

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4619
ANSWERED ON 28.03.2025

REJUVENATION OF INLAND WATERWAYS

4619. SHRI RAVINDRA DATTARAM WAIKAR:
DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE:
SHRI RAJESH VERMA:
SMT. SHAMBHAVI:
SHRI NARESH GANPAT MHASKE:

Will the Minister of PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS be pleased to state:
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has invested over Rs. 6,000 crores for the rejuvenation of inland waterways since 2014 and if so, the details of the projects funded under this initiative;
- (b) whether the number of National Waterways has increased from 5 to 111 under the current administration and if so, the manner in which this expansion has impacted cargo movement and passenger connectivity;
- (c) whether the Government has set targets for cargo movement via inland waterways, specifically aiming for 200 million MT by 2030 and 500 million MT by 2047 and if so, the strategies that are being implemented to achieve these goals;
- (d) whether infrastructure projects in the country including Maharashtra are expected to enhance trade and connectivity and if so, the details of the progress made on these projects; and
- (e) whether the revitalization of inland waterways is anticipated to contribute to eco-tourism and sustainable transportation in India?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Yes. An amount of Rs. 6434 cr. has been invested by the Government from 2014-15 to 2023-24 for development of National Waterways (NWs) in the country. The details of the projects funded are given at **Annexure-1**.
- (b) Yes. For development of Inland Water Transport (IWT) in the country, 111 National Waterways were declared vide National Waterways Act, 2016. The cargo movement on National Waterways has increased from 18 million ton per annum (MTPA) in 2013-14 to 133 MTPA in 2023-24 and passenger movement has reached to 1.61 Crores in 2023-24.

(c) Yes. The strategies to achieve the goals of 200 million MT by 2030 and 500 million MT by 2047 in terms of Policy Measures are detailed at **Annexure-2**.

(d) Yes. The inland water transport infrastructure development projects on National Waterways across India including Maharashtra aims to enhance trade and connectivity. The details of infrastructure facilities developed are at **Annexure-3**.

(e) Yes. The inland water transport is economical, safe and environment friendly mode of transportation. Revitalization of inland waterways is anticipated to contribute to eco-tourism through River Cruises/House Boats and sustainable transportation.

Annexure-1

Sl.	Name of Project
A	Ongoing sanctioned NWs projects -
1	Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP-I & II) from Varanasi-Haldia stretch on NW-1 (Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System) in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand & West Bengal
2	Comprehensive Development of NW-2 (River brahmaputra from B'desh Border –Dhubri to Sadiya) in Assam
3	Comprehensive Development of NW-16 (River Barak from Lakhipur to Toker Gram) in Assam and Indian Portion of IndoBangladesh Route in Assam
B.	NWs projects sanctioned since 3 years
4	Development of Approach Road from Pandu Port Terminal to NH27 on NW-2
5	Development of Ship Repair Facility at Pandu, Guwahati(Assam) on NW-2
6	Development of 23 NW's (Phase1) (** 3 existing & 13 new NW's) -- Development of 20 NWs (NW-3, 4, 5 & 17 new NWs) in the States of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Goa, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra & Assam
(i)	NW-3-West Coast Canal (Kottapuram - Kollam), Champakara and Udyogmandal Canals in Kerala
(ii)	Part of NW-4- Krishna River (Vijayawada – Muktyala) in Andhra Pradesh
(iii)	NW-5- Dhamra-Paradip via Mangalagadi to Pankopal of river Brahmani in Odisha
(iv)	NW-8- Alappuzha-Changanassery Canal in Kerala
(v)	NW-9- Alappuzha-Athirampuzha Canal in Kerala
(vi)	NW-27-Cumberjua River in Goa
(vii)	NW-68- Mandovi River in Goa
(viii)	NW-111- Zuari River in Goa
(ix)	NW-86- River Rupnarayan in West Bengal
(x)	NW-97- Sundarbans Waterways in West Bengal
(xi)	NW-40- Ghaghra River in U.P. & Bihar
(xii)	NW-44- Ichamati River in West Bengal
(xiii)	NW-10- Amba River in Maharashtra
(xiv)	NW-28-Dabhol Creek Vashisthi River in Maharashtra

(xv)	NW-57- Kopili River in Assam
(xvi)	NW-31- Dhansiri River in Assam
(xvii)	NW-73- pontoons in River narmada in Gujarat
(xviii)	NW-73 (the Narmada) & NW-100 (the Tapi) – EIA/EMP Study in Gujarat NWs
(xix)	NW-110 (the Yamuna)- pontoons in Mathura
(xx)	NW-37 (the Gandak)- pontoons in Battiah in Bihar

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 has been approved by the Government. This scheme is expected to divert 800 million tonne Km cargo on IWT mode, which is nearly 17% of the current cargo of 4700 million tonne Km on NWs. The scheme is at a cost of less than 100 Crore for three years and can be scaled up or modified depending on the success of the scheme. The scheme also aims to start a scheduled waterway cargo service between Kolkata and Varanasi/Pandu using IWAI vessels through Shipping Corporation of India for demonstration effect and to increase trust of cargo movers/owners in the waterway movement.
- An extension of the tonnage tax scheme to inland vessels registered under the Indian Vessels Act, 2021 is announced during the budget presented on 01.02.2025. Inland vessels operating on National Waterways, rivers, and canals, will be benefited. This move is expected to boost the industry's competitiveness and encourage more cargo owners to use inland waterways for transportation. A tonnage tax system is a special taxation policy for shipping companies where tax is not based on actual profits but on the size (tonnage) of the vessel. It provides stable, predictable, and lower taxation for vessel owners, reducing their financial burden.
- The National Waterways (Construction of Jetties/Terminals) Regulations 2025 has been notified, allowing private companies to invest and operate Inland Waterways infrastructure by providing a clear regulatory framework to attract private sector investment for facilitating the growth of inland waterways sector.
- 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 NW1 and can also help in resolving the problem of multi-modality. Therefore, Multi Modal Terminals at Varanasi, Sahibganj, Haldia and Intermodal terminal at Kalughat along with other terminals on NW-1 are being transferred to Shyama Prasad Mookherjee Port, Kolkata for operation and management.
- Digitalisation: To increase ease of doing business in the IWT sector, along the same lines as 'vahan' and 'sarathi', a central data base and portal is being developed for registration of vessels and crew all over the country. This will facilitate registration of vessels and crew digitally and would also provide accurate status on number of vessels and crew in the country and thus help in planning.
- 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, Sahibganj have been taken up. NHLML, a PSU under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has been engaged for development of these MMLPs. The work of Rail connectivity for three MMTs has been assigned to M/s Indian Port and Rail Company Ltd. (A PSU under MoPSW).

- IBP Route: Indo Bangladesh Protocol route no. 5 & 6 between Maia and Sultanganj has been operationalized recently with successful trial movements. Regular movement shall commence shortly, once the consent of Bangladesh Side is received.
- Shift of cargo by PSUs: For modal shift of cargo to waterways, more than 140 Public Sector Units have been approached to plan their movement using Inland Water Transport 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 PNG, Co-operation/ Fertiliser, Food & Public distribution, Heavy industries, Steel and Coal have been requested to advise the PSUs under their jurisdiction to utilise IWT mode as far as possible and earmark certain percentage of their cargo for IWT mode keeping in line the MIV targets.

Infrastructure measures:

(i) Fairway maintenance works (river training, maintenance dredging, channel marking and regular hydrographic surveys) are taken up in various National Waterways (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) in addition to 5 pre-existing permanent terminals.

(iii) 12 floating terminals provided on NW-2 (River Brahmaputra) along with MMTs at Pandu, Jogighopa and terminals at Bogibeel and Dhubri are also used for berthing of river cargo/ cruise vessels. Four dedicated Jetties have been provided at Jogighopa, Pandu, Biswanath Ghat and Neamati with an investment of Rs. 7.09 crores. In addition to this, Jetties for cruise and passengers have been constructed at 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) 03 floating concrete jetties were provided to Govt. of Goa in 2020 and 01 during September 2022 and installed in Mandovi River (NW-68). 4 Tourist Jetties on part of NW-4 (River Krishna) in Andhra Pradesh have been commissioned and 12 Nos. floating jetties on NW-110 (River Yamuna) in Mathura-Vrindavan stretch in Uttar Pradesh, 2 Jetties on NW-73 (River Narmada) & 2 Jetties on NW-37 (River Gandak) in Bihar are under execution.
