

## Rebooting of Rail Link by India, Bangladesh

### Why in news?

Two years after they were stopped due to the Covid-19 outbreak, passenger train services between India and Bangladesh resumed.

### What about the train services between the two country?

- **Maitree Express**- The Maitree Express was introduced between Kolkata and Khulna via Petrapole and Benapole border route in 2008.
- **Bandhan Express**- The Bandhan Express rail link between Kolkata and Khulna was served by the Barisal Express in 1965 which was later stopped due to the India-Pakistan war.
- The route restarted with Bandhan in 2017.
- **Mitali Express**- The Mitali Express will connect New Jalpaiguri in North Bengal with Dhaka.
- This train was announced by PM Modi during his visit to Dhaka in 2021.
- **Haldibari-Chilahati rail link**- In 2021, the two sides started regular movement of freight trains between the newly-restored link between Haldibari in India and Chilahati in Bangladesh.
- The Haldibari-Chilahati rail link between India and the then East Pakistan was also operational till 1965 and stopped due to the war.
- This was part of the broad gauge main route from Kolkata to Siliguri at the time of Partition.



## What is the significance of rail infrastructure in the relationship of both the countries?

- Policymakers on both sides view railways as an opportunity to deepen diplomatic ties using cross-border movements of goods and passengers.
- Five rail links have so far been rebooted between India and Bangladesh.
  - Petrapole (India)-Benapole (Bangladesh)
  - Gede (India)- Darshana (Bangladesh)
  - Singhabad (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh)
  - Radhikapur (India)-Biroi (Bangladesh)
  - Haldibari-Chilahati
- Railway PSU CONCOR has also started container cargo with fast moving consumer goods of private clients.
- In 2021, the Eastern Railway facilitated the import of de-oiled soya cakes from Bangladesh.

### Reference

1. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-how-india-bangladesh-are-rebooting-their-rail-link-7946133/>

