New Vistas in the Development of Mormugao Port

V. Srinivasachari

Chairman
Mormugao Port Trust

Mormugao Port may be said to be the nub of Goan economy on account of its primary position in the economic fabric of present-day Goa, — which status will further flourish in the immediate future on account of the catalytic impact its development will have on the industrial expansion of Goa.

Mormugao Port plays a key role in sustaining and increasing the tempo of mining and mineral ore exports, which constitute an important facet of Goa’s economy by provision of efficient export facilities. For this very reason, the recent economic progress of Goa owes a great deal to Mormugao Port. There has been a spectacular growth of over 100% in the annual traffic of this Port from about 5.5 million tonnes in 1962-63, the first year after Liberation, to over 11.7 million tonnes in 1971-72, the main increase being in the tonnage of export of ore from Goa. This is ample proof of the important role of this Port in the economic growth and prosperity of Goa.

What is, however, more significant is not merely the traffic growth that has taken place in the last decade or even the additional facilities provided by the Port for the handling of traffic, but the major efforts made and success achieved by the Port in trying to provide a significant qualitative change in the type of facilities available at the Port, — which major task is still in progress, so as to keep it in tune with the changing technology in the world and with the new vistas of development that are taking place in the other sectors of Goan economy, particularly in the Industrial field. The massive Rs. 40 crore Port development project, work on which was started in February, 1970, is the culmination of these efforts, and the completion of this project will doubtlessly be a significant landmark in the progress of Goan economy for many decades to come.

Apart from the tremendous increase recorded in the tonnage of traffic handled at the Port in recent years, there has also
been a change in the composition of traffic during this period leading to greater diversification of the items handled. In 1962-63, ore was practically the only export item, accounting for 5.36 million tonnes out of 5.47 million tonnes (96%), the import being only of 1.1 lakh tonnes. In 1971-72, out of a total traffic over 11.7 million tonnes, export of ore was 11.20 million tonnes oilcakes was 0.63 lakh tonnes and import comprising of various items was of the order of 4.36 lakh tonnes. Along with diversification in traffic, there has also been an expansion in the service area of the Port, the Port now serving many areas outside Goa as well. There has also been during the period a significant change in the size pattern of ships visiting Mormugao, indicating thereby a change in the nature of facilities to be provided by the Port. It is significant that though the number of vessels visiting Mormugao has remained rather stationary, viz, 622 vessels in 1962-63 and 618 vessels in 1971-72, the total gross tonnage of vessels increased from 4.6 million g.r.t. to 8.3 million g.r.t., reflecting the growing average size of vessels visiting the Port. In 1962-63, none of the vessels carried more than 30,000 tonnes; whereas in 1971-72, as many as 130 vessels were above 30,000 d.w.t. size, even 60,000 d.w.t. vessels being regular callers at the Port at present. This change in shipping pattern has been so phenomenal that more than 45% of the ore carried is currently in vessels of above 30,000 d.w.t.

While these changes in shipping are a reflection of technological changes that have taken place in the world, they pose a challenge to the port which has to handle them more speedily then ever before so as to increase and sustain our ore trade in the competitive international market. In fact, the need for modernisation of facilities to cope with changing shipping standards and their growing traffic requirements has been one of the primary pre-occupations of the Mormugao Port in recent years. The Port has, in the meantime, indeed provided several additional facilities for handling traffic and speedy turn-round of vessels, but it has all along been recognised that the basic solution to the Port's problem lies in totally revolutionising its traditional facilities available rather than by any half-way measures which cannot make any significant improvement. Accordingly, it was considered necessary to increase the capabilities of the Port so as to accommodate ships of 60,000 d.w.t. to 100,000 d.w.t. range and to increase the loading rate of ore from the existing 2000-5000 tonnes per day to anything like 60,000-100,000 tonnes per day, taking also into account the need to cater to the growing industrialisation of the Goan region. The Port’s Development Project now in progress is designed to meet these challenging new requirements.

The main physical objectives of the Rs. 40 crore port development project now under execution are the following: (a) the construction of modern ore-handling facilities to handle (at berth) 60,000 d.w.t. vessels at all states of tide initially and up to 100,000 d.w.t. subsequently, equipped with an ore-loading system having a rated capacity of 8000 tonnes per hours

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(b) construction of an oil berth and (c) creation of new facilities for general cargo.

The broad components of this Project include dredging of the entrance channel to 13.7 metres below LWOST for a width of 250 metres and dredging of the approaches to the ore pier to—13.1 metres alongwith reclamation of about 80 acres of land, which will be used for locating the ore stacking area, the ore and oil berths, the road and rail approaches etc. The combined work in this regard involves dredging of over 10 million cums. of silty and sandy material and construction of reclamation bunds of about 2 km in length. Other major components are construction of an ore pier for berthing 60,000 d.w.t. ore carriers at the initial stage (which can accommodate vessels upto 80,000 d.w.t. (with the help of tide), which will be subsequently further deepened to accommodate 100,000 d.w.t. vessels, installation of a modern mechanical ore handling plant with a rated capacity of 8000 tonnes per hour, construction of an oil bearth which will also have a draft of 13.1 metres, construction of new sheds/warehouses, procurement of new floating crafts including two large dredgers etc.

**Progress**

Work on the project was started in early 1970, and considerable physical progress is already visible in the Port area, with new reclamation areas coming up in the Vasco bay, where new ore, oil and barge berths are to be located and with brisk activity all-round in the matter of dredging, bund-building, reclamation and other preparatory work in connection with the project. The very landscape of the Port area is fast changing in the process of this development, which in fact marks a historic landmark in the history of Goa. The dynamism and the optimism induced by this major investment project under progress is discernible everywhere and has in a sense brought about an accelerated rate of growth in the Port's existing level of traffic.

The capital dredging and reclamation work was the major project component on which physical work was started first since
the other civil works depend upon availability of reclaimed land. This work which is being done by a Yugoslavian Dredging concern is in progress.

In respect of the other important civil works, tenders for the construction of barge berths, ore berth and oil berth were processed and orders are being issued for award of the contracts.

Among the mechanical works, major works relating to the Conveying System, Bucket Wheel Reclaimers, Stackers, Loaders etc. have already been entrusted to the Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation, a Public Sector Undertaking. Work order for the Barge Unloaders which is another crucial item of the project has already been awarded to M/s. Braithwaite & Co., Calcutta, on the basis of competitive tenders. Similarly, work order for Overhead Cranes has been awarded to M/s. New Standard Engineering Co. Bombay, during the last year. For many other items of mechanical works, preparatory work is progressing in various stages, largely according to the C. P. M. Schedule of the project.

Some other major work-orders for the project issued recently have been in the matter of acquisition of new floating crafts required for handling the bigger sized vessels expected and for maintaining the much deeper harbour drafts. Orders have already been placed for acquiring a 2500 cu.m. capacity Hopper Suction Dredger, a 250 cu. m. Grab Dredger, 2 large Harbour Tugs having 30-ton bollard pull, 3 launches etc.

On the whole, there has been significant and all-round progress in the execution of the project and there is every reason to believe that the target date of the project of mid-1974 will be duly fulfilled, thereby fulfilling also a long-cherished dream of the entire industrial and trading community of this region.