

PANDU PORT (INLAND WATER TRANSPORT TERMINAL) – GATEWAY TO NORTH EAST INDIA

Pandu Port is located on the North Bank of River Brahmaputra (NW-2) within the city of Guwahati. This Port is serving local populace on the banks of Brahmaputra river since times immemorial.

The terminal at Pandu had established by R.S.N. Company for their regular IWT services which were in operation by them during the British period and up to the winding up of the company during 1960. The terminal was then taken over by Central Inland Water Transport Corporation (CIWTC) and operated till 1991. Thereafter, this terminal was



transferred to Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) as the development of infrastructure on National Waterways was entrusted to IWAI.

This inland Port is the most important and largest river Port in Assam state. Apart from cargo vessels, cruise vessels with international tourists regularly use this Port. This Port connects to Kolkata through Inland Waterways in Bangladesh known as Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route. As per the Protocol on Inland Water Transit & Trade between India and Bangladesh, the vessels of both the countries can ply on declared IBP routes.

The Pandu Port is an important terminal-cum-transit point for the goods and cargo destined for North Eastern Region. Recognizing the importance of Port and its centralized location, the Pandu Port has been developed as a multi modal inland terminal with permanent RCC jetties, a broad-gauge railway siding and road connectivity with NW-31. The Port is capable of handling all types of inland vessels including container vessels round the year.



The salient features of the Pandu Port are as listed below:

- Total Area of the terminal: 7 hectares
- No. of Jetties: 2 (two) Permanent RCC Jetties
 - o High level jetty of size 50m x 20m berthing platform and 9m x 20m approach
 - o Low level jetty of size 50m x 20m berthing platform and 115m x 8.5m approach

- Other Infrastructure

- o Transit covered Shed: 2 (two) of size 75m x 21m each
- o Weigh Bridge: 100T capacity
- o Shore crane: Two hydraulic shore crane of 20 MT and one crane of 75 MT capacity
- o Open storage area: 553.90 sqm

The existing road connectivity to Pandu Port has certain issues as it passes through the populated city area. A dedicated road connectivity to Pandu Port by constructing a fly-way is under consideration to remove any congestion problems that may occur in the future due to increase trade at the Port.

In the recent past, the utilization of Pandu Port has increased with transportation of imported coal from Haldia Dock Complex, containerized cargo, fly ash for the cement industries located in the North East. The transportation of Bhutan's cargo to Bangladesh as well as to Kolkata through Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route has a potential and it is expected that this terminal shall become an EXIM Port for the third country trade.

The broad-gauge railway siding established at this Port provides an opportunity for handling both riverine and non-riverine cargo. The cargo transported through Railways can be stocked at Pandu Port and further distributed through waterways and vice-versa.



Recently, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) has commenced the operation of broad-gauge railway siding of Pandu by receiving first consignment of 644 MT of steel round bars from their Vizag Plant in 10 wagons on 28.03.2021. RINL has a plan to use this broad-gauge railway siding for transporting their finished products to Pandu Port regularly.

The consignment was unloaded from the wagons, within the allowed time limit of 6 Hours of placement without



any difficulties due to co-operation and helping hands extended by NF Railway, Maligaon. The material also had been shifted to the customer premises without any difficulties and the entire operation completed without any single hitch at any point starting from beginning of journey from Visakhapatnam till the premises of the Customer at Ameengaon, Guwahati.

An MoU has been recently signed on 31st March 2021 between NF Railways and IWAI for mutual cooperation and optimum utilization of assets and infrastructure created at Pandu and other locations on National Waterway-2.

The terminal is also proposed to be given to private entity on Equip, Operate, Maintain and Transfer (EOMT) model so as to enable the terminal realize its full potential and for further expansion of growth.

With all the above developments being undertaken, the Inland Water Terminal at Pandu has a bright future and it will soon become a major multi-modal destination of North East India and will help in the economic growth by providing safe, eco-friendly and efficient mode of transportation.