

MONTHLY UPDATES ON NATIONAL INLAND WATERWAYS OF INDIA

UPDATE-4

DEVELOPMENTS IN DECEMBER 2018

- [Over 50 river experts and activists write to MoEFCC to make environmental clearance mandatory for National Inland Waterways](#)
- [Inland Waterways Authority of India \(IWAI\) sets up four floating terminals for Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj; IWAI initiates techno-economic feasibility assessment of navigation on NW-110 connecting Delhi to Prayagraj](#)
- [After Kolkata - Varanasi, movement of container cargo commences on Kolkata-Patna along the river Ganga on National Waterway-1](#)
- [Ministry of Shipping approves Rs 152 Crore Freight Village in Varanasi near Ramnagar multi-modal terminal](#)
- [IWAI surveys Tripura's Gomati river which is to be connected with Meghna river at Dawodkandi to enhance Indo-Bangladesh Waterways Connectivity](#)
- [Status of Development on National Waterway-4 from Vijayawada to Muktyala stretch of Krishna river; dredging and setting up of floating terminals to be done by 2019; ro-ro services already under operation for transportation of construction material on river Krishna](#)

1. **Over 50 river experts write to MoEFCC for making environmental clearance mandatory for National Inland Waterways**

Over 50 experts and concerned citizens have written an open letter on 1 Jan 2019 to Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forests & Climate Change(MoEFCC), Government of India urging

him, and the Ministry to make Environmental Clearance process mandatory and legally binding for Inland Waterways. This is in context of the order of the National Green Tribunal in O.A. 487 of 2015, directing MoEFCC to submit its opinion by 31st Jan 2019 on whether Environmental Clearance in respect to Inland Waterways is required or not.

Full letter can be read [here](#).

| | Date and Remarks | Orders of the Tribunal |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>Item No. 15</p> <p>November 01, 2018</p> | <p>In this original application, the primary issue raised is as to whether Environmental Clearance in respect to Inland Waterways is required under Law or not. There is no dispute about the fact that the project of Inland Waterways is, as on date, not included in the EIA Notification, 2006. There is no doubt about the fact that such projects are first of its kind and may increase in the coming days.</p> <p>Therefore, we consider it appropriate to direct Ministry of Environment and Forest to look into the issue in consultation with the Experts in the field, as to whether any Environmental Clearance is required or not and whether Environmental Impact Assessment is to be done in projects relating to Inland Waterways. They may do this exercise within a period of three weeks.</p> <p>The Ministry of Environment would submit their final opinion to the Tribunal by 31st January, 2019. Accordingly, this Original Application No. 487 of 2015 is</p> |

(NGT order dated 01.11.2018, O.A. 487 of 2015)

Also see <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/activists-demand-mandatory-environmental-clearance-for-inland-waterway-projects/story-wbqo4gAvP2NrB2TBcuaDWJ.html>;

<https://thewire.in/environment/centre-urged-to-make-prior-environment-clearance-mandatory-for-waterway-projects>

RTI information received by Manthan Adhyayan Kendra revealed how recommendations of Expert

Appraisal Committee for mandatory environmental clearance and amendment in the EIA notification 2006 to appraise National Waterways as 'Category A' project were overruled by the Ministry of Shipping. Refer [Update 2](#) for more on this.

2. Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) sets up four floating terminals for Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj; IWAI initiates assessment of techno-economic feasibility of navigation on NW-110 connecting Delhi to Prayagraj



Media briefing at Sangam with Prayagraj journalists onboard IWAI vessel CL Kasturba
(Source: [IWAI](#))

IWAI has deployed two vessels and four floating terminals - Kilaghat, Sarasvati Ghat, Naini Bridge, and Sujawan Ghat for Kumbh-Mela to be held at Sangam, Prayagraj (Allahabad) for safe passenger movement.

Fairway with 1.0m least available depth will be maintained between Prayagraj and Varanasi. Five temporary jetties at Chatnag, Sirsa, Sitamarhi, Vindhyachal and Chunar have also been set up for

embarkment and dis-embarkment of passengers. (PIB, Ministry of Shipping, 15.12.2018)

Further, the work of preparation of DPR to assess techno-economic feasibility of navigation on NW-110 on river Yamuna connecting Delhi to Allahabad has also been initiated (PIB, Ministry of Shipping, 14.12.2018).

Earlier, a Detailed Project Report (DPR) and technical specifications for introduction of a Water Taxi Project in Delhi from Wazirabad to FatehpurJat (16 km) stretch of river Yamuna (National Waterway – 110) have been finalized and tenders were floated for implementation of the following three components, including fairway development and reclamation of land. The clearance of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has been requested for construction work in the flood plains upstream of Wazirabad. New tenders have also been floated for the water taxi project on NW-110 from Sonia Vihar to Tronica City in Delhi. (PIB, 01.12.2016)

3. After Kolkata - Varanasi, movement of Container Cargo commences from Kolkata-Patna along river Ganga on National Waterway-1



Pontoon Bridge at Gaighat Terminal at Patna, Bihar for National Waterway-1 on Ganga (Source:

Manthan Adhyayan Kendra, Field Visit for Waterways of Bihar)

On 14th December 2018, 16 TEUs of container cargo (equivalent to 16 truckloads) of PepsiCo India and Emami Agrotech reached Patna's Gaighat terminal on river Ganga (NW-1) from Kolkata (PIB, MOS, 15.12.2018) . Kolkata-Patna is India's new IWT origin-destination pair for containerised cargo movement on the National Waterway-1. Earlier, on November 12, 2018, the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had received the country's first IWT containerised cargo that reached Varanasi from Kolkata .

4. Ministry of Shipping approves Rs 152 crore Freight Village in Varanasi near Ramnagar Multi-modal terminal

“The Ministry of Shipping has approved the development of a Rs 156 crore freight village in Varanasi adjoining the Inland Waterways Terminal on River Ganga. The Varanasi freight village will be developed by the Inland Waterways Authority of India. ..A freight village is a designated area where facilities for various modes of transportation, distribution of goods and other logistics are available in a synchronized manner on a large scale. The main function of freight villages is management and utilization of various modes of transport, synergizing them and decongesting the existing mode of transportation.” (PIB 06.12.2018)

The PIB release from Ministry of Shipping further added that a World Bank pre-feasibility study has found Varanasi to be a suitable site for the freight village. The city is located strategically and is a focal point in the logistics chain of Eastern Transport Corridor of India where the National Waterways-1, Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC), National Highway-7 and National Highway-2 pass through. The volume of traffic on inland waterway to Varanasi is expected to increase with the commissioning of the multi modal terminal being built under the Jal Marg Vikas project. The estimated volume of traffic for Varanasi multi modal terminal is 3.55 MMT by 2020; 3.82 MMT by 2025; 10.12 MMT by 2035; and 10.32 MMT by 2045.

[National Inland Waterways of India - A Strategic Status Report](#) (2017) refers to Varanasi as the ‘hub of waterways’ as four national waterways (NW-1 (Ganga), 12 (Asi), 42 (Gomti) and 108 (Varuna) pass from or near Varanasi.

5. IWAI surveys Tripura's Gomati river which is to be connected with Meghna river at

Dawodkandi to enhance Indo-Bangladesh Waterways Connectivity

A four-member team of IWAI visited Srimantapur Land Customs Station in Sonamura sub-division of Tripura to select the site for terminal building for Indo-Bangladesh Waterway Project. 10 acres of land was required by IWAI to set up the terminal at Srimantapur Land Customs Station in Sephajila district. However, the State Water Resource Department of Tripura said they can only arrange 2 acres of land (at best). Read more at <https://nenow.in/north-east-news/iwai-team-visits-tripura-indo-bangla-waterway-project.html>

Connectivity of Tripura's Gomati river with Bangladesh's Meghna river at Dawodkandi has been proposed to enhance the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route through waterways. Refer [Update-2](#) for recent agreements signed by India and Bangladesh for enhancing inland and coastal waterways connectivity.

6. Status of Development on National Waterway-4 from Vijayawada to Muktyala stretch of river Krishna

The Kakinada-Puducherry stretch of canals and the Kaluvelly tank, Bhadrachalam-Rajahmundry stretch of river Godavari and Wazirabad - Vijayawada stretch of river Krishna with a total length of 1,078 kms was declared as National Waterway-4 (NW-4) in 2008. The stretch was further extended upto Nashik in case of Godavari and upto Galagali in case of river Krishna, in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry under the National Waterways Act, 2016. The length of NW-4 is 2890 kms and it is planned to be developed in three phases:-

- Phase-I: - Vijayawada to Muktyala stretch of Krishna River.
- Phase-II: - Kakinada to Vijayawada and Rajahmundry to Polavaram
- Phase-III :- Remaining stretches of NW-4 after completion of Phase-I and Phase-II

According to the PIB (31.12.2018), development work of Phase-I at a cost of Rs. 96 crore has already started. Dredging for this phase is in progress and is scheduled to be completed by June 2019.

Establishment of four floating terminals (Durga-Ghat, Bhavani Island, Amravati, Vedadri) is to be completed by March 2019. Land Acquisition for construction of fixed terminals at Ibrahimpatnam, Harishchandrapuram, and Muktyala is in progress. Ro-Ro services between Ibrahimpatnam and Lingyapalam is already under operation for transportation of construction material on river Krishna.