

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS  
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1810  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2021

ROUTE OF NATIONAL WATERWAY-1

1810. SHRI BRIJENDRA SINGH:

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

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री

- (a) whether the route of National Waterway-1 passes through the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary; and
- (b) if so, the details of the measures being taken by the Government to ensure that the riverine dolphins' habitat is not disturbed by this Waterway?

ANSWER

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

(a) Yes, Sir. The Sultanganj-Kahalgaon stretch of NW-1 passes through Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (VGDS).

(b) Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is developing the Haldia-Varanasi stretch of National Waterway-1 through the Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP), with the technical assistance and investment support of the World Bank.

In order to ensure safe navigational activities and to ensure Environmental and Social Safeguard, IWAI carried out a comprehensive Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) study on NW-1 including the stretch falling within VGDS. The Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) reports include the impact assessment with reference to the Gangetic Dolphins and Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, Bhagalpur also. The report recommended mitigation/ safeguard measures (at Annexure) for safe navigational activities in NW-1 including VGDS and other aquatic animals protected areas.

## Annexure

### Mitigation/ safeguard measures for safe navigational activities in NW-1 including dolphins and other aquatic animals protected areas.

- Vessel speed would be restricted to 2.7 knots in Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (VGDS) area to reduce the noise generation from propeller. Restricting speed of vessels in sanctuary area can maintain noise levels lower than tolerance levels of dolphins, thus minimizing impact of noise on dolphins.
- Vessels would be fitted with propeller guards and dolphin deflectors to minimize dolphin accidents.
- Usage of non-toxic and non TBT containing anti-fouling paints for painting vessel.
- Barge/vessel movement would be restricted to the designated route only to minimize disturbance of aquatic life.
- If any aquatic mammal/dolphin is spotted, then the measures will be taken to push it away through sirens/signals.
- All waste from vessels shall be discharged at designated terminals/vessel repair facility only.

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