

A brief background note on development of port facilities at Sagar Island

- Due to availability of a deeper draft location, midstream lighterage operation of ships is being carried out at Sagar Anchorage, close to the Sagar Island, for the last 40 years. Presently, the draft available at Sagar Island is around 10 mtrs. without dredging, which is more than that at Kolkata and Haldia. Through capital dredging, the draft can be enhanced up to 12 mtrs. in the first phase.
- Sagar Island is located about 150 KM in the downstream of Kolkata. By road, about 90 KM is to be travelled south of Kolkata to reach Harwood Point and a branch of the river Hooghly (channel creek) about 3 KM wide is to be crossed to reach Sagar Island. The island is 30 KM in length and 10 KM in width. Population of Sagar Island is around 1,60,000.
- In 2002, Kolkata Port Trust identified Sagar Island for development of a deeper draft terminal, in view of draft restrictions at Haldia and Kolkata. The Overseas Coastal Area Development Institute of Japan (OCDI) approached the Ministry of Shipping as well as the Kolkata Port Trust authority showing interest in undertaking a detailed feasibility study for development of port facilities at Sagar Island and the feasibility study was proposed to be undertaken by them through fund assistance from JICA. OCDI also indicated

about availability of soft loan through JBIC for development of the port facilities.

- To undertake the feasibility study through JICA, the matter was required to be processed through the Govt. of India and accordingly, a concept paper was prepared by Kolkata Port Trust, according to which, Sagar Island was found to have a potential to handle about 64 million tons of cargo comprising liquid and dry bulk commodities as also containers. The concept paper also envisaged requirement of at least 2 riverine jetties and 10 dock berths for handling the cargo and the tentative project cost was estimated in 2002 to be around Rs.2500 crore, including construction of a 4-lane rail-cum-road bridge between the mainland and the island.
- The Deptt. of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India, finally cleared the project in 2005 and sent the proposal to the Govt. of Japan for inclusion in the list of projects under JICA for the year 2006. A pre-feasibility study of the project was also carried out by JICA through their office in India.
- However, the project was ultimately not included in the JICA's list.
- Recently, Kolkata Port Trust revived its earlier proposal for development of port facilities at Sagar Island and an Expression of

Interest was invited in August, 2009 for development of this project on PPP basis. The response was quite encouraging and as many as 15 applications were received and some of the participants were M/s Essar Shipping, M/s Mundra Port & SEZ Ltd., M/s Sical Logistics, M/s Punj Lloyd, M/s CONCOR, M/s Gammon Infrastructure, etc.

- The southwest bank of Sagar Island, north of the lighthouse, in the Beguakhali/Mohishmari mouzas, has been identified for development of the port facilities. Both riverine jetties and impounded dock system are possible at the location. The commodities identified are dry bulk commodities like coking coal, thermal coal, coke, iron ore, etc. and also containers. The traffic potential for these commodities has been found to be around 60 million tons. The requirement of land for dock/jetties, back-up facilities, railway sidings, etc. has been roughly estimated to be around 2000 acres, for which the Govt. of West Bengal will be approached in due course.
- The port facilities at Sagar Island, Kolkata and Haldia will function as an integrated river-port system and aggregation/evacuation of cargo will be in all three modes, viz., by river, road and rail.
- The Govt. of West Bengal has already undertaken a feasibility study for a road-bridge at an estimated cost of around Rs.550

crore between the mainland and the Sagar Island and this project will be under the Sundarban Development Board. A rail connectivity from the nearest rail-head, viz., Kakdwip in the district of South 24 Parganas (about 5 KM from Harwood Point) will also be necessary for which the Railway authority will be approached at an appropriate stage.

- Presently, NIT has been published for appointment of a consultant for a detailed feasibility study of the project. Details of this NIT will be available in the Kolkata Port Trust's website www.kolkataporttrust.gov.in by opening the window 'tender' and going through the NITs issued by the Civil Engineering Department of Kolkata Dock System.
