

Siliguri corridor a crucial link with Northeast, SSB presence boosts security: Amit Shah

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Published - December 20, 2024 10:28 pm IST - KOLKATA



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Union Home Minister Amit Shah inspects the Guard of Honour during the 61st Foundation Day Parade ceremony of SSB, at Frontier Headquarters in Siliguri on December 20, 2024. | Photo Credit: ANI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday highlighted the significance of the Siliguri corridor as a crucial link to Northeast India and said that the presence of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in the area comes as an assurance to the entire country.

“Siliguri corridor is a very important strategic area of eastern India. Located between Mahananda and Teesta, Siliguri corridor serves an important link between northeast and rest of India. The presence of SSB in the area provides assurance and confidence to the rest of the country,” Mr. Shah said.

The Siliguri corridor, also referred to as the Chicken’s Neck, is a narrow strip of land in West Bengal that connects the Northeastern States to the rest of the country. The area is not far away from neighbouring countries including China, with a width of about 20 km and length of 60 km.

The Home Minister made the remarks while addressing the 61st Raising Day celebrations of SSB in Siliguri. Mr. Shah lauded the efforts of SSB in securing the nation’s borders with friendly countries such as Nepal and Bhutan.

SSB guards the 2,450 km of the country’s border with Nepal and Bhutan and Mr. Shah said that as the Home Minister of the country, he is assured that the borders will be protected because SSB jawans are deployed there.

Referring to the SSB’s efforts in tackling left-wing extremism, the Home Minister said: “The SSB has played an important role in ending the menace of Naxalism in Bihar and Jharkhand. From this stage I want to say that Bihar and Jharkhand are free of Left Wing Extremism”.

Mr. Shah also commended the SSB for its unique initiatives in fostering cultural integration in the bordering areas. “The SSB has done a commendable job by connecting the culture, language and heritage of border villages of India with the mainstream of the country. This initiative strengthens the bond between the nation and its border communities,” he said.

During the ceremony, the Home Minister inaugurated and virtually laid the foundation stone of eight different construction works related to SSB in different parts of the country at a cost of ₹192 crore.

Mr. Shah also inaugurated through virtual means the newly constructed residential complexes of ‘Border Guarding Force’ built at ICP Agartala and Petrapole at a cost of ₹ 55 crore.