



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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National Waterways

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Why is in news? PM Narendra Modi expresses happiness on construction of National Waterways-68

The Prime Minister of India has expressed happiness on the **construction of National Waterways-68** that has reduced the distance **between Panjim to Vasco in Goa** by 9 Kilometer.

The journey can now be completed in just 20 minutes. Earlier, Panjim to Vasco distance was approx 32 kilometer and travel time was about 45 minutes, this connectivity between Panjim to Vasco in Goa will **provide relief to the people as well as promote tourism**.

National Waterways in India:

India has a vast network of inland waterways that include river bodies, canals, backwaters and creeks.

However, these inland waterways have been unutilised, as compared to other countries in the world.

India has about 14500 km of navigable waterways. This includes rivers, backwaters, canals, creeks, and so on.

The **National Waterways Act** proposed 106 additional national waterways to the five national waterways declared earlier.

The **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** is responsible for the timely execution of national waterways projects and to ensure improved water transportation in India.

Under the **National Waterways Act, 2016, 111 inland waterways** (including five national waterways in India declared earlier) have been **declared as 'national waterways'**.

Out of the 111 national waterways, 13 are active for shipping and navigation and are used by cargo or passenger vessels.

As of 2016 act, the **longest national waterway** is the **National Waterway 1 or the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system**, running from Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh to Haldia in West Bengal and covers a length of 1,620 kilometres.

The **Manimutharu River** in Tamil Nadu or the **National Waterway 69** is the **shortest national waterway** in India.

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI):

The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) came into existence on **27th October 1986** and responsible for **development and regulation of inland waterways for shipping and navigation**.

The Authority primarily undertakes projects for development and maintenance of IWT infrastructure on national waterways through grant received from Ministry of Shipping.

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The head office of the Authority is at Noida.

India has about **14,500 km of navigable waterways** which comprise of rivers, canals, backwaters, creeks, etc. About 55 million tonnes of cargo is being moved annually by **Inland Water Transport (IWT)**, a fuel - efficient and environment -friendly mode.

Its **operations are currently restricted to a few stretches** in the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly rivers, the Brahmaputra, the Barak river, the rivers in Goa, the backwaters in Kerala, inland waters in Mumbai and the deltaic regions of the Godavari - Krishna rivers.

Besides these organized operations by mechanized vessels, country boats of various capacities also operate in various rivers and canals and substantial quantum of cargo and passengers are transported in this unorganized sector as well.

