

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1303
ANSWERED ON 09.02.2024

WATER BASED TRANSPORT SYSTEM

1303. SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI:

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

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps for development of inland waterways for cargo shipments etc.;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken for promotion of water based transport system?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) Yes. For development of Inland Water Transport (IWT) in the country, 111 waterways (including 5 existing NWs and 106 new) spread over 24 States have been declared as National Waterways (NWs) under the National Waterways Act, 2016. Action plan has been formulated for development of 26 viable NWs based upon the outcome of study reports completed for the waterways and development for shipping & navigation has been taken up on 20 NWs in various States as detailed at **Annex.-1**.

(c) The steps taken by the Government for promotion of cargo movement through National Waterways are at **Annex.2**.

Annex.-1

LIST OF 26 NATIONAL WATERWAYS (NWs) PROJECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Sl. No	NW	Details of Waterways	Length (Km)	STATES	Status
1	NW 1	Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System (Haldia - Allahabad)	1620	Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand & West Bengal	Development taken up with Assistance from World Bank Jal Marg Vikas Project
2	NW 2	Brahmaputra River (Dhubri - Sadiya)	891	Assam	Development taken up as per approved SFC for FY 2020-21 to 2024-25
3	NW 16	Barak River (Lakhipur -Tuker Gram)	121	Assam	
4	NW 3	West Coast Canal (Kottapuram - Kollam), Champakara and Udyogmandal Canals	205	Kerala	Mostly Operational Waterways and development and maintenance work taken up under Phase-I DIB approval.
5	NW 4	Krishna River (Vijayawada – Muktyala)	82	Andhra Pradesh	
6	NW 5	Dhamra-Paradip via Mangalagadi to Pankopal	233	Odisha	
7	NW 8	Alappuzha- Changanassery Canal	29	Kerala	
8	NW 9	Alappuzha - Kottayam – Athirampuzha Canal	40	Kerala (Alternate route: 11.5km)	
9	NW 27	Cumberjua River (Cortalim-Ferry to Sao MartiasVidhanParisad)	17	Goa	
10	NW 68	Mandovi River (Usgoan bridge to Arabian Sea)	41	Goa	
11	NW 111	Zuari River (Sanvorden bridge to Marmugao Port)	50	Goa	
12	NW 86	Rupnarayan River (PratapPur to Geonkhali)	72	West Bengal	
13	NW 97	Sunderbans Waterway (Namkhana to AtharaBanki Khal)	172	West Bengal	
14	NW 40	Ghagra River (Faizabad to ManjhiGhat)	345	Bihar & U.P.	
15	NW 52	Kali River (Kodasalli Dam to Sadashivgad Bridge, Arabian Sea)	53	Karnataka	
16	NW 44	Ichamati River (Bridge at Gobra to Bansjhari near Bangladesh Border)	63	West Bengal	
17	NW 57	Kopili River (BanthaiGaonTinali Bus Stop to	50	Assam	

		Chandrapur No.2 confluence with Brahmaputra)			
18	NW 31	Dhansiri River (Morongi T.E. village Bridge to Numaligarh)	110	Assam	
19	NW 10	Amba River (Arabian Sea, Dharamtaar Creek to Nagothane ST Stand)	45	Maharashtra	
20	NW 28	Dabhol Creek Vasisti River (Arabian Sea at Dabhol to Bridge at Pedhe)	45	Maharashtra	
21	NW 25	Chapora River (Bridge near Maneri village to Morjim, Arabian Sea)	25	Goa	Operational Waterways for development by 2030.
22	NW 37	Gandak River (Bhaisalotal Barrage to Hazipur)	296	Bihar & U.P.	
23	NW 73	Narmada River (Pandhariya to Gulf of Khambhat)	226	Maharashtra & Gujarat	
24	NW 85	Revadanda Creek - Kundalika River System (Arabian Sea at Revadanda to Bridge near Roha Nagar)	31	Maharashtra	
25	NW 94	Sone River (Sone Barrage, Dehri to Confluence with the Ganga)	141	Bihar	
26	NW 100	Tapi River (Hatnur Dam to Gulf of Khambhat)	436	Maharashtra & Gujarat	

STEPS TAKEN FOR PROMOTION OF WATER BASED TRANSPORT SYSTEM

1. Initiatives for growth of traffic on National Waterways

i. Fairway Development Works:

Fairway development works to ensure Least Available Depth (LAD) of 3.0 meter in Haldia-Barh, 2.5 meter in Barh-Ghazipur and 2.2 meter in Ghazipur-Varanasi stretches on NW-1 under the Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) have been undertaken by IWAI with the technical and financial assistance from World Bank. Similarly, to improve the connectivity between NW-1 and NW-2/NW-16 via the Indo Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) Route, the critical and shallow stretches between Sirajganj and Daikhowa on IBP Route No. 1 & 2 and Ashuganj and Zakiganj on IBP Route No. 3 & 4 in Bangladesh, development works have been taken up jointly by India and Bangladesh for round the year navigability (with targeted LAD of 2.5 mtrs). Similarly, fairway development works are carried out on NW-97 in Sunderbans to allow smooth navigation of vessels on the IBP Route.

ii. Development of New National Waterways:

IWAI has identified 25 new NWs through techno-economic feasibility studies for undertaking technical interventions to make the waterways navigable for transportation purpose.

iii. Ro-Ro/Ro-Pax Service Commenced in Various National Waterways:

The Operation of Ro-Ro /Ro-Pax vessels inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister during February 2021 for the following routes:

Vessel Name	Ro-Ro/Ro-Pax Services between	Date of Inauguration by Hon'ble Prime Minister
MV Rani Gaidinliu & MV SachinDeve Barman	Neamati and Kamalabari (Majuli)	18.02.2021
MV JFR Jacob	Guwahati and North Guwahati	18.02.2021
MV Bob Khathing	Dhubri and Fakirganj (U/S Hatsingimar)	18.02.2021
MV AdiShankara & MV	Wellington Island and Bolghaty	14.02.2021

C.V. Raman		
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iv. Revision of Levy & Collection of Fees:

Taking ahead the vision of the Government of India to promote Inland Waterways as a supplementary mode of transport, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has allowed the waiver of waterway user charges initially for a period of three years.

2. Digital solutions for ease-of-doing business:

- **CAR-D (Cargo Data) Portal:** CAR-D is a web based portal for collection & compilation, analysis and dissemination of all cargo and cruise movement data of National Waterways to the stakeholders.

- **PANI (Portal for Asset & Navigation Information):** PANI is an integrated solution bringing river navigation and infrastructure information on a single platform.

It provides detailed information of various features of National Waterways and the assets such as fairway, infrastructure facilities, cross-river structures, connectivity at jetties, emergency services for facilitating transportation of cargo.

These solutions increase collaboration across divergent stakeholders, improve organizational consistency, increased resource agility, enhances ownership and accountability for each stakeholder leading to improved management of activities. By having public access to key work being done by IWAI for the sector, will enhance IWAI's standing in the market and will increase trust in the sector.

3. Enhanced regional trade using IWT mode:

a. Addition of new Ports of Call and routes in India and Bangladesh under PIWT&T: With 7 new ports of call in addition to existing 6 on each side along with addition/ extension of 2 waterway routes in addition to existing 8 routes under PIWT&T between India and Bangladesh, the accessibility of IWT mode for trade between India and Bangladesh is expected to increase and result in growth of traffic on NWs.

b. Trade between Bhutan and Bangladesh: Stone exporters from Bhutan have identified Inland waterways as an alternate mode of transportation considering the benefits associated with waterways mode such as lower transportation cost, larger shipment size compared to road, avoiding congestion on land routes etc. The first movement under supervision of IWAI was successfully executed in July 2019. This trade using the IWT mode is expected to continue and reach a significant scale in the coming years.

4. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for facilitating the Stakeholders to use Inland Water Transport and access the various information related to National Waterways:

The list of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for various National Waterways which are available at IWAI website is as given below:

- i. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the Agreement on the use of Chattogram and Mongla Ports for movement of goods to and from India between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Government of Republic of India.
- ii. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of MoU on Passenger and Cruise Services on the Coastal and Protocol Route between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Government of Republic of India.
- iii. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the MoU on use of Inland Waterways for Transportation of Bilateral Trade and Transit cargoes between the Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Government of Republic of India.
- iv. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Movement of Vessels on Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWT&T) to contain the spread of COVID19.
- v. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Check List for Ro-Ro / Ro-Pax vessel operations on National Waterways.
- vi. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Car-D Portal.

5. Stakeholder consultations:

IWAI carried out stakeholder consultations at six different locations (Kolkata, Kochi, Mumbai, Patna, Goa and Dhaka) in FY-20, 9 nos. during FY-21 and 06 nos. conference-cum-webinars in FY22 for cargo promotion.

- PM GatiShakti Multimodal Waterway Connectivity Summit held in Varanasi from 11th - 12th November 2022 attended by Hon'ble Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (PSW), Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce, Hon'ble Ministers- PSW. This summit focussed on creating more awareness about the PM GatiShakti and 07 community jetties were inaugurated, and foundation stones laid for 08 community jetties on the Ganga.
- Flagging off of world's longest river cruise and waterways development projects inaugurated and foundation stone laid virtually by Hon'ble Prime Minister in the presence of Hon'ble Minister PSW, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh on 13th January 2023 at Varanasi. The Ganga Vilas river cruise successfully completed 3200

km voyage at Dibrugarh on the Brahmaputra via Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route on 28.02.2023.

- Hon'ble Union Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways held a stakeholders meeting with Indo-Bangladesh-Bhutan IWT Operators at IWAI Dhubri Terminal in the presence of the Chairman & Member (Tech), IWAI on 12.6.2023 for promotion of Inland Water Transport (IWT).
- To accelerate the holistic development of Inland Waterway Transport in the country leading to enhanced cargo, passenger movement and river cruise tourism with active association of States, an Inland Waterways Development Council (IWDC) has been set up under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush with representatives from the State Governments/ Union Territories for the comprehensive development of National Waterways, other inland waterways and the associated ecosystem. The first meeting of IWDC was held at Kolkata on 8th January 2024.

Interventions under the World Bank supported JMVP-II (Arth Ganga) have been taken up at a cost of Rs. 746 Crore on an approach based on the principles on the sustainable development model to energize economic activities which will impact on overall over all ecosystems along the riverbank, leading to socio-economic upliftment of the population living on banks of NW-1.

This can lead to inclusive growth and play a key role in improving the livelihoods of the populations with the transportation of goods and passengers (including tourist) through National Waterway-1.
