MARITIME CORNER

MARITIME NEWS

INDIA'S FIRST RIVERINE LIGHTHOUSES TO COME UP ON BRAHMAPUTRA (NW-2)

India took a pioneering step in inland waterway navigation as **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW),** laid foundation stones for four river lighthouses along the banks of the Brahmaputra River, marking the first time when lighthouse infrastructure will be established on an inland waterway in the country.

The four sites — Bogibeel in Dibrugarh district, Pandu in Kamrup (Metro) district, Silghat in Nagaon district, all along the south bank of the river, and Biswanath Ghat in Biswanath district, the only one in the north bank — are located at strategic points along Brahmaputra (National Waterway-2), one of India's most important inland cargo and passenger corridors. The combined project outlay for all four lighthouses stands at approximately ₹84 crore. Each lighthouse will rise to 20 metres with a geographical range of 14 nautical miles and a luminous range of 8–10 nautical miles, powered entirely by solar energy. Alongside navigation infrastructure, every site will feature a museum, amphitheatre, cafeteria, children's play area, souvenir shop and landscaped public spaces, positioning each lighthouse as a tourism landmark as well as a functional maritime asset.

The commissioning of river lighthouses on NW-2 is a direct response to a 53 percent surge in cargo movement on the Brahmaputra waterway in the financial year 2024-25, as recorded by IWAI. Cargo traffic on NW-2 has been growing consistently and the Brahmaputra corridor is now integral to supply chains serving Assam's tea, coal and fertiliser industries, in addition to carrying passenger and tourism traffic. The new lighthouses will enable 24×7 safe navigation, accommodate weather observation sensors and provide the navigational infrastructure necessary for the sustained growth of both freight and passenger movement on the river.

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RENOVATION OF HISTORIC BASCULE BRIDGE AT KOLKATA PORT APPROVED

The **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** has approved the renovation of the historic Bascule Bridge at **Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata**, at a cost of ₹117.54 crore to enhance safety and operational efficiency.

The project involves modernisation of the nearly six-decade-old double-leaf bascule bridge located at the Kolkata Dock System (KDS). Originally built by Wagner-Biro Bridge Systems AG, the bridge will undergo comprehensive structural strengthening along with electro-mechanical upgrades to improve reliability and operational safety.

The renovation project, estimated at ₹117.54 crore, will receive financial assistance of around ₹41 crore under the Sagarmala Programme, the Government of India's flagship initiative aimed at port-led development.

Once completed, the upgraded bridge is expected to facilitate safer, faster and more efficient movement of cargo and vehicles within the port premises, thereby strengthening logistics operations at one of India's oldest and busiest ports.

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GOVT. ENGAGES NATIONAL SHIPPING BOARD (NSB) TO ADDRESS SECTORAL CHALLENGES AMID GLOBAL MARITIME UNCERTAINTY

The government held a high-level interaction with the National Shipping Board (NSB) to address emerging challenges in India's shipping sector and review measures to strengthen maritime capacity amid evolving global geopolitical and trade dynamics.

The meeting reviewed progress under major national initiatives such as Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 and Maritime India Vision 2030, which seek to expand port infrastructure, boost shipping capacity and position India as a leading global maritime hub.

Emphasising the importance of dialogue with industry stakeholders, Government highlighted the role of the National Shipping Board as a critical advisory platform for addressing sectoral issues and shaping policy direction. The government's engagement with the board comes at a time when global maritime trade faces heightened geopolitical uncertainties and shifting supply chains, prompting India to reinforce its shipping capabilities and operational preparedness.

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V.O. CHIDAMBARANAR PORT BECOMES FIRST INDIAN MAJOR PORT TO IMPLEMENT DIGITAL TWIN

The V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority has achieved a major technological milestone by becoming the first port in India to launch the Digital Twin initiative for port management. The Port has marked a significant step toward smart, efficient, and technology-driven maritime management.

The Digital Twin platform will create a real-time virtual replica of the port's infrastructure, operational assets, and maritime ecosystem, enabling enhanced operational visibility, predictive analytics, and data-driven decision-making across the port. By integrating advanced technologies such as IoT sensors, GPS tracking, LiDAR

mapping, drone imaging, and CCTV networks, the platform will continuously mirror real-time conditions, enabling efficient coordination among all operational departments.

The Platform enables real-time operational monitoring, providing live visualisation of berth occupancy, vessel movements, crane utilisation, and yard capacity across the port. It supports predictive maintenance of cargo handling equipment through AI-based asset monitoring, helping to minimise equipment downtime and improve operational reliability. The system facilitates berth and traffic optimisation by enabling intelligent scheduling of vessels and cargo operations, thereby reducing congestion and waiting time. In addition, the platform will also provide energy and emissions tracking to support data-driven sustainability management and include scenario simulation capabilities that allow operators to conduct "what-if" modelling to prepare for peak demand situations and operational disruptions.

The platform is designed to support the Port's transformation into a smart and efficient maritime gateway by reducing vessel turnaround time by up to 25%, improving equipment availability and reliability, enhancing operational safety through predictive alerts, and optimising energy utilisation to lower carbon emissions. The project is being implemented in a phased and planned manner. The full-fledged Digital Twin initiative is expected to strengthen resilience against potential operational disruptions while enabling more efficient, sustainable, and data-driven port operations.

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INAUGURATION OF ELEVATED PORT CORRIDOR IN GUWAHATI AND LAUNCH OF MULTIPLE WATERWAYS PROJECTS WITH ₹526 CRORE INVESTMENT IN ASSAM

The elevated road corridor connecting Pandu Port Complex to NH-27, built with an investment of ₹180 crore, addresses the critical last-mile connectivity gap between one of NW-2's principal river terminals and the national highway network. Engineered to bypass Guwahati's urban congestion, the corridor ensures seamless two-access to Pandu Port, improving operational flexibility and port connectivity reducing logistic cost considerably.

The Cruise Terminal at Biswanath Ghat, for which the foundation stone was laid, is part of a coordinated effort to build modern cruise infrastructure along the Brahmaputra (NW-2). The terminal will enhance passenger amenities, support river cruise operations and generate fresh economic opportunities for local communities in tourism, hospitality and handicrafts.

The Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) at Bogibeel in Dibrugarh, is being developed with an investment of ₹188 crore. The first maritime skill development hub of its kind in Northeast India, the RCoE will train over 5,000 students annually in vessel operations, inland navigation and maritime logistics. It will also house research and development infrastructure for crew and trainee programmes, building the skilled manpower base that India's expanding inland waterways sector requires.

The Cruise Terminal at Neamati, will strengthen cruise tourism and organised passenger movement along

NW-2, improving infrastructure for tourists and communities along the Brahmaputra corridor. The two cruise terminal projects at Biswanath Ghat and Neamati carry a combined investment of ₹158 crore.

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GOVT APPROVES ₹472 CRORE ROAD OVER BRIDGE TO POWER TUNA-TEKRA PORT CONNECTIVITY

In a significant move to strengthen port connectivity and enhance cargo evacuation infrastructure, the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW**), has approved the construction of a Road Over Bridge (ROB) along with associated roads and allied facilities at Tuna-Tekra. The project is estimated at ₹472 crore.

The project includes comprehensive civil works such as viaduct structures, a bridge over a creek, and provisions for maintenance over a period of 10 years to ensure long-term operational efficiency and durability.

The ROB is strategically designed to serve as the primary connectivity artery for the upcoming Mega Container Terminal, with a capacity of 2.19 million TEUs, and the Multipurpose Cargo Berth, with a capacity of 18.33 MMTPA, at Tuna-Tekra.

Upon completion, the ROB is projected to significantly reduce logistics turnaround time, enhance supply chain efficiency and support the rapid scale-up of port operations in the region.

The execution of the project will be closely synchronised with the commissioning of the Tuna-Tekra Container Terminal, which is currently at 45% physical progress, ensuring timely readiness of supporting infrastructure.

This critical infrastructure is expected to play a pivotal role in ensuring seamless cargo evacuation, addressing potential rail-road bottlenecks, and facilitating the smooth movement of heavy-duty port traffic.

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UNDERSTANDING WATERWAYS

STRAIT

A strait is a passage that is navigable and has been formed naturally. It is like a tiny pass between two oceans or water bodies. These water channels are often bordered by land masses on both sides and act as natural connectors in global geography. Straits are generally the result of geological processes such as tectonic shifts, erosion, or rising sea levels.

BONNE-FAZIO STRAIT

The Bonne-Fazio Strait is another unique strait by its formation. It joins the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. The countries which fall in its line are Sardinia and Corsica. This strait is shorter than most others on the list. However, it is one of the major straits of the world due to its maritime importance. Many ships sail through this state, and international border are also present in this location.

DAVIS STRAIT

The Davis Strait falls between two countries such as Greenland and Canada. It joins the Atlantic Ocean and the Baffin Bay. This strait is yet another shallow strait with a depth less than the Labrador Sea in the south.

The Davis Strait is mostly known as an Arctic Strait, and the survey reports show that there might be some oil deposits in this area. There are a lot of concession areas in the Davis Strait.

FOVEAUX STRAIT

The Foveaux Strait joins the Stewart Islands and the South Island of New Zealand. The local name of this Strait is 'Te Ara a Kewa', which means it is a path for the whales to pass. The pioneer who charted this strait for the first time was Owen Folger Smith. There is the historical importance of this strait as it was used as a whaling station during the colonial period. This, however, dates back to the nineteenth century. As per the worldwide fame, the Foveaux Strait is known for the presence of the Bluff oyster in this area.

MALACCA STRAIT

The Malacca Strait is a connecting pass between the Andaman Sea and the South China Sea. It has a lot of maritime importance due to its location. It is one of the primary places from where many ships sailing to Indonesia and Malaysia pass. The Malacca Strait can always top the list as it is the largest strait in the world. The total length of the Malacca Strait is 800 km.

NORTH CHANNEL

North Channel is one of the major straits of the world, and it is a busy one as it is located between Ireland and England. It is the connecting area between the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea.

STRAIT OF HORMUZ

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the most beautiful straits of the world when it comes to its landform. The Hormuz Strait falls between two countries, Oman and Iran. The length of this strait is only 21 nautical miles. A unique fact to know about this strait is TSS. The Traffic Separation Scheme is followed by all the ships passing through this area. This is ensured as no collision between the ships occurs. Lately, the Iranian Government has allowed transit passage under the UNCLOS. This shortens the distance for the people of Oman to reach the mainland of Asia.

TAURUS STRAIT

The Taurus Strait is located between Papua New Guinea and Australia. It is another main strait in the southern hemisphere. As many ships pass through this strait, it also has a lot of geographic importance.

https://www.vedantu.com/general-knowledge/major-straits-of-the-world