

## Dhaka-New Jalpaiguri direct train service to begin on March 26

A Monitor Report

Date: 01 March, 2021



**Dhaka:** A new non-stop passenger train service between Dhaka and New Jalpaiguri of India's West Bengal state will begin on March 26 as part of the golden jubilee celebrations of Bangladesh's independence.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, who would travel to Dhaka on March 26, are expected to flag off the new train service as part of the efforts to revive the rail connectivity that had existed till 1965 between the two neighbours.

The operation of the direct ten-coach train between Dhaka and NJP, which will cover a distance of 513km, was discussed at a two-day meeting between a team of Bangladesh Railway officers and Ravinder Kumar Verma, divisional railway manager of India's Katihar division in New Jalpaiguri on February 23-24.

Mohammed Shahidul Islam, the divisional railway manager of Paksey division, who led the Bangladesh team to the meeting, told the media in Siliguri on February 24 that Bangladesh wanted to operate the train between Siliguri and Dhaka. "But Siliguri didn't have the required infrastructure, so it had to be New Jalpaiguri instead," he added.

New Jalpaiguri has the biggest railway station in the northern part of West Bengal and is just six km away from Siliguri. It is a key junction between mainland India

and north-eastern India.

The Dhaka-NJP train would take the same route as the Haldibari-Chilahati train that was flagged off last year.

The name of the Dhaka-NJP train and its fare are yet to be decided, said Verma.

Customs and immigration facilities will be provided at NJP and Dhaka railway stations. The train will run from NJP on Thursdays and Fridays and from Dhaka on Fridays and Tuesdays.

Shahidul said, "We will connect Nepal and Bhutan in the next phase."

"With the Partition in 1947, railway connectivity between these two stations was severed. People of both the countries wanted this route to be revived," he concluded.