

## INLAND WATERWAYS OF INDIA: KEY STATISTICS

- **Total National Waterways (NW):** 111 (As per the National Waterways Act, 2016).
- **Total Length:** 20,187 km.
- **Currently Operational:** 32 National Waterways (Spanning 5,155 km).
- **Budget 2026-27 Target:** Operationalize **20 new waterways** over the next 5 years.
- **Vision 2047 Target:** Increase the share of water transport from 6% to **12%**.

## IMPORTANT NATIONAL WATERWAYS (NW)

Waterway (NW)	River / Region	Reach (Key Locations)
NW-1	Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly	Allahabad (UP) - Haldia (West Bengal)
NW-2	Brahmaputra River	Dhubri - Sadiya (Assam)
NW-3	West Coast Canal	Kollam - Kottapuram (Kerala)
NW-4	Krishna - Godavari	Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu
NW-5	Brahmani - East Coast Canal	Talcher - Dhamra (Odisha)
NW-16	Barak River	Assam

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES &amp; ACTS

1. **Jalvahak Cargo Promotion Scheme, 2024:** Provides up to **35% reimbursement** of operating costs to vessel operators to shift cargo from road/rail to waterways.
2. **Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP):** A project for the capacity augmentation of **NW-1 (Ganga)**, implemented with technical and financial assistance from the **World Bank**.
3. **Arth Ganga:** Aimed at promoting economic activities and sustainable livelihoods for local communities along the banks of the River Ganga.

4. **Harit Nauka Guidelines (2024):** A roadmap to transition to **100% green vessels** (eco-friendly) for inland leisure and transport by 2047.
5. **Inland Vessels Act, 2021:** Replaces older laws to provide a **uniform regulatory framework** for vessel registration and safety across India.

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## DIGITAL INITIATIVES

*Important for "Match the Following" or "Identify the Objective" type questions:*

- **PANI (Portal for Asset & Navigation Information):** An integrated portal for waterway assets and real-time navigation data.
- **LADIS (Least Available Depth Information System):** Provides real-time information on the **minimum depth** available in the navigable channel.
- **CAR-D (Cargo Data):** A portal for the collection and analysis of cargo and cruise movement data.
- **RIS (River Information Services):** A technology-based system to enhance safety, efficiency, and traffic management on waterways.

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## CRITICAL POINTS (EXAM PERSPECTIVE)

- **Environment:** Water transport is **3-6 times more fuel-efficient** compared to road transport and produces significantly lower emissions.
- **Economy:** A single vessel with a 2,000-tonne capacity can replace approximately **125 trucks** (of 16-tonne capacity), reducing logistics costs.
- **Tourism:** The **Varanasi - Dibrugarh** corridor hosts the world's longest river cruise (approx. 4,000 km).
- **Regional Connectivity:** **NW-2** and **NW-16** are vital for providing low-cost, bulk cargo connectivity to the North-Eastern Region (NER).
- **Local Focus:** For APPSC/TSPSC, **NW-4** (Krishna-Godavari) is a high-priority topic for its impact on regional trade and the development of the Buckingham Canal.

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## INDIA - NEW ZEALAND FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA): KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The agreement was signed on **April 27, 2026**. It is the fastest-ever FTA concluded by India, reaching a final agreement in a record **9 months**.

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### 1. TRADE & TARIFFS

- **100% Duty-Free:** New Zealand has eliminated customs duties on **100% of Indian exports** (covering all tariff lines).
- **India's Exclusions:** To protect domestic interests, India has excluded sensitive sectors like **Dairy (milk, curd, cheese)** and certain **Agricultural products (onions, almonds, sugar)** from the agreement (Exclusion List).
- **Immediate Relief:** India has immediately eliminated duties on 30% of tariff lines, including **wood, wool, and sheep meat**.

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### 2. INVESTMENTS

- New Zealand has committed to investing **USD 20 Billion** in India over the next 15 years.
- A **Rebalancing Clause** has been included to address and resolve any shortfalls in the delivery of these investments.

### 3. SERVICES & MOBILITY

- **STEM Graduates:** Post-study work visas for Indian students who studied Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) have been extended (**3 to 4 years**).
- **TEE Visa (Temporary Employment Entry):** A new visa pathway for **5,000 skilled Indians**. Priority will be given to **AYUSH practitioners, Yoga instructors, Indian chefs, and Music teachers**.
- **Working Holiday Visa:** 1,000 young Indians annually will have the opportunity to visit and stay in New Zealand for **12 months**.

### 4. AYUSH AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

- For the first time in history, New Zealand has recognized and facilitated trade in **Ayurveda and Yoga**, opening doors for Indian traditional medical practices.

### STATE-WISE GAINS

State	Key Benefiting Sectors
Andhra Pradesh	Major boost for <b>Marine products (Shrimp)</b> , Fruits, and the Pharma sector.
Telangana	Benefits for the <b>Hyderabad Pharma Hub</b> , Chemicals, and Turmeric exports.
Gujarat	Rise in exports of <b>Petroleum products</b> , Gems, and Jewelry.
Tamil Nadu	Gains for <b>Textiles</b> , Leather (Footwear), and Automobile components.
Uttar Pradesh	Growth for <b>Leather goods (Kanpur)</b> and Handicrafts (Moradabad).

### SECTORAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

- **Labour Intensive Sectors:** Elimination of tariffs will boost employment opportunities in **Textiles, Leather, Footwear, and Gems & Jewelry**.
- **Agricultural Productivity Partnership: Centres of Excellence** will be established to share technology and improve productivity in **Kiwifruit, Apple, and Honey** cultivation.
- **MSMEs:** The New Zealand market will become accessible to Small and Medium Enterprises, with a special focus on **women and youth-led startups**.

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#### KEYWORDS FOR ASPIRANTS (IMPORTANT FOR EXAMS)

1. **Rules of Origin (PSRs):** Strict regulations to prevent third-party countries from misusing the agreement to dump goods into India or New Zealand.
2. **Geographical Indications (GIs):** New Zealand must provide legal protection for Indian GI products like **Basmati Rice and Darjeeling Tea** within 18 months.
3. **SPS & TBT:** Measures to remove Sanitary (health) and Technical barriers, ensuring faster clearance of goods (within **48 hours**).
4. **Oceania Gateway:** This FTA serves as a strategic gateway for India to enter the markets of other **Pacific Island nations**.

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#### APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW CHIEF VIGILANCE OFFICER (CVO) OF SAIL

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##### KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Appointment:** **Shri Dilip Kumar** assumed charge as the Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) on **April 27, 2026**.
- **Service Cadre:** He is a senior officer of the **IRSME** (Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers).

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##### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS & POSITIONS HELD:

- **Experience:** He brings over two decades of expertise in train operations, rolling stock maintenance, and human resource management.
- **Previous Roles:** Served as the Additional Divisional Railway Manager in **East Central Railway (ECR)** and Chief Workshop Manager at Harnaut (Nalanda, Bihar).
- **Innovations:**
  - Introduced the first **ISO 9001** certified train in East Central Railway.
  - Played a pivotal role in the nationally acclaimed **Madhubani Railway Station** beautification project.

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##### AWARDS & EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

- **Education:** Holds a B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering from **IIT BHU**.
- **Awards:**
  - National Award for Outstanding Services (2016).
  - Railway Board's Certificate of Excellence for Best Innovation (2018-19).

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##### STATIC GK FOCUS (EXAM PERSPECTIVE):

1. **SAIL (Steel Authority of India Limited):** It is a **Maharatna** Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) owned by the Government of India.
2. **CVO (Chief Vigilance Officer):** The highest-ranking officer responsible for anti-corruption measures and maintaining transparency within an organization. They operate under the guidelines of the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)**.
3. **Nodal Ministry:** SAIL functions under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Steel**, Government of India.

## NATIONAL DELIBERATIVE SUMMIT ON ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Organized By:** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (**MoSPI**).
- **Dates:** April 29–30, 2026.
- **Venue:** Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- **Core Theme:** "Harmonizing Administrative Data for Governance."

### OBJECTIVES OF THE SUMMIT:

- **Data Harmonization:** Bringing administrative data from various government departments into a unified and standardized format.
- **Policy Formulation:** Leveraging collected data effectively for informed policy decisions and efficient service delivery.
- **Interoperability:** Building technical and institutional frameworks to ensure seamless data exchange across different departments.
- **AI-Ready Data:** Preparing data ecosystems to be compatible with future Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications.

### IMPORTANT MILESTONES:

- **Background:** This summit is a follow-up to the decisions taken during the **5th National Conference of Chief Secretaries** held in December 2025.
- **Participants:** Officers from State/UT Planning and IT departments, representatives from Central Ministries, international experts, and members of various think tanks.

### EXAM PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS (STATIC GK & CONCEPTS):

1. **MoSPI:** The nodal ministry in India responsible for the collection of statistics, administration of the Statistical Services, and estimation of the National Income (**GDP**).
2. **Data Silos:** This refers to situations where different government departments keep their information isolated from one another. Eliminating these silos to ensure data flow is a primary goal of this summit.
3. **Evidence-Based Decision Making:** Using accurate statistical data allows the government to make decisions that minimize resource wastage and ensure welfare schemes reach the intended beneficiaries.
4. **Digital India Linkage:** This initiative aligns with the **Digital India Mission** by promoting transparency and high-tech efficiency in public administration.

## INS SUDARSHINI - LOKAYAN 26 EXPEDITION

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **The Vessel: INS Sudarshini** (A Sail Training Ship of the Indian Navy).
- **Current News:** Concluded a landmark three-day port call at **Las Palmas, Canary Islands** (a Spanish archipelago) on April 26, 2026.
- **Expedition Name: Lokayan 26** – a transoceanic (across oceans) expedition.
- **Next Destination: Mindelo, Cape Verde.** This serves as the final African stopover before the ship begins its trans-Atlantic passage.

### EXPEDITION OBJECTIVES:

- **Maritime Diplomacy:** To strengthen bilateral ties and deepen partnerships with the navies of other nations.
- **Training:** To provide naval personnel with professional engagement and experience in long-distance ocean sailing.
- **Bridges of Friendship:** To foster bonds and mutual trust across West Asia, the Mediterranean, Europe, and Africa.

### EXAM PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS (STATIC GK & MAPPING FOCUS):

1. **Canary Islands:** Located in the Atlantic Ocean, these are autonomous territories belonging to **Spain**.
2. **INS Sudarshini:** It is a **three-masted** sail training ship built by **Goa Shipyard Limited**.
3. **Geographical Significance:** Through this voyage, India is enhancing maritime security and technical cooperation with Western and African nations.
4. **Lokayan Project:** An initiative by the Indian Navy to showcase India's seafaring legacy and build international cooperation through long-range sailing expeditions.

### QUICK REVISION BITS:

- **Which Spanish island did INS Sudarshini recently visit?** – Canary Islands (Las Palmas).
- **What is 'Lokayan 26'?** – An international transoceanic training and diplomatic voyage by the Indian Navy.
- **Which is the final African stop before the trans-Atlantic passage?** – Mindelo, Cape Verde.

## ANDHRA UNIVERSITY CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS (1926-2026)

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Occasion:** Centenary celebrations held in Visakhapatnam to mark 100 years of the founding of Andhra University.
- **Chief Guest:** Vice-President of India, **Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan**.
- **Dignitaries Present:** Governor of AP S. Abdul Nazeer, Former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, and cricket legend **Sachin Tendulkar**.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS & SPECIAL FEATURES:

- **Commemorative Releases:** The Vice-President released a **Commemorative Coin**, a **Commemorative Stamp**, and a Coffee Table Book.
- **International Agreements (MoUs):** Andhra University signed three key MoUs with:
  1. University of Florida (USA)
  2. Oxmiq Labs Inc. (USA)
  3. Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM).
- **Capital Reference:** The Vice-President noted that the passage of the bill in Parliament declaring **Amaravati** as the permanent capital reflects the collective aspirations of the people.
- **Investments:** It was revealed that **Andhra Pradesh** emerged as a leader, accounting for **25%** of the country's proposed investments in 2025-26.

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#### DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS:

- **M. Venkaiah Naidu** (Former Vice-President of India)
- **Haribabu Kambhampati** (Governor of Odisha)
- **Grandhi Mallikarjuna Rao** (Chairman, GMR Group)
- **Trivikram Srinivas** (Renowned Filmmaker)
- **Satyanarayana Chava** (CEO, Laurus Labs)

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#### STATIC GK & CONCEPTUAL FOCUS (EXAM PERSPECTIVE):

1. **Andhra University (AU):** Established in **1926**. Its first Vice-Chancellor (VC) was **C.R. Reddy**. Later, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan also served as its VC.
2. **Viksit Bharat - Viksit States:** The Vice-President echoed PM Narendra Modi's slogan, emphasizing that "A developed India is only possible through developed states."
3. **Significant Visits:** During his trip, the Vice-President visited the **Sri Kurmanatha Swamy Temple** and the **Arasavalli Sri Suryanarayana Swamy Temple** in Srikakulam district.
4. **Vizag Growth Hub:** Visakhapatnam is emerging as a hub for Data Centers, IT, Tourism, and Electronics (e.g., investments by companies like Google).

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#### QUICK REVISION BITS:

- **Who was the legendary cricketer at the AU Centenary?** – Sachin Tendulkar.
- **AP's share in national investment proposals (2025-26)?** – Over 25%.
- **Which foreign university signed an MoU with AU?** – University of Florida, USA.