



Sagar Sandesh

Guiding Spirit to Shipping Industry

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**SHIPPING - 4**

INSA lauds recent move by CBIC to permit Indian-flag ...

**LOGISTICS - 7**

Prime Minister launches development projects at ...

**EXIM - 9**

India bans all imports of solid plastic waste

**PORT - 10**

Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurates ...

We call ourselves a maritime nation when we do not even have large dry-docking: Captain G. Ramaswamy



Capt G. Ramaswamy, CEO, Sea Team Management (India) Pvt Ltd

(Interview Continued)

(For the sake of continuity, we begin from the last question and continue the answer from the beginning)

Capt G Ramaswamy: If mainline vessels are not coming to east coast ports it must be because these ports lack rail road connectivity on par with facilities in the west coast. East coast ports lack draft that even the recently commissioned private ports possess.



Kattupalli port is doing well in the east coast

The neglect of east coast ports in terms of rail connectivity and infrastructure has driven the main line vessels to JNPT or Mundra Ports. One has to undertake an in depth study why the container terminals in the East coast are working to fifty per cent of the capacity and come out with corrective measures.

Private ports in the east coast like Krishnapatnam and Katupalli are doing well. I am told more vessels dock at Krishnapatnam port than the major port at Chennai. I do not have statistics but this is what I hear in the market.

There needs to be involvement by employees in the development of the port. There should not be a fixed tenure for the post of chairman. The leader should be made accountable. If a captain of a vessel who is on a four month contract with a shipping company is sacked for non performance, why should chairman of a port have a fixed tenure?

Tuticorin, Vizhinjam and Vallarpadem are suitable sites for transshipment traffic since mainline vessels operating on the major sea lanes need not have to do lot of diversions to reach these ports.

Of the two major transshipment hubs in the region, Singapore port has already reached the status of a world hub. The Colombo port is being developed from a regional to a World hub. Both the ports enjoy the strategic advantage of being located at the junction of international sea lanes. All the ships sailing in the international sea lanes have to go via South of Sri Lanka and hence prefer to call at Colombo port.

If India has to make a success of Tuticorin or Vizhinjam as a transshipment port, their port administration has to give better service, bring down the tariff to less than what the Colombo port charges and make consignees happy with service. Rail connectivity from the port is crucial. At the end of the day the cargo has to be given by the exporter or importer and they will use the facility at Indian transshipment terminals only if they are economic.

But India is way behind in developing transshipment terminals of world class.

Colombo port is way ahead of us and we are behind China by over one hundred years.

One of our company's fully loaded very large crude carrier VLCC suffered an explosion in mid sea in Japanese waters recently. We brought the vessel to a Chinese ship yard for repairs. The ship Yard did the work on time and the rates were competitive. If Chinese ship yards could undertake such repair work why not the Indian ship yards?

Indian shipyards have no big dry dock to accommodate very large crude carriers for repairs. We call ourselves a maritime nation when we do not even have large dry-docking. Our ship yards are not known to undertake ship repairs for modern vessels.

Summary

If the mainline vessels have virtually stopped calling at East coast ports of India, it has got to do something with the port infrastructure, draft of the port, rail connectivity and lack of dedicated railway corridors as they have for the ports in the west coast from the manufacturing centers of the country.

These are the reasons why the

mainline vessels make a beeline to JNPT and Mundra ports in the west coast. But private ports in the east coast like Katupalli and Krishnapatnam are doing well despite the connectivity handicaps. I hear that more ships are calling at Krishapatnam than at Chennai port. I have no statistics but this is what I hear in the market.

Tuticorin, Colachel Vizhinjam ports are the ideal spots for setting up transshipment terminals as they situated near the international ship lanes. Mainline vessels do not have to take much of diversions to reach these places.

But we are too late to enter the transshipment business, Singapore has emerged as a global hub and Colombo is becoming one shortly. If we have to compete with them, the proposed Indian terminals have to offer better draft, better facilities and competitive tariff compared to Colombo. At the end of the day the cargo is given by the exporter and importer and they need to be happy if the port or the terminal has to be successful. We are behind the Chinese port industry by one hundred years.

Last Date for Filing of Annual Return in GST for 2017-18 extended up to 30th June, 2019

NEW DELHI
Sagar Sandesh News Service

The GST law mandates filing of annual return in FORM GSTR -9 and FORM GSTR-9A. Vide Order No 3/2018-Central Tax, dated 31.12.18, the last date for filing the Annual Return for the Financial Year 2017-18 has been extended to 30th June 2019.

It is being informed to the trade and industry that the form is now available on the common portal for filing and



taxpayers are requested to file their returns at the earliest.

Taxpayers may please exercise caution while filing this return as facility to revise the FORM GSTR -9 and FORM GSTR-9A is not available.