



PM Narendra Modi Dedicates Waterways and Railways Infra worth ₹830 Crores in West Bengal

**“PM Narendra Modiji’s Vision Revives India’s Inland Waterways as a Modern, Efficient Transport Network”:
Sarbananda Sonowal**

PM Narendra Modi Launches SIX Hybrid Electric Catamaran to Boost Green Passenger Transport on Kolkata Waterways

Port, Inland Waterways Projects Worth ₹552 Crore Launched to Boost Riverine Logistics

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated, laid the foundation stone of and flagged off various development projects worth more than ₹830 crore at Singur in Hooghly district, West Bengal today. Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Shri Modi remarked that yesterday he was in Malda and today he had the privilege of being among the people in Hooghly. He highlighted that for a developed India, the development of Eastern India is essential, and with this goal the Union Government is continuously working. He stated that the programmes of yesterday and today strengthen this resolve. The Prime Minister noted that during this period he had the opportunity to lay the foundation stone and inaugurate projects worth hundreds of crores related to the development of West Bengal.

PM Modi highlighted that yesterday the country’s first Vande Bharat Sleeper Train was launched from West Bengal. He added that Bengal has also received nearly half a dozen new Amrit Bharat Express trains. He remarked that today three more Amrit Bharat Express trains have been launched. He pointed out that one of these trains will further strengthen the connectivity between his parliamentary constituency Varanasi and Bengal. He further stated that Amrit Bharat Express trains have also been launched for Delhi and Tamil Nadu. The Prime Minister underlined that the past 24 hours have been unprecedented for West Bengal’s rail connectivity.

PM Modi observed that Bengal has immense potential for waterways and the Union Government is working on this as well. He noted that assistance is being provided to build the necessary infrastructure for port-led development. He stated that a short while ago, projects related to ports and river waterways were also inaugurated and foundation stones laid. He emphasised that these are very important for the development of West Bengal and India. He remarked that these are the pillars on which West Bengal can be developed into a major hub of manufacturing, trade, and logistics. The Prime Minister congratulated everyone for these projects.

“The dedication of infrastructure projects worth ₹830 crore marks a major step in scaling up waterways and rail-based transportation in West Bengal. These projects will significantly enhance cargo movement, strengthen multimodal connectivity and ensure smoother passenger travel through modern, safe and energy-efficient transport systems, while accelerating economic activity and employment generation across the region,” said **Union Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal** on the occasion.

Speaking about the decisive leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for revival and rejuvenation of the Inland Waterways on the occasion, **Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW)**, said, “For decades, India’s inland waterways remained largely untapped despite their immense potential. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this sector has been comprehensively transformed into a modern, efficient and economical mode of transportation. Today, inland waterways are emerging as a vital pillar of India’s multimodal logistics network, reducing congestion on roads and railways, lowering logistics costs and driving sustainable growth across the country.”

In a major push to strengthen river-based logistics and promote sustainable inland water transport, projects worth ₹552 crore were launched under the ports and inland waterways sector, marking a significant step toward decongesting traditional cargo routes and expanding multimodal connectivity.

A key highlight was the inauguration of the Extended Port Gate System at Balagarh, developed by the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port Authority (SMPA). Located about 45 nautical miles upstream from Kolkata, the facility is aimed at easing congestion at the Kolkata Dock System while enabling efficient movement of cargo through inland waterways.

The Balagarh facility includes a modern barge terminal with two berths capable of handling containerised and coal cargo, with a projected capacity of 2.7 million tonnes per annum. The terminal is seamlessly integrated with National Waterway-1 (Ganga–Bhagirathi–Hooghly) and is supported by road and rail connectivity, strengthening multimodal logistics across the eastern region.

Supporting infrastructure at the site includes a newly constructed road overbridge and advanced dredging facilities, enabling uninterrupted year-round navigation and improved turnaround time for cargo vessels.

As part of the clean transport initiative, the Prime Minister also launched a 50-passenger hybrid electric aluminium catamaran, marking a major milestone in the transition toward green inland water transport. Developed at a cost of ₹12 crore, the vessel is powered by advanced lithium-titanate battery technology, offering an energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable option for passenger movement on inland waterways in Kolkata.

“West Bengal has always been the gateway to India’s maritime trade, and under PM Modiji’s leadership, the state is once again emerging as a growth engine for eastern India. With strengthened ports, inland waterways and rail connectivity, Bengal is becoming a vital link between the rest of the country and the Northeast, reinforcing the Prime Minister’s vision of making eastern India the centre of India’s next development journey,” added **Sonowal**.

The initiatives are aligned with the government’s broader vision of leveraging inland waterways as a cost-effective, environment-friendly and reliable mode of transport, while enhancing port-led development and reducing pressure on road and rail networks.

Strengthening rail connectivity, the Prime Minister inaugurated railway infrastructure projects worth ₹280 crore and flagged off new passenger services to improve regional and long-distance travel. Key initiatives included the commissioning of the 15-km Jayrambati–Barogopinathpur–Maynapur rail section, part of the 83-km Tarakeswar–Bishnupur rail project, expected to spur socio-economic development in Bankura district. A new passenger train between Jayrambati and Maynapur was also flagged off, benefiting daily

commuters and students. In addition, three Amrit Bharat Express services were launched to enhance national connectivity — linking Santragachi with Tambaram, Howrah with Anand Vihar Terminal, and Sealdah with Banaras — strengthening economic, cultural and religious corridors across the country.

The inauguration, conducted virtually from Singur, reflects the Government of India's commitment to strengthening logistics, mobility and regional connectivity in West Bengal and the Eastern region. Governor of West Bengal, Shri C V Ananda Bose, Union Ministers, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Shri Shantanu Thakur, Shri Sukanta Majumdar were present among other dignitaries at the event.

These projects reflect the Modi Government's integrated and future-oriented approach to infrastructure development, combining sustainable inland water transport with modern rail connectivity. Together, they are expected to reduce logistics costs, ease congestion, improve passenger mobility and reinforce West Bengal's role as a vital gateway for trade and connectivity between India's mainland and the North-Eastern region.





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