

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1269
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2007
NEW RAIL LINE BETWEEN INDIA-NEPAL-BHUTAN
Murmu Shri Rupchand

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is planning to construct a new rail line between India, Nepal & Bhutan;
- (b) if so, the details of expenditure of the proposed project;
- (c) whether the Government is trying to renew Friendship Treaties with Nepal and Bhutan in the sphere of bilateral relations; and
- (d) if so, the details of the proposed changes thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a)-(b) Feasibility studies are presently being undertaken in respect of setting up of five cross border rail-links between India and Nepal and five cross border rail-links between India and Bhutan.

(c)-(d) Government have updated the Treaty between India and Bhutan of August 8, 1949. The updated India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty has been signed on February 8, 2007 in New Delhi. The updated Treaty reiterates that there shall be perpetual peace and friendship between India and Bhutan. It removes provisions, which have become obsolete over time. It includes fresh provisions for consolidating and expanding economic cooperation for mutual and long-term benefit and cooperation in the fields of culture, education, health, sports, and science and technology. It does not envisage a change in the treatment of nationals of both countries, or in the free trade regime that we have. The Treaty commits both countries to cooperate closely with each other on issues relating to their national interests, and not allow the use of their territories for activities harmful to the national security and interest of the other.