

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2199
ANSWERED ON 12.12.2025

CARGO MOVEMENT ON NATIONAL WATERWAYS

2199. SMT. SHAMBHAVI:
SHRI RAJESH VERMA:
SHRI ATUL GARG:
DR. LATA WANKHEDE:

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

- (a) the current status of the development of National Waterway 1 (Ganga) and National Waterway 2 (Brahmaputra) for shipping and navigation;
- (b) the total cargo movement (in MMT) on all National Waterways during the last three years along with its percentage of India's total freight, year-wise;
- (c) the number of multimodal terminals and jetties that are operational and under construction on the said waterways;
- (d) the steps being taken to ensure navigational depth (fairway) throughout the year, including dredging operations; and
- (e) the challenges faced in promoting inland water transport, such as lack of private sector participation, higher costs and competition from road/rail?

ANSWER

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

- (a) National Waterway-1 (NW-1) and NW-2 are operational with required depth and width for movement of inland vessels. On NW-1, 3 multimodal terminals (MMTs) at Haldia, Sahibganj and Varanasi, 1 Intermodal terminal (IMT) at Kalughat, 1 Navigational Lock at Farakka and 53 community jetties have been developed under Jal Marg Vikas Project by Inland Waterways Authority of India (WAI), an autonomous organisation under Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways. On NW-2, 2 Multimodal terminals at Panduand Jogighopa,

2 permanent terminals at Dhubri and Bogibeel and 13 floating terminals have been developed.

(b) Details of the total cargo movement on all NWs is given below. The Inland Water Transport's (IWT) share is approximately 2% of the total cargo.

Year	Cargo movement (in MMT)
2022-23	126.15
2023-24	133.03
2024- 25	145.84

(c) On NW-1, 3 MMTs have been constructed at Haldia, Sahibganj and Varanasi and are operational. Construction of one intermodal terminal at Kalughat has been completed. In addition, 53 community jetties developed on NW-1 are operational and construction of 7 jetties is progressing. On NW-2, 2 MMTs at Pandu and Jogighopa, 2 permanent terminals at Dhubri and Bogibeel and 13 floating jetties are operational.

(d) To maintain fairway from Haldia to Varanasi stretch of NW-1 with 2.2/3 m Least Available Depth (LAD) and 45 m bottom width, the contracts to provide fairway on 10 stretches of NW-1 have been awarded. On NW-2, the LAD from Bangladesh Border to Pandu (Guwahati) is maintained through assured depth Contract and Pandu to Sadiya is maintained through 7 departmental dredgers and other conventional river training works such as Bandalling.

(e) Challenges faced in promoting IWT are given below:

- (i) Discharge in Rivers
 - Highly Seasonal with significant variations between monsoon and dry seasons. – upto 10 m vertical variation
 - 16 NWs have their origin in Himalayas; Rest are either rain fed or tidal.
 - Upstream Dams / Barrages & Irrigation Projects without Navigational Locks.
- (ii) Non- Availability of Cargo on the return leg along Waterway – Low industrialization along Waterways
- (iii) Higher total cost due to first & last mile connectivity
- (iv) Low private sector participation specially in vessels & terminal operations.
