

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 977
ANSWERED ON 24.07.2026

INLAND WATERWAY PROJECTS

977. DR. ALOK KUMAR SUMAN:

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

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has implemented inland waterway projects during the last three years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the status of projects on National Waterway-1 passing through Bihar;
- (c) whether the Government has taken measures to promote inland cargo movement and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has proposed additional river terminals for development in Bihar and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of steps taken by the Government to modernize inland water transport infrastructure in the country?

ANSWER

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

(a), (b) and (d) Yes. The details of inland waterway projects implemented during the last three years along with its status on National Waterway (NW) -I, including the projects in Bihar are given at **Annexure-I**.

(c) Infrastructure and Policy measures taken by the Government to promote inland cargo movement on NWs are detailed at **Annexure-II**.

(e) The Government has embarked upon a transformational drive to promote inland waterways as a key pillar of India's multimodal transport system under, Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047. The Inland Water Transport (IWT) development in India encompass creation of World-class waterway infrastructure through fairway development, development of multimodal terminals, community jetties, river cruise terminals, establishment of Regional Centres of Excellence, promoting digital navigation and adoption of Green vessel technologies, coupled with seamless integration under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan.

To improve Ease of Doing Business, digital initiatives including Portal for Asset and navigation Information (PANI), Jalyan & Navic portal, Cargo data portal (CAR-D), Jal Samriddhi portal, digital hydrographic surveys charts etc. have been introduced by Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways to simplify approvals, enhance navigational safety and enable real-time information services to stakeholders.

The development of waterway infrastructure, digital and policy reforms have resulted in the operationalization of 32 NWs in the country and laying the foundation for a modern, technology-driven, sustainable and globally competitive IWT ecosystem that reduces logistics costs, promotes green mobility and accelerates inclusive economic growth.

Annexure-I**IWT Projects Completed/ Undertaken during last 3 years:****1. Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) on NW-1:**

Sl. No.	Project	Status
1	Development of Multi-Modal Terminal at Varanasi, Sahibganj & Haldia	Completed and Operational
2	Development of new Navigational Lock at Farakka	Completed and Operational
3	Development of Intermodal Terminal, Kalughat	Completed and Operational
4	Development of Intermodal Terminal Balagarh	Under Implementation
5	Modernization of existing Navigational Lock at Farakka	Under Implementation
6	Installation of 66 Community Jetties in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal	Completed and Operational
7	Development of Ship Repair & Maintenance Facility at Patna and Varanasi	Under implementation
8	Proposed River Cruise Terminals at Patna and Varanasi	DPR/Planning stage
9	Proposed Water Metro at Varanasi, Patna and Kolkata on NW-1	DPR/Planning stage
10	Quick Pontoon Opening Mechanisms (QPOMs) in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar	2-commissioned and additional 8 under development.
11	End to end Fairway development along NW-1 in stretches Tribeni-Katwa, Katwa – Farakka, Farakka–Kahalgaon, Sultanganj–Mahenderpur–Barh, Barh–Digha, Digha – Majhaua, Majhaua – Ghazipur, Ghazipur – Varanasi, and Kalughat Access Channel etc.	Ongoing
12	Development of Regional Centre of Excellence, Varanasi	DPR being prepared
13	Development of Ro-Pax facility at 4 locations , in the state of Bihar & West Bengal	Commissioned
14	Procurement of Pusher Tug (3 Nos) + Dumb Barge Flotilla (6 Nos)	Completed
15	Design construction and supply of 10 Cutter Suction Dredgers (CSDs)	1 delivered; 9 under development
16	4 Hybrid Survey Vessels	Under development
17	Development of MMLP-Freight Village, Varanasi	Under Tendering stage

2. Projects on NW-2 (Brahmaputra River) and NW-16 (Barak River) in NER:**(i) COMPLETED PROJECTS OF NER:**

Sl. no.	Projects
1.	Development of IWT Terminal at MMLP Jogighopa
2.	Construction of Cargo-cum-Tourist Terminal at Bogibeel
3.	Construction of Floating Tourist Jetties at Bogibeel and Pandu
4.	Construction of Customs and Immigration Buildings at Dhubri and Bogibeel.
5.	Construction of Boundary Wall at Jogighopa Terminal.
6.	Renovation of Heritage Building at Dibrugarh.
7.	Construction of Approach Road to Pandu Jetty from NH-27 in Assam.
8.	Operation and Maintenance of Other Works including Terminals and Fairway Maintenance (2014–2026).

(ii) ONGOING PROJECTS OF NER:

1. **Fairway Development in NER through DCI for NW-2 (Bangladesh Border to Pandu)** – Being undertaken at a cost of Rs. 143 crore through the Dredging Corporation of India to maintain assured navigational depth and improve safe vessel movement on NW-
2. **Ship Repair Facility at Pandu** – Being developed at a revised cost of Rs. 283 crore to provide dry-docking and repair infrastructure for inland vessels and strengthen IWT operations in the Northeast Region.
3. **Construction of Tourist Jetty at Bishwanath Ghat & Cargo-cum-Cruise Terminal at Neamati Ghat**– Being developed at a cost of Rs. 158 crore to strengthen cruise tourism and passenger movement on NW-2.
4. **Development of RCoE at Dibrugarh** – Being developed at a cost of Rs. 188 crore to provide training, skill development, and research infrastructure for the inland waterways sector.
5. **Construction of Steel Gangway with Yoke System at Pandu** – Being developed at a cost of Rs. 2.88 crore to improve passenger and cargo accessibility and enhance vessel berthing operations at Pandu Terminal.
6. **Construction of Building for Regional Office, MSDC, Guest House and Office Space for ITAT at Fancy Bazar** – Being developed at a cost of Rs. 50.00 crore to strengthen administrative and skill development infrastructure for inland waterways operations.
7. **Link Road Connecting Pandu Terminal with Ship Repair Facility** – Being developed at a cost of Rs. 55 crore to provide seamless connectivity for movement of heavy machinery, vessels, and logistics equipment.

8. **Construction of 02 Nos. Steel Pontoons for Brahmaputra River (NW-2)** – Being developed at a cost of Rs. 3.40 crore to improve floating terminal infrastructure and berthing operations on NW-2.
9. **Construction of 02 Nos. SDB Vessels for Brahmaputra River (NW-2)** – Being constructed at a cost of Rs. 2.88 crore to strengthen inland passenger transportation and river connectivity on NW-2.
10. **Mathematical Modelling of Bogibeel Approach Channel** – Being undertaken at a cost of Rs. 0.60 crore to improve fairway planning, navigational safety, and terminal sustainability at Bogibeel.
11. **DPR for Construction of Community Jetties** – Being prepared at a cost of Rs. 5.56 crore to improve rural river connectivity and support safe passenger movement in remote riverine areas of Assam.

3. Projects of Other NWs in the Country:

(i) Kerala NWs:

- Continued development of fairway channel on NW-3, NW-8 & NW-9 in the state of Kerala.
- IWAJ entrusted the works of re-construction of new Navigation lock at Thrikunnapuzha and single lane bridge at Kovilthottam in NW-3, to Government of Kerala on deposit basis.
- NW-8 & NW-9 are connected to NW-3 at Alappuzha & both the NWs are operational (partly) for tourism & passenger movements. Provided 24 Hours navigational aids - 15 nos in NW-8 & 25 nos in NW-9 respectively for safe movement of tourism & passenger traffic round the clock. 4 nos. HDPE Jetties being installed at feasible locations in NW-3.

(ii) Andhra Pradesh & Telangana NWs:

- Land acquisition completed at Muktyala and Harichandrapuram. Land acquisition under progress at Ibrahimpatnam through the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh in NW-4.
- Ro-Ro terminal development is undertaken at Muktyala, Harischandrapuram along with its associated infrastructure.
- 4 nos. steel floating Pontoon Jetty handed over to Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development corporation (APTDC) under State Support Agreement (SSA) for promotion of tourism activities.
- 03 steel floating pontoon jetties under fabrication for installation in Krishna River (NW-4) portion of Telangana State.

(iii) Odisha NWs:

- Regular longitudinal thalweg survey being undertaken in Odisha NWs.
- 10 navigational buoys were installed in Mahanadi River (NW-64) for safe movement of the cargo vessel.

- Developing of Talcher- Dhamra- Paradip Port stretches of NW-5 towards evacuation of the coal movement from Talcher in Odisha.
- 3 concrete jetties being installed in NW-14 & NW-64 for promotion of tourism activities.

(iv) Karnataka NWs:

- Development of Kabini River (NW-51) and Sharavati River (NW-90) for river cruise tourism.
- 03 concrete Jetties being installed in Kabini River and Sharavati River for promotion of tourism activities.

(v) Goa NWs:

- Development of Mandovi River, Zuari River and Cumberjua River for river cruise tourism in Goa.
- 10 concrete jetties being installed on Mandovi River, Zuari River and Cumberjua River for promotion of tourism activities.

(vi) UT of J&K NWs:

- Action initiated for undertaking developmental works such as on-shore facilities, floating concrete Jetties and navigational aids in Jhelum River (NW-49), Chenab River (NW-26) and Ravi River (NW-84).

(vii) Himachal Pradesh & Punjab NWs:

- Feasibility study in Beas River (NW-17) and Sutlej River (NW-98) is being undertaken.

(viii) Gujarat NWs:

- Developmental activities undertaken in Narmada River (NW-73) and Tapi River (NW-100) for river cruise tourism.
- 02 floating concrete jetties installed in Narmada River (NW-73) & 02 floating concrete jetties being installed in Tapi River (NW-100) for promotion of tourism activities.

(ix) West Bengal NWs:

- Developmental activities undertaken in Ichamati River (NW-44) and Sundarban Waterways (NW-97).
- Single lane bridge at Swaroopnagar which was obstruction for safe navigation across Ichamati River (NW-44) completed in March, 2026 and was inaugurated by the Hon'ble PM.
- Sundarban Waterways from Silvertree point to Atharabanki (201 Km) comprises of an international IWT route, which provided International connectivity with Bangladesh and North Eastern states of India forms part of Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route 1,2 and 3,4 under Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) between India and Bangladesh.

4. Hydrographic Survey Projects in National Waterways:

(i) Hydrographic Survey in NWs:

At present, regular weekly/ fortnightly/ monthly thalweg surveys are being carried out in 22 National Waterways, namely NW-1, NW-2, NW-3, NW-4, NW-5, NW-8, NW-9, NW-14, NW-16, NW-23, NW-31, NW-40, NW-44, NW-47, NW-57, NW-64, NW-73, NW-86, NW-94, NW-97, NW-100, NW-110, and the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route.

This expansion reflects a significant enhancement in the hydrographic monitoring network to ensure regular assessment of navigational channels, maintenance of fairway conditions and improved safety and reliability of inland water transport operations.

(ii). River Information Service System

IWAI implemented the River Information Service (RIS) system on NW-1 (Ganga River) in three phases during the period from 2015 to 2020, covering the stretches of Phase-I: Haldia–Farakka, Phase-II: Farakka–Patna and Phase-III: Patna–Varanasi.

The RIS system comprises 4 Control Stations and 13 Base Stations equipped with advanced communication and monitoring infrastructure including Automatic Identification System (AIS), VHF communication systems, servers, monopole towers, meteorological sensors and other associated equipment. The system facilitates real-time tracking and monitoring of vessels plying on the waterway enabling enhanced navigational safety, efficient traffic management and improved operational efficiency of inland water transport.

Further, 30 departmental vessels have been equipped with RIS consoles to provide necessary navigational assistance to vessel masters during their operations on NW-1.

(iii). Electronic Navigational Charts (ENC)

IWAI has prepared ENCs for operational and tidal NWs for providing detailed information to the Mariners for navigation of vessels plying in the NW-1, NW-3, NW-5, NW-8, NW-9, NW-10, NW-14, NW-23, NW-27, NW-53, NW-64, NW-68, NW-73, NW-83, NW-86, NW-91, NW-110 and NW-111 and are uploaded on IWAI Vessel Tracker & PANI. Prior to 2014, ENCs were available only for NW-1.

Measures taken by the Government to promote inland cargo movement on NW

1. Infrastructure measures:

(i) 66 community jetties, 20 floating terminals, 3 Multi-Modal Terminals (MMT), 1 Inter-Modal Terminal (IMT) and 4 Ro-Pax terminals have been constructed on NW-1 in addition to 5 pre-existing permanent terminals.

(ii) 13 floating terminals provided on NW-2 along with MMTs at Pandu, Jogighopa and terminals at Bogibeel and Dhubri. Four dedicated Jetties for cruise vessels have been provided at Jogighopa, Pandu, Biswanath Ghat and Neamati. In addition to this, Jetties for cruise and passengers have been constructed at Sadiya, Lyka and Orium Ghat in Assam.

(iii) 2 existing terminals at Badarpur & Karimganj on NW-16 have been upgraded/renovated and 1 terminal at Sonamura on Gumati River in Tripura on IBP route has been constructed.

(iv) 9 Permanent IWT terminals with godowns and 2 Ro-Ro/Ro-Pax terminals have been constructed on NW-3 in Kerala.

(v) 4 floating concrete jetties have been provided to Govt. of Goa and installed on NW-68.

(vi) 4 Tourist Jetties on NW-4 in Andhra Pradesh have been commissioned and 8 Floating Jetties on NW-110 in Mathura-Vrindavan stretch in Uttar Pradesh, 2 Jetties on NW-73 and 2 Jetties on NW-37 in Bihar have been established.

(vii) A new Navigation Lock at Farakka has been constructed.

(viii) 2 Quick Pontoon Opening Mechanisms (QPOMs) have been constructed on NW-1 to facilitate smooth and faster movement of vessels.

(ix) Fairway maintenance works (river training, maintenance dredging, channel marking and regular hydrographic surveys) have been taken up in various National Waterways 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.

2. Policy Measures:

- **Jalvahak Scheme:** A scheme for providing 35% incentive to promote the utilization of inland waterways transport sector by cargo owners and for scheduled service for cargo movement on NW-1 and NW-2 and NW-16 via IBP route by Inland & Coastal Shipping Limited (ICSL) has been approved

by the Government. The scheme is implemented at a cost of INR 95.42 Crore for three years.

- **Tonnage tax:** An extension of the tonnage tax scheme to inland vessels registered under the Indian Vessels Act, 2021 was announced during the budget presented on 01.02.2025. Inland vessels operating on NWs, 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.
- **Jalyan & Navic :** To increase ease of doing business in the IWT sector, along the same lines as 'vahan' and 'sarathi', a central data base and portal has been 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 – MMLP 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).
- **Shift of cargo by 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. Ministries 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.
