

India set to sail containerised EXIM cargo to Bangladesh from IBP for the first time: Govt

The government on Saturday said it is set to sail maiden containerised Exim Cargo from Haldia Dock Complex to Narayanganj, Bangladesh, via Indo-Bangla Protocol (IBP) route. This is the first time that cargo consignment is to be exported through IBP route. "In line with Government's focus on strengthening regional connectivity through inland waterways, maiden containerised EXIM cargo consignment is set to sail from Haldia Dock Complex (HDC) to Narayanganj, Bangladesh," Ministry of Shipping said in a statement. It said 64 TEUs (Twenty Feet Equivalent Units) of steel fillings / pig iron ingots, of West Bengal-based steel manufacturer Rashmi Metaliks Ltd will be exported to Bangladesh via National Waterway – 1, National Waterway – 97 (Sundarbans) and IBP Route.

Loading will start after getting clearance from customs, it said. It is expected to open up possibilities for movement of other commodities on inland waterways between India and Bangladesh.

Currently, IBP route is mostly used for transportation of Bulk cargo like fly-ash, coal, stone chips and over-dimensional cargo for export to Bangladesh. Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said, "The Maiden Exim cargo movement through National Waterways is a landmark moment and we are very delighted with our recent development in shipping sector. This environment-friendly mode of transportation would escalate business growth and contribute to the economic development of the country." India's exports to Bangladesh in FY 2018-19 stood at USD 9.21 billion and imports from Bangladesh during the same period were USD 1.04 billion. The government said given the trade volume, this movement is a welcome development as it will not only reduce the congestions on Land Custom Stations at Petrapole, Gojadanga etc but also reduce the cost of logistics, air pollution and GHG emissions.