

Govt to expand rail connectivity to 10 more districts

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Online Desk : Road Transport and Bridges, Shipping and Railways Minister Shaikh Rabiul Alam on Tuesday, June 16, said the government has taken an initiative to expand rail connectivity to 10 more districts. The minister said this in a press briefing at the Press Information Department (PID) at the Secretariat following a review meeting on railway development and connectivity chaired by the Prime Minister. The minister said the meeting reviewed the current state of railway services, overall connectivity, ongoing development projects and future expansion plans.

“The Prime Minister reviewed the latest activities of the Railways Ministry, assessed the quality of services and connectivity, and provided his observations. Following the review, several important decisions were taken to improve connectivity and railway services across the country,” he said. He said several major railway projects, including the Akhaura-Sylhet and Sirajganj-Bogura rail links, are already progressing. The government has also approved a project to establish an Inland Container Depot (ICD) at Dhirashram in Gazipur, while steps are being taken to improve railway infrastructure on the Dhaka-Chattogram route, he said.

The existing metre-gauge sections between Tongi and Akhaura and between Laksham and Sylhet will be upgraded to dual-gauge double-track lines to remove existing connectivity gaps, he added. Currently, 49 districts of the country are connected to the railway network, he said, adding that the government’s election manifesto pledged to bring all 64 districts under rail connectivity. “To achieve that goal, we have presented possible routes and expansion plans to extend rail services to 10 more districts that currently lack adequate railway connectivity,” he said.

The minister said discussions also focused on introducing and expanding commuter train services in areas surrounding Dhaka to ease travel for workers and businesspeople. Citing Manikganj as an example, he noted that the district, despite being located close to the capital, still lacks rail connectivity. “We have plans to establish commuter rail services linking Dhaka with nearby districts, including Manikganj and Narsingdi, similar to existing services on the Dhaka-Narayanganj and Dhaka-Tongi-Joydebpur routes,” he said.

The proposed expansion would enable residents of surrounding districts to travel to and from Dhaka more quickly for work, business and other daily activities, he added.

Source : UNB