

YEAR END REVIEW -2020 : MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Government policies & interventions for development in various Sectors and issues arising out of their design & implementation incl. Housing

In the year 2020, the government has undertaken several important progressive policy interventions and new initiatives to accelerate the overall development of the shipping sector.

COVID Management

To maintain the supply of essential items and provide effective support in fight against COVID 19 pandemic, certain services were declared as essential including transport service for carriage of goods by water. However, Ports and dependent stakeholders faced immense difficulty in carrying out their operations as a result of the Lockdown.

Government took various efforts and initiatives to mitigate the impact of pandemic and ensure smooth functioning of supply chains. Some of the key initiatives taken are as follows:

MoPSW has facilitated more than 1,00,000 crew change on Indian ports and through charter flights. It is the highest number of crew changes in the world. Crew change consists of replacing one of the ship's crew members with another one and involves sign-on the ships and sign-off the ships procedures.

Maritime sector is among the worst hit sectors due to Corona pandemic. Despite that, all the Indian Ports were operational and providing essential services throughout the pandemic and main pillar for the smooth supply chain for India and world were the seafarers.

SAGARMALA PROGRAMME

To harness the coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and strategic location on key international maritime trade routes, the Government of India has embarked on the ambitious Sagarmala Programme to promote port-led development in the country. The vision of the Programme is to reduce logistics cost of EXIM and domestic trade with minimal infrastructure investment. This includes reducing the cost of transporting domestic cargo; lowering logistical cost of bulk commodities by locating future industrial capacities near the coast; improving export competitiveness by developing port proximate discrete manufacturing clusters, etc. The Sagarmala programme has identified 504 projects under four pillars – 211 port modernization projects, 199 port connectivity projects, 32 port-led industrialization projects and 62 coastal community development projects which can unlock the opportunities for port-led development and are expected to mobilize more than Rs. 3.57 Lac Cr of infrastructure investment.

In the last 15 months (July 2019 – October 2020), 20 Sagarmala projects worth Rs. 4,543 crore have been completed which comprise 9 projects of Port Modernization worth Rs. 1,405 crore, 7 Port Connectivity projects worth Rs. 2,799 crore and 4 Coastal Community Development projects worth Rs. 339 crore.

Ghogha - Hazira RoPAX Ferry

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and flagged off the Ro-Pax ferry service between Hazira and Ghogha in Gujarat through video conferencing, on

8th November, 2020. A new maritime connectivity has been established between Bhavnagar and Surat of Gujarat. The service between Hazira and Ghogha will shorten the journey from 10-12 hours to 3-4 hours. This will save time and cost will also be reduced.

New name of the Ministry of Shipping

In the inauguration of Ghogha-HAZira RoPax Ferry, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced the new name of Ministry of Shipping as Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

First Seaplane of India started its operation from Statue of Unity, Kevadiya to Sabarmati River in Gujarat

India's first Seaplane Service operation inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 31st October, 2020, between Kevadia and Sabarmati River front in Ahmedabad. The innovative floating jetties made of concrete is installed by the Inland Water Authority of India to support the seaplane operations. Ministry intends to gauge the interest of airline operators who is interested in the operation of the Seaplane services on the select routes. The key focus is to ensure faster and hassle-free travel of passengers, tourists and pilgrims through seaplanes to destinations which are currently accessible through long and tortuous road journeys.

PORTS

Development of Ports is crucial for the economy. Ports handle around 90% of EXIM Cargo by volume and 70% by value. In order to meet the ever-increasing trade requirements, expansion of Port Capacity has been accorded the highest priority by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways through implementation of well-conceived infrastructure development projects. The capacity of major ports which was 871.52 MTPA at the end of March 2014 has increased to 1534.91 MTPA by the end of March 2020. The Major Ports in the country have an installed capacity of 1534.91 MTPA as on March, 2020 and handled traffic of 704.92 MT during 2019-20.

Challenges faced by the shipping and ports sector and recent policy initiatives

The Key Challenges faced by port sectors are as follows:

In order to overcome these challenges, many initiatives have been taken over the period of last few years. Some of the recent initiatives taken by government are as follows:

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended the grand Sesquicentenary Celebrations of the Kolkata Port Trust and launched multimodal development projects for Kolkata Port. Prime Minister announced the new name Kolkata Port Trust as Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Port Trust. Prime Minister handed over Cheque of 501 Crore towards pension fund of employees of the Kolkata Port Trust

INLAND WATER TRANSPORT

Major Inland Water Transport (IWT) projects are under construction in 2020-21 under the Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) on National Waterway-1 (NW-1) (river Ganga) from Haldia to Varanasi

Under the JMVP being implemented with World Bank assistance, latest technological interventions are being introduced to overcome technical challenges. To support the 24x7 navigation, the digital solutions in the form of state-of-the-art River Information System (RIS) & Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS) is being implemented on NW-1.

Freight Village & Logistics Hubs are proposed to be developed adjacent to the Varanasi and Sahibganj MMTs to enable cargo aggregation & transshipment. Pre-investment works have been initiated for the Freight Village, Varanasi.

On National Waterway (NW-2) (River Brahmaputra), Ro-Ro service between Dhubri & Hathsingimari, Neamati & Kamlabari and Guwahati & North Assam is operational. Work on dredging and setting up of floating terminals have commenced under Phase I of development of NW-4 (river Krishna) between Vijayawada & Muktiyala. Ro-Ro Services between Ibrahimpatnam & Lingayapalam for transportation of construction materials on NW-4 (river Krishna) is also under operation. Inland Waterways Authority of India has commenced works on 10 new NWs declared under the National Waterways Act, 2016. Cargo movement on NWs during FY 2019-20 was 73.61 MMT as against 72.3 MMT during last year. The total cargo movement during April-September, 2020 is 30.38 MMT, which is 16% less than the corresponding period last year owing to COVID-19 induced restrictions.

Ministry of Shipping waived waterway usage charges considering the Government of India's vision to promote inland waterways as a supplementary, eco-friendly and cheaper mode of transport. The charges are waived initially for three years. The decision is estimated to increase the inland waterway traffic movement to 110MMT in 2022-23 from 72MMT in 2019-20. It will benefit the economic activities and development in the region

To enhance the access and establish alternative waterway connectivity to the North East through Bangladesh, new initiatives and measures are in progress. On the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route, dredging has commenced between Ashuganj and Zakiganj (295 km) and Sirajganj and Daikhawa (175 km) in Bangladesh by sharing the cost on 80:20 basis (80% by India & 20% by Bangladesh). Cruise movement commenced between India and Bangladesh by private operators of both countries in March-April 2019 under the MoU and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Passenger and Cruise service on the Coastal and Protocol routes signed by India and Bangladesh.

Second Addendum to The Protocol for Inland Water Trade & Transit (PIWT&T) has been signed by the two countries on 20th May, 2020 adding 5 Ports of Call and 2 extended Ports of Call on each side. Bangladesh has allowed the use of its Mongla & Chattogram Ports for the movement of goods to and from India under MoU and Agreement/SoP signed for the purpose. Eight routes are provided under the Agreement which would enable access of North East Region (NER) via Bangladesh. The routes identified allow entry/exit to Agartala and Srimantpur in Tripura, Dawki in Meghalaya and Sutarkandi in Assam. In July 2020 wherein both pulses and TMT steel bars were moved from Kolkata to Agartala via Chattogram Port.

SHIPPING: Achievements in the shipping sector

Coastal Shipping

Besides being fuel-efficient and environment friendly, Coastal shipping is capable of transporting large volumes of cargoes vis-a-vis other modes of transport and is potentially the cheapest mode of transport. However, due to certain intrinsic impediments, the share of coastal shipping in India is around 6%, which is much lower than that of developed countries. In order to encourage a modal shift from road and rail and to promote coastal shipping, cabotage has been relaxed for coastal transportation of (a) Exim/empty containers, (b) Agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and animal husbandry commodities and (c) Fertilizers. Coastal vessels are also provided a discount of 40% in port charges over foreign going vessels. Additional concessions

have been extended to Ro-Ro vessels and Container vessels engaged in coastal movement of automobiles. Other measures such as reduction of GST on bunker fuel, Green channel clearance for coastal cargoes and priority berthing for coastal vessels at major ports have also been extended to coastal shipping.

Cruise Shipping

Cruise shipping in India is at a nascent stage and Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ministry of Tourism are actively promoting cruise tourism for its vast economic impact, potential for job creation and earning foreign exchange. A national roadmap for development of cruise tourism has been made and various steps have been taken to promote cruise tourism in India, these include extension of relaxation of cabotage for foreign cruise vessels calling Ports of India for a further period of 5 years beyond Feb, 2024 i.e., up to February, 2029, e-visa facilities for cruise passengers arriving in India, and concessional tariff rates for cruise ships.

Shipbreaking

Shipbuilding

Under the Shipbuilding Financial Assistance policy for Indian shipyards for contracts signed during a ten-year period 2016-2026, an amount of 29.02 crores was released to Indian shipyards for 12 vessels in FY 2018-19; 26.97 crores for 7 vessels in FY 2019-20 and 5.06 crores was released to Indian shipyards for 3 vessels in 2020-21.

The Ministry of Shipping has directed all major ports to procure or charter tug boats which are only made in India. All procurements being done by major ports would now need to be carried out as per the revised 'Make in India' Order.

The Ministry of Shipping is aiming to promote Indian shipbuilding industry and also have discussion with some leading countries for Make in India shipbuilding. .

International Ship Repair Facility (ISRF) at Cochin Port Trust

Cochin Shipyard Limited continued to operate the dry-dock & existing facilities in the leased area (first phase) at Cochin Port premises. CSL completed the repairs of eleven ships during the financial year 2019-20. The construction works of the ISRF project, which commenced on November 17, 2017, is progressing in full swing. More than 95% of the piling works, 50% of the deck concreting & 80% of the dredging activities are completed and the facility is expected to be commissioned in FY 2021-22. As a part of the effort to develop Kochi as a maritime hub of India, CSL had set up a Maritime Park near to the International Ship Repair Facility at Willingdon Island, which was inaugurated by Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Shipping, Shri Mansukh L Mandaviya on September 19, 2019. Ten globally renowned firms in the maritime industry have already partnered with CSL for setting up their units in the Maritime Park in the first phase. CSL expects to position Kochi as a major ship repair hub with major operations in the present ship repair dock, coupled with increased capacities that would be available when the ISRF is commissioned.

New Dry-dock Project

The new dock will augment the Company's shipbuilding and ship repair capacity essentially required to tap the market potential of building specialized and technologically advanced vessels such as LNG Carriers, Aircraft Carriers of higher capacity, jack up rigs, drill ships, large dredgers and repairing of offshore platforms and larger vessels. The New Dry-dock facility is expected to

be commissioned in FY 2022-23

Ramayan Cruise

Ramayan Cruise Tour' on the Saryu river in Ayodhya will be launched soon. Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways chaired a review meeting for the implementation of cruise service. It will be the first-ever luxury Cruise service on the Saryu river (Ghagra/National Waterways-40) in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. It aims to give mesmerizing experience to devotees with one-of-its-kind spiritual journeys while cruising through the famous ghats of the holy river Saryu.

VTS and Vessels Traffic Monitoring Systems (VTMS)

Development of Indigenous Software solution for Vessel traffic services (VTS) and Vessels Traffic Monitoring Systems (VTMS) launched. VTS and VTMS is a software which determines vessel positions, position of other traffic or meteorological hazard warnings and extensive management of traffic within a port or waterway. Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) contribute to safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and protection of the marine environment, adjacent shore areas, work sites and offshore installations from possible adverse effects of maritime traffic.

National Authority for Ships Recycling:

Directorate General of Shipping notified as National Authority for Ships Recycling. DG, Shipping designated as an apex authority under the Recycling of Ships Act, 2019 for the ship recycling industry of India. Office of National Authority will be set up in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Direct cargo ferry service between India and Maldives started. During its maiden voyage, a vessel with a capacity of 200 TEU and 3000 MT of break bulk cargo sailed from Tuticorin to Kochi, from where proceeded to Kulhudhuffushi port in North Maldives and then to Male port. This ferry service, being operated by the Shipping Corporation of India and will provide a cost effective, direct and alternate means of transportation of goods between India and Maldives.

Lighthouses as Tourism Attraction

A high level meeting was held for developing around 194 existing lighthouses across India as Major tourist attractions. Shri Mandaviya said it will boost the tourism activities in lighthouses surrounding areas and give an opportunity to know about the enriched history of lighthouses.

National Maritime Heritage Complex

A world class National Maritime Heritage Complex will be developed at Lothal, Gujarat Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Ministry of Shipping of Government of Indian and Ministry of National Defence, Republic of Portugal.

YB/AP

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