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CPA News

Premier Maritime Magazine of Bangladesh

MET: Maritime Education and Training

Prospects and Potentials in Bangladesh

The salt industry of Bangladesh needs vigorous attention

IWT for regional connectivity and the role of BIWTA

Bangladesh enters LNG era

MET in Bangladesh at a glance

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU)

Started academic programmes since 2015. 3rd maritime university in South Asia. Presently at Dhaka and a huge campus is underway at Chattogram.

Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST)

Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) has introduced the Department of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering.

University of Dhaka has two maritime related departments - Oceanography and Fisheries under the faculty of science.

Deck and Engine Personnel Training Center

Established in Narayanganj and Barishal by the government initiative.

Khulna University offers Fisheries and Marine Resources Technology for undergraduate and post graduate students.

Patuakhali Science and Technology University offers five maritime departments: Aquaculture, Fisheries Biology and Genetics, Marine Fisheries and Oceanography, Fisheries Management and Fisheries Technology.

Ocean Maritime Academy, Dhaka.

MAS Maritime Academy, Dhaka.

International Maritime Academy, Dhaka.

International Maritime Training Academy (IMTA), Dhaka.

Bangladesh Maritime Training Institute (BMTI), Dhaka.

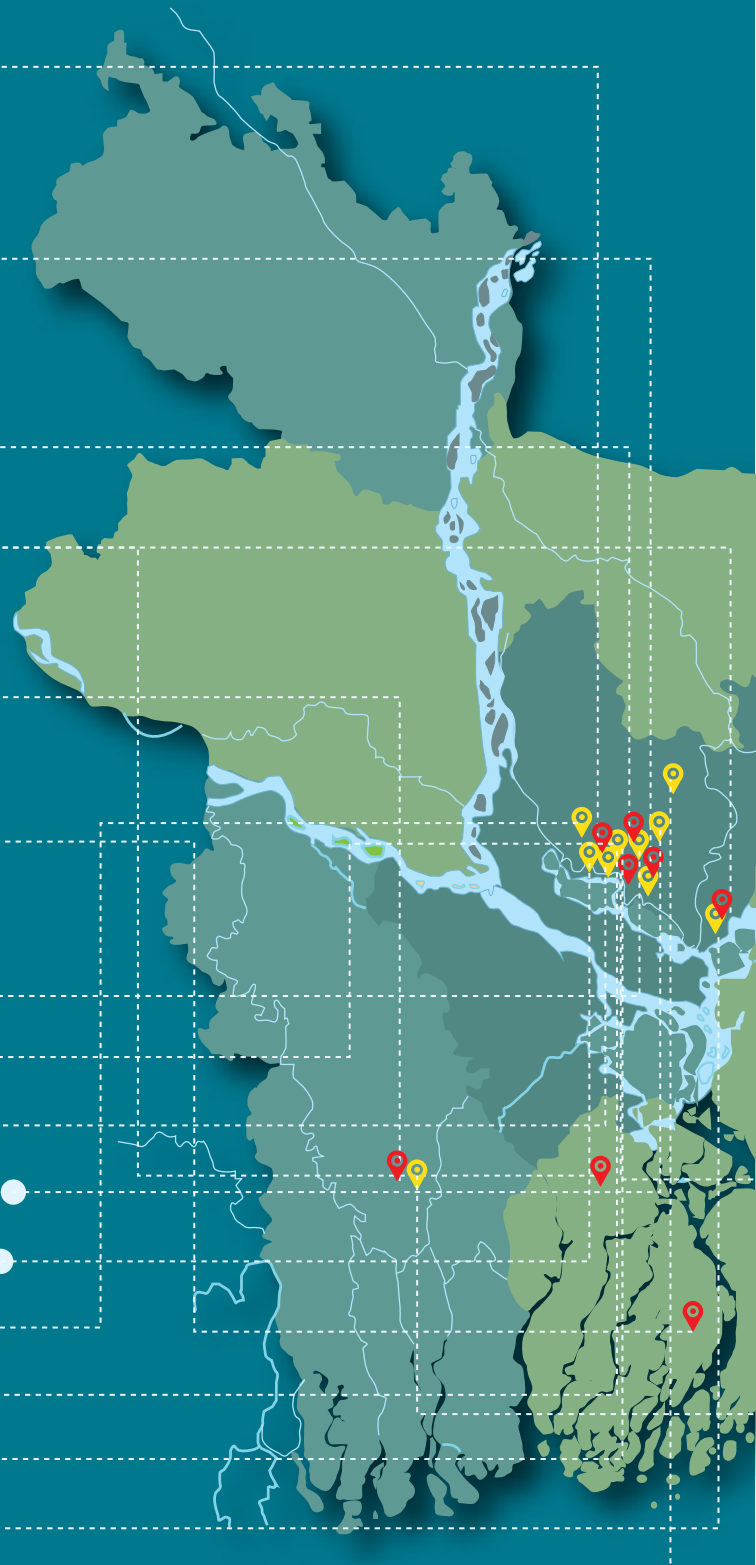
Western Maritime Academy, Dhaka.

United Marine Academy, Dhaka.

Cambridge Maritime College, Dhaka.

International Maritime Academy, Gazipur.

Bangladesh Institute of Marine Technology, Narayanganj.



Government institutes Private institutes

Our land area is limited, but maritime resources are abundant. It is evident that the maritime sector will play an important role in building a prosperous Bangladesh in the future. Promoting maritime education is of immense importance in Bangladesh now. Many educational institutions already offering quality maritime education in the country and more on the way.

Bangladesh Oceanographic Research Institute

Established in Cox's Bazar in 2015 in the context of Bangladesh's victory over maritime boundary.

National Maritime Institute

Established in 1952 as a 'Sailor Training School' in Gosaldanga of Chattogram. Now NMI trains sailors.

Bangladesh Naval Academy

Located in Patenga, a specialised military training centre prepares officers for Bangladesh Navy under the Ministry of Defence.

University of Chittagong has a department of Marine Science and Fisheries.

Bangladesh Marine Academy

Situated on the banks of the river Karnaphuli in Jaldia, Chattogram. Founded in 1962.

Marine Fisheries Academy

Established in Chattogram by the river Karnaphuli.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) has Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering Department.

Fisheries and Marine Science is being taught in **Noakhali University of Science and Technology.**

Mangrove Institute of Technology at Khalishpur in Khulna.

There are also **49 public** and **221 private** polytechnic institutes registered in Bangladesh under technical education board and those institutes offer Electrical, Mechanical, Civil Engineering courses.

By studying those subjects students can get opportunity to work in the maritime sector in future.

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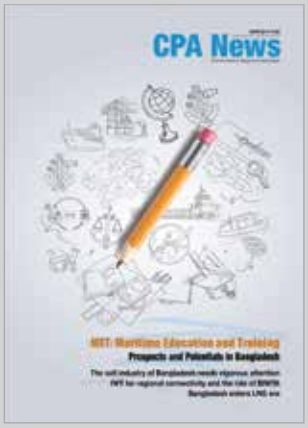

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Editorial

Specialised MET for the 21st century Bangladesh

When we talk about maritime, our eyes roll over the sailor's face roaming in the ocean. But in reality, the maritime sector is much more than that. It's about many professionals and different duties. And for the supply of skilled manpower in the maritime sector, specialised Maritime Education and Training (MET) is needed. Since the maritime sector is almost absent in the conventional education system, people have a less clear idea about the MET. Theoretically and practically, Maritime Education and Training (MET) is a specialised education system.

Bangladesh has a great potential to emerge as a notable maritime country in the world. The country's maritime sector on the verge of robust development activities after resolving the maritime border disputes with India and Myanmar. In parallel to the economic growth, investment in the maritime infrastructure sector is increasing too. As a result, there is an urgent need for skilled manpower in this sector. Now it is the time for Bangladesh to motivate and educate the youth with MET to increase their participation in the national maritime development activities. However, attracting the youth for MET needs new ideas, awareness, policies, special incentives, and the availability of necessary information about the maritime sector. Realising the circumstances, we felt a need to portray the lead story on present MET scenario in Bangladesh.

Inland waterways play a vital role in the hinterland connectivity of the sea ports. The World Bank report predicted that the use of Inland Water Transport (IWT) could save about 58.5 million liters of diesel and 155,000 tons of CO_2 per year. Considering IWT's importance in port-led development, we have covered an article seeking regional connectivity by waterways.

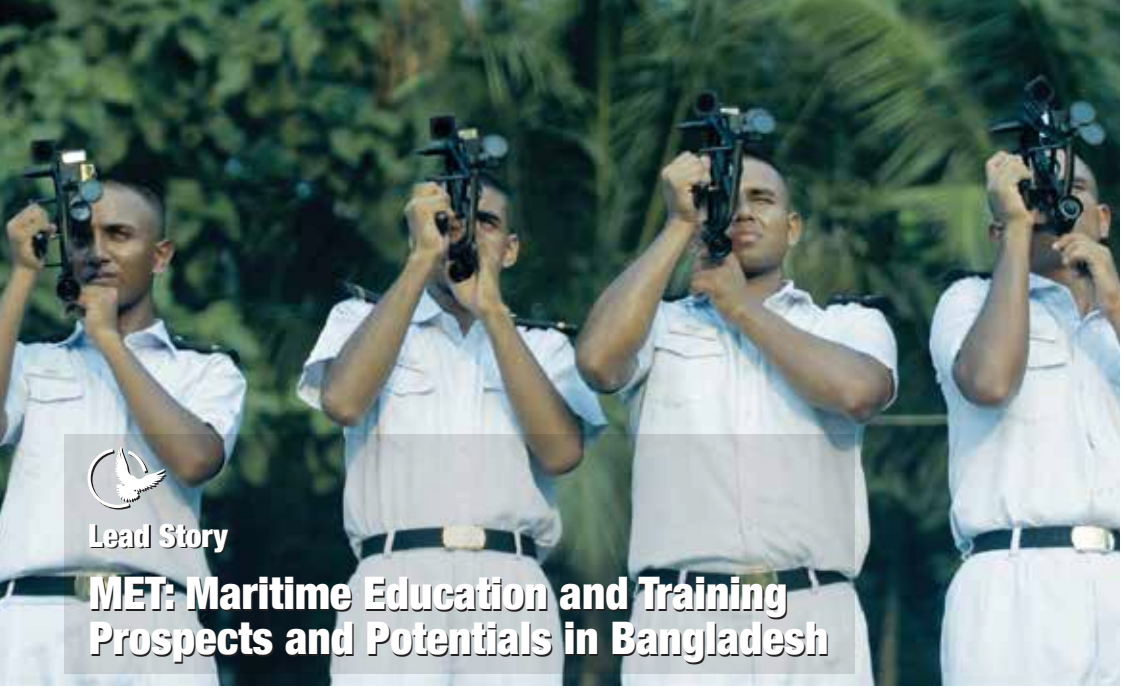
We also focused in our salt industries in another article. It is apparent that most of the salt farms are small-scale, using manually operated local equipment and lease the land from landowners, or sometimes from the government on a yearly basis. Community-focused land leasing systems, sufficient credit facilities, use of mechanical equipment (water pump, leveller, etc.) and reliable weather forecasting can enhance salt production.

We have also accumulated all the important news and events happened over the past quarter, those are showcased in the newsbyte section to keep you all informed.

We always value your feedback. We welcome you to share your thoughts and ideas with us to make this effort worthier.

Thanking you

Zafar Alam
Editor



Lead Story

MET: Maritime Education and Training Prospects and Potentials in Bangladesh

CPA News
in this issue

06

In the modern context, when the development of the shipping industry significantly contributes globally, a new outlook to redefine the concept of MET from a broader perspective is needed.

Bangladesh needs to keep the pace up of the GDP, and by developing the existing Inland Water Transportation (IWT) the country will be able to increase domestic and regional trade activities, as a result, the economic growth of Bangladesh will soar.

Bangladesh must seek self-sufficiency in salt to save a huge amount of foreign currency. As an employment generating sector, about 5 million people are directly and indirectly engaged in this industry. It is estimated that more than thousand crore taka being contributed to the national economy by this industry.

We value your thoughts

CPA news is open to submissions exclusively from the maritime enthusiast writers. We are looking for strong, authentic and thought-provoking articles on maritime issues.

email your views to cpanews@gmail.com

MET: Maritime Education and Training

Prospects and Potentials in Bangladesh

CPA News Desk

Maritime community denotes a global community in real sense. It is a discrete community of expert people that defines some kind of special relation pertaining to the oceans, seas and major waterways of the globe. The word maritime relates to a wide range of diversified scopes and opportunities. Maritime Education and Training or MET essentially lies at the heart of this global community. It is the source of vital lifeblood that flows through the arteries of this community keeping it alive and thriving.

Let's for a moment imagine a ship cruising through the big waves out in the vast sea. Now imagine the people who are actually running the ship, like the captain, the engineers, the crew and the sailors, the man on the radar, and many other responsible persons who are operating the ship to its destination. Now think about the people who had built this huge ship (like the electrical, mechanical and the marine engineers), and then think about the port it had left behind or the port it is destined to and think about the dozens of different departments and faculty and thousands of people that operate a port and finally then think about the people who are the customs or obligatory law inspectors, or the decision or policymakers, who decide on courses of maritime trade and prospects. And still, there are people who are

specialist on seas and oceans and know about its magnetism and can predict on oceanic events. Think about the people who are the scientist, underwater explorer, marine biologist or a thousand others who are in different ways relatable to this particular ship of our imagination. They all fall into the jurisdiction of the maritime domain and the above-mentioned people are marine professionals.

By simply looking at a ship sometimes we might fail to perceive the bigger picture of the immensity of our maritime world. According to the general notion, maritime education implies certain modules of education particularly designed for the seafarers, which in reality is much more than this. Maritime education and training are not just for the seagoing ships. It has its physical, technical, scientific, social and legislative aspects as well. In a broader range, the domain of maritime today incorporates issues like naval architecture, marine engineering, maritime finance, maritime security and maritime laws, to name just a few.

What is MET?

MET covers a wide range of apparently diversified areas and excellence. MET can open up new doors of opportunities within the robust ambit of the maritime industry. At present, the omni façade marine industry in Bangladesh is facing challenges for skilled manpower to fill up the voids in its operational network. It needs educated human resource to employ as port managers, cargo surveyors, marine surveyors and operation managers to name just a few from the vast array of different jobs pertaining to the industry.

Let us have a look at the list of vocations and careers one could choose from after completion of his/her chosen subject or course of maritime education and training.

- Business planners
- Communication and information technologists
- Competency and people management professionals
- Crew managers
- Customer relation officers
- Freight forwarders
- Harbour masters
- International trade experts
- Logistic and distribution managers

Maritime education and training are not just for the seagoing ships. It has its physical, technical, scientific, social and legislative aspects as well. In a broader range, the domain of maritime today incorporates issues like naval architecture, marine engineering, maritime finance, maritime security and maritime laws, to name just a few.

- Marine business managers
- Marine engineers
- Marine environmental managers
- Marine environmental surveyers
- Marine incident and accident investigators
- Marine insurance executives
- Marine insurance practitioners
- Maritime administrators
- Maritime conventioners
- Maritime economists
- Maritime journalists
- Maritime lawyers
- Maritime security and safety practitioners
- Maritime trade and transport experts
- Marketing and business development executives
- Nautical scientists
- Naval architects
- Occupational health and safety professionals
- Port designers and engineers
- Port managers
- Port project managers
- Ship recycling experts
- Ship management professionals
- Ship managers
- Ship superintendents
- Shipbrokers
- Shipbuilding engineers
- Surveyers
- Transport and logistics experts

It is agreeably evident that how expanded and diversified are the options that are offered by maritime education.

Attentive students in uniform are attending a class on Geography, in their campus classroom in Bangladesh Marine Academy.

Existing MET backdrop in Bangladesh

Bangladesh, a maritime champion in the South Asia region has its sovereign authority over an area of 118, 813 square kilometers of territorial water in the Bay of Bengal with 710 kilometers of coastline beside having an extensive network of robust rivers spread over all across the country. Maritime infrastructure and operations within the country greatly impact our foreign trade. Nearly all of the EXIM trade in the country rely on maritime support and port logistics, thus making ports and maritime infrastructure the lifeline of the country's economy.

As history records, formal education in the maritime sector began with the establishment of Sailors Training Center (STC) in 1952 that later turned into National Maritime Institute (NMI). This was followed by Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA) in 1962.

Realising our maritime potential at an early stage in our modern history, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman after the independence of Bangladesh undertook dynamic initiatives to revive the war-torn maritime sector. He also initiated strengthening of the infrastructure besides reinstituting maritime academic and training activities laying the foundation to build up skilled and able human resource who would be capable enough to exploit the immense potential of our maritime realm. After the liberation, Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Academy (BMFA) was established in 1973 with a view to educating mainly the maritime fishing professionals.

Gradually the numbers of government and private marine academies began to increase. Till the establishment of Bangladesh Navy Hydrographic and Oceanic Centre (BNHOC), maritime education in the country was unidimensionally aimed to create seafarer i.e. merchant mariners only.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) conducts an undergraduate and postgraduate programme on Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering (NAME) designed to produce human resources, especially for the shipbuilding industry. Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) has also started NAME at the undergraduate level. University of Dhaka (DU) started the postgraduate programme in Oceanography in 2013. It also started a bachelor programme in the same field in 2014. The country has four vocational maritime institutes in Narayanganj, Sirajganj, Faridpur and Bagerhat and more in the queue.

The Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina initiated the establishment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU) in 2013 with the view to bring together all maritime professional to a common and collaborative platform, besides imparting world class maritime education to aspiring students.

Emphasis on theoretical education as well as practical education is now being given in MET

Institute of Marine Science and Fisheries (IMSF), University of Chittagong (CU) also conducts an undergraduate and postgraduate programme on Marine Science and related discipline. The IMSF has been established in the University of Science and Technology at Noakhali and Patuakhali. The University of Khulna (KU) established a school on Fisheries and Marine Resources Technology (FMRT) in 1991. Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) has also introduced courses on Oceanography.

However, over the last decade, things began to change remarkably and took on a dynamic shape coping with new demand of the present market and policies. Accordingly, to augment higher education and produce the expertise in various marine disciplines through graduating maritime professionals in the maritime domain in country and employ them to exploit the untapped potential of our sea resources, the Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina initiated the establishment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU) in 2013 with the view to bring together all maritime professional to a common and collaborative platform, besides imparting world class maritime education to aspiring students.

Recruits in National Maritime Institute are taking a hands on lesson to prepare themselves as skilled seafarers.

BSMRMU is the third in Asia and 12th maritime university in the whole world. It is also the first and only specialised maritime university in Bangladesh.

Prospects and potential in Maritime Bangladesh

With a vivid backdrop of maritime resources in the country, the leadership in a wise vision took upon huge tasks to enhance the existing capacity and expand the operational areas with the view to exploit them in the most fruitful manner. Different maritime nations may have varied types of sectors as their primary maritime interest. The Maldives values fisheries and tourism as the core possession in their maritime potential while in Bangladesh, seaports and their functions stand at the heart of its maritime plan. Ports and waterways play as the backbone for executing the major portion of our external and internal trade. In an obvious manner, like Japan, Singapore, China, India and other coastal countries who have dramatically reached outstanding success in recent history mainly exploiting their port and maritime potential, Bangladesh also resolved to head on in the same direction. To that end, the government has already unleashed a set of new policies and mega-projects pursuing the port led development agenda of the country.

At the moment, colossal development work focusing on maritime interest are underway throughout the country. Besides enhancing the capacity of the two existing ports in Chattogram and Mongla, new ones are being constructed to accommodate the ever-increasing trade volume of the country. Capacity and strength of the ports are being boosted in terms of more sustainable infrastructure, incorporating of modern equipment and enhancement of operational efficiency. Construction of over 100 export-oriented economic zones is underway that would principally rely on the ports of the country. To enhance hinterland connectivity construction work of mega projects e.g. Padma Bridge, metro rail and river tunnel projects are running in full swing. Construction of Payra port in Patuakhali and Matarbari Multipurpose Terminal at Maheshkhali would provide access to bigger ships with deep-sea port facilities. Automation is being introduced in almost all the sectors concerned with the maritime operation. As such, it is evident that a new generation of skilled and educated human resource will be primary requisite if we want to make the best use of these renovations and innovations and thus unlock the enormous maritime prospects and potentials.

The next most potential and thriving area in the maritime sector is the fisheries. We have a fisheries academy in the country to produce knowledgeable and enlightened human resource for the industry. It is to note that Bangladesh has earned exclusive fishing rights over a huge area in the sea. Now we need a strong support base for the fishing industry to exploit this boon. Besides, under the current norms and ethics of leading international forums, we also need to address issues like climate change and pollution on valuable habitats such as mangrove and estuaries that have a considerable impact on marine fisheries productivity. No doubt, this will require researchers and judicious think-tanks who would pursue comprehensive plans for sustainable conservation, management, and exploitation of this immense reserve.

We have a fisheries academy in the country to produce knowledgeable and enlightened human resource for the industry. It is to note that Bangladesh has earned exclusive fishing rights over a huge area in the sea. Now we need a strong support base for the fishing industry to exploit this boon.

On the other side, the country is gaining speed in the shipbuilding and ship recycling sector. Bangladesh has a thousand-year-old heritage in shipbuilding which is rejuvenating in the new millennium years once again. Shipbuilding enterprises both in the public and private sector are on a fast rise in country empowered by huge incentive offers and support from the government. In spite of these enormous possibilities, there still exists a lack of skilled and trained human resource in the sector which is a big hindrance on its way to greater accomplishment.

Blue economy is the other golden door to a sustainable prosperity for the nation. The government has decisions to exploit the resources of the Bay of Bengal in a careful manner without jeopardising the ecological balance of the sea. It is the biggest bay on the earth providing support for about 1.4 billion people living on its coastlines. Blue economy offers an extensive range of options for further explorations in the field. Marine tourism is a prospective sector. In addition, initiatives are underway for further enhancement of coastal shipping.

We need to introduce new service sectors, develop logistics and infrastructure to accommodate the existing industrial demand. Fisheries in the sea and coastal aquaculture offer potential means for the provision of food and livelihood as well as respecting the ecological parameters besides creating sustainable employment. In addition, we need to give emphasis and focus on sectors such as oil, gas and mineral mining, marine biotechnology, ocean renewable energy, sea salt production, marine trade, marine tourism, marine surveillance and marine spatial planning. These

Maritime education has a huge emphasis on practical trainning and lessons. Keen male and female cadets are in a laboratory demonstration.

untapped resources of the blue economy are the next most important domains where we have huge possibilities yet to explore and exploit.

MET towards realising our development vision

The leadership of the country has set development targets projecting long-term progress in all sectors on the social, economic and human development index. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged all countrymen to make the best use of all existing resources and rise up as a developed nation in the world by 2041. It is certain that if we could pragmatically utilise our maritime potential to its fullest extent we could definitely realise that vision.

MET focusing on the industrial need

However, to unlock and make an intelligent use of these potential there is no other option but to build, train and educate a generation of intelligent and skilled human resource on our own. Be it in areas of shipbuilding or as diversified as underwater marine research, we certainly need to be self-reliant in terms of knowledge and capacity in the very first place.

For a better collaboration, we need people who would be technical experts as well as people who would run research work to delve deep into the possibilities of the maritime domain and gift us with new knowledge. We will also need experts who would analyse the social impact on maritime sectors and generate smart policy in the hierarchy for an environment-friendly and sustainable progress. The key that would unlock this pathway to success is obviously quality maritime education and training.

The course and curriculum need to be designed in a way so as to welcome and encourage the young men and women in the country to join the future fleet of development.

Nonetheless, we cannot expect the best yield from our maritime context if we just continue to depend on the foreign experts and faculties for the exploration and exploitation of our own resources. We may have foreign support in a various manner in the initial level and sustain for the time being but for the long run, we have to build up a strong education and knowledge base in the maritime sector in the country. The course and curriculum need to be designed in a way so as to welcome and encourage the young men and women in the country to join the future fleet of development.

We should also build platforms for greater collaboration and through them decide upon formulating new policy and planning to enhance and consolidate the maritime.

Maritime domain has every potential to emerge as one of the most lucrative areas for employment in the country today and in days to come. It has diversified scopes and the extent is limitless. To realise the vision 2041 in its true essence and elevate the country into a developed nation, we must look into the untapped maritime magic of our territory. But the question is, how we can reach there if initially, we do not have the desired human resource capable enough to think, search, research, explore and exploit the dormant possibilities lying at the feet of our map, the endless maritime reality. To build up such an educated and intelligible maritime community we need to think on long-term but begin with what we have at hand right now, like by nurturing and expanding the scopes of existing maritime learning centres and institutions in the country. Our mission though should be to build up a sustainable, dynamic and proactive maritime workforce in the country for the long term who would willing to join and celebrate our maritime opportunities. Through a judicious and visionary policy, we can equip us with an empowering knowledge of maritime science, literature and laws and then march on to explore the gifted maritime heritage and resources.

It is time, we open our eyes and gaze over the blue waves, to see and welcome the bright light waiting upon us.

CPA News Desk

Strategic plan needs to be taken to produce skilled human resources in the maritime sector of Bangladesh

An enterprise for regional connectivity:

SAMLF 2018 Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dhaka will be hosting the 2nd edition of South Asia Maritime and Logistics Forum (SAMLF) on October 9-10, 2018. The forum is being organised by Maritime Gateway and Colombo International Maritime Conference (CIMC) Events in association with Ministry of Shipping, Government of Bangladesh. It is expected that government representatives, trade associations and industry leaders in the South Asian maritime sector will participate in that event.

Governments, trade associations and industries in the South Asian region need trade exchange with the business enterprises from Europe, Middle East, South East Asia and beyond. SAMLF aims to bring them together. The 1st edition of SAMLF was held in Mumbai, India with the support of Ministry of Shipping, Govt. of India. Considering the immense maritime and EXIM trade potential of Bangladesh, the Ministry of Shipping, Government of Bangladesh has come forward to host the 2nd edition of SAMLF. The first forum had seen the enthusiastic response from all the South Asian nation and a commendable collective approach towards how they could all work jointly to be a driver of economic growth, trade and market expansion for the entire world. The 1st forum anticipated that the process would bring bigger opportunities for the entire region. In a bid to reach out to the trade in each member country of South Asia, the annual summit is planned to be organised in a different country each year.

Governments, trade associations and industries in the South Asian region need trade exchange with the business enterprises from Europe, Middle East, South East Asia and beyond. SAMLF aims to bring them together.

SAMLF will:

1. Put deep insights into maritime infrastructure
2. Focus on investment opportunities
3. Bring meaningful regional and international relationships to the table
4. Find solutions for the existing challenges
5. Share best practices and identify ways to collaborate
6. Promote new business and investment opportunities to a global audience

Additionally, this forum will provide each of the South Asian countries with an opportunity to market collectively as well as individually.

Bangladesh is a maritime country due to its geographical location and the country not only connects to South Asia but also to South East Asia, Asia Pacific, Europe and Africa through the sea. The government has taken pragmatic steps in order to develop the maritime sector. The revival of waterways and building new seaports, infrastructural development with hinterland connectivity and river ports imply that the government is giving necessary importance to the port-led development. This upcoming forum will be a grand occasion to showcase Bangladesh's changing face that beckons rising opportunities for the logistics industry. Through the SAMLF Bangladesh will be able to present its maritime potential to the global players and investors in international trade, shipping, logistics and infrastructure development.

CPA News Desk

IWT for regional connectivity and the role of BIWTA

Rajeev Ahmed

Introduction

Since Bangladesh is crisscrossed by rivers, river ports and river ways have been playing a significant economic role for the country by transporting goods and passengers from the ancient times. It is estimated that the total length of its waterway (800 rivers) is about 24,000 km, of this, 8,433 km is navigable by larger vessels in the rainy season (5,968 km of which is classified for navigation) while in the dry season about 4,800 km is navigable (classified 3,865 km). Presently two organisations: Bangladesh Inland Water Transportation Authority (BIWTA) and Bangladesh Inland Water Transportation Corporation (BIWTC) control the marine vessels ply in the inland river-ways and the river ports of Bangladesh. As a country with rapid infrastructural development, Bangladesh needs to keep the pace up of the GDP, and by developing the existing Inland Water Transportation (IWT) the country will be able to increase domestic and regional trade activities, as a result, the economic growth of Bangladesh will soar.

Bangladesh needs to keep the pace up of the GDP, and by developing the existing Inland Water Transportation (IWT) the country will be able to increase domestic and regional trade activities, as a result, the economic growth of Bangladesh will soar.

Old Testament of IWT in Bengal

Memoirs of Ibn Battuta, a Moroccan globe trotter during Sultani era, and other travelers from China suggest that they came to Sonargaon by river via Chattogram seaport. During the Mughal era, when Dhaka became the capital, the importance of Sonargaon inland port increased manifold. Since then, the river-route of Bengal became an important issue to set off communication with North India. The Ganges contributed to linking river route with Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and the Brahmaputra as well as the Meghna became an important means of communication with Assam. When the English set out its rule over Bengal in the eighteenth century, Kolkata became administratively more important than Dhaka. By this time, due to setting up of trading ties with the river ports of Kolkata and Hughli, river ports like Narayangonj, Chandpur, Barishal, Madaripur, Khulna and Goalanda became very important. Besides, to make communication with Assam reroute to the Northern part of Bengal, river ports of Shirajganj and Chilmari on the bank of Brahmaputra or Jamuna were a dire necessity. Goods and passengers were carried and transported by boats of huge sails through these ports.

In the second half of the 19th century, two private companies: Indian General Navigation Company and River Steam Navigation Company took the initiative to launch steam engine driven marine vessels to ship goods from Kolkata river port to East Bengal river ports. Since then sailboats and ships are being replaced by motorised marine-vessels. Due to the change of the course of rivers and development of road and railway networks, many

river ports have, on the one hand, lost their importance; and on the other hand, many new river ports have emerged.

River ports in the land of rivers

According to the statistics of BIWTA, there are 29 complete river ports in Bangladesh. These river ports have necessary arrangements to load and unload passengers and goods and to land motorised marine vessels. Apart from these, with the initiative of BIWTA, another 448 small-medium ports have so far been improved or set up, which are called 'Secondary Riverine Port'. According to BIWTA, there are 374 places have so far been identified where BIWTA does not have any establishments. Those ports are being used loading and unloading the goods and passengers. In addition, there are eight ferry jetties which are for the transportation of motor vehicles carrying goods and passengers.

IWT routes and network

The inland navigable waterway routes as classified by Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) fall into four groups:

Class-I: Four trunk routes (depth 3.66 m -3.96m, length about 683 km)- Chattogram-Chowkighata-Chandpur-Shambhupura-Narayanganj/ Dhaka; Shambhupura-Demra; Shambhupura-Bhairab Bazar/Ashuganj; and Chowkighata-Barishal-Mongla-Khulna- Maheswarpasha;

Class-II: Eight link routes (depth 1.83m- 3.65m, length about 1,000 km)- Mohanpur-Daikhawa; Bhairab Bazar-Chhatak; Chalna-Raimongal; Hijla- Saistabad; Satnal-Daudkandi; Chattogram-Cox's Bazar; Diara-Barishal via Nandir Bazar; and Chandpur-Ichuli;

Class-III: Twelve secondary routes (depth 0.91m-1.82m, length about 1,905 km)- Dilalpur-Fenchuganj-Zakiganj; Chattogram-Kaptai; Rangamati-Kaptai; Kaptai-Belaichari; Rangamati-Chotohorina; Rangamati-Mahalchari; Rangamati-Marisha; Sripur (Bhola)-Nazirpur-Char Montaz; Jhalakati-Barguna- Patharghata; Charpower-Patuakhali-Galachipa-Bara Baishdia; Bara Baishdia-Khepupara-Mohipur; and Khulna-Bardia-Manikdah, and,

Class-IV: Seasonal routes (depth less than 0.91m, length about 2,380 km). In addition to the above, there are many unclassified routes.

RIVER PORTS OF BANGLADESH

Sl.	Name of the Port	District	River	Location, Area and Infrastructure
01	Dhaka	Dhaka, Ashulia to Buriganga mouth 40 km along Buriganga	Buriganga	Largest passenger handling facilities include pontoons and allied facilities. Cargo Handling facilities like RCC jetties and pontoons. POL jetties. Private dedicated jetties
02	Narayanganj	Narayanganj city 27 km along the river Shitalakhya	Shitalakhya	Largest cargo Handling facilities installed by BIWTA. POL jetties. Private dedicated jetties
03	Chandpur	Chandpur	Dakatia	Moderate landing facilities for the passengers including passenger waiting shed and pontoons at both the areas. Steel jetties and pontoons for cargo handling as well
04	Barishal	Barishal 5km along the bank of river Dakatia additional facilities at Madrasha ghat	Kirtonkhola	Second largest passenger handling facilities with newly installed pontoons and terminal building facilities. Steel jetties for cargo handling. Private dedicated jetties
05	Khulna	Khulna Both banks of the river Bhairab and Rupsha with a length of 20 km	Bhairab	Moderate passenger facilities with a number of pontoons and terminal building. 550-meter-long quay wall for cargo handling. Private dedicated jetties
06	Ashuganj-Bhairab	Brahmanbaria Both side of the river Meghna	Meghna	Cargo handling facilities including RCC jetties and steel jetties, pontoons. Dedicated private jetties
07	Baghabari	Sirajganj On the north bank of the Boral river with a length of 5.5 km	Boral	Cargo Handling facilities including steel jetties, pontoons and warehouse. A distribution center for Food department and Agricultural Development Corporation. POL jetties
08	Noapara	Jashore On the bank of the Bhairab river with a length of 12 km	Bhairab	Cargo Handling facilities including steel jetties and pontoons. More than 50 nos. private jetties for common handling of cargo
09	Bhola	Bhola	Pangasia	Moderate passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities. Steel jetties for cargo handling
10	Borguna	Borguna	Khagdon	Moderate passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities. Steel jetties for cargo handling
11	Cox's Bazar	Cox's Bazar	Bakkhali	Small-scale passenger facilities for engine boat
12	Teknaf	Cox's Bazar	Naf	Private jetties for tourist facilities. Land port, International facilities for cargo and passenger
13	Faridpur	Faridpur	Padma	Facilities for passengers and cargo
14	Tongi	Gazipur	Turag and Balu	Moderate facilities for handling passengers. Steel jetties for Cargo Handling. Private jetties/ Industrial jetty
15	Chilmari	Kurigram	Jamuna	Private jetties for Industrial cargo
16	Moju Chowdhury hat	Lakshmipur	Meghna	Facilities for passengers and cargo. Private jetty
17	Tekerghat	Madaripur	Kumar	Private jetties for Industrial cargo
18	Aricha	Manikganj	Padma	Ferry crossing facilities. Moderate passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities; Steel jetties for cargo handling
19	Mawa	Munshiganj	Padma	Ferry crossing facilities, Numbers of passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities
20	Kathalbari	Munshiganj	Padma	Ferry crossing facilities.Numbers of passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities
21	Mir Kadim	Munshiganj	Dhaleshwari	Moderate passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities. Steel jetties for cargo handling
22	Meghnaghat	Narayanganj	Meghna	Number of private dedicated jetties for large manufacturers. Site for a private SEZ
23	Narsingdi	Narshingdi	Meghna	Moderate facilities for handling. Steel jetties for cargo handling
24	Ghorasal	Narshingdi	Shitalakhya	Facilities for passengers and cargo. Private jetty
25	Nagarbari	Pabna	Jamuna	Cargo facilities. Boat facilities
26	Patuakhali	Patuakhali	Lohalia and Patuakhali	Moderate passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities. Steel jetties for cargo handling
27	Daulatdia	Rajbari	Padma	Ferry crossing facilities. Moderate passenger embarkation and disembarkation facilities
28	Sunamganj	Sunamganj	Surma	Facilities for passengers and cargo. Private jetty
29	Chatak	Sylhet	Surma	More or less 100 private jetties facilities for handling specifically stone and sand. Cargo facilities

The IWTA network consists mostly of passenger vessels, cargo vessels, tankers, tugboats and dumb crafts. In 2000, the number of registered passenger vessels (including sea trucks and ferries) was 1,868, cargo vessels (including tanker and coaster) 2,160, dumb craft 760 and towing vessel 194. The present fleet strength of BIWTC is 107, of which 51 are registered passenger vessels and 56 ferries. The static carrying capacity of the IWTA fleet is about 0.20 million passengers and 0.55 million tons cargo. In terms of carrying capacity, the private sector outweighs the contribution of the public sector both for the passenger and cargo movement (private sector: 93 per cent for passenger and 95 per cent for cargo). In the informal sector, the country boats plying mainly in the perennial waterways play the key part. More than a million country-boats operating within the country and a substantial part of which has already been mechanised mostly with low-cost shallow pump engines. Approximately 65 per cent of the country boats are passenger boats and the rest are cargo boats. The static cargo capacity of the country boat is about one million tons, nearly double that of the formal IWTA sector. According to a recent report of ESCAP, Inland Waterways of Bangladesh are estimated to carry about 14 per cent annual passengers (87.80 million per year) and 35 per cent annual freight volume (0.58 million tons per year).

IWT in transit and regional connectivity

There are about 800 rivers in Bangladesh of which 57 are transboundary rivers. Out of the 57 transboundary rivers, 54 are common with India and remaining 3 with Myanmar. Three mighty rivers, which enter Bangladesh from India at different points, play a very important role in the areas of transportation, cultural practices, and livelihoods of the people. Eastern states of India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh are more or less connected by these rivers. These rivers were once the main communication links for people of this region for traversing from one place to another. Using the waterways benefits trade as it is less expensive than other modes of transportations.

In the age of globalisation, the scope of connectivity through these old waterways becomes more important. The mobility and access to the facilities depend on the sound infrastructure of both inland waterways and highways. In Bangladesh, domestic communications comprise roads, rails and waterways.

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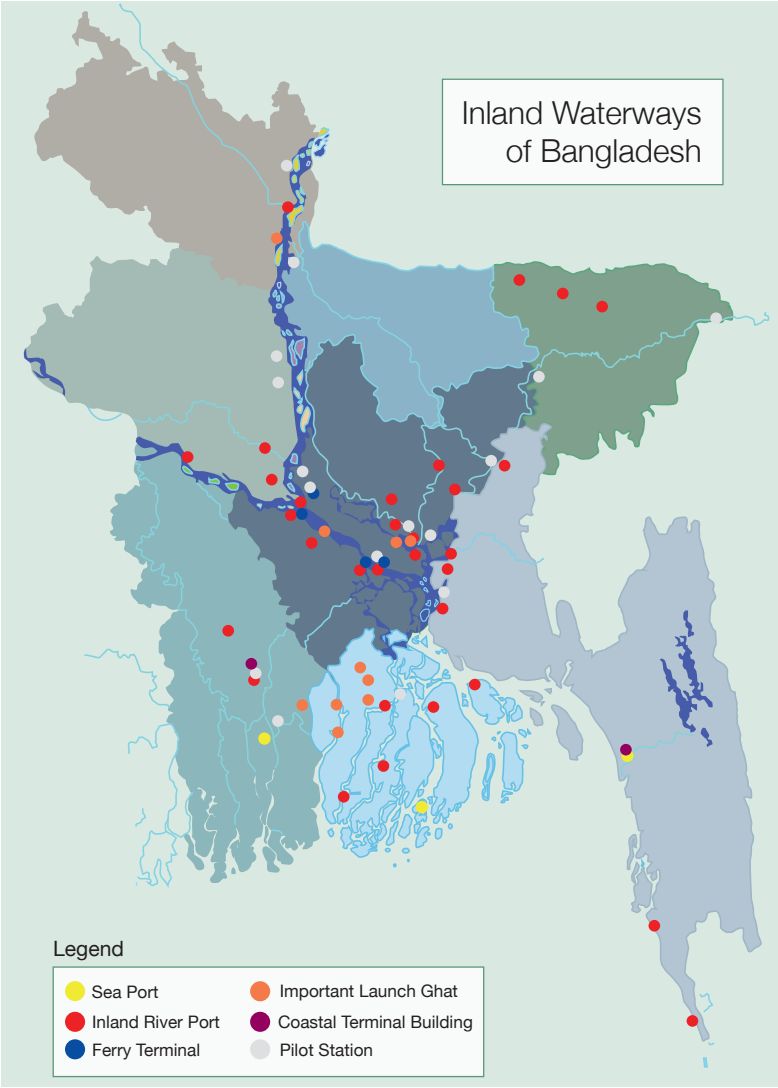

During the British period, IGN and RSN Co used to operate their cargo services from Kolkata to Assam via East Bengal. In late 1950s, the governments of Pakistan and India entered into an agreement to make use of the waterways of both countries for trade between them and for passage of goods between two places of one country through the territory of the other. The agreement was titled 'Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade'. The trade continued well up to September 1965, when it was suspended due to the Indo-Pak war. On 28 March 1972, the governments of Bangladesh and India revived the agreement and introduced eight trade routes. These were: Kolkata-Raimongal-Chalna-Khulna-Mongla-Kaukhali-Barishal-Nandir Bazar-Chandpur-Aricha-Sirajganj-Bahadurabad-Chilmari-Dhubri; Dhubri-Chilmari-Bahadurabad-Sirajganj-Aricha-Chandpur-Nandir Bazar-Barishal-Kaukhali-Mongla-Khulna-Chalna-Raimongal-Kolkata; Kolkata-Raimongal-Mongla-Kaukhali-Barishal - Nandir Bazar-Chandpur-Narayanganj -Bhairab Bazar-Ajmiriganj-Markuli-Sherpur-Fenchuganj-Zakiganj-Karimganj; Karimganj-Zakiganj-Fenchuganj-Sherpur-Markuli-Ajmiriganj-Bhairab Bazar- Narayanganj -Chandpur Nandir Bazar-Barishal-Kaukhali-Mongla-Raimongal-Kolkata; Rajshahi-Godagari-Dhulian; Dhulian-Godagari-Rajshahi; Bhairab Bazar-Mitamain-Itna-Lalpur-Sunamganj-Chhatak; and Chhatak-Sunamganj-Lalpur-Itna-Mitamain-Bhairab Bazar.

Recently, India and Bangladesh have signed an agreement to use Chattogram and Mongla ports in Bangladesh for movement of goods to and from India. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has also been signed for movement of passenger and cruise services. In addition to this, an addendum to 'Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade' (PIWTT) between India and Bangladesh has been signed for the inclusion of Dhubri in India and Pangaon in Bangladesh as new Ports of Call. These agreements will facilitate easier movement of goods and passengers between the two countries, giving an impetus to trade and tourism. On the other hand, Bhutan and Nepal have shown interest to use seaports of Bangladesh as they want access to the world maritime trade. Hence, an improved IWT of Bangladesh would play the key role to transfer goods from Nepal and Bhutan to Chattogram port and Mongla port.

BIWTA under spotlight

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) was established in 1958 for development, maintenance and control of inland water transport and of certain inland navigable waterways. Three departments of BIWTA, namely Engineering, Conservancy and Pilotage, and Port and Traffic Department, are involved in the operation of inland river ports. The Engineering Department is responsible for construction, repair and maintenance of shore facilities such as terminal buildings, terminal sheds, jetties, gangways, quays, warehouses, roads and parking yards. The Conservancy and Pilotage Department provides floating facilities such as pontoons, buoys and moorings. The Ports and Traffic Department is responsible for the operation and utilisation of the above facilities and realisation of port revenue from their users. BIWTA's Hydrography Department maintains the waterways for safe and effective navigation and for other uses. Ports are operated and managed under certain specific legal provisions namely Ports Act 1908 and Port Rules 1966. BIWTA maintains and supervises 29 river ports and more than 400 launch terminals. It has 475 barges, pontoons and flats and 86 vessels including 7 dredgers, 3 coastal survey ships, 10 launches and 19 workboats for survey and inspection, 6 tug ships, 2 salvage units, 1 training ship and 3 houseboats. BIWTA conducts hydrographic surveys in 3,000 km of inland waterways and 1,000 sq. km. of the coastal area every year. The volume of its annual dredging is about 5 million cubic meter.

BIWTA has implemented 137 development schemes since 1958 for increasing and improving essential facilities of river ports and launch stations, ferry ghats, hydrographic surveys, river dredging and pilotage services. BIWTA's Deck Personnel Training Centre is the only marine institute in Bangladesh that was set up at Narayanganj in 1971 for the inland water transport sector. The institute offers 7 courses for the personnel of not only BIWTA, but also for the same of Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation, Bangladesh Rifles, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation and deck workers of the armed forces. BIWTA has a marine workshop in Barishal, set up in 1960 with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Since maritime shipping is easy and cost reducing, it is high time for BIWTA with all its assets, channels and departments to initiate and lead a regional platform with India, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar to transfer goods from one place to another through waterways for mutual economic development.

The accessibility of the waterways network is large enough to cover all the growth center of the country. According to the World Bank, more than fifty per cent of the economic activities in the country are located within a distance of 10 km from the nearest navigable waterways in all seasons.

Conclusion

Inland waterways play a vital role in the hinterland connectivity of the maritime ports. The accessibility of the waterways network is large enough to cover all the growth center of the country. According to the World Bank, more than fifty per cent of the economic activities in the country are located within a distance of 10 km from the nearest navigable waterways in all seasons. The high degree of penetration of the IWT network is providing access to about 25 per cent of the rural household in Bangladesh. This is also the main mode of transport in the North Eastern Haor areas and south coastal areas where the road network is less developed. Inland waterway has an overall cost advantage over other modes as well. It has been estimated that it costs BDT 1.00 for IWT, BDT 4.5 for road and BDT 2.5 for rail to transport per ton cargo per km. As the World Bank report predicted, the use of IWT could save about 58.5 million liters of diesel and 155,000 tons of CO_2 per year. Since the transport sector of the country is subsidies by the government, poor budgetary allocation compares to other modes led towards the inefficient utilisation of this prospective sector. Therefore, the government should pay more attention in promoting and improving IWT with the regional stakeholders so that the country emerges as the maritime powerhouse linking South Asia with South East Asia.

Rajeev Ahmed
Senior editor
Enlighten Vibes

The salt industry of Bangladesh needs vigorous attention

CPA News Desk

It is believed that the Roman soldiers were paid in salt, hence the word soldier derived from the word 'Sal-dare' meaning (to give salt). It is also believed that the word salary has its origin in the Latin word Salarium which stands for salt money. Salt is a mineral composed primarily of sodium chloride (NaCl), salt in its natural form as a crystalline mineral is known as rock salt or halite. Perhaps, salt is one of the most valuable composites known to human. Globally, 93 countries produce salt commercially. Salt has long been used for cooking, making bread, flavouring and for preserving food. It has also been used in tanning, dyeing and bleaching, and the production of pottery, soap, and chlorine. Today, it is widely used in the chemical industry. There are many types of salts for human consumption and uses including table salt, kosher salt, sea salt, Himalayan pink salt, Celtic sea salt, fleur de sel, Kala namak, flake salt, black Hawaiian salt, red Hawaiian salt, smoked salt, pickling salt etc.

According to the US Geological Survey, in the year 2016, the world produced 2,70,000 million metric tons of salt and in 2017, the world porduced 2,80,000 million metric tons of salt.

Salt has been an important and integral part of the world's history since ancient times, as it has been intertwined with many civilisations. Salt had been used as a part of Egyptian religious offerings and valuable trade between the Phoenicians and their Mediterranean empire, salt and history have been inseparably entangled for millennia. Salt was highly valued and its production was legally restricted in ancient times, so it was historically used as a method of trade and currency. There was the Salt War in 1540 AD between the city of Perugia and the Papal States during the pontification of Pope Paul III for tax imposition on salt. The Chinese and Egyptians were thought to be the pioneers in salt production from brine. The earliest known town in Europe, Solnitsata, located in Bulgaria, was established near a salt production facility. Many archaeologists believe Solnitsata gathered wealth by supplying salt throughout the Balkans. Undeniably, the history of salt is both broad and unique, leaving its indelible mark in cultures across the globe. According to the US Geological Survey, in the year 2016, the world produced 2,70,000 million metric tons of salt and in 2017, the world porduced 2,80,000 million metric tons of salt.

Sources of salt

There are two main sources of salt, sea water and the sodium chloride mineral halite (also known as rock salt). Rock salt can be mined from the drying up of enclosed lakes, playas, and seas. Salt is produced in one of two principal ways for industrial production: the evaporation of salt

Black Hawaiian salt

Himalayan pink salt

Red Hawaiian salt

Kosher salt

water (brine) which is also called the lixiviation process, or by mining. The evaporation can either be solar or using some heating machine. There are four known methods for salt production. They are,

Solar evaporation of seawater: In a correct climate condition, it is possible to use solar evaporation of sea water to produce salt. In this process, Brine is evaporated in a set of beds so that the salt crystallises on the bed.

Open pan production from brine: It is one of the traditional methods of salt production. In this process, brine is pumped into the pans and concentrated by the heat of the fire burning below. When crystals of salt formed, these would be extracted.

Closed pan production under vacuum: In a closed pan system, the brine is evaporated under a partial vacuum and crystals of salt would be collected.

Salt mines: Since the bronze age salt has been mined from the natural deposits. But in modern times, industrial mining and new drilling techniques revolutionised the mining of mineral deposits from the deep earth. It is expensive to mine salt than evaporation of seawater, although the introduction of this new source makes the salt cheaper due to a reduction of monopolisation.

In Bangladesh, farmers produce salts mainly by evaporation of saltwater method around the coastal areas though some industrial producers are now using closed pan production under vacuum method.

Salt production in Bangladesh

It is estimated that about 5 million people are directly or indirectly involved in the salt industry and 25 million people's socio-economic life style mostly depends upon these 5 million people as well. The salt industry contributes about thousand crore taka each year in national economy. Hence, the importance of the crude salt production and the salt producers needs no further exaggeration. Bangladesh produces salt mainly for human consumption, fish and animal feed, tannery industry, soap making and chemical uses. Occasionally, the country imports salts form neighbouring countries like Myanmar and India. Salt was never an export-oriented industry in Bangladesh. Annually, the demand for salt is more than 1.6 million metric tons for domestic and industrial consumption, and at present, the country is producing on an average of 1.36 million metric tons of salt per year.

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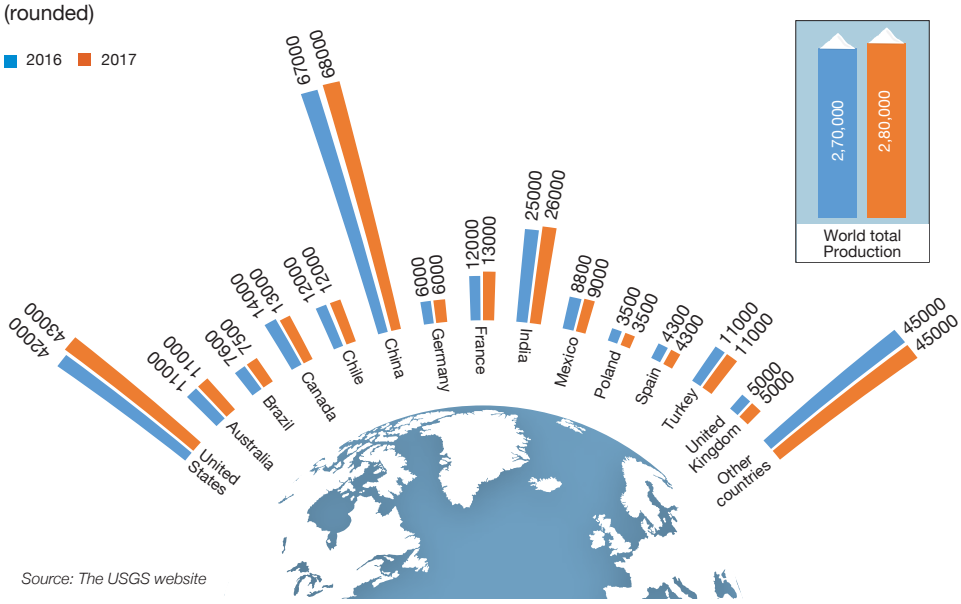
Historical journey of salt in Bengal

The salt industry in Bengal was developed by the people known as Mulunghees. They used to produce salt by the open pan production method. The field for salt production has been known as Tofol. Two government departments known as Jaigir Mahal and Nimak Ewaz Mahal administered the salt industry in the Mughal period. In the 16th century, salt manufacturing was a source of income for the government. It had monopoly control over salt production and trading. Salt producers used to take advances called dadni from the traders. According to some historians, the salt industry got a new direction when the East India Company acquired Chattogram in 1760. It made Chattogram a major source of income by monopolising the salt production.

World salt production and reserves

Production in million tons (rounded)



Source: The USGS website

Such policies transformed the Mulunghees, who were independent producers before, into salt labourers. Salt production as a monopoly of the government continued and farmers faced a major setback.

During the British period, Britain's Salt Act of 1882 prohibited Indians from acquiring and trading salt. The British empire earned a handsome revenue from the rent of salt producing land and the duty on salt termed as 'NIMKI/Nimak Mahal'. Indians were forced to buy the important mineral from their British rulers who was exercising a monopoly over the manufacture and sale of salt. British rulers also charged a heavy tax on salt, as a result, India's poor suffered the most. Indian leader Gandhi declared resistance to the British Salt Act and started a new campaign named 'Satyagraha,' or mass civil disobedience. On 12 March 1930, Gandhi set out from his ashram at Sabermanti near Ahmedabad with several dozen followers on a journey of some 240 miles to the coastal town of Dandi which is famously termed as Salt March. Gandhi and his supporters were to defy British policy by making salt from seawater and with each passing day, an increasing number of people joined the salt Satyagraha campaign.

After 1947 partition, the salt sector of Bangladesh, then East Pakistan, was restored, but the imposition of heavy customs duty and tax on salt industries to import salt from West Pakistan became an obstacle for the flourishment of the industry again. The East Pakistan Directorate of Industries and the Small Industries Corporation was responsible for the development of the salt industry at that time. After the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries or BSCIC took up the task of developing this industry.

BSCIC as the caretaker

The government owned corporation, Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) is responsible to improve, promote and support small businesses. In 1957, BSCIC was established by an Act of the Parliament. BSCIC aims to accelerate the industrial growth through promotion and extension of medium, small and cottage industries. To create more employments, to ensure appropriate price for salt and to be self-sufficient in salt production BSCIC took several programs in the coastal zone of Bangladesh. As a result, there is a remarkable expansion of salt farming. Under the assistance of BSCIC, about 70,000 acres of land in the coastal region of Cox's Bazar and Shatkhira districts have come under salt cultivation. Moreover, BSCIC has provided 263 Salt Iodisation Plans (SIP) to salt industrial units for mixing iodine in edible salt with the aim to fill Iodine deficiency in human body. Implementation of Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorder through universal iodisation of salt (CIDD) project had been implemented by June 2016 and more than 90 per cent households are using iodised salt today. On 11 December 1994, the government enacted a law to prevent iodine deficiency diseases. Under this Act, it is compulsory to add iodine in all edible salt from 31 June 1995 onward and there is a prohibition to store and market non-iodine salt in Bangladesh.

Under the assistance of BSCIC, about 70000 acres of land in the coastal region of Cox's Bazar and Shatkhira districts have come under salt cultivation. Moreover, BSCIC has provided 263 Salt Iodisation Plans (SIP) to salt industrial units for mixing iodine in edible salt with the aim to fill Iodine deficiency in human body.

Methods used in salt production in Bangladesh

Traditionally in Bangladesh, salt was manufactured by open pan production from brine method or solar evaporation of seawater method. Polythene process was introduced from 2000-2001 in which salt production was higher than the traditional methods. In the Polythene process, 21 metric tons of salt can be produced per acre of land while the traditional methods produce 17.25 metric tons. Furthermore, the production per acre and the quality of salt has been very standard in Polythene process.

In the polythene process, salt farmers make small bed shaped grounds with aisles (like high fencing with soil) around lands. Then they dry out those salt-beds under the sun and spread black polythene over them. Usually, farmers fill those small salt beds with saltwater collected from nearby rivers. Saltwater-filled salt-beds are then kept under the sun for 4 to 5 days. Eventually, the heat evaporates water and unrefined salt remains on the polythene. Refining machinery are then required to process the unrefined salt to get the finished product. It is estimated that 25 per cent of the unrefined salt become wastage during processing, while the remaining 75 per cent are crushed, packed and distributed throughout the country mainly for human and industrial consumption. *Falgun* and *Chaitra* (March and April) are the best months for salt cultivation.

Table 1: Summary of zone wise salt factories in Bangladesh

Zone	District	Number of salt factories
Dhaka	Dhaka	7
	Munshiganj	4
	Kishoreganj	2
	Sylhet	1
	Sirajganj	1
	Gazipur	1
	Manikganj	1
Narayanganj	Narayanganj	48
Chandpur	Chandpur	25
Chattogram	Chattogram	91
	Feni	3
Patiya	Patiya area-Chattogram	39
Cox's Bazar	Cox's Bazar	31
Khulna	Khulna	22
	Jashore	1
	Satkhira	1
Jhalokati	Jhalokati	12
	Pirojpur	4
	Bhola	1
Grand Total		295

Source: *GIS-based Salt Industries Information System for Salt Iodisation in Bangladesh - a study conducted by the Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services, Dhaka.*

Present scenario of the salt industry of Bangladesh

Chattogram, Cox's bazar, Noakhali, Barishal and Khulna and the connecting off-shore islands are the main producers of unrefined salt in Bangladesh. At present, 18 districts are engaged in salt production with 295 refined salt producing factories. Table 1 shows the summa ry of zone wise salt factories in Bangladesh.

Since the population of Bangladesh is increasing, there is an increment of demand for salts. Bangladesh introduced the National Salt Policy in 2011, discouraging salt import. But

according to BSCIC figures, the salt production is decreasing. Salt mill owner's association, 'Bangladesh Labon Mill Malik Samity' had blamed the use of sodium sulphate as edible salt, import of finished salt in the name of sodium sulphate, and a dual policy on import duty as reasons behind the setback of our salt industry. On the other hand, the farmers became frustrated by selling salt at lower prices occasionally. In coastal areas, farmers are shifting from salt production to shrimp production as shrimp aquaculture brings more money. Besides, short evaporation season and limited mechanisation, low pace of production to meet increasing local demand, the low selling price of crude salt compared to high production cost, lack of financing from financial institutions and the high cost of financing from informal sources are contemporary problems faced by the salt farmers.

When traders import from abroad, locally produced salt price decreases. Sporadically, the government gives import permit for salts and as a result, local salt farmers face the economic backlash. In the fiscal year 2014-15, Bangladesh imported 1 lac tons of salt. In the fiscal year 2015-2016, Bangladesh imported 2.5 lac tons and 5 lac tons have already been imported in the current fiscal year. If this import rate continues, this industry will fall into serious danger in near future. Dependence on import will also increase simultaneously. Many farmers will stop producing salt for fear of losses and they will become indebted by taking advance loans from the traders. Also, farmers should not be affected by excess salt production, the authority should be aware of that as well. To ensure the fair price of the salt produced by the farmers, the Ministry of Commerce and the BSCIC will have to take effective action and make a realistic effort to protect the farmers from the middlemen. The country must seek self-sufficiency in salt to save a huge amount of foreign currency. If the government gives financial support and sets conditions of fair price, the salt production will increase. Table 2 shows the demand, production target and total production of salt in the last 5 fiscal years.

Measures to protect and prosper the salt industry

Community-focused land leasing systems, sufficient credit facilities, use of mechanical equipment (water pump, leveller, etc.) and reliable weather forecasting can increase quality salt production.

To enhance the volume of production, the following efforts should be taken,

1. Bangladesh should get rid of import dependency on salt.

2. Effective implementation of National Salt Policy 2011 is needed.

3. The country should train its salt producers to produce quality salt for household and industrial uses.

4. Bangladesh needs to put the condition on shrimp farmers to produce salt at the time of land allotment.

5. Creating buffer stock for salt can support the farmers during the time of price fluctuation.

6. The government should take initiatives to collect and implement innovative technology in salt production.

7. For further improvement of this sector, the authority needs to conduct regular survey and study for collecting and compiling sufficient data base.

The formation of salt farmer's cooperatives can ensure bargaining power and maximise economic return (i.e., salt price) for their standard of living. To reduce the production cost of salt, the following measures can be taken:

a. Without security or collateral and low interest loans should be arranged for the salt cultivating farmers as agricultural loans.

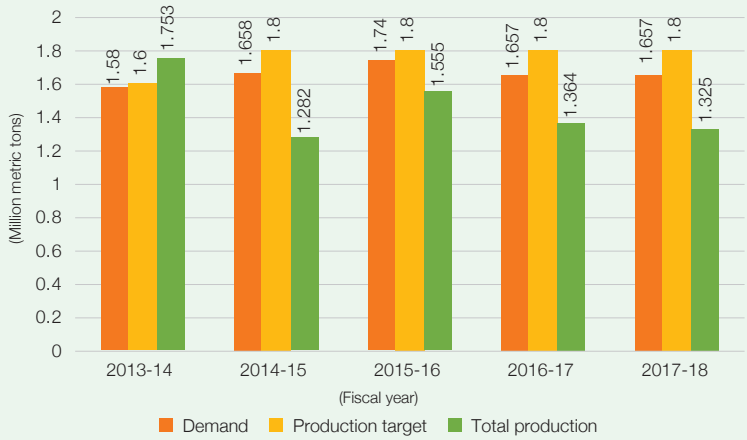
b. On the observation of district commission, the leased cost at private level should be reduced for reduction of primary cost of producing salt.

c. The Government should take proper steps to import required raw materials for producing polythene only to be used for salt production without tax.

Salt is an important industry. To keep this industry alive, Bangladesh needs modernised production system, proper management and environment-friendly cultivation system. By improving the cultivation method of marginal farmers, it is possible to reduce the import dependency of salt. Therefore, by achieving long-term success through salt production, the country can meet the local demand and be able to export salt to import-dependent countries.

To keep this industry alive, Bangladesh needs modernised production system, proper management and environment-friendly cultivation system. By improving the cultivation method of marginal farmers, it is possible to reduce the import dependency of salt. Therefore, by achieving long-term success through salt production, the country can meet the local demand and be able to export salt to import-dependent countries.

Table 2: Total salt production in the last 5 fiscal years



Source: BSCIC website

CPA News Desk

Bangladesh enters LNG era

Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) of Excelerate Energy has shipped the country's first Liquefied Natural Gas or LNG. By receiving this shipment Bangladesh has entered the LNG era. With this specialised vessel, a total of 48,028 metric tons of gas was sent from Qatar to the coast of Matarbari on Maheshkhali Island of Cox's Bazar. Implementation of the USD 180 million project is supported by Petrobangla, Excelerate Energy and the World Bank.

The economic development of Bangladesh is being interrupted due to the rising gas crisis. It will be possible to overcome this crisis due to the entry into the LNG era. According to the agreement, the FSRU will supply an annual 3.8 million metric tons of gas and Excelerated Energy will operate this gas terminal for 15 years, each year with a USD 90 million contract. After that time period, Petrobangla will get the ownership of the terminal. Already an LNG pipeline from Maheshkhali to Chattogram city is constructed. The gas will be supplied to the different power plants. 14 million metric tons of gas per day will be available from imported LNG.

Qatargas will provide 1.8 million metric tons gas per annum (MMTPA) from 2018 to 2022 and 2.5 MMTPA gas from 2023 to 2032. The country's second LNG terminal is to be launched in Maheshkhali in 2019, it will also be a 3.8 MMTPA Excelerate FSRU. Apart from this, various projects and new LNG contracts are being signed. In December 2017, Reliance Energy approved the finance for the construction of a terminal and a 750 megawatt power plant. In January 2018, an agreement was signed between Bangladesh Power Development Board and the Indonesian state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to build a 1.4 gigawatt (GW) gas-based power plant with the LNG supplied through dedicated FSRU. In March of this year, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Summit Power, Mitsubishi and Diamond Gas for constructing a 2.4 GW power plant with a terminal. Already Petrobangla signed MoUs with AOT Energy, Gunvor, Oman LNG, and Pertamina for gas supply.

Gas Transmission Company Limited (GTCL) officials said the long-term gas crisis in Chattogram is going to end with the import of LNG. The gas will remain surplus. Which will be provided in other districts in phases.

Container handling increases at the port

Container handling has been increasing sharply in Chattogram port. In the fiscal year 2017-18, the growth of container handling is 12.19 per cent, which is 1.19 per cent more than the fiscal year 2016-17. In the fiscal year 2017-18, 28 lacs 8 thousand 554 TEUs containers were handled and in 2016-17 the port handled a total of 25 lacs 3 thousand 471 TEUs containers.

Police recommends 17 points to resolve port traffic

It takes an average of three to four hours for transport vehicles to reach the city centre from Chattogram Shah Amanat International Airport. This situation is largely due to the pressure of a big volume of transporting goods at the port. Thousands of merchandise vehicles occupy a zone from traffic congested Barik building circle to EPZ. To ease the congestion, a letter signed by the Deputy Secretary of the Home Ministry, Mallika Khatun urged the Secretary of the Ministry of Shipping and the IG of police to take necessary action on June 19, 2018. The matter has also been reported to the Prime Minister's Office from the Police Headquarters.

The police made a report with 17-point recommendations to resolve the traffic congestion. The law and order force recommended to keep the gate number 3 of the New Mooring Container Terminal open from 7 am instead of 11 am, to keep the road beside North Container Yard open in order to facilitate the passage for loaded trucks from the port, to reserve the road from Ishaq Brothers to old market and Bandar college for trucks and covered vans, to reconstruct the square in front of the Bandar Bhaban so that container movers can take necessary turn, to make the port connecting road fully operational in the fastest time, automation of each gate of the port, to make separate terminals for the port merchandise vehicles, etc.

Singapore expressed interest to invest in Chattogram

Singapore Business Federation (SBF) leaders have expressed their interest in investing in education, infrastructure, power, health and IT sectors in Chattogram. Singapore has significant investment plans in the financial sector of Bangladesh as part of the investment in South Asia. The leaders of the trade delegation of Singapore expressed their interest in a meeting with the Chattogram Chamber leaders on Thursday, July 12. They said, "Singapore is interested in private sector investment in Bangladesh. Due to the strategic location, the place to invest in Chattogram. There is a chance to build a special economic zone here."

Singapore Business Federation Chairman Teo Siong Seng led the delegation. The Chattogram Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCCI) President Mahbubul Alam led the traders of Chattogram. The meeting was held at Bangabandhu Conference Hall of the World Trade Centre of Chattogram Chamber. On the occasion, Chattogram Port Authority Chairman Commodore Zulfiqur Aziz presented a documentary about the expansion of the port.

CCCI president Mahbubul Alam anticipated necessary support and investment from Singaporean experts and business community to make Chattogram as an attractive city, to develop Mongla and Payra port and to construct the Matarbari seaport. To reduce the trade deficit, he urged the delegation to export Bangladeshi products through Singapore to other countries. Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) Kazi M Aminul Islam, Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (BEZA) Paban Chowdhury, Honorary Consul of Turkey Salahuddin Kasem Khan, and Honorary Consul of Italy Mirza Salman addressed the meeting.

UK to invest in maritime sector

The United Kingdom seeks to invest in the maritime sector of Bangladesh. The country expressed its interest in expanding its partnership with Chattogram port's development activities. On July 24, the British Prime Minister's Trade Ambassador and member of the British Parliament, Rushnara Ali, expressed this interest in a meeting with senior officials of Chattogram port. She had also expressed interest in direct foreign investment. Zafar Alam, member of the Chattogram Port Authority, Commodore Khondokar Akter Hossain, Director (Security) Lt. Colonel Abdul Gaffar, deputy secretary of Chattorgram Port Authority Mohammad Azizul Mowla, deputy high commissioner of the British High Commission Kanbar Hossain Bore, Director of International Commerce Benjamin Kantmour, Deputy Director Khalid Gaffar, Manager Abir Barua and Public Relations Officer Narayan Debnath were present at the meeting.

NBR to introduce AEO system

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) is going to introduce the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) system for faster release of imported products. Earlier, in 2012, the NBR took the initiative to introduce this system. As a result, the goods will go directly to the importers' own warehouse as soon as the goods are unloaded from a ship. Customs officials will examine the products at the warehouse. Both sides will communicate through E-mails. Recently, a rule has been issued in this regard. The NBR will give AEO certificate to the organisations having transparent import-export activities in the past. Applications for the certificate will be called soon. NBR wants to launch the system in December. Not only Chattogram and Mongla seaports, but this will also be introduced in all the airports and land ports of the country.

According to the World Customs Organisation (WCO) condition, this system is being introduced. Certificate holders will also get ten more types of facilities, including the facility of testing the shipments of goods in their own premises rather than the customs station. In addition, they will also get the same facility abroad. For this, there should be an understanding with the concerned country. A special team of the customs department will be supervising this arrangement. All tax and duty procedures including the bill of entries will be completed before the arrival of goods at the port.

To get this certificate, one needs to fulfil seven conditions. Those are,

1. The concerned company should have five years of business management experience
2. The concerned company should pay regular duty, VAT and income tax
3. In the revenue related cases, the number of fines cannot exceed 1 per cent of the total product or service value
4. If there is any criminal complaint against the applicant within the last three years, the concerned company will not be certified
5. All due duties should be paid
6. The authorised capital of the company should be at least BDT 15 crores and,
7. The annual import-export amount should be at least BDT 5 crores.

Business leaders meet CPA chairman

Business leaders of Chattogram emphasised on increasing the capacity of the port attuning to the pace of trade and commerce of the country to carry on the economic growth. Besides, there were some other recommendations from them. Those are, to ensure that no ship can leave the port with the manifested cargo, to stop the extra handling charge of the container in the ICD, to launch the lighter jetty operation at Sadarghat immediately, to construct and renovate the roads needed for trucks and covered vans for the upcoming lighter Jetties, to cancel extra charges for special permission, to collect necessary port equipment on urgent basis, and to complete the Laldia, Patenga and Bay terminal construction work as soon as possible.

On July 11, a delegation of business leaders led by Chattogram Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Mahbubul Alam presented the above recommendations while interacting with the chairman of the port authority. The delegation of the business leaders apprised the chairman of the port authority, Commodore Zulfiqur Aziz, about the problems and expectations of the port users. The Chamber director Anjan Shekhar Das, Mohammad Shahriar Jahan and Tarafdar Mohammad Ruhul Amin, C & F Agent Association president AKM Akter Hossain, Shipping Agent Association chairman Ahsanul Haque Chowdhury and senior officials of the port and customs were also present during the occasion of the exchange of views.

Pointing to the directive of the Prime Minister to reduce the 'Cost of Doing Business', the port chairman said, "If any kind of immoral charge is imposed by shipping agents, strict action will be taken against them." He mentioned that shipping agents should continue issuing DO after five o'clock in the afternoon.

The chairman of the port also emphasised following the ICD policy. He assured that the lighterage jetty operation in Sadarghat would start soon to increase the productivity of the port and measures had been taken for container delivery system by urgently constructing yards in the Bay Terminal area.

Additional tariff withdrawn from ship recycling industry

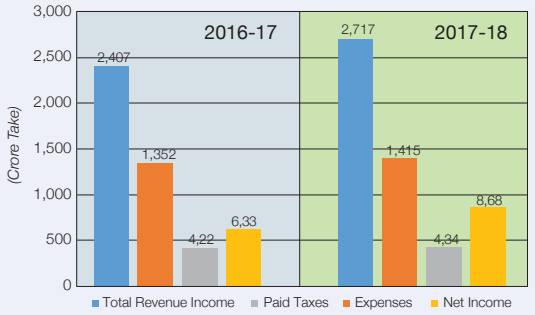
The extra VAT, imposed in the recently announced budget for the ship recycling industry, has been withdrawn for the next two years. Members of a ship breakers association of Bangladesh have conveyed this information. Prior to this, in a primary proposition, the finance ministry imposed 15 per cent more value-added taxes in the current fiscal year for all the imported scrap ships. Bangladesh Ship Breakers and Recyclers Association (BSBRA) had been protesting against the extra taxation from the beginning. The Association anxiously said that if the proposed budget was implemented, the country's ship recycling industry and steel mills might face a huge blow. Finally, the finance ministry cancelled the decision. As a result of this new decision, many scrap ships are now coming to Chattogram, which were supposed to go to Pakistan or to the coast of India.

Chattogram port enjoys income growth

In the latest fiscal year (2017-18), the post-tax net income of the Chattogram port increased. The net income of the port stood at BDT 868 crore in the specified period. In the previous fiscal year, the amount was BDT 633 crore. That means net income of Chattogram port increased 37 per cent in the last fiscal year.

In the fiscal year 2017-18, the total revenue earning on the port (including operational and non-operational sector) has been BDT 2,771 crore. The total cost of the port was BDT 1,415 crore. BDT 434 crore has been paid to the government after paying income tax. After deducting those amounts, the net income of the port stood at BDT 868 crore. In the fiscal year 2016-17, total revenue from Chattogram port was BDT 2,407 crore. The port had BDT 1424 crore expenses. BDT 422 crore was paid as tax to the government. As a result, the net income of the port of the year 2016-17 was 633 crore taka.

About 80 per cent revenue of the Chattogram port comes from product handling. Ships, storage, land and river rent and various sectors bring the remaining income. In the last fiscal year, 93 million tons of total handling had been done under Chattogram Port Authority. Before that, the number was eighty million tons. That means the number of goods has increased almost 16 per cent.



The revenue and expenditure table of the Chattogram port in 2016-17 and 2017-18 fiscal year

Japan seeks land in Maheshkhali

Japan wants a land for establishing another Economic Zone (EZ) in Bangladesh. Now their interest is in Maheshkhali upazila of Cox's Bazar, where Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (Beja) has taken land for several economic zones. If Japan gets the land in Maheshkhali, it will be the second economic zone of Japan in Bangladesh. At present, the country is working on establishing an economic zone of 1,010 acre of land in Araihazar of Narayanganj. Japan's interest in establishing economic zones in Maheshkhali came up in a bilateral meeting with BEZA. In that meeting, Japan sought 1,000 acres of land. The Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which has a master plan for the Government of Bangladesh regarding Maheshkhali, also has the issue of establishing economic zones.

Executive Chairman of BEZA, Paban Chowdhury said, "We welcome the investment of Araihazar, Maheskhali or Mirsarai. If Japan wants to invest, maximum support will be given on behalf of the BEZA."

In addition to Japan, China is establishing an economic zone for its investors in Anwara of Chattogram. India will establish three economic zones, one in Mirsarai in Chattogram, one in Bagerhat's Mongla and the other is to be in Bheramara of Kushtia. The total amount of land in India's three economic zones is 1,624 acres. The size of the Chinese economic zone is 783 acres. Japan's economic zone size in Narayanganj is 1,010 acres.

Three gantry cranes reached the port

Three gantry cranes have reached Chattogram port. On 17th of August, they were taken off the ships in the Chattogram Container Terminal (CCT) jetty. It will take three months for these cranes to start container handling. These three gantry cranes will be added to speed up the container handling of the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT) of Chattogram port.

In 2005, four gantry cranes were added to Chattogram port. They were provided by the famous Japanese company, Mitsubishi. They are being used in moving goods at the CCT Terminal of the port. Then, it was decided to add 10 gantry cranes built in 2007 to the NCT. This time, cranes are being bought from China.

The port chairman Commodore Zulfiqur Aziz said, "With these three gantry cranes, it will be possible to unload containers quickly from the gearless vessel. This will increase the capacity of container handling at least one and a half times. Time and money will be saved."

The 10 gantry cranes are being bought for speeding up of NCT. In this connection, on October 15, 2007, the agreement for the purchase of six gantry cranes was signed in the first phase. These gantry cranes are being purchased from Shanghai Zhenhua Heavy Industries Company Limited (ZPMC) in Shanghai, China. The cost of buying each gantry crane is BDT 57.5 million. In the first phase, the remaining three of the six gantry cranes will reach the port in October 2018. In the next step, the contract for the purchase of four more gantry cranes has been signed on August 8, 2018. These four cranes are being purchased at the cost of BDT 238.61 million, and they are worth BDT 59.55 million each. China's ZPMC will supply them within the next one year.

FBCCI recommends port service improvement

FBCCI has given importance to improving the quality of services of different ports including Chattogram port. Traders have made several recommendations for the development of ports to make the country's business more dynamic and fruitful. FBCCI Standing Committee discusses these issues on July 17 at a meeting relating to Ministry of Shipping (Maritime Port). The speakers said that the need for the quick construction of the Patenga Terminal, urgent basis construction of a part of the Bay Terminal to store containers, concretising private jetties of Sadarghat, and building some jetties at Narayanganj BIWTA are matters of earnestness.

Chairman of the committee, Dr Md. Parvez Sajjad Akter presided over the meeting. He urged to develop the toll road as a six-lane for container transport and to lengthen the Chattogram port rail line up to the Bay terminal. FBCCI Vice-President Munatakim Ashraf, Director Nizamuddin Rajesh, Tabarakul Tosaddek Hossain Khan Titu and Hafez Haroon also spoke at the meeting. In addition, the committee's co-chairman Ahsanul Haque Chowdhury, Mahbub Chowdhury, Captain Shahed Chowdhury and Shamsuzzaman Russell and the committee members took part in the discussion.

Belgium expressed interest to invest in Bay Terminal

Belgium has expressed interest in investing in the Bay Terminal, the biggest development project in Chattorgram port. On July 24, Belgian ambassador to India, Jean Louis, visited the Chattogram port. During his visit, a meeting was held between him and the port's board member Zafar Alam. The director of the port (security) Lt. Colonel Abdul Gaffar and Deputy Secretary Mohammad Azizul Molla were also present in that meeting. Belgian Ambassador expressed his desire to participate in the development of Chattogram port after seeing the progress.

Mitsubishi to buy stake in Bangladesh LNG terminal

Japanese Mitsubishi Corporation (MC) has agreed to acquire a 25 per cent stake in Summit LNG Terminal (SLNG) and to develop a liquefied natural gas (LNG) receiving terminal that uses a floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) in Bangladesh.

With the acquisition, 75 per cent of SLNG will be held by Summit Corporation and 25 per cent by MC. Under the project, SLNG will install an FSRU 6km off the coast of the Moheshkali island in the Cox's Bazar district of Chattogram division in Bangladesh, where it will receive and regasify LNG procured by Petrobangla. The construction of the terminal commenced at the end of 2017 and commercial operations are expected to start in March 2019. The planned LNG import volume is approximately 3.5 MTPA, according to MC.

Bangladesh is promoting LNG imports as part of its national energy policy. The country will start importing LNG in 2018, with a targeted import volume of 17 MTPA in 2030.

As explained, LNG receiving terminals that use FSRUs can be installed at lower cost and constructed within a shorter period than conventional onshore receiving terminals and, hence, are effective means to build LNG receiving capacity in emerging countries. The demand for such terminals is expected to grow.

In addition to this project, Summit and MC have agreed to jointly pursue other projects across the LNG value chain in Bangladesh, from LNG supply to power generation.

Earlier this year, the duo inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to jointly pursue an integrated LNG-to-power development consisting of onshore LNG receiving terminal with a regasification capacity of up to 1,500 million cubic feet per day, associated LNG supply and construction of 2,400 Megawatt gas-powered thermal power plant.

India provides loan assistance for Mongla port

For the development of the second largest port of the country, Mongla port, which is situated in the southern region, a project worth of BDT 6,585 crore has been taken. India will provide BDT 6, 256 crore as loan assistance to this project. The port authority said that the project will be implemented by 2022. The project will be funded from USD 4.5 billion, the amount India will provide due to a loan agreement between Bangladesh and India under the third Line of Credit (LoC) signed during the visit of Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India in April last year.

The secretary of the Ministry of Shipping, Abdus Samad notified that infrastructure facilities in Mongla port are not enough to meet the present requirement. The port will be busier when the Padma bridge will start operation. On the other hand, to shift all the activities of the port from Khulna to Mongla, the overall facilities should be increased greatly. The purpose of the project is to provide modern facilities to Mongla port users with an increased capacity. This big project includes the construction of an economic zone near the port and the construction of rail linking and the connecting road from Mongla to via Bhutan and Nepal to Kolkata of India to increase regional connectivity.

Shipping Ministry informed that businessmen had shown interest in using Mongla port due to increased traffic in Chattogram port. Apart from that, India, Nepal and Bhutan proposed the government of Bangladesh to use this port due to the transit convenience.

Commodore AKM Faruk Hasan, the chairman of Mongla Port Authority said that Mongla port received BDT 10 crore for the development programmes in last 9 years and the work of Mongla Economic Zone was almost done. He further said that the employment opportunities of at least 25 thousand people would be created after the completion of Mongla Economic Zone.

Government approves the Delta Plan 2100 for sustainable development

On 4th September 2018, the government approved the Delta Plan 2100 with the view to harness huge potentials of Bangladesh as a delta country through water resource management, ensuring food and water security and tackling disasters. According to news reports, the plan is expected to boost the country's GDP (gross domestic product) growth by another 1.5 per cent by 2030. With NEC chairperson Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's presence, the approval came at a National Economic Council (NEC) meeting at its conference room in the capital. Later, Planning minister AHM Mustafa Kamal briefed the reporters.

The minister said that the short-term measures of the plan will be implemented by 2030, while the mid-term ones by 2050 and the long-term ones by 2100. He also added that the government will need 37 billion USD by 2030 for implementing the plan. According to the minister, the country could boost its GDP growth by another 1.5 per cent by 2030 through implementing the plan. He called the day as the 'Red-Letter Day' for Bangladesh as well as his ministry since nearly a 100 year plan was approved for the first time in the country. The Netherlands, as mentioned by the minister, have been greatly benefitted through adopting such a plan as the country has been able to reclaim around 6,000 square kilometers of land in addition to its mainland.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, encouraged by the experiences of Netherlands, had earlier directed the authorities concerned to work out such a plan to tap the maximum potentials of Bangladesh as a deltaic region. The planning minister also said that the work is underway to formulate another perspective plan for the year 2021-2041 to transform the nation into a developed one. State minister for finance and planning MA Mannan, GED member of the planning commission professor Shamsul Alam and secretaries concerned were present at the briefing.

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