**Press Release**

**Railway JWG discusses running train services on Jaynagar-Kurtha Cross Border Rail link.**

The 4th India-Nepal Joint Working Group meeting on Railway Cooperation was held today via video-conferencing. The Indian side was led by Dr Manoj Singh, Executive Director (Traffic Transportation-F), Ministry of Railways, Government of India and Nepali side was led by Er Gopal Prasad Sigdel, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport of Government of Nepal. Other stakeholders who participated from both sides included senior officials from Indian Railway, Ministry of External Affairs, Embassy of India in Kathmandu, Konkan Railways and IRCON on the Indian side and Director General, Department of Railway (DoRw), General Manager of Nepal Railway Company (NRC), officials from Ministry of Home and Foreign Affairs of Government of Nepal from Nepali side.

2. The JWG reviewed the cross border rail link projects that are between Jaynagar-Bijalpura-Bardibas and Jogbani-Biratnagar under advance implementation. Both sides discussed the technical preparedness of the completed 34 km long section of the railway line between Jaynagar in India and Kurtha in Nepal for the purpose of running passenger train services, including the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that need to be put in place for resumption of passenger train services by Nepal Railway Company (NRC). The section, originally a narrow gauge built by British India, was upgraded by Government of India to broad gauge at a cost of over INR 380 cr (NR 6080 million). Government of Nepal has recently procured two DEMU train sets from India for running on this railway link. Both sides also discussed the mutual facilitation and coordination required for completion of the work on remaining sections from Kurtha to Bilajpura, currently under construction by Government of India at a cost of INR 200 cr (NR 3200 million).

3. Both sides further agreed to expedite the work for completion of the other ongoing cross-border railway project between Jogbani in India and Biratnagar in Nepal under a grant assistance of INR 374 cr (NR 5884 million). The JWG Co-Chairs agreed to extend cooperation in the railway sector, including in the capacity building and training of Nepali railway personnel in India and in Nepal as per the requirements of Nepal.

4. Both sides agreed to remain engaged closely to strengthen cooperation in the railway sector.

**Kathmandu**

**Nov 19, 2020**

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