

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4341
ANSWERED ON 20.12.2024

CARGO MOVEMENT THROUGH NATIONAL WATERWAYS

4341. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:

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

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री

- (a) the steps taken by the Government to increase cargo movement through the National Waterways, and the infrastructure and policy measures that have been implemented to facilitate this growth;
- (b) the year-wise details of cargo movement through the National Waterways and other waterways in India from 2013-14 till date, including the volume of cargo transported and the key regions involved;
- (c) the manner in which increase in shipping costs is affecting the export sector with the rising cost of containers and logistics, particularly in terms of competitiveness in global markets; and
- (d) whether there has been any impact on export volumes due to the rising cost of container transport and if so, the steps taken by the Government to mitigate these challenges and ensure the sustainability of exports through waterways?

ANSWER

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

- (a) The steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to increase cargo movement through the National Waterways (NWs) indicating the infrastructure and policy measures that have been implemented to facilitate this growth are at **Annexure-1**.
- (b) The details of cargo movement through the National Waterways and other waterways in India including the volume of cargo transported and the key regions involved from 2013-14 till October-2024, year-wise is attached as **Annexure-2**.
- (c) & (d) The detailed reply is placed at **Annexure-3**.

Steps taken by the Government to increase cargo movement through the National Waterways indicating the infrastructure and policy measures:

(a) Infrastructure measures:

(i) Fairway maintenance works (river training, maintenance dredging, channel marking and regular hydrographic surveys) are taken up in various 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) 49 community jetties, 20 floating terminals, 3 Multi-Modal Terminals (MMTs) and 1 Inter-Modal Terminal (IMT) have been constructed on NW-1 (River Ganga).

(iii) 12 floating terminals provided on NW-2 (River Brahmaputra) along with one MMT at Pandu and permanent terminals at Jogighopa, Bogibeel and Dhubri. Four dedicated tourist jetties have been provided at Jogighopa, Pandu, Biswanath Ghat and Neamati. In addition to this, jetties for cruise and passengers have also been constructed for Sadiya, Lyka and Orium Ghat 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) 3 floating concrete jetties were provided to Government of Goa in 2020 and 1 in September-2022 and installed in Mandovi River (NW-68). 4 tourist jetties on NW-4 (River Krishna) in Andhra Pradesh have been commissioned. 12 floating jetties on NW-110 (River Yamuna) and 2 jetties on NW-73 (River Narmada) have been provided. A tender has been awarded for construction of 2 Jetties on NW-37 (River Gandak) in Bihar.

(b) Policy Measures:

- A scheme for providing 35% incentive to promote the utilization of inland waterways transport sector by cargo owners and for establishing scheduled service for cargo movement on NW-1 and NW-2 and NW-16 via Indo Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) has been launched by the Government. This scheme is expected to divert 800 million tonne Km cargo on Inland Water Transport (IWT) mode, which is nearly 17% of the current cargo of 4700 million tonne Km on NWs. The scheme also aims to start a scheduled waterway cargo service between Kolkata and Varanasi/Pandu using Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) vessels through Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) for demonstration effect and to increase trust of cargo movers/owners in the waterway movement.

- Shift of cargo by Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs): For modal shift of cargo to waterways, more than 140 PSUs have been approached to plan their movement using IWT 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 Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), Co-operation/ Fertiliser, Food & Public distribution, Heavy industries, Steel and Coal have been requested to advise the PSUs under their jurisdiction to utilize IWT mode as far as possible and earmark certain percentage of their cargo for IWT mode keeping in line the Maritime India Vision (MIV) targets.

- **Integration with Ports:** World over, waterways are most optimally utilised if they are linked to ports. Kolkata port offers an opportunity of seamless integration with NW-1 and can also help in resolving the problem of multi-modality. Therefore, Syama Prasad Mookherjee Port, Kolkata has been requested for operation and management of MMTs at Varanasi, Sahibganj, Haldia and IMT at Kalughat along with other terminals on NW-1.

- **Cargo Aggregation:** 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 (ICLP), Sahibganj have been taken up. National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML), a PSU under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has been engaged for development of these Multi-Modal Logistics Parks (MMLPs). The work of Rail connectivity for 3 MMTs has been assigned to M/s Indian Port and Rail Company Ltd. (IPRCL), a PSU under Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW).

- **River Cruise Tourism:** To promote river cruise tourism, numbers of meetings with cruise operators have been organised. Based on their feedback, steps like provision of shore power at IWA terminals, extra berthing arrangements, etc. have been made. New cruise circuits have been identified for operationalization. A total of 34 Waterways have been identified for cruise movement and 10 have already been operationalised.

- **IBP Route:** Indo Bangladesh Protocol route no. 5 & 6 between Maia and Sultanganj has been operationalized recently with successful trial movements.

National Waterways Cargo Data 2013-14 to 2024-25 Oct (in Million Tons)													
National Waterway (NW)	State / UT	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 till October-2024
NW-1 {Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System (Haldia-Allahabad)}	Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal	3.35	5.05	6.48	4.89	5.48	6.79	9.11	9.21	10.93	13.17	12.82	8.59
NW-2 {Brahmaputra River (Dhubri-Sadiya)}	Assam	2.48	0.51	0.60	0.61	0.56	0.49	0.39	0.31	0.43	0.63	0.59	0.51
NW-3 (West Coast Canal)	Kerala	1.07	0.96	1.06	1.03	0.42	0.42	0.55	0.73	1.70	3.23	3.29	1.90
NW-4 (Krishna Godavari River Systems)	Andhra Pradesh						0.45	0.08	6.83	11.23	8.42	4.30	4.70
NW-5 (East Coast Canal And Matai River/ Brahmani-Kharsua-Dhamra Rivers/ Mahanadi Delta Rivers)	Odisha							-		0.02	0.40	0.64	0.15
NW-8 (Alappuzha-Changanassery Canal)	Kerala										0.03	0.04	0.02

NW-9 (Alappuzha-Kottayam Athirampuzha Canal)	Kerala										0.02	0.02	0.01
NW-14 (Baitarni River)	Odisha										-	0.00	-
NW-16 (Barak River)	Assam						0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.10	
NW-23 (Budha Balanga)	Odisha										0.03	0.02	0.01
NW-31 (Dhansiri/ Chathe)	Assam											0.01	0.00
NW-44 (Ichamati River)	West Bengal						0.90	0.28	0.82	0.46	0.48	0.26	
NW-48 (Jawai- Luni-Rann of Kutch River)	Gujarat												1.32
NW-53 (Kalyan-Thane-Mumbai Waterway, Vasai Creek and Ulhas River)	Maharashtra												1.58
NW-64 (Mahanadi River)	Odisha						-	-	0.02	0.45	0.67	0.16	
NW-86 (Rupnarayan River)	West Bengal						-	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.10	0.08	
NW-94 (Sone River)	Bihar						0.80	-	-	-	1.16	0.71	
NW-97 (Sunderbans)	West Bengal					3.22	3.46	3.86	6.10	5.47	5.19	3.45	

Waterway)	Bengal												
Maharashtra Waterways													
NW-10 (Amba River)	Maharashtra	-					22.24	22.01	17.69	20.23	28.54	30.17	16.98
NW-83 (Rajpuri Creek)	Maharashtra	-					0.85	0.67	0.21	0.23	0.24	0.45	0.18
NW-85 (Revadanda Creek-Kundalika River System)	Maharashtra	-					1.72	1.59	1.08	0.70	0.50	0.99	0.33
NW-91 (Shastri River - Jaigad Creek System)	Maharashtra	-					3.53	0.12	9.24	22.45	33.87	37.05	19.39
Goa Waterways													
NW-68 (Mandovi River)	Goa	-					1.65	1.58	4.00	2.62	2.54	2.42	1.23
NW-111 (Zuari River)	Goa	-					2.10	1.36	4.47	1.96	0.39	1.10	0.68
Gujarat Waterways													
NW-73 (Narmada River)	Gujarat	-					0.04	0.10	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.04
NW-100 (Tapi River)	Gujarat	-					28.78	30.92	25.63	29.32	27.62	31.46	19.17
Grand Total Million Tonnes		18.07	29.16	41.53	55.47	55.03	72.30	73.64	83.61	108.79	126.15	133.03	81.56
IBP		1.89	2.00	2.28	2.58	3.09	3.22	3.46	3.60	5.43	5.20	4.68	2.60

Annexure referred to in reply to Part (c) and (d) of the Answer to the question

- (c) Shipping costs, including freight and container charges, are highly market-driven and are very volatile. These costs are influenced by factors such as market driven volatility and emergent situations as follows:
- Supply and Demand: Shipping costs fluctuate based on the balance between the supply of shipping capacity and the demand for shipping services.
 - Vessel Availability: The availability of vessels can be affected by various factors, including, port congestion and geopolitical events.
 - Fuel Prices: Changes in fuel prices directly impact shipping costs. Higher fuel prices lead to increased operational costs for shipping companies, which are often passed on to exporters.
 - Significant Impact: During Russia-Ukraine war or the COVID-19 pandemic, shipping costs has seen significant spikes due to sudden disruptions in global trade routes, port operations and supply chains.

The increase in shipping costs, particularly the rising cost of containers and logistics, directly affects the competitiveness of exporters in global markets. Higher logistics costs mean higher prices for goods, which can make them less attractive to international buyers.

- (d) To mitigate the challenges posed by the increased freight costs and container shortages and to ensure the sustainability of exports, the Government has implemented the following measures:
1. Enhancing Port Infrastructure: The expansion of port capacities has been significant across all 12 Major Ports in India from 2014-15 to 2023-24. The overall cargo handling capacity of these major ports has increased from 800.52 Million Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA) in FY 2013-14 to 1630 MTPA in FY 2023-24, showcasing Government's commitment for enhancing maritime infrastructure.
 2. Enhancing Local Shipping Companies: Efforts are being made by Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) aiming to increase container shipping capability of the country by leasing in container ships with plans of acquiring some vessels as well.
 3. Promoting Ownership of Containers by Indian Entities: Encouraging Indian entities to own and operate containers, which is seen as a long-term solution to container shortages.
 4. Tracking and Tracing Mechanisms: The development of tracking systems like the Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) and Logistics Data Bank (LDB) aims to improve the turnaround time of export containers.

5. Cargo Promotion Scheme: The government launched the 'Jalvahak' scheme to boost cargo movement via inland waterways on 15.12.2024. This scheme aims to offer reimbursement on operating costs for cargo owners and aims to play a key role in unlocking the trade potential of inland waterways.
6. Facilitating exports to neighbouring countries via Waterways: The IBP Route has been a significant facilitator for exports to Bangladesh. The recent inauguration of the Maia-Sultanganj River route in February-2024 is expected to further boost trade by providing a direct and efficient waterway connection between the countries.
