

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTIONNO. 782
ANSWERED ON 07.02.2025

CARGO MOVEMENT IN INLAND WATERWAYS

782. SMT. VIJAYLAKSHMI DEVI:
SHRI RAVINDRA SHUKLA ALIAS RAVI KISHAN:
SMT. SHOBHANABEN MAHENDRASINH BARAIYA:
SHRI DILIP SAIKIA:

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

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री

- (a) the salient features and objectives of the 'Jalvahak' scheme along with the total budgetary allocation therefor;
- (b) the regions/areas and sectors included thereunder along with the expected economic benefits of boosting inland waterways cargo movement;
- (c) the manner in which the introduction of 'Jalvahak' scheme will improve the efficiency and sustainability of cargo transportation in inland waterways across the country; and
- (d) whether the western region of the country including Gujarat will benefit economically from the scheme, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) The Inland Water Transport (IWT) sector is in nascent stage and requires support to promote modal shift of cargo, in addition to creation of physical infrastructure. While the cost of transporting cargo on the waterways itself is less compared to other modes of transport, the multi modal nature of the transport makes the total logistics cost higher than other modes of transport. Even in the developed part of world e.g. Europe, programs like Marcopolo were launched to provide financial support for modal shift of cargo to waterways. Accordingly, while Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) works on providing hard infrastructure on National waterways, it is essential to provide financial support to waterways.

The "Jalvahak" Scheme has been launched on 15.12.2024 with the objective to provide impetus to modal shift of cargo to IWT by incentivizing such shift and demonstrate the reliability as well as readiness of the IWT sector. The Scheme, at a cost of Rs. 95.42 crores, has following two components:

Component-1: Provide financial incentive directly to the cargo owners for sustainable modal shift of cargo from rail/ road to IWT mode. Such financial incentive is to the extent of 35% of the total actual operating expenditure incurred on waterways journey. The modal shift to waterways aims to act as a driver for promoting the utilization of IWT mode by the cargo owners.

Component-2: Scheduled Services: Under Jalvahak Scheme, scheduled services have been introduced, which are crucial for improving the reliability and predictability of cargo transportation on India's inland waterways. These scheduled services ensure that vessels operate on a consistent timetable, allowing businesses to plan their logistics more efficiently. This predictability helps in reducing delays and ensures timely delivery of goods, fostering confidence among stakeholders in the reliability of waterway transport. The routes identified for scheduled services are Kolkata - Patna - Varanasi stretch of NW-1, Kolkata-Pandu on NW-2 via Indo Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) Route and Kolkata-Badarpur/Karimganj on NW-16 via IBP Route.

This scheme is applicable for cargo movement on NW-1, NW-2 and NW-16 via Indo Bangladesh Protocol route thus benefits the areas adjoining these national waterways.
