LADIS – Least Available Depth Information System

To ensure optimum use of National Waterways (NWs), the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has launched a **new portal LADIS – Least Available Depth Information System.**

- LADIS will ensure that **real-time data on least available depths** is disseminated for ship/barge and cargo owners so that they can undertake transportation on NWs in a more planned way.
- IWAI has designed LADIS to facilitate the **day-to-day operations of inland vessels plying on NWs** and to avoid any hindrance in service and operation.
- It will enhance **credibility and efficiency of information sharing** to achieve seamless operations on NWs, besides pre-empting problems that may occur during movement of vessels.

Inland Waterways Authority of India

- The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is a **statutory body under Ministry of Shipping established in 1986** for development and regulation of inland waterways for shipping and navigation.
- It is **headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh** and its main function is to build necessary infrastructure in inland waterways, surveying economic feasibility of new projects and also carrying out administration and regulation.
- As per the **National Waterways Act, 2016, 111 waterways** have been declared as NWs.

- In **2018, the IWAI** also launched a portal known as **Forum of Cargo Owners and Logistics Operators (FOCAL)** for cargo owners and logistic operators to access real time data on availability of vessels.
- In 2018, IWAI signed a project agreement with the World Bank for **Jal Marg Vikas Project** on river Ganga which aims for capacity augmentation of navigation on **NW-1 (River Ganga) from Varanasi to Haldia.**

- These initiatives are a part of objective to develop NWs as a **key transport intervention and lower huge logistics costs,** which currently account for **15% of the GDP** and is about **twice that of the U.S.' logistics costs.**