



Sunset in Bhramputra

Brahmaputra the 'male' river

Brahmaputra originates in the Tibetan Plateau near Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake, and flows through Tibet, North-East India and Bangladesh before falling into the Bay of Bengal. It has a total length of 2,900 kilometres of which 891 km runs through the Assam Valley and a shorter distance in Arunachal Pradesh. This river is known as the Tsangpo in Tibet, the Siang in Arunachal Pradesh, and the Brahmaputra as it enters Assam and is joined by the Dibang and Lohit. Further downstream in Bangladesh, it is called the Jamuna and then the Padma, after it merges with the Ganga, until it flows into the Bay of Bengal. As many as 40 tributaries fall into it from the northern bank in Assam and another 20 rivers in the southern bank, which makes the river virtually a moving sea.

It is a majestic waterway and one of the most powerful on earth, influencing the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the three countries through which it flows. It is also the only male river of the Indian subcontinent.

The Brahmaputra forms part of a great natural river basin, along with the Ganga and the Barak rivers, which covers an area no less than 174 million hectares in five countries - Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and India.

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), set up in 1986 by an Act of Parliament, has been entrusted the task of development and regulation of the National Waterways. The Authority undertakes infrastructure development and maintenance works on national waterways. Presently, there are three operational National Waterways where IWAI is maintaining a navigable fairway and has put in place basic IWT infrastructure such as fixed terminals and floating pontoon jetties. These are as under:

- ♦ Haldia - Allahabad stretch of the Ganga - Bhagirathi - Hooghly river system (1620 km) declared as National Waterway 1 in 1986.
- ♦ Sadiya - Dhubri stretch of the Brahmaputra river system (891 km) declared as National Waterway 2 in 1988.
- ♦ Kollam - Kottapuram stretch of West Coast Canal along with Champakara canal and Udyogmandal canal (205 km) declared as National Waterway - 3 in 1993.



Sunrise at Ganga Ghat, Varanasi