

'Inauguration of Akhaura-Agartala rail link a historic moment': Prime Minister Narendra Modi

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NEW DELHI: Calling the inauguration of the Akhaura-Agartala rail link a historic moment, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that this is the first rail link between Bangladesh and the North Eastern states of India.

He said that Tripura has had a strong bond with Bangladesh since the days of its Liberation struggle, and added that the internal trade between India and Bangladesh has tripled in the last 9 years.

In a video conference with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today, PM Modi said, "In the last 9 years, our internal trade has tripled. Today the inauguration of the Akhaura-Agartala rail link is a historic moment. This is the first rail link between

Bangladesh and the North Eastern states of India Tripura has had a strong bond with Bangladesh since the days of its Liberation struggle I am happy that we have inaugurated the second unit of the Maitree Thermal Power Project"

PM Modi further highlighted that in order to establish peace and security at the border, India and Bangladesh have also signed a Land Boundary Agreement and that in the last nine years, 3 new bus services have been started connecting Dhaka, Shillong, Agartala, Guwahati and Kolkata.

He also noted that three new train services have also started in the last nine years.

"For establishing peace, security and stability at the border, we signed the Land Boundary Agreement which had been delayed for decades. We also solved the maritime boundary... In the last 9 years, 3 new bus services have been started connecting Dhaka, Shillong, Agartala, Guwahati and Kolkata... 3 new train services have also started in the last 9 years. Since 2020, parcel and container trains are also running between India and Bangladesh... By starting the world's biggest cruise, Ganga Vilas, between India and Bangladesh, tourism has been boosted," PM Modi said.

On the inauguration of three development projects between India and Bangladesh, PM Narendra Modi said, "It is a matter of joy that once again we have connected to celebrate the success of India-Bangladesh cooperation. Our relations are reaching new heights continuously."

"The work we have done together in the last 9 years was not done even in the decades before this," he added.

"We have considered our approach of 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas' for our neighbour country Bangladesh also. We take pride in being the biggest development partner for Bangladesh. In last 9 years, an aid of USD 10 billion has been given. The list of our achievements is very long... We took the decision of the three projects that are inaugurated today and we got the chance of inaugurating them too. I express gratitude to PM Sheikh Hasina for the success of our joint efforts," PM Modi said.

The Akhaura-Agartala railway is a new commercial opportunity between Northeast India and Bangladesh.

The Agartala-Akhaura International Railway is an internationally recognized project to connect the two countries.

The Akhaura-Agartala dual gauge railway is located in Bangladesh. The whole portion has been lined

with railroad tracks. Whereas, the station platform and the Customs and Immigration building still need renovation.

Owing to land acquisition challenges and the Covid-19 pandemic, the project's 2020 completion date was pushed back. An international immigration station would be situated on the 15-kilometer railway line that connects Bangladesh's Akhaura to Nischintapur, the border between India and Bangladesh.

When the railway is put into operation, it will take 10 hours instead of 31 to get from Agartala to Kolkata, creating a plethora of opportunities for tourism, commerce, and intercultural exchange.