

Staff Reporter

Bangladesh is seriously looking forward to having rail connectivity with India and assured India of early completion of the ambitious Agartala-Akhaura rail linkage project.

Railways Minister M Mazibul Hoque, who was on a two-day visit to Tripura to attend a function of Agartala Chapter of Iswar Pathshala, made the assurance after a meeting with Chief Minister Manik Sarkar on Friday afternoon.

He hoped that the relations between Bangladesh and India's northeastern region would further get strengthened with coordinated economic, social and cultural exchanges, reports The Hindu from Agartala on Saturday.

The famous educational institution named after the great Indian reformist Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar situated in Comilla, Bangladesh is celebrating its centenary.

"The project implementation plan to execute the work on our side is being prepared. It'll be sanctioned soon as we're interested for an early execution of this important rail connectivity," he told reporters at the State secretariat.

Though the India railways completed the survey and other preliminary works for the 15-km cross-border rail project, and the Tripura government initiated the process for land acquisition, nothing significant was done in Bangladesh for its 10km strip.

India had promised to take the entire burden of the work expenditure on both sides for the rail connectivity to transport passengers and goods from Bangladesh and from other parts of India through Bangladesh.

The Indian External Affairs Ministry is spending on laying the track, installing a border station at Nischintapur and infrastructure facilities on the 15km-railway stretch. It had already allocated Rs 252 crore for the project in pursuance of an agreement between the two countries signed in 2010.