

Dhaka-Siliguri direct bus service in works to start this year

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Dhaka : The Road Transport and Highways Division (RTHD) announced that direct bus service between Dhaka and Siliguri is likely to begin this year, although the agreement on which the service would start is yet to be finalised.

A senior official of the division said they want to finalise a bilateral agreement with India to start the service this year.

Although the service will be operated between Dhaka and Siliguri, convenient transports will also be available at Siliguri for Bangladeshi nationals to travel to Gangtok and Darjeeling, two popular tourist places in India, via the route.

"But the final decision over the agreement will be taken by the top authorities of the governments as it is a multi-border connectivity that connects Nepal and Bhutan in future so far," he added.

On January 13, a virtual meeting was held between India and Bangladesh for regulating motor vehicles and passenger traffic in operating bus service between Dhaka and Siliguri. Concerned officials from RTHD, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) and Roads and Highways Department (RHD) attended the meeting.

The meeting focused on the inauguration of the passenger bus service on the Dhaka-Siliguri-Dhaka route, however, officials said no concrete decisions have been

made yet.

"But, bus service will start soon either following bilateral agreement or under the Bangladesh-India-Nepal (BIN) Motor-Vehicle Agreement (MVA), said RHD Chief Transport Economist Marufa Ismat.

"All the departments have placed their opinions and now the higher authority will take a decision," she added.

Earlier, Bangladesh and India planned to inaugurate direct bus service between Dhaka and Sikkim and Dhaka and Darjeeling.

However, the initiatives were cancelled after the feasibility study by the BRTC as the roads are too narrow for buses from Siliguri to Sikkim and Darjeeling. There are also risky bends for bus on both the routes after Siliguri.