

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1526
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.07.2021**

TRANSIT THROUGH BANGLADESH

1526. DR. RAJDEEP ROY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government has taken up the issue of transit through Bangladesh with the Bangladesh Government and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Union Government is interested in reviving the pre-independence rail, road and water connectivity through Bangladesh; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]**

(a) to (c) Yes. Connectivity is an important area of cooperation between India and Bangladesh. Both sides have undertaken several efforts to augment connectivity by reviving pre-1965 links and also opening new routes. The details are:

(i) Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister H.E. Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated Maitri Setu road bridge over River Feni in Tripura on March 09, 2021, which will connect Tripura with Bangladesh.

(ii) At the December 17, 2020 Prime Minister-level Virtual Summit, both sides inaugurated the restored Chilahati-Haldibari rail link, which will enhance connectivity to Assam. On March 27, 2021, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister H.E. Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated 'Mitali Express', passenger train service on Dhaka-New Jalpaiguri-Dhaka route through the Chilahati-Haldibari rail link.

(iii) Both sides are restoring the Kulaura-Shahbajpur section of the Bangladesh Railway, which will provide rail connectivity to Assam.

(iv) Government of India is undertaking the construction of Akhaura (Bangladesh) - Agartala railway line, which will provide connectivity to the North Eastern States, especially Tripura.

(v) Agreement on the use of Chattogram and Mongla Ports for movement of goods to and from India was signed in October 2019. Under this agreement, trial run of transshipment of Indian cargo through Chattogram Port to Tripura, was conducted in July 2020.

(vi) A second addendum to Protocol on Inland Waterways Trade and Transit (PIWTT) was signed in May 2020 under which two more inland water routes have been added which will link Tripura to National Waterways. Trial run on this new route was undertaken in September 2020.

(vii) Bus services between Kolkata-Dhaka and Dhaka-Agartala have been operational since 1999 and 2001 respectively.
