

Bhutan carries out first trial transit of goods via Bangladesh

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Dhaka: Bhutan carried out its first trial run under the traffic-in-transit agreement signed with Bangladesh, as a 15-ton consignment moved from Chattogram Port to Burimari land port and onward to Bhutan through Indian territory during Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay's Bangladesh visit.

Once the second trial run is completed, the South Asian landlocked country will be able to transport goods regularly through Bangladesh, using Chattogram Port and traveling 684 kilometers across Bangladeshi territory, commerce ministry officials said on November 21.

Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay visited Bangladesh from November 22 to 24 and received VVIP protocol during the trip, as per a government gazette notification.

Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman said that Bangladesh issued written consent to the port authorities and the National Board of Revenue to facilitate the movement of Bhutanese cargo.

According to him, there was no bilateral meeting on trade or investment between the commerce ministries during the visit.

They attended a dinner hosted by the chief adviser on November 22. He also added, the next commerce secretary-level meeting with Bhutan is scheduled for January 2026.

Bangladesh signed the "Agreement on the Movement of Traffic-in-Transit" and its protocol with Bhutan on March 22, 2023. At a commerce secretary-level meeting in Bhutan in April 2024, both sides agreed that the agreement would come into effect after completing two trial runs at mutually convenient times.

In October, Bhutan informed Bangladesh through a note verbale that a 15-ton shipment had been loaded for Chattogram Port for the first trial run and designated M/s Abhi Cargo Company to handle the process. The goods were imported from Thailand.

For Bhutan's trial transit, Bangladesh has set a document processing fee of BDT 30 per consignment, a transshipment fee of BDT 20 per ton, a security charge of BDT 100 per ton, an escort fee of BDT 85 per kilometer per container, administrative charges of BDT 100 per ton and a scanning fee of BDT 254 per container.

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