

Water taxi service

February 19, 2022

In news— Recently, the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has virtually flagged off **India's first 'Water Taxi for citizens' in Mumbai**, from Belapur Jetty.

About Water taxi service-

- The service promises a comfortable, stress-free journey, is time-saving and promotes eco-friendly transport.
- It will **connect the twin cities of Mumbai and Navi Mumbai for the first time.**
- It will **commence from the Domestic Cruise Terminal (DCT) and will also connect nearby locations at Nerul, Belapur, Elephanta island and JNPT.**
- These services are going to give huge impetus to the tourism sector, especially travel to the historic Elephanta caves from Navi Mumbai.
- The newly constructed Belapur jetty, built at a cost of Rs. 8.37 crore was **funded in the 50-50 model under the Sagarmala scheme** of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- The fare of the water taxi speed boat service will be around RS. 800 to RS.1,200 for one-way journey and will take around 30-40 minutes.
- A total of eight boats have so far been allocated for commuters. A speed boat can accommodate 10 to 30 passengers, and the catamaran can hold 65 people.
- The new jetty will enable movement of vessels to locations like Bhaucha Dhakka, Mandwa, Elephanta and Karanja.

Sagarmala programme-

- The Sagarmala programme is the flagship programme of the Ministry of Shipping.
- It was launched in 2015 to promote port-led development in the country through harnessing India's 7,500 km long

coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and strategic location on key international maritime trade routes.

- The main vision of the Sagarmala Programme is to reduce logistics cost for EXIM and domestic trade with minimal infrastructure investment.

Components of the programme

- Port Modernization & New Port Development: Debottlenecking and capacity expansion of existing ports and development of new greenfield ports
- Port Connectivity Enhancement: Enhancing the connectivity of the ports to the hinterland, optimizing cost and time of cargo movement through multi-modal logistics solutions including domestic waterways (inland water transport and coastal shipping)
- Port-linked Industrialization: Developing port-proximate industrial clusters and Coastal Economic Zones to reduce logistics cost and time of EXIM and domestic cargo
- Coastal Shipping & Inland Waterways Transport: Impetus to move cargo through the sustainable and environment-friendly coastal and inland waterways mode.
- Coastal Community Development: Promoting sustainable development of coastal communities through skill development & livelihood generation activities, fisheries development, coastal tourism etc..