

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
SHIPPING  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4941  
ANSWERED ON:07.05.2012  
INLAND WATER TRANSPORT  
Patel Shri Bal Kumar

**Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Inland Water Transport (IWT) is an eco-friendly, economically viable and fuel efficient mode of transport;
- (b) whether IWT has not developed to its full potential while India has 14500 kms. of navigable waters;
- (c) if so, whether development of IWT could have numerous direct and indirect benefits;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government had discontinued the scheme; and
- (f) if so, the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN)

(a): Yes, Madam.

(b): The inland water transport could not develop fully because rail and road transport historically have been given more importance in the country. Further IWT presently cannot ensure the availability of connectivity to its terminals by rail and road for its efficient functioning. Factors such as Least Available Depth, width of fairway, Night navigation aids, and continuous stretch of the waterway are important for Inland Water Transport.

(c) & (d): IWT is more suitable mode of transportation for bulk goods, over dimensional cargo and hazardous cargo. The development of IWT will have several direct and indirect benefits which, inter-alia, include reduced cost of transportation, fuel savings and less of pollution.

(e) & (f): Government is undertaking many schemes for development of IWT sector in the country. While several schemes have continued during different plan periods, some have been discontinued. The continuation or otherwise of a scheme for the development of IWT depends upon various socio economic factors.