

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTIONNO. 870**  
ANSWERED ON 29.11.2024

**REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR UTILIZATION OF WATERWAYS**

870.SHRI KONDA VISHWESHWAR REDDY:

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

**पत्तन,पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री**

- (a) the details of the regulatory framework governing the utilization of waterways for both commercial and recreational boating activities across the country;
- (b) the roles and responsibilities of various agencies and authorities in overseeing and regulating waterways, including the management of boat traffic, waterway infrastructure and compliance with environmental standards;
- (c) the licensing and approval process for operators wishing to conduct boating or water transport services, with emphasis on the criteria, duration, and renewal processes associated with such licenses;
- (d) the details of the safety and operational standards for these activities, including safety protocols, training requirements for operators and guidelines for emergency preparedness that aim to protect passengers, operators and the environment; and
- (e) the details of manufacturing and technical standards for boats manufacturing, covering the required certifications, quality checks and durability assessments that boat manufactures must meet to ensure safety and sustainable operations?

**ANSWER**

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

(a)The regulatory framework governing the utilization of waterways and inland vessels related activities across the country are the Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985 (IWAI Act, 1985) and regulations framed therein; and the Inland Vessels Act, 2021 & rules framed thereunder.Further, the National Waterways Act, 2016 covers the declaration of 111 rivers and river stretches as National Waterways. The Inland Vessels Act, 2021 (IV Act, 2021) establishes a comprehensive regulatory framework that governs both commercial and recreational boating activities across India. It delineates standards for vessel classification, construction, safety, and environmental compliance. The IV Act, 2021, along with the Rules made thereunder, ensures uniform regulation through zoning of waterways, mandatory registration, and certification processes, promoting safe and sustainable use of Inland Waterways for diverse boating purposes.

(b) The roles and responsibilities of various authorities have been framed under IWAI Act, 1985 and regulations framed therein and IV Act, 2021 & rules framed thereunder for management of National Waterways and inland waters & vessel related issues respectively. Implementation authority under IV Act, 2021 is the respective State Government and under IWAI Act, 1985 is Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI). In addition, State Pollution Control and Port authorities are also responsible for pollution control and traffic management of vessels in respective States.

(c) The licensing and approval process for operators are covered under IV Act, 2021 along with Rules thereunder. For vessels, the licensing authority is the Designated Authority of the respective States as per IV Act, 2021 and rules framed thereunder. National Institute of Water Sports under Ministry of Tourism is authorised for training and certification of crew and operators for water sports.

(d) For inland vessels and crew, the standards have been laid down in IV Act, 2021 & rules framed thereunder. In addition, DG Shipping Guidelines/Instructions for Construction, Survey, Certification and Operation of Large Pleasure Crafts – 2020 are also applicable depending on the length of the vessel and area of operation. For water sports, boat safety and operational standards including safety protocols, training requirements for operators, National Institute of Water Sports under Ministry of Tourism conducts the training of crew and operators and issues the license.

(e) The details of provisions for manufacturing and technical standards for boat manufacturing, covering the required certifications, quality checks, and durability assessments that boat manufactures must meet to ensure safety and sustainable operations, are stipulated in IV Act, 2021 & rules framed thereunder.

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