

### Staff Reporter

Sumith Nakandala, new Secretary General of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), on Sunday met Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali.

During the meeting, the Foreign Minister congratulated Nakandala on his assumption of office as the new Secretary General of BIMSTEC and assured him of the fullest support of the Government of Bangladesh during his tenure as the Secretary General.

The BIMSTEC Secretary General thanked Bangladesh Government for their full support and cooperation for the establishment of the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka.

He also appreciated the various commitments of Bangladesh Government for strengthening regional cooperation and economic integration.

The Foreign Minister said that BIMSTEC Secretariat is very important for Bangladesh since it is the first ever Headquarters of any inter-governmental Organization in Bangladesh.

Therefore, the Government is putting emphasis on the successful operation of the BIMSTEC headquarters, he added.

The formal inauguration of the BIMSTEC Secretariat will take place on September 13 by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The BIMSTEC activities will get momentum with the operation of the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka, the Minister remarked.

With the signing of Bangkok Declaration, the BISTEC (Bangladesh India Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation) was established on 6 June 1997.

Later, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan joined the organization and it was renamed as the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation).

The seven members of BIMSTEC are Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.