

India Plans Diesel Pipeline to Bangladesh

The cross-border pipeline will run from West Bengal to northern Bangladesh

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New Delhi: India plans to build a pipeline to carry high-speed diesel (HSD) to Bangladesh, similar to a project it announced last week to supply fuel to Nepal.

A formal proposal on the friendship project could be announced when Bangla Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina meets her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi here on April 8, people in the know said.

The cross-border pipeline will run from Siliguri in West Bengal to Parbatipur in northern Bangladesh.

Until the project is completed, HSD will be transported from Assam's Numaligarh Refinery to Bangladesh via rail and one such consignment will be flagged off by the two Prime Ministers.

In fact, supplies to Bangladesh has already begun from Numaligarh Refinery. Recently, it dispatched the first consignment of HSD to Bangladesh - a railway rake containing 2,281 metric tonnes of the fuel chugged off from the refinery's marketing terminal at Siliguri to the Parbatipur depot of Bangladesh Petroleum Corp (BPC). Each such consignment will travel some 516 kms - 253 km in India and 263 km in Bangladesh - on an existing rail line.

Numaligarh Refinery and BPC have signed a sale-purchase agreement which includes a joint initiative for the construction of a 131-km pipeline, with a capacity to carry 1



million metric tonnes a year of fuel products, to Parbatipur from Siliguri.

The neighbouring countries are also contemplating building a gas pipeline. State-run Oil & Natural Gas Corp and BPC are in talks to build the 6,900-km pipeline that is proposed to link Chittagong in Bangladesh and Sitwe in Myanmar with India's northeastern states.

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The pipeline project is part of the government's Hydrocarbon Vision-2030 for the northeastern region. A joint LPG plant is planned at Chittagong from where the gas will be piped to the north-eastern region. The project had figured in the talks during Modi's Dhaka trip in 2015. India last week announced that it will lay pipeline to supply fuel to Nepal and jointly market it in the Himalayan nation. State-run Indian Oil Corp will help build the pipeline to supply petrol, diesel and cooking gas.

India is also considering extending a natural-gas pipeline from Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh to Nepal.