



Ganga Vilas Cruise

Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister of India **flagged off the world's longest river cruise, MV Ganga Vilas in Varanasi.**

- During the event, the Prime Minister **also inaugurated Tent City in Varanasi and laid the foundation stones for several other [inland waterways projects](#).**

Ganga Vilas Cruise: What You Need to Know?



▪ About:

- The cruise will be **managed by private operators, the [Inland Waterways Authority of India \(IWAI\)](#), under the Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways (MoPSW) has supported the project.**
- It will **explore forty historic sites** on the banks of the river Ganga including, **[Mahabodhi temple](#)**, Hazarduari Palace, Katra Masjid, Bodh Gaya, Chandanagar church, Char Bangla Temple and more.
- Besides connecting **National Waterway 1 (NW-1) which includes [Ganga](#) and National Waterway 2 (NW-2) on Brahmaputra**, the cruise will cross 27 river systems.
 - The Ganga - Bhagirathi-Hooghly River system between Haldia (Sagar) and Allahabad (1620 km) **was declared as NW-1 in 1986.**
- The **51 days cruise is planned with visits to 50 tourist spots** including [World Heritage Sites](#), [National Parks](#), River Ghats, and major cities like Patna in Bihar, Sahibganj in Jharkhand, Kolkata in West Bengal, Dhaka in Bangladesh and Guwahati in Assam.

▪ Significance:

- The sector **would generate employment opportunities in the hinterland.**

- The project **will boost river cruise tourism** and bring about a new age of tourism for India. The cruise has been **curated to showcase the best of India to the world.**
- The journey will give **foreign tourists an opportunity to embark upon an experiential voyage** and indulge in the art, culture, history, and spirituality of India and Bangladesh.

What is the Inland Waterways Authority of India?

- It **came into existence on 27th October 1986** for the development and regulation of inland waterways for shipping and navigation.
- It primarily **undertakes projects for development and maintenance of IWT infrastructure on national waterways** through grants received from the Ministry of Shipping.
- It is **headquartered in Noida** with regional offices at Patna (Bihar), Kolkata (West Bengal), Guwahati (Assam) and Kochi (Kerala) and **sub-offices at other places throughout India.**

Source: IE

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