

## **Birgunj ICP to be inaugurated on Saturday**

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The Birgunj Integrated Check Post (ICP) will be formally inaugurated on Saturday.

Prime Ministers of Nepal and India will jointly inaugurate the ICP through video conferencing, according to Laxman Prasad Basnet, executive director of Nepal Intermodal Transport Development Board. "We will be inaugurating Birgunj ICP on Saturday. And this will be done by the Prime Ministers of Nepal and India," Basnet confirmed.

As part of his first international visit, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli is leaving for New Delhi on Friday on a three-day official visit to India.

On the second day of the visit, Prime Minister Oli of Nepal and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India will jointly inaugurate the ICP from New Delhi itself via video conference, according to Chandra Kumar Ghimire, secretary of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies.

"Birgunj customs point handles 60-65 percent of total trade between Nepal and India. Yet we are doing trade via a route that is at least a century old," he said, adding: "The Birgunj ICP is equipped with some of the most advanced technologies and is unlike any that the country has. And this will greatly help in supporting and systematizing the bilateral trade."

According to Ghimire, the ICP will provide 'one-window service' wherein a plethora of services like immigration, customs, quarantine, and banks as well as security check posts are available at the same place. Unlike the existing modus operandi at the Birgunj customs point, importers and exporters can complete paper works and fees before containers arrive at the check post.

The ICP in the Nepali side is spread over 15 bigaha of land in Alau of Parsa district. It was built with an investment of Rs 5 billion. The Indian side of the ICP was completed a year ago itself. It is spread over 110 bigaha of land.

Ghimire added that the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies has been working on close co-ordination with the Ministry of Finance and other concerned authorities to shift the customs office and other related authorities within the ICP premises.

Source : My Republica, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018