



Varanasi to Witness Launch of India's First Indigenous Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vessel as Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Flags Off Operations from Namohat

“Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vessel Launch in Varanasi Marks New Era of Clean Transport for Pilgrims and Public Under Modi's Leadership”: Sarbananda Sonowal

Green Transport on the Ghats: Varanasi Set for Hydrogen Vessel Launch Enhancing Pilgrim and Public Connectivity

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Varanasi is set to mark a major milestone in India's transition toward sustainable inland water transport as **Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal** will flag off the commercial operations of the country's first indigenous hydrogen fuel cell vessel at Namohat on December 11.

The ceremony will be attended by senior leaders from the Uttar Pradesh government, including Transport Minister **Dayashankar Singh**, and Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ayush, Food Security and Drug Administration, **Dr. Daya Shankar Mishra 'Dayalu'**, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Stamp and Court Fee, Registration Shri Ravindra Jaiswal alongside Members of the Legislative Assembly and **Ashok Kumar Tiwari**, Mayor of Varanasi Municipal Corporation.

The initiative is part of the ongoing modernisation of India's inland waterways under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has prioritised cleaner transport, improved connectivity and enhanced public convenience. Over recent years, the Government of India and the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) have expanded navigation channels, introduced modern terminals, and operationalised new passenger and cargo routes to strengthen water-based communication and reduce logistics costs.

Speaking ahead of the launch, Sonowal said the development highlights the transformational approach of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has reshaped India's infrastructure with people-first modernisation.

“Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been the change-maker who transformed India's development landscape with modern infrastructure that enhances public welfare and convenience. Modi's vision for a clean, efficient and future-oriented waterways network is turning rivers into engines of growth and mobility. The launch of India's first hydrogen fuel cell vessel in Varanasi demonstrates our resolve to adopt cutting-edge, eco-friendly technology that will define the next era of green transport. This pioneering step reflects our commitment to a future where sustainable innovation drives progress,

strengthens economic potential, and improves the daily lives of people. In the timeless spiritual capital of India, this advanced green transport will enhance the experience of people and pilgrims who arrive here from across the world, allowing them to move along the holy ghats with greater convenience, dignity and comfort,” Sarbananda Sonowal said.

These efforts align with long-term strategic frameworks, including the *Maritime India Vision 2030 (MIV 2030)* and *Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 (MAKV 2047)*, which outline the road map for greener transport, smart infrastructure and increased use of alternative fuels on inland waterways.

The launch at Namohat positions Varanasi at the forefront of India’s green waterways initiative and sets the tone for the next chapter of sustainable transport on rivers and inland routes.

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