

M/s Assam Bengal Navigation, an Indo-British Joint Venture, is also operating river cruise in Bengal virtually throughout the year during which their vessels undertake regular cruise trips between Kolkata to Jangipur and Kolkata to Farakka on the Hooghly and Bhagirathi river and to the world famous mangrove forests of Sunderbans. They intend to commence river cruise between Patna and Farakka as well in their winter schedule of 2010.

Assam Bengal Navigation is operating M.V.Sukapha (GRT 631) in Bengal and the same vessel will be deployed for their Farakka Patna river cruise too.



MV Charaidew

West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation Limited, a Govt. of West Bengal Undertaking is also operating four tourist vessels on the Hooghly. These are M.V.Chitralekha (GRT 149) and M.V.Sarvayaya (GRT 141), which have facilities for day and night stay of tourists. The other two vessels run by them, M.V.Sumangal (GRT 141) and M.V.Madhugar (GRT 71.6) offer only day cruise facilities.



One vessel each of M/s Eastern Navigation Company, M.V.Rivera (GRT 348) and of M/s Ambuja Reality M.V.Pari (GRT 111) are also operated on the Hooghly in and around Kolkata area and they offer only day cruise facility.

Government of Bihar has recently procured one vessel M.V.Ganga for providing day river cruise experience to tourists in and around Patna.

While vessels operating in and around Kolkata area are operational virtually throughout the year, those plying further upstream of Farakka, can do so only during the winter months when the weather is pleasant for undertaking such voyages. During the harsh summer months of

April, May and June, it is virtually impossible to take tourists around as warm winds called the loo sweep the Gangetic plains of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and temperatures touch 45 degree Celsius and more. Likewise, the heat and humidity of monsoon months may also lessen the attraction of a long distance river cruise on Ganga. However, innovations and out of the box tour packages also have their patrons and, maybe, unconventional river cruises may soon be introduced even on the Ganga.

National Waterway No. 2 (NW- 2) : Brahmaputra river from Sadiya to Dhubri (891 kms)

River Brahmaputra (NW-2) provides round the year connectivity to Assam and through Assam to other North Eastern States like Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Manipur.

Maintenance of a navigable fairway with channel width ranging from 30-45 metres and depth of 2 metres or more is a major challenge considering the heavy silt load of the river and its propensity to change course quickly and break up into multiple channels in the plains of Assam. While LAD of 2 m or more between Dhubri to Dibrugarh is easily available for more than ten months in a year, IWAI has been using low cost eco-friendly technique of bandalling along with dredging through deployment of Dredgers to obtain the requisite LAD in the Brahmaputra upto Dibrugarh for the entire year.