

## Bill Summary

### The National Waterway (Lakhipur-Bhanga) Bill, 2013

- The National Waterway (Lakhipur-Bhanga Stretch of the Barak River) Bill, 2013 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on March 22, 2013 by the Minister for Shipping Mr. G.K. Vasan. The Bill proposes to declare and develop the 121-km long Lakhipur-Bhanga stretch of the Barak river in Assam, for shipping and navigation, as National Waterway-6 (NW-6).
- The Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on the same day. The Committee submitted its report on June 26, 2013. The Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on August 14, 2013.
- The Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985 established the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) for regulation and development of inland waterways as National Waterways. The government has declared five waterways as National Waterways, and IWAI has undertaken development, maintenance and management of these waterways.
- According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, the current infrastructure facilities for Lakhipur-Bhanga stretch of the Barak River are inadequate for shipping and navigation by large mechanised vessels. Hence, the government has decided to provide adequate infrastructure along the proposed waterway through IWAI. The Financial Memorandum of the Bill states that NW-6 is expected to carry 12.5 lakh tonnes of annual traffic after completion of the project.
- According to the Financial Memorandum of the Bill, the 121-km long NW-6 shall be developed at an estimated cost of Rs 123.3 crores in two phases. The works shall include infrastructure facilities for shipping and navigation, channel marking, construction of terminals, transit sheds, and installation of handling equipment. The first phase of the project is likely to be completed by 2016-17 followed by the second phase by 2018-19. The annual recurring expenditure for dredging, maintenance of navigation aids and operation of terminals is estimated to be Rs 3.1 crores.

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