I want to say this to you – obtaining respect and ensuring dignity for societies can also be achieved through cultural prowess – especially, through cultural prowess.

In that context, traditions are of particular value because ultimately, they define identity. We must be assured of what we are if we want to be confident about shaping the future. For nations like us, traditions are truly a great source of strength.

So, let me, in conclusion, thank ICCR and thank Team MEA, for organizing this event. On your behalf, I would like to thank all the participants, the performers who have come from all the BIMSTEC countries, and once again, I wish you all a very, very enjoyable evening.

Namaskar!  
New Delhi  
August 04, 2025