



IWAI sets up new Regional Office at Varanasi

Aims to streamline IWT activities in Uttar Pradesh

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 24 JAN 2025 1:58PM by PIB Delhi

For effective implementation of Inland Water Transport (IWT) activities in National Waterway-1 (NW-1), River Ganga, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) under the Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has upgraded its existing sub-office at Varanasi to a full-fledged Regional Office on January 23, 2025. The decision is aimed at streamlining IWAI projects and related works in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

IWAI, presently has five regional offices in Guwahati (Assam), Patna (Bihar), Kochi (Kerala), Bhubaneswar (Odisha) and Kolkata (West Bengal). It will now have its sixth regional office in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

The Varanasi regional office with its sub-office at Prayagraj will oversee works in 487-kilometre stretch from Majhua to Varanasi MMT (Multi-Modal Terminal) and further up to Prayagraj, apart from other NWs in Uttar Pradesh.

Implementation of the World-Bank supported Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) will be one of its key priorities. JMVP is aimed at the capacity augmentation of River Ganga, i.e., NW-1 through various river conservancy works like bandalling and maintenance dredging in addition to already constructed MMT at Varanasi to promote cruise tourism and smooth cargo movement along the waterway. Three Multi-Modal Terminals – one each at Varanasi, Sahibganj and Haldia along with an Inter-Modal Terminal at Kalughat and a new navigational lock at Farakka in West Bengal have been built under JMVP to facilitate easy navigation along River Ganga. Besides, 60 community jetties are being built along NW-1 in four states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal – to facilitate local commuters, small and marginal farmers, artisans and fishermen communities. With its new Regional Office in place, all these activities will be monitored and executed more efficiently.

There are about 30 rivers in Uttar Pradesh, of which ten have been declared as National Waterways. The Varanasi Regional Office of IWAI shall look after development works not only on River Ganga but its various tributaries and other national waterways in Uttar Pradesh. These include rivers like Betwa, Chambal, Gomti, Tons, Varuna and parts of Gandak, Ghaghra, Karamnasa and Yamuna rivers.

IWAI's Varanasi Regional Office will also be coordinating with the State IWT Authority set up for development of waterways in Uttar Pradesh.

Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the able guidance of Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, IWAI has been making several infrastructural interventions to develop waterways as a robust engine of growth. With its concerted efforts, IWAI is expanding its footprint throughout the country – from Arunachal Pradesh in the East to Gujarat in the West and Jammu and Kashmir in the North to Kerala in the South. Other than NW-1, the Authority is presently working towards capacity augmentation of NW-2, NW-3 and NW-16, in the country – by means of developing IWT terminals, fairways through end-to-end dredging contracts, navigational aids like night navigation facility, navigational locks among others.

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