

APCL Flags Off First-Ever Methanol Consignment to Bangladesh via Inland Waterways



Dibrugarh, 5 October 2026: Assam Petro-Chemicals Limited (APCL) achieved a historic milestone today with the flag-off of its first-ever methanol consignment to Bangladesh through inland waterways. The maiden shipment, carried by Barge DLB-PATKAI, was flagged off from the Bogibeel IWT Terminal, Dibrugarh, for its journey to Pangaon Port, Dhaka, Bangladesh.





The historic movement marks a significant step towards connecting Assam's industrial output with international markets through the Brahmaputra and National Waterway-2 (NW-2). It also marks the revival of international riverine cargo movement from Upper Assam after Independence, reconnecting Dibrugarh with its historic identity as a river port.

Consignment at a Glance

- **Cargo:** Approximately 540 MT of methanol produced by APCL, Namrup
- **Containers:** 27 ISO tank containers
- **Vessel:** Barge *DLB-PATKAI*, propelled by Pusher Tug *PT Kushal Konwar*
- **Route:** Bogibeel, Dibrugarh, to Pangaon Port, Dhaka, through NW-2 and the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBPR)
- **Distance:** More than 1,100 km



A Ceremony of Historic Significance

The Flag-Off Ceremony was graced by Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, as the Chief Guest, who addressed the gathering virtually, and Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India, as the Guest of Honour.



The occasion was also graced by Shri Charan Boro, Hon'ble Minister of Transport, Government of Assam; Shri Bimal Borah, Hon'ble Minister of Industries, Commerce & Public Enterprises, Government of Assam; and Shri Sushanta Borgohain, Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources & Judicial, Government of Assam.



Among other distinguished dignitaries present were Shri Terash Gowalla, Hon'ble Member of Rajya Sabha; Shri Prasanta Phukan, Hon'ble MLA, Dibrugarh; Shri Chakradhar Gogoi, Hon'ble MLA, Khowang; Shri Topon Kumar Gogoi, Former Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha; Shri Bikul Chandra Deka, Hon'ble Chairman, APCL; Shri Hemanta Gogoi, Hon'ble Vice-Chairman, APCL; Shri Jitu Talukdar, Hon'ble Director, APCL; and Shri Rajnesh Gogoi, Managing Director, APCL, along with senior officials of the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and other distinguished dignitaries.

A New Gateway for Assam's Trade

In his video message, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, described the occasion as a proud moment for Assam. He recalled that APCL had earlier exported methanol to Bangladesh by road through the Dawki–Tamabil route, where the mountainous terrain makes transportation more difficult and costly.

The Chief Minister said that the new waterway corridor would open up fresh export opportunities while easing logistical challenges. Highlighting the efficiency of the movement, he noted that a single voyage carrying 540 MT of methanol is equivalent to approximately 18 tanker trips by road.



Dr. Sarma said APCL has already established its presence in the Bangladesh market and that the waterway would support the Company's vision of exporting 60,000 MT of methanol. He further observed that the corridor could create new export opportunities for petrochemicals, petroleum products, coal, tea and agricultural produce, linking Assam with Bangladesh, Haldia and global shipping networks.



“The Northeast is no longer a frontier. It is India's gateway to the East.”

Revival of Dibrugarh's Riverine Legacy

Addressing the gathering, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, emphasised the importance of inland waterways as one of the most economical modes of transportation.

He highlighted the need for Assam to expand its port and logistics infrastructure to emerge as one of India's leading states in the sector. Recalling Dibrugarh's historic identity as a river port and the long silence of its steamer ghat, Shri Sonowal remarked:

“The steamer whistle that fell silent in 1956 is heard again.”



Describing the voyage as the first of many such movements, Shri Sonowal highlighted the environmental and logistical advantages of inland water transport, noting that every tonne of cargo moved by river means less fuel consumed and fewer trucks on the highways.

Pioneering the Revival of Waterway Trade

The maiden movement places APCL at the forefront of the revival of cargo trade along National Waterway-2 and the wider inland waterway network. The successful movement demonstrates the growing potential of Assam's inland waterways as a gateway for trade, industry and regional connectivity.

The movement also establishes the feasibility of transporting industrial cargo from the Northeast to international markets through a route that is cost-effective, environmentally sustainable and dependable.

APCL aims to develop this corridor into a reliable and regular trade route, strengthening connectivity between Assam and Bangladesh and, through established riverine and maritime networks, connecting the region with wider national and international markets.

A Collaborative Endeavour

APCL sincerely acknowledges the support and cooperation extended by the following organisations in making this historic movement possible:

- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) – for port facilities and operational assistance.**
- Inland Water Transport (IWT) Department, Government of Assam – for facilitating regulatory compliance and coordination.**
- Assam Inland Waterways Company Limited (AIWCL) – for providing the tug and barge in a timely manner.**

APCL also extends its sincere gratitude to Mr. Jaison George, Managing Director, Cochin Bunkers Pvt. Ltd., its logistics partner for the waterway movement, for his valuable support and coordination.

APCL further acknowledges the contribution of Ms. Kazi Gulshan Ara, Managing Director, Three Eye, APCL's authorised indent agent for the Bangladesh market, in facilitating the Company's engagement with the Bangladesh market.

The successful flag-off of APCL's maiden methanol consignment through inland waterways is more than the movement of cargo. It marks a new chapter in Assam's industrial, logistical and international trade journey, demonstrating the potential of the Brahmaputra and its connected waterways to carry Assam's products from the heart of the Northeast to international markets.

From Bogibeel to Bangladesh. From the Brahmaputra to the World.

A historic journey. A new beginning for Assam.



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