India's First Riverine Lighthouses in NW-2

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Government policies and interventions*

Why in News?

Recently, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal laid the foundation stones for four river lighthouses along the banks of the Brahmaputra River.

- **Aim –** To modernise inland navigation infrastructure across India's river systems.
- **Location –** Along the Brahmaputra River in Assam.
- **Implemented by –** Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships (DGLL).
- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).
- **Under the –** Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

The river Brahmaputra flows down the centre of the Assam Valley. It receives a number of tributaries like Subansiri, Jia Bharali, Dihing, Burhi Dihing, Disang, Dhansiri and Kopili.

- **Will be constructed in –**
  - Pandu (Kamrup Metro district)
  - Bogibeel (Dibrugarh district)
  - Silghat (Nagaon district)
  - Biswanath Ghat (Biswanath district)
- **Connectivity –** These locations ***lie along National Waterway-2 (NW-2) in the Brahmaputra***, an important inland cargo and passenger route.

NW-2 forms the longest navigable inland waterway stretch in India, passing through the heart of Northeast India.

- **Technical Features – Height –** Around 20 metres
- Solar-powered operation.
- **Geographical range –** 14 nautical miles
- **Luminous range –** 8–10 nautical miles
- Designed to assist vessels navigating the river and support night navigation.
- **Timeline –** Expected to be completed within 24 months after the award of contracts.
- **Need –** ***Cargo movement on NW-2 recorded a 53% surge*** during FY 2024–25, according to the Inland Waterways Authority of India.
    - It is increasingly used to transport tea, coal and fertilisers in Assam and the Northeast.
- The lighthouses will ***enable round-the-clock safe navigation*** and strengthen the logistics ecosystem of Northeast India.
- Address a key limitation of river transport — restricted night navigation — through visual navigation aids and weather observation sensors.

National Waterway-2 (NW-2)
• Located on the Brahmaputra River. • **Declared in –** 1988. • **Length –** 891 km. • **Stretch –** From Dhubri to Sadiya. - North End – Sadiya - South End – Bangladesh Border • **Owner –** Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI). • **Operator –** Central Inland Water Transport Corporation (CIWTC).

References

1. PIB | India's First Riverine Lighthouses
2. DH | India's First Riverine Lighthouses

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