

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 696
TO BE ANSWERED ON 7TH FEBRUARY, 2019

ENVIRONMENT/ SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL INLAND WATERWAY-1

696. SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

पोत परिवहन मंत्री

- (a) whether an environment clearance was obtained for the National Inland Waterway No.1 and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether a Social and an Environment Impact Assessment of the proposed project was conducted and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the details of negative impacts of the said project on the ecology of Ganga river or the local human population inhabiting the surrounding area, if any?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING
(SHRI PON. RADHAKRISHNAN)

(a) to (c): The Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) is being implemented for augmentation of navigation capacity on the Haldia – Varanasi stretch of National Waterway-1 on Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System with technical and financial support of the World Bank. The Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has concurred with the decision that as per extant legal position, no prior Environment Clearance (EC) is required for maintenance dredging in navigational channel for Inland Waterways including dredging under JMVP. The clearances/approvals and details of public consultation under JMVP are at **Annex.**

To safeguard the environment and ecology, Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has undertaken Detailed Environment Assessment (EA) for JMVP through renowned consultants as per requirement under the World Bank operational policies. As part of the EA, extensive consultations with stakeholders (including Locals and Civil Society Organisations) were carried out by the Consultants in June, July, September, October and November of 2015 and in February, 2016 along the project Corridor. Additionally, the draft cumulative Impact Assessment Report; the Consolidated Environmental Impact Assessment Report containing the Environment Management Plans (EMPs) for maintenance dredging, barge operations, the

Farakka Navigational Lock, the multimodal terminals at Sahibganj, Varanasi and Haldia, the Executive Summary, and the Consolidated Social Impact Assessment-cum-Resettlement Action Plan were published on the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) website in May, 2016 for information and comments from the public. These reports were finalised on the basis of comments received from the public and the World Bank.

The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), MoEF&CC accorded permission for movement and plying of inland vessels through the Turtle Wildlife Sanctuary, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh on 12th June 2017 as no dredging is proposed in the wildlife sanctuary areas such as Vikramashila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, Bhagalpur and Kashi Turtle Sanctuary, Varanasi.

IWAI commissioned a consultancy in December, 2017 to carry out a special study on the effect of navigational activities on the Gangetic Dolphin. The scope of the study on 'Effect of Navigational Activities on Dolphin in the NW-1' was finalized in a brain-storming session held on 14th October, 2016 at IWAI, Noida with the subject experts from Patna University, Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University, Wildlife Institute of India, National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and also in consultation with the World Bank.

Under the JMVP, a Consultant has been engaged by the IWAI for identification of Risk Assessment (RA) and preparation of Disaster Management Plan (DMP) for National Waterway-1. The objective of consultancy service is to assess the risk associated with ongoing and proposed cargo and passenger movement and other navigational activities including maintaining fairway through NW-1 and identifying abatement measures towards developing a proposal for integration of IWT related disasters into existing District Disaster Management Plan (DDMP).

Clearances/approvals received and Public Consultations under Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP):

Clearances and approvals received

- Wildlife clearance for the movement of vessels through Kashi Turtle Wildlife Sanctuary, Varanasi: The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), MoEF&CC recommended for movement and plying of inland vessels through the Turtle Wildlife Sanctuary, District Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh vide letter dated 12th June, 2017 of UP State Board for Wildlife.
- CRZ Clearance for the Multimodal Terminal at Haldia: The MoEF&CC granted the CRZ clearance for Multimodal Terminal at Haldia on 6th November 2017.
- Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan approved by Indian Coast Guard, Haldia on 22nd December 2016.
- National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) examined and supported the proposal for construction of New Navigational Lock at Farakka on 28.02.2016
- The ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CIFRI), Barrackpore had carried out a special study on the 'Impact assessment of coal transportation through barges along the National Waterway-1 (Sagar to Farakka) along river Ganga. The study revealed no significant changes in water quality parameters.
- In addition, a Project Oversight Committee (POC) is constituted to provide critical guidance and evaluation of the project. Representatives of the States, through which NW-1 passes, are included in this Committee to facilitate closer interaction, sharing and dissemination of views on issues that may concern the respective State Governments. The Committee comprises of senior representatives of IWAI, Central Water Commission and concerned State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The Committee is expected to meet once in three months at IWAI, Noida or in the capital or project sites of any of the four States.

Public consultations

Detailed Environmental Assessment (EA) has been undertaken for all the proposed components to identify the environmental issues associated with the Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP). The Environmental Impact Assessment was carried out in line with the World Bank Operational Policies, IFC Guidelines and MoEF&CC Guidelines.

The environmental assessments were carried out in substantial consultation with stakeholders, to ensure that the environmental assessment and other compliance requirements are in alignment with the policies and procedures as specified by the Government of India and the World Bank Group safeguard policies.

Stakeholder's view and perception was assessed through informal and formal public consultation meetings. The different stakeholder's viz. government officials, NGOs, village panchayats (village administration), people (male, female) were contacted and consulted during the course of the study. Stakeholders were informed about the project components and likely environmental impacts before seeking their views. In each consultation, all efforts were made to have adequate participation from women as well. Consultations have been carried

out for the project in two stages. First stage consultation was undertaken during impact assessment process to identify the concerns of people, which were duly addressed through appropriate mitigation measures. Second stage consultation was undertaken after preparation of EIA report to assess the adequacy and acceptability of the proposed mitigation measures and management plan.

Period of Public Consultation

Haldia Terminal:	September, 2015
Farakka Lock:	June, 2015
Sahibganj Terminal:	July-November, 2015
Varanasi Terminal:	October-November, 2015
Buxar Area:	February, 2016
Patna:	February, 2016

The draft ESIA reports (the CIA, the Consolidated EA containing the EMPs for maintenance dredging and barge operations; the stand-alone EMPs for Farakka Lock, Sahibganj, Varanasi and Haldia Terminals; and the Executive Summary, and Consolidated Social Impact Assessment cum Resettlement Action Plan) were disclosed on the IWAI website in May, 2016.

Based on the comments from stakeholders, the EIA reports were revised in September, 2016. These revised versions of the ESIA reports are uploaded on IWAI website in December, 2016.

An executive summary of consolidated EA report is available for public scrutiny in local language (Hindi and Bengali) versions at IWAI website. EIA report for entire Jal Marg Vikas Project and its executive summary is also disclosed at IWAI website and as per provisions of World Bank disclosure policies.

Any new investments in future that require use of a safeguard instrument such as an EIA reports will also follow the World Bank operational policies for public consultation and for disclosure.

Public consultations ensured involvement of public, NGO, experts in the project's pre-planning stage itself and addresses of their concerns and expectations from the project. The community members, government officials and NGO members opined that the proposed project would contribute to social and economic development of the region. The proposed project would contribute to increased employment opportunities for the local people during and after project implementation. The communities welcomed the project and all were in favour of the project. However, some of the fishermen and land holders have raised some concerns about the fishing activities/yield and the compensation to be given. Major issues highlighted during consultations were adequate compensation against the land, loss of livelihood, provision of alternate employment, river water pollution, fish yield and disruption of fishing activities. Each of the issues raised by stakeholders was analysed for practical and scientific basis, and for developing an appropriate mitigation, management and monitoring plan, depending on its importance and practicality.
