

India's First Direct Commercial Container Freight Train Reaches Nepal, Opening a New Chapter in Cross-border Trade and Connectivity

40-Wagon Freight Train from Kolkata Port to Biratnagar Operates Under Revised India-Nepal Rail Transit Protocol

Direct Rail Freight Service Reduces Transit Time, Logistics Costs and Cargo Handling, Strengthening India-Nepal Trade Ties

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Indian Railways has achieved a major milestone in strengthening India-Nepal freight connectivity with the successful operation of the first-ever direct commercial container freight train from Kolkata Port to Biratnagar Customs Yard, Nepal. The train, comprising 40 wagons carrying a consignment of canola, completed its journey under the revised India-Nepal Rail Transit Protocol, marking a new chapter in rail-based cross-border freight movement.



The successful operation enables direct rail movement of containerised cargo from Kolkata Port to Biratnagar without transshipment at the border. The new arrangement is expected to substantially reduce transit time, logistics costs and cargo handling while improving the efficiency, reliability and competitiveness of cross-border trade between the two neighbouring countries. The milestone has been made possible through the implementation of the revised India-Nepal Rail Transit Protocol, which facilitates seamless end-to-end rail transportation of freight between the two countries.

The achievement builds upon the broad-gauge rail link between Jogbani (India) and Biratnagar (Nepal), inaugurated in June 2023 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi and the then Prime Minister of Nepal. Following the signing of the revised Letter of Exchange (LoE) in November 2025, direct commercial rail movement to Biratnagar has now become operational, opening new opportunities for bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

The direct freight service is expected to provide a significant boost to the movement of import and export cargo by offering a faster, more economical and environmentally sustainable mode of transportation. By reducing multiple handling points and improving supply chain efficiency, the initiative will benefit exporters, importers, logistics operators and industries engaged in cross-border trade.

The milestone also reflects Indian Railways' continued focus on expanding international rail connectivity, strengthening freight logistics and supporting the Government's vision of improving ease of doing business through modern transport infrastructure. Increased rail-based freight movement will contribute to lower logistics costs, improved cargo reliability and greener transportation while fostering stronger economic partnerships with neighbouring countries.

The successful operation of the first direct commercial container freight train to Nepal marks another important achievement in Indian Railways' efforts to build an integrated, efficient and future-ready freight network that supports regional trade, economic growth and seamless international connectivity.

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