

## Waterways Conclave 2022 to strengthen cruise tourism, regional connectivity

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Dhaka: India's Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, along with the Inland Waterways Authority, is going to organise "Waterways Conclave 2022" from April 11-12 in Dibrugarh, Assam.

In line with the PM Gati Shakti's National Masterplan, the Waterways Conclave aims to develop multimodal projects in the northeastern region fast in order to strengthen the economic activities and augment employment generation.

The waterways sector can potentially bring about an upsurge in bilateral trade and investment through collaboration. Hence, the Waterways Conclave will deliberate on the new possibilities for cooperation in the waterways sector between nations.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and International Chamber of Commerce are the industry partner for the two-day conclave.

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and AYUSH, India; Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport and Highways, India; and the Chief Minister of Assam, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, will attend the event and address during the Inaugural Session on the April 12.

Shri Nakap Nalo, Minister of Tourism, Transport and Civil Aviation, Arunachal Pradesh, Chief Minister(s) of North-eastern States, Dr Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Minister of State, Ministry of External Affairs, India; Shri Shripad Naik, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, India; and Shri Shantanu Thakur, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, India will also be present on the occasion.

Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, Minister of State for Shipping, Government of Bangladesh, and Lyonpo Loknath Sharma, Minister of Economic Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan will address the gathering as well.

Waterways Conclave 2022 will also be attended by various stakeholders in the waterways ecosystem, such as policymakers, senior government officials, domestic and international investors, sector experts, infrastructure players, vessel owners and operators, cruise tourism industry, cargo passengers, representatives of major ports and the governments of Maritime States in India.

India has signed bilateral agreements with Bangladesh for strengthening and reinforcing inland water transportation and marine relations.

The conclave is planned with special sessions to deliberate on issues concerning the sector. The sessions will identify common goals and joint strategic initiatives, the roadmap for policies and strategies for the IWT sector's growth, infrastructural constraints in waterways logistics, and intervention to ensure seamless connectivity on waterways.

The sessions will also discuss infrastructure and development requirements for Waterways, including the paramount procedures to address technical challenges in maintenance.

Moreover, the sessions will highlight the suggestions and proposals from the members serving the industry. The aim is to enhance the utilisation of waterways in regional trade through different techniques and methods.

The conclave will consider the opportunities to increase river cruise tourism and passenger transportation safety and embrace the finest international measures that benefit all concerned.

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