

MONTHLY UPDATES ON NATIONAL INLAND WATERWAYS OF INDIA

UPDATE-9
May 2019

This update covers the following:

- [Locals protest against land acquisition for Varanasi multi-modal terminal on river Ganga](#)
- [Work apace on the National Waterways of Kerala; Operationalised Waterways remain underutilised](#)
- [Centre allocates funds for development of fairway and terminals on river Kosi, National Waterway-58](#)
- [Concern raised on the viability of dredging in Brahmaputra on National Waterway-2](#)

1. Locals protest against land acquisition for Varanasi Multi-Modal Terminal on river Ganga

Ramnagar multi-modal terminal is one of the most celebrated and controversial infrastructure of the National Waterway-1 on river Ganga. The first phase of this World Bank funded terminal was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi in November 2018. Various news reports recorded that the Ramnagar multi-modal terminal was built by circumventing laws to evade environmental clearance, while many celebrated the inauguration of this terminal as a watershed moment in India. (See [Update- 3](#))

“The pre-investment activities and land acquisition process have started for the expansion of this multi-modal terminal. The local population in the village Milkipur near Chandauli is protesting against the land acquisition. On 30th May 2019, SDM Chandauli visited the village for land acquisition but the locals are not ready to part with their ancestral land. They were also dissatisfied by the amount of compensation offered for their land by the state.” Read more at <https://m.dailyhunt.in/news/nepal/hindi/uttar+pradesh-epaper-uttar/bhumi+adhigrahan+ke+virodh+me+gramino+ne+kiya+pradarshan-newsid-117442171>

80 percent of the locals in this village, according to our sources, are engaged in fishing

activities. The local population is also concerned about the impact of the terminal on the fishing activities which sustain their livelihood.

Risks			
Systematic Operations Risk-rating Tool			
Risk Category	Rating at Approval	Previous Rating	Current Rating
Political and Governance	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Macroeconomic	Low	Low	Low
Sector Strategies and Policies	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Technical Design of Project or Program	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial
Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial
Fiduciary	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial
Environment and Social	High	High	High
Stakeholders	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial
Other	Low	Low	Low
Overall	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial

Risk related to environment and Social aspects of the National Waterway-1 is rated ‘high’ in this document to the World Bank (24. 05.2019). (Source: [Implementation Status and Results Report](#), Capacity Augmentation of the National Waterway-1)

Land acquisition is claimed to be minimal for inland water transport projects. However, National Waterway-1 (also known as Jal Marg Vikas Project) is a gigantic project, for which three multi-modal terminals (and many intermodal terminals and jetties) are being built at Varanasi, Sahibganj and Haldia for storage and handling of the cargo to be transported through river Ganga. The Consolidated Social Impact Assessment/Resettlement Action Plan made for this project has identified Project Affected families/affected population only for Sahibganj Multi-modal terminal.

2. Work space on the National Waterways of Kerala; Operationalised Waterways remain underutilised

“The less-visited backwater interiors of Kottayam will soon be opened for ferrying cargo and people with the Inland Water Authority of India (IWAI) set to commence work on restoring two major water routes that currently lie derelict. According to officials, the agency has conducted a feasibility study on the 28-km Alappuzha-Changanassery Canal and the 38-km Alappuzha-Kottayam-Athirampuzha Canal, which have been notified as National Waterway - 8 (NW-8) and the National Waterway - 9 (NW-9). The findings of the survey, carried out through a selected agency, have been shared with the government for its consideration.

“The primary objective of restoring these routes, he says, is to utilise the region’s backwater network as an economical means of transportation. Besides these two routes, the Union government has also notified the 28-km Kottayam-Vaikom Canal in the district as the National Waterway-59. Meanwhile, the 365-km National Waterway-3 that runs through the Kollam-Kozhikode stretch of West Coast Canal remains underutilised even 12 years after its inauguration.”

Read more at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/iwai-plans-to-restore-waterways->

[in-kottayam/article27256005.ece](https://www.in-kottayam/article27256005.ece)

3. Centre allocates funds for development of fairway and terminals on river Kosi, National Waterway-58

According to the news reports, Centre has allocated Rs 15 crores for the development of National Waterway-58 on river Kosi in Bihar. The funds allocated are to be used for the development of fairway and for Kursela and Dhamaraghat terminals on river Kosi.

<https://www.bhaskar.com/bihar/katihar/news/development-of-waterway-58-will-be-rs-1568-crores-080150-4602334.html>



Photograph of proposed site for Kursela terminal at the confluence of Ganga and Kosi rivers, National Waterway-58, captured during the field visit to the National Waterways in Bihar in May 2018. (Source: Manthan Adhyayan Kendra)

Kosi in Bihar is notorious for shifting channels, annual floods and heavy sediment load. The detailed project report of Kosi waterway (Transport Department, Government of Bihar) has indicated that the waterway is financially less viable on the basis of the commodities traffic. Solutions to the changing course and shifting channels of the river Kosi are not clearly presented in the detailed project report. During Manthan's field visit in Bihar, it was found that the river has already shifted away from the proposed terminal site at Kursela.

Read more at <https://www.manthan-india.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Kosi-and-Gandak-Report-min.pdf>

4. Concerns on dredging in Brahmaputra on National Waterway-2

“The Brahmaputra River has the second highest sediment yield per square kilometre in the world, exceeded only by that of the Yellow River in China. India’s central government and the state government of Assam have planned to dredge the Brahmaputra, with [an initial amount of Rs 4 billion](#) (\$57 million). One purpose of this dredging is to reduce flooding by allowing more water to stay in the river. The second is make the Brahmaputra navigable for large vessels – the river has been designated National Waterway 2 by the [Inland Waterways Authority of India](#). It is planned as a vital component of trans-boundary inland waterways transport between India and Bangladesh.

“Since suspended sediments form the majority of the load, will it be possible to maintain the dredged channel suitable for large vessels at the desired width and depth during the monsoon, when there is daily input of 2.12 million metric tonnes of sediments into the river?”

Read more at <https://thewire.in/environment/what-use-is-dredging-the-brahmaputra>



Dredger in Brahmaputra. (Source: Water Resources Department, Government of Assam)

Water Resources Department, Government of Assam has said that the Government is planning to form an expert committee to be sent to China. “To study the management strategies of the Yellow River, and whether they could be applied in the Brahmaputra for controlling flood and erosion, the Govt. is planning to form an expert committee to be sent to China. This study will be conducted in association with the World Bank, where road map will be prepared and will take into account all details related to river engineering,

basin characteristics, hydrology, channel morphology and floodplain evolution.” Read more at <https://waterresources.assam.gov.in/portlet-innerpage/dredging-of-river-brahmaputra>