1. **NGT case on applicability of Environment Clearance for the Ganga Waterway postponed again; Report by MoEF&CC & Jal Shakti not submitted**

National Green Tribunal has been deciding on the applicability of the EIA Notification 2006 for the Jal Marg Vikas Project – Capacity augmentation of the National Waterway -1 on Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River systems since 2015. The National Green Tribunal in its order dated 10th January 2020 for this case directed the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) to constitute an expert committee with ecological, aquatic ecosystem experts to look further into the matter and submit a report in three months. On 16th December 2020, after many postponed dates of hearing, the NGT again asked the MoEF&CC to submit the report. After many adjourned dates, on 2nd September 2021, the NGT notes that MoEF&CC has still not furnished the sought information. NGT was informed that the matter is now under the purview of the Ministry of Jal Shakti. Hence the NGT asked both Ministry of Jal Shakti and MoEF&CC to submit their reports. After three more adjournments with the latest dated 24th January 2022, no submission was made by MoEF&CC or Ministry of Jal Shakti in this matter till now (as mentioned in the Cause list of 24th January 2022), this case is now listed for hearing on till 2nd March 2022.

All this while the development of the Jal Marg Vikas Project continues with the project on track for completion by December 2023.
2. Speedy implementation of the Yamuna National Waterway in Draft Regional Plan 2041 for the National Capital Region; DPR prepared for IWAI found the waterway to be financially non-viable.

The draft Regional Plan 2041 for the NCR was published online inviting public comments and objections on 9th December 2021. The draft Regional Plan in the inland waterways proposals mentions speedy implementation of the National inland waterways project (NW-110) on the river Yamuna for transportation of cargo and passengers.

However, the conclusion of the Detailed Project Report prepared for the Inland Waterways Authority of India (2020) is that the NW-110 on river Yamuna is a financially non-viable project. With extremely high capital investment, the project would require major interventions such as dredging and construction of 20 barrages in an already severely polluted and almost dying river. Manthan submitted comments and suggestions in this regard to suggest that long-term planning should be the first step before any further interventions are planned, and that priority be on
revitalization of the river. We also recommended proper and intensive environment, social and economic assessments including the consultations with the communities most dependent on the riverine resources as the fulcrum of further planning.

Read Manthan’s submission [here](#).

### 3. Contracted awarded for Haldia Inland Waterway terminal while earlier inaugurated terminals at Sahibganj and Varanasi await private players.

“Union Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal today announced that the contract has been awarded for Haldia inland waterway terminal, and the jetty will be soon operational for sending exim and inland cargo to Pandu terminal in Guwahati connecting the northeast with kolkata via National waterway 2. This will provide an alternate to chicken neck route for easy and cost-effective movement of cargo to and from northeast to the foreign countries and other states of India.

“Shri Sonowal also informed that depth assurance contract has been awarded to maintain NW1 and 2, and the barge operators shall soon start using these waterways as depths are assured. The minister also said that there is thinking to provide guarantee to banks to give easy and soft funds for barges so that this sector can take off. The stakeholders assured that they will come forward to utilise this opportunity to make this mission a success. More than 40 key players participated in the stakeholders conference.”

Read more here:


While the contract is awarded for Haldia inland terminal, the earlier inaugurated terminals at Varanasi and Sahibganj are awaiting the process of tender for the third time. Earlier, the tenders were floated twice by the IWAI but contract was not awarded as there seemed to be a lack of interest in taking the contract to operate and maintain the Multimodal terminals.

It is the fly ash transportation from West Bengal to Bangladesh which has been contributing the most of traffic on the National Waterways. The movement of goods is already established from Haldia, before this terminal it used to take place from Haldia Jetty of the Haldia Port. This explains the speedy award of contract of this Multimodal terminal while the other two multimodal terminals located upstream on the Ganga Waterway haven’t really taken off in terms of cargo vessel handling.


### 4. Budget Speech 2022 mentions 100 cargo terminals with multimodal connectivity, Inland Waterways as one of the seven engines in PM Gati Shakti
Budget Speech by the Finance Minister for FY 2022-23 mentioned PM GatiShakti as a transformative approach for economic growth and sustainable development. Inland Waterways along with roads, railways, airports, ports, mass transport and logistic infrastructure were named as seven engines of the PM GatiShakti approach. It is announced by the Finance Minister that contracts for implementation of Multimodal Logistics Parks at four locations through PPP mode will be awarded in 2022-23 and One hundred PM GatiShakti Cargo Terminals for multimodal logistics facilities will be developed during the next three years.


Capital Outlay in Budget estimate (FY 2022-23) for Inland Water Transport is Rs. 544.51 crores.

(Source: [https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/doc/eb/dg78.pdf](https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/doc/eb/dg78.pdf))