

India-Nepal Statement on Expanding Rail Linkages: Connecting Raxaul in India to Kathmandu in Nepal

With the objective of expanding connectivity to enhance people-to-people linkages and promote economic growth and development, the Prime Ministers of India and Nepal agreed to construct a new electrified rail line, with India's financial support, connecting the border city of Raxaul in India to Kathmandu in Nepal. As a first step, it was agreed that Government of India would, in consultation with the Government of Nepal, carry out preparatory survey work within one year, and the two sides would finalize the implementation and funding modalities of the project based on the Detailed Project Report. The Prime Minister of Nepal assured that the Government of Nepal will extend full cooperation for early completion of the requisite surveys for the new rail line.

The two Prime Ministers appreciated the progress made in the implementation of Phase-I of the India-Nepal cross-border rail link projects. The two leaders noted that the stretch of railway lines from Jayanagar to Janakpur/Kurtha and from Jogbani to Biratnagar Custom Yard will be completed in 2018, and that work on the remaining stretch of the ongoing rail link projects: (a) Jayanagar-Bijalpura-Bardibas and (b) Jogbani-Biratnagar, will be taken forward on priority. India expressed appreciation for Nepal's commitment to expeditiously resolve all outstanding issues, including land availability, for the ongoing rail link projects.

The two Prime Ministers noted with appreciation that the India-Nepal Joint Working Group has been meeting regularly to discuss issues relating to operation of train services on the ongoing cross-border rail link projects. It was agreed that the JWG would identify requirements for operating train services on these cross-border rail links, and finalize the bilateral modalities expeditiously.

The two leaders emphasized the importance of implementing the remaining three links under Phase-II of the India-Nepal cross-border rail link projects: (i) New Jalpaiguri-Kakarbhitta, (b) Nautanwa-Bhairahawa, and (c) Nepalgunj Road-Nepalgunj. Welcoming the ongoing Final Location Survey of the three links, the two leaders agreed to expedite completion of the remaining survey work.