

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1115
ANSWERED ON 28.07.2026

**TOURISM, LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND REGIONAL ECONOMY IN BIHAR
THROUGH NATIONAL WATERWAY-1 (GANGA RIVER)**

1115. DR. BHIM SINGH:

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

- (a) the progress of the 'Cruise Bharat Mission' so far in promoting cruise passenger traffic and the strategies being adopted to link Bihar's Ganga river cruise circuits with maritime and island circuits under the integrated national plan; and
- (b) the plans of Government to assess the long-term impact of this mission on tourism, local employment and the regional economy in Bihar through National Waterway-1 (Ganga river)?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) The Government has launched the Cruise Bharat Mission with the objective of promoting cruise tourism across the country through the development of cruise infrastructure, cruise circuits, and related tourism facilities. A study has been conducted for preparing a Detailed Road Map for Development of River Cruise Tourism in India, which has identified 38 river cruise circuits for phased development. Of these, two circuits are in Bihar or pass through Bihar, namely:

- Kolkata–Varanasi circuit, which traverses the State of Bihar through National Waterway-1 (Ganga River); and
- Engineering College–Digha Bridge, Patna circuit within Bihar.

To promote river tourism, two Ro-Ro vessels have been provided to the Government of Bihar for deployment for tourism purposes at Patna and Bhagalpur. Regular river cruise services are operated between Kolkata and Patna by private operators, with scheduled halts at various destinations in Bihar. These cruise operations promote tourism, generate direct and indirect employment for local communities, and contribute to the regional economy through increased demand for hospitality, transport, handicrafts and other allied services.
