

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4917  
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2005  
HIGHWAY RAIL CONNECTIVITY WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES  
Singh Shri Sugrib

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

(a) the details of the Highways and Rail routes connecting the neighbouring countries as on date along with the routes on which negotiations are going on; and

(b) the details of the agreements signed with neighbouring countries in this regard, country-wise?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a)&(b) The details of Highway/Road and Rail routes connecting India with neighbouring countries as at present, negotiations in progress for other rail/road routes to neighbouring countries and agreements signed thereof are given below, country-wise:

**NEPAL**

Under the Treaty of Trade between India and Nepal, which was last revised in March 2002, the following border points have been designated for bilateral trade between India and Nepal:

No. In India In Nepal

- |    |                         |                  |
|----|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1  | Sukhia Pokhari          | Pashupatinagar   |
| 2  | Naxalbari               | Kakarbhitta      |
| 3  | Galgalia                | Bhadrapur        |
| 4  | Jogbani                 | Biratnagar       |
| 5  | Bhimnagar               | Setobandha       |
| 6  | Kunauli                 | Rajbiraj         |
| 7  | Jayanagar               | Siraha, Janakpur |
| 8  | Bhitamore (Sursand)     | Jaleshwar        |
| 9  | Sonabarsa               | Malangawa        |
| 10 | Bairgania               | Gaur             |
| 11 | Raxaul                  | Birgunj          |
| 12 | Nautanwa (Sunauli)      | Bhairahawa       |
| 13 | Hkunwa                  | Taulihawa        |
| 14 | Barhni                  | Krishnanagar     |
| 15 | Jarwa                   | Koilabas         |
| 16 | Nepalgunj Road          | Nepalgunj        |
| 17 | Katerniyaghat           | Rajapur          |
| 18 | Sati (Kailali)/Tikonía  | Prithivipur      |
| 19 | Gauriphanta             | Dhangdhi         |
| 20 | Banbasa                 | Mahendranagar    |
| 21 | Jhulaghat (Pithoragarh) | Mahakali         |
| 22 | Dharchula               | Dharchula        |

2. Under the Treaty of Transit, which was last revised in January 1999, for Nepal's trade with third countries, India provides to Nepal port facilities at Kolkata/ Haldia and specified 15 transit routes between Kolkata/Haldia and the India-Nepal border. These transit routes are listed below:

1. Kolkata/ Haldia Sukhia Pokhari
2. Kolkata/ Haldia Naxalbari (Panitanki)
3. Kolkata/ Haldia Galgalia

4. Kolkata/ Haldia Jogbani
5. Kolkata/ Haldia Bhimnagar
6. Kolkata/ Haldia Jayanagar
7. Kolkata/ Haldia Bhitamore (Sitamarhi)
8. Kolkata/ Haldia Raxaul
9. Kolkata/ Haldia Nautanwa (Sonauli)
10. Kolkata/ Haldia Barhni
11. Kolkata/ Haldia Jarwa
12. Kolkata/ Haldia Nepalgunj Road
13. Kolkata/ Haldia Tikonia
14. Kolkata/ Haldia Gauri-Phanta
15. Kolkata/ Haldia Banbasa

3. The following projects are presently under consideration:

Development of important link roads to Nepal on the Indian side of the border. In Phase-I, the following stretches would be covered:

- Purnia-Araria-Jogbani (84 kms);
- Gorakhpur Sunauli (90 kms);
- Nepalganj Road-Nanpra-Baharaich (70 kms); and
- Raxaul - Motihari (50 kms.)

Detailed Project Report in respect of these roads is ready. Approval of relevant authorities will have to be obtained for implementation.

4. Construction of link roads connecting various towns and townships falling between the India-Nepal border and the East-West Highway in Nepal, to the Highway.

The project is proposed to be implemented in three phases and the Government is in the process of appointing a Consultant to prepare the Detailed Project Report for Phase-I.

5. Setting up/broad-gauging of rail links between important border towns of India and Nepal. This would include:

Conversion of the Katihar-Jogbani MG Line to BG (already approved) and its extension to Biratnagar in Nepal (about 10 kms. by road from Jogbani);

- Conversion of Gonda-Nepalgunj Road MG line to BG and its extension to Nepalgunj in Nepal;
- Conversion of MG line to Nautanwa (via Anandnagar) into BG (already approved) and its extension to Bhairahawa (10 Kms by road from Nautanwa);
- Construction of a BG line from New Jalpaiguri to Kakrabitta (Nepal) via Panitanki (about 34 Kms. by road from New Jalpaiguri).
- Conservation of existing rail line from Jaynagar (India) to Bijalpura (51 kms) to Board Gauge and extension of the same to Bardibas (17 kms.) (all in Nepal)

Detailed Project Report is under preparation.

6. No inter-governmental agreement is required for the implementation of projects in para 3 above. For other two projects at para 4 and 5 above, we are yet to sign formal agreements/MOUs with Government of Nepal.

## BHUTAN

At present the following road/highways are connecting India and Bhutan:

- Phuentsholing (Bhutan) - Hasimara (India)
- Kalikhola (Bhutan) - Barobisa (India)
- Gelephu (Bhutan) - Samtabri (India)
- Samdrup Jongkhar (Bhutan) - Rangia (India).

2. The Indian towns listed above are located in West Bengal and Assam and fall on the National Highway No.31 and 31-C.

3. India and Bhutan signed an MOU in January 2005 under which Government of India would conduct feasibility studies for establishing broad gauge rail links between following border towns of India and Bhutan:

- (1) Hasimara (West Bengal) -Phuentsholing (Approx. 18 km) and bifurcation to Pasakha
- (2) Kokrajhar (Assam) -Gelephu (Approx. 70 km)
- (3) Pathsala (Assam) - Nanglam (Approx. 40 km)
- (4) Rangia (Assam) - Samdrupjongkhar (Approx. 60 km) via Darranga
- (5) Banarhat (West Bengal) - Samtse (Approx. 16 km)

4. Ministry of Railways, Government of India have initiated feasibility studies for the above projects and further action would depend on the outcome of these studies.

#### BANGLADESH

There are a total of 90 Land Customs Stations on the India Bangladesh border, which utilize the road, rail and riverine routes. Out of these 32 are presently functioning.

2. There are three broad gauge (BG) rail links between India and Bangladesh:

- (i) Gede (India)-Darsana (BD) and
- (ii) Singhabad-Rohanpur (BD) and
- (iii) Petrapole (India) - Benapole (BD). There are also two meter-gauge links between Biroi- Radhikapur and Shahbazpur-Mohishashonpur. While Biroi- Radhikapur is undergoing gauge conversion, the latter link is inoperational. Wagons are taken to and from the border by the engines of each side.

3. An agreement for running of a passenger train service between Sealdah and Jamuna Bridge (Bangladesh) was signed in July 2001 and a trial run has also been successfully conducted. The Bangladesh side has not yet agreed to operationalize this passenger train service. Once operational this would enable both Indian and Bangladeshi passengers to commute between Kolkata and Joydebpur (near Dhaka) by using the existing broad gauge link on this route. The Government of Bangladesh has already undertaken a project to establish a broad gauge link between Joydebpur and Dhaka. In addition, there is an existing meter gauge link connecting Joydebpur with Akhaura.

4. There is a missing rail link of about 13 Kms. between Akhaura and Agartala. We have offered to finance this project under a new line of credit, which is under discussion between the two countries. The establishment of this rail link would make rail connectivity from Sealdah to Agartala possible.

5. The Indian side has also submitted a proposal for movement of rail-borne container service using the existing Sealdah-Joydebpur Broad Gauge link. The response from Bangladesh side is awaited.

6. There are two bus services between India and Bangladesh. These are the Kolkata-Dhaka bus service operational since 1999, and the Agartala-Dhaka bus service operating since September 2003. The road between Brahmanbaria in Bangladesh and Agartala is both narrow and in poor condition. GOI has offered to finance upgradation of this road link under a new line of credit, which is under discussion between the two countries.

#### MYANMAR

The existing routes connecting India to Myanmar are as follows:

(i) Moreh in Manipur is connected with Tamu in Myanmar by road. There is a border trading point at Tamu-Moreh. Government of India has also upgraded the 160 km long Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo road in Myanmar in 2001. The road was used during the first India-ASEAN Car Rally that was flagged off by PM from Gawahati in November 2004.

(ii) There is another border trading point at Zowkathar (Mizoram) - Rhi (Myanmar). Government of India has committed to help upgrade the Rhi-Tiddim and Rhi-Falam Roads connecting Mizoram with Myanmar. A Detailed Project Report on the road upgradation is due to be commissioned soon.

(iii) Negotiations are also currently underway on two other routes that would connect India with Myanmar. The first of these is by means of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport Project which envisages connectivity between Indian Ports on the Eastern Seaboard and Sittwe Port in Myanmar and then through riverine transport and by road to Mizoram, thereby providing an alternate route for transport of goods from the eastern coast of India to North-East India. Within Myanmar, the route would include the Kaladan River up to Setpyitpyin (Kaletwa) from where a highway would be constructed up to Myeikwa near the India-Myanmar border. The highway would extend for 117 km into Indian territory and link up with National Highway 54 in Mizoram. The second one, a Trilateral Highway is also proposed to be constructed from Moreh (Manipur) in India to Mae Sot in Thailand through Bagan in Myanmar. In addition, it has been agreed to promote a highway from Kanchanaburi in Thailand to the Dawei sea port in Myanmar and from there, shipping links to Indian ports.

(iv) On 19 March 1997, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government of India and the Government of Myanmar on Co-operation in the Development of Roads in Myanmar along the India-Myanmar border. The MoU envisaged upgradation of the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo Road in the first instance. Another Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two Governments on 25 May 2001 entrusting GOI with maintenance of the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo Road for a period of six years upto 2007.

2. No agreements have been signed so far on the other Projects mentioned above.

3. It was agreed at the 3rd Ministerial Meeting of Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) in June 2003 that technical feasibility studies would be conducted for Delhi-Hanoi Rail link via Myanmar. RITES Ltd. was assigned to conduct a technical feasibility study for laying of missing links - both in India and Myanmar and upgradation of existing railway track in Myanmar to facilitate faster movement of trains. Partial draft feasibility report consisting engineering and signaling aspects has been received from RITES Ltd. in April 2005. Once the Rail Link is found technically feasible, Detailed Project Report will be prepared for its implementation.

## PAKISTAN

Delhi Lahore Bus Service is the only Road service operational between India and Pakistan. The Agreement for this bus service was signed between Government of India and Government of Pakistan on 17 February 1999. The bus service was terminated in January 2002 due to deterioration of relations between the two countries. It has been operationalised again since 11 July 2003.

2. During the recent visit of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf to India, agreement was reached for an early start of the Amritsar-Lahore Bus Service, including to religious places such as Nankana Sahib.

3. At present there is only one rail route operational between India and Pakistan, i.e., Samjhauta Express via Attari (India) - Wagha (Pakistan). Samjhauta Express (Passenger & Freight Train) operating between India and Pakistan in terms of provision of India-Pakistan Rail Services Agreement, 2001, extended upto January 19, 2007. Samjhauta Express runs between India and Pakistan from Attari to Lahore on bi-weekly basis. Freight Services between the two countries on 'paid to pay' basis; for export consignment, freight upto the border is charged by Indian Railways and vice versa.

4. Another rail/bus link services from Munnabao to Khokhrapar (Pakistan) is also in the pipeline.