

Minutes of the meeting held between Chairman, IWAI and representatives of Goa Barge Owners Association at Mumbai on 16.3.10 on prospects of cargo movement on Ganga and Brahmaputra

- 1) A meeting was held between Chairman IWAI and representatives of Goa Barge Owners Association at Bombay Presidency Golf Club, Chembur, Mumbai on 16.3.2010 on the subject of ‘Cargo movement on Ganga and Brahmaputra Navigational challenges and solutions’. List of officials who attended this meeting is annexed.
- 2) Chairman IWAI welcomed the representatives of Goa Barge Owners Association (GBOA) and at the outset said that while the role of GBOA in transporting iron ore through the inland waterways of Goa is well known, it is heartening for the IWAI to see that a few barges of GBOA have also been shifted to Kolkata area. Since the efficiency of operation by GBOA is better than those of the existing barges in Kolkata area, it is expected that due to their presence the overall efficiency of operation of IWT vessels in eastern region will improve. He said that there however is ample opportunities for the barges of GBOA to start operating in the stretches up-stream of Kolkata on NW-1 and also from Kolkata/Haldia to NW-2 since infrastructure on these two National Waterways (NW) has been substantially upgraded by IWAI in last few years and while regular movement of stone chips by IWAI vessels between Sahibganj and Patna is already taking place for many years, there are new and realistic possibilities of transportation of several specific bulk cargo as well, such as coal, fertilizers, foodgrains, cement, steel, ODC etc.
- 3) Vice-Chairman, IWAI gave a power point presentation, a copy of which is enclosed. In this presentation, he gave hydromorphological details of Ganga (NW-1) and Brahmaputra (NW-2) such as water level, discharge and current velocity at different places, critical bend radius, steps being taken by IWAI for improving the LAD and 24 hrs navigational facilities, DGPS stations etc. Status of LAD of more than 3 m/2m during various months of the year on NW-1 & 2 were presented through bar charts. He said that NW-1 can be developed as a **“dedicated freight corridor”** for UP, Bihar and West Bengal (as there is potential of movement of coal and other cargo such as foodgrain, cement, stone chips etc) and NW-2 for entire North-Eastern region. He suggested that for NW-1 & 2, tug and barge combination perhaps may be a better option as against self propelled vessels and

the GBOA, who have enough expertise on design aspects of inland vessels as well their operation, should be able to design optimum type and size of inland vessels for NW 1 & 2. He said that to acquaint themselves with actual field conditions, the representatives of GBOA should inspect both these waterways in survey vessels of IWAI which undertake longitudinal surveys every fortnight on NWs. This way they shall have actual feel of the waterway and surrounding areas. He hoped that very soon IWAI would see substantial presence of GBOA vessels on NW-1 right up to Allahabad and on NW-2 right up to Sadiya.

- 4) Chairman IWAI made special reference to the transportation of ODC on NW-1, 2 & 3 in last 2-3 years and informed that for the first time IWAI has started levying user charges for movement of ODC which has generated some revenue for IWAI on account of IWT operations on NWs. He also mentioned (a) the potential of use of IWT mode for transportation of project cargo for 34 hydro power plants coming up in Arunachal Pradesh, (b) Ashuganj as a multi-modal port of call for transportation of project cargo for up coming Palatana power plant of ONGC near Agartala and (c) potential of Dhubri to be developed as an important IWT port.
- 5) The members of GBOA expressed satisfaction that IWAI has completed low level jetties at Patna and Pandu and two more permanent terminals at Varanasi and Kolkata (G.R. Jetty) are under construction. Chairman said that if these jetties begin to be utilized for IWT movement, it will give good visibility to the sector and also encourage the Govt of India/IWAI to construct more jetties which involve substantial capital investment. Vice-Chairman also informed about the possibility of signing of MoU by Govt of Bihar with IWAI and prospective IWT operators for transportation of coal (either domestic or imported) for their power plants. He said that now when IWAI is committed to provide and maintain a higher level of IWT infrastructure and there are several prospective cargo owners who are willing to start transporting cargo by this mode, it is necessary that operators like GBOA also start showing their physical presence in NW-1 & 2 since in this way the entire IWT operation on these two waterways can become successful. He said that if the GBOA is first looking for a committed cargo, then at the first instance, movement of stone chips between Sahibganj and Patna, which is regularly being done by IWAI vessels since many years and also between Pakur and Kolkata can be taken over by

GBOA since it already has shown the viability of captive cargo at reasonable freight rate of about Rs 1 per tonne per km, by IWAI vessels.

- 6) GBOA informed that most of their barges have draft in the range of 2.8 to 3.3 m and since on NW-1 and 2 the availability depth is not adequate for this draft (except probably Haldia – Farakka sector where IWAI is going to provide 3 m LAD) it may be difficult for them to operate their existing vessels on NW-1 (upstream of Kolkata) and between Kolkata/Haldia and NW-2. Vice-Chairman, IWAI stated that CIWTC has many barges of 750 tonne dwt with loaded draft of 1.8 – 1.9 m along with tugs and hence IWAI and GBOA should make efforts to get some of CIWTC barges transferred to GBOA so that CIWTC barges which were designed for operation on NW 1 & 2 can start getting utilized on NW 1 & 2.
- 7) The representatives of GBOA then gave details about some of the difficulties they are facing in operating in West Bengal. It was informed that some vessels of GBOA have already been shifted to Kolkata region but some of the operators are finding it difficult to get permission by the Chief Ship Surveyor of West Bengal for regular operation in that region. They said that Mr. Chakraborty, Chief Ship Surveyor does not have the amended IV Act and he wants that a consolidated IV Act with amendments made in 2007 be provided to him by IWAI. Vice-Chairman said that the IV Act and the approved amendments are already available on IWAI website but in addition to it, IWAI shall also get IV Act printed and the same shall be circulated to all the State Govts including West Bengal and operators like GBOA.
- 8) GBOA also said that there are some more issues such as development of night navigational aids between Kolkata and Haldia by KoPT and IWT terminals in Haldia and Kolkata. They said that if these two facilities are made available they can enhance efficiency of their operations to a great extent. Chairman IWAI said that the GBOA may send a focused write up on all the issues they are facing with KoPT and IWAI will facilitate their solution through KoPT.
- 9) To summarise, the decision points of this meeting are as follows:
 - i) GBOA would inspect both NW-1 & 2 on the survey vessels of IWAI to know the actual field characteristics of NW 1 & 2.

- ii) IWAI and GBOA will explore the possibility of transfer of CIWTC barges to IWAI/GBOA on mutually agreed terms and conditions.
 - iii) GBOA will explore the possibility of taking up transportation of stone chips on NW-1 either through their own vessels or the vessels which they may take over from CIWTC.
 - iv) IWAI shall get amended IV Act printed along with the amendments made in 2007 and circulate to all the State Govts as well as other stake holders.
 - v) GBOA will send a write up explaining problems/issues they are having with KoPT in operation of their barges in Kolkata-Haldia-Sagar region and IWAI will facilitate their interaction with KoPT and in arriving at necessary solutions to the issues.
- 10) Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

Annexure

List of officials who attended the meeting between Chairman IWAI and representatives of Goa Barge Owners Association held at Mumbai on 16.3.2010

A) IWAI

1. Shri S.P. Gaur, Chairman - in the Chair
2. Shri Sunil Kumar, Vice-Chairman
3. Shri R.P. Khare, Director (P&C)

B) Representatives of GBOA

1. Shri Atul Jadhav, President
2. Shri William D'Costa, Hon. Secretary
3. Shri S.K. Shahi, SKS Logistics
4. Shri Sanjay Jain, Clara Vinimoy P. Ltd
5. Shri Aditya Suklikar, Orion Agencies ltd
6. Shri Amir X. Fernandez, Delta Engineering
7. Shri P.N. Sawant, Atreya Shipping
8. Shri Prabhakar Naik, Vishal Ore Carriers
9. Shri Viraf M. Bharucha, Jag Shipping & Transports
10. Shri L. Almeida, Nav Bharat Carriers
11. Shri Suhan Karkal, Premier Marine
12. Shri Neeraj N. Bajoria, Jubilee Shipping & Logistics Ltd.
