

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.4646  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.03.2021

**DIRECT ROUTE TO NORTH EASTERN STATES**

†4646. SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has made efforts to have dialogue with Bangladesh regarding direct route to North-Eastern States of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, whether the Government proposes to have a dialogue in this regard in future; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) Connectivity is an important area of cooperation between India and Bangladesh. Both sides are undertaking several key projects to augment road, rail and inland water connectivity, which will also enhance connectivity with the North Eastern Region. The details of some of the projects 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.
- 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.

Apart from these projects, several other initiatives under the Lines of Credit, extended to Bangladesh by Government of India, will enhance road and rail connectivity with North Eastern States.

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