

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2713
ANSWERED ON 12.08.2025

INLAND WATERWAYS DEVELOPMENT

2713. SHRI BABUBHAI JESANGBHAI DESAI:

Will the Minister of PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number and status of operational inland waterways across the country;
- (b) the budget allocation and utilisation for developing National Waterways in the last three years;
- (c) whether the Ministry has taken steps to encourage cargo movement through waterways; and
- (d) the steps taken to promote eco-friendly transport and enhance port connectivity through multimodal logistics?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)

(a) There are 29 operational National Waterways (NWs) across the country. The details are at **Annexure-1**.

(b) The budget allocation and utilisation by Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways for developing National Waterways in the last three years are given below;

Year	Budget allocation/released for development of NWs (in Rs. crore)	Utilization (in Rs. crore)
2022-23	495.31	495.31
2023-24	956.50	956.50
2024-25	1069.62	1069.62

(c) The steps taken to promote cargo movement and to ensure sustainability of NWs in the country are at **Annexure-2**.

(d) Towards promoting eco-friendly transport on National Waterways, IWAI has placed order for construction of 8 hybrid electric catamaran on Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL). One Hydrogen fuelled cell vessel has also been deployed at Varanasi. To enhance port connectivity through multi-modal logistics, multi-modal and inter-modal terminals on NW-1, NW-2 and NW-16 have been developed which are connected to Kolkata/Haldia Ports through waterways. Moreover, Indian Ports Association (IPA) has been engaged for the feasibility study for establishment of a Cargo Facilitation Centre and Integration of Coastal Mode with Waterways Movement in India.

Annexure-1

Operational National Waterways as of 31.07.2025					
Sl. No.	NW No.	Inland Waterways Name	Cargo	Cruise	Passenger
1	NW-1	Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System (Haldia-Allahabad)	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	NW-2	Brahmaputra River (Dhubri-Sadiya)	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	NW-3	West Coast Canal	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	NW-4	Krishna Godavari River Systems	Yes		Yes
5	NW-5	East Coast Canal And Matai River/Brahmani-Kharsua-Dhamra Rivers/Mahanadi Delta Rivers	Yes	Yes	
6	NW-8	Alappuzha-Changanassery Canal	Yes	Yes	Yes
7	NW-9	Alappuzha-Kottayam – Athirampuzha Canal	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	NW-14	Baitarni River	Yes	Yes	
9	NW-16	Barak River	Yes		Yes
10	NW-23	Budha Balanga	Yes		
11	NW-31	Dhansiri/Chathe	Yes		
12	NW-44	Ichamati River	Yes		Yes
13	NW-48	Jawai-Luni-Rann Of Kutch River	Yes		
14	NW-53	(Kalyan-Thane-Mumbai Waterway, Vasai Creek And Ulhas River)	Yes		Yes
15	NW-64	Mahanadi River	Yes		
16	NW-86	Rupnarayan River	Yes		Yes
17	NW-94	Sone River	Yes		
18	NW-97	Sunderbans Waterway	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	NW-10	Amba River	Yes		Yes
20	NW-83	Rajpuri Creek	Yes		
21	NW-85	Revadanda Creek-Kundalika River System	Yes		
22	NW-91	Shastri River - Jaigad Creek System	Yes		

23	NW-68	Mandovi River	Yes	Yes	Yes
24	NW-111	Zuari River	Yes		Yes
25	NW-73	Narmada River	Yes	Yes	
26	NW-100	Tapi River	Yes		Yes
27	NW-27	Cumberjua River		Yes	
28	NW-47	Jalangi River		Yes	
29	NW-87	Sabarmati River		Yes	

The infrastructure and policy measures being taken to promote cargo movement and to ensure sustainability of NWs in the country:

- i. Fairway maintenance works (river training, maintenance dredging, channel marking and regular hydrographic surveys) are taken up in various National Waterways (NWs) for providing a navigation channel of 35/45 m width and 2.0 / 2.2 / 2.5 / 3.0 m least available depth (LAD) for operation of vessels.
- ii. 53 community jetties, 20 floating terminals, 3 Multi-Modal Terminals (MMTs) and 1 Inter-Modal Terminal (IMT) have been constructed on NW-1 (River Ganga) in addition to 5 pre-existing permanent terminals.
- iii. 13 floating terminals provided on NW-2 (River Brahmaputra) along with MMTs at Pandu, Jogighopa and terminals at Bogibeel and Dhubri. Four dedicated Jetties for cruise vessels have been provided at Jogighopa, Pandu, BiswanathGhat and Neamati. In addition to this, Jetties for cruise and passengers have been constructed at Sadiya, Lyka and OriumGhat in Assam.
- iv. 9 Permanent Inland Water Transport terminals with godowns and 2 Ro-Ro/Ro-Pax terminals have been constructed on NW-3 (West Coast Canal in Kerala).
- v. 04 floating concrete jetties were provided to Govt. of Goa and installed in Mandovi River (NW-68).
- vi. 04 Tourist Jetties on NW-4 (River Krishna) in Andhra Pradesh have been commissioned. Construction of 12 Nos. floating jetties on NW-110 (River Yamuna) in Mathura-Vrindavan stretch in Uttar Pradesh, 2 Jetties on NW-73 (River Narmada) & 2 Jetties on NW-37 (River Gandak) in Bihar have been taken up.
- vii. A new Navigation Lock at Farakka and 2 Nos. Quick Pontoon Opening Mechanisms (QPOMs) have been constructed on NW-1 to facilitate smooth & faster movement of vessels.
- viii. A scheme for providing 35% incentive to promote the utilization of inland waterways transport sector by cargo owners and for scheduled service for cargo movement on NW-1 and NW-2 and NW-16 via Indo Bangladesh Protocol by Inland & Coastal Shipping Limited (ICSL) has been launched by the Government. This scheme is expected to divert 800 million tonne Km cargo on IWT mode, which is nearly 17% of the current cargo of 4700 million tonne Km on NWs.

- ix. The National Waterways (Construction of Jetties / Terminals) Regulations 2025 have been notified, allowing private companies to invest and operate Inland Waterways infrastructure by providing a clear regulatory framework to attract private sector investment for facilitating the growth of inland waterways sector.
- x. To increase ease of doing business in the IWT sector, along the same lines as ‘vahan’ and ‘sarathi’, a central data base and portal has been developed for registration of vessels and crew all over the country. This will facilitate registration of vessels and crew digitally and would also provide accurate status on number of vessels and crew in the country and thus help in planning.
- xi. The cargo movement on the waterways suffer from problems of multimodality because of lack of industries along the waterways. Therefore, projects for development of cargo aggregation hub – Freight Village at Varanasi and Integrated Cluster- cum-Logistics Park, Sahibganj have been taken up. NHLML, a PSU under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has been engaged for development of these MMLPs. The work of Rail connectivity for three MMTs has been assigned to M/s Indian Port and Rail Company Ltd. (A PSU under MoPSW).
- xii. Indo Bangladesh Protocol route no. 5 & 6 between Maia and Sultanganj has been operationalized recently with successful trial movements.
- xiii. For modal shift of cargo to waterways, more than 140 Public Sector Units have been approached to plan their movement using Inland Water Transport mode. They have been requested to outline their current status of cargo movement through the waterways and their plan for modal shift of cargo. The Ministry of PNG, Co-operation/ Fertiliser, Food & Public distribution, Heavy industries, Steel and Coal have been requested to advise the PSUs under their jurisdiction to utilise IWT mode as far as possible and earmark certain percentage of their cargo for IWT mode keeping in line the MIV targets.
