

Ladies& Gentlemen

Warm greetings from India

I' m greatly privileged rather honored to be here in the midst of this august gathering especially with the young entrepreneurs' group of Asia pacific.

First of all I must thank CACCI and FICCI for giving me such a wonderful platform for sharing my experience of setting up of India's first Minor port and ICD utilizing Inland waterway notified under the Indian ports and by Customs act, in a locality where there is no sea facility available and the people could not think or even dream that of a port will be set up in their region and still many hardly believe it is true even though it is a fact.

As far as my home country India concerned,

- India has a promising future, given the unprecedented growth in economy and its clout in the global issues.
- India is poised to become the entertainment superpower.
- India is now a nuclear power.
- Indian culture is influencing the western world in dress, food and festivals.
- The 21st century could well belong to India if it fully utilize its resources and expertise.
- The strongest economy in the world by 2030
- We no longer discuss the future of India. We say the future is India"

And my home state,

Kerala- The God's own country A slender green silver land at the south western flank of the Indian peninsuala, Kerala is one of the southern states of the Republic of India.

The state has been in the forefront, in terms of education and health services. It has the highest rate of literacy, lowest rate of infant mortality and the leading female to male ratio, in the country

My home town

Kottayam, located in the central part of kerala, the God's own country , is known as – the land of lakes, latex and letters. The world renowned tourist destination Kumarakom is in Kottayam.

- Kottayam is an important commercial centre of Kerala, India, thanks to its strength as a producer of cash crops.
- Most of India's natural rubber originates from the acres of yielding plantations of Kottayam.
- Kottayam, provides some of Kerala's finest natural scenes sandwiched between serene palm-fringed backwaters and the Western ghats.
- Kottayam Town is the first town in India to have achieved 100% literacy
- The first printing press (CMS Press) in Kerala was established here in 1821 by Rev. Benjamin Baily.
- The first college in the State (CMS College) was also started here at Kottayam in 1840.
- Kottayam is the first town in India selected by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India to be transformed as an Eco City.

Kottayam has a rich legacy of popular trade centre in 1950's through waterway. Even though Kottayam being the largest producer of latex and 100% literacy in India, it became an undeveloped town in terms of infrastructure development compared to the neighboring districts of Kerala.

But in 2002 a group of young people from Kottayam gathered and decided to start a new forum, with its only objective is the development of Kottayam economically what ever way it's possible.

Thus formed a forum which its objective was to promote and attract new projects to our place for the socio-economic, cultural development of the region, and also join to hands with national and state govt in their efforts to develop the national economy. And that forum is named nothing but "The South Indian chamber of Commerce & Industry."

By the grace of god, I happened to be president of this wonderful organization constituted for a challenging cause.

Recognitions of SICCI

- Approved by Ministry of Commerce. Govt. India.
- Affiliated to FICCI.

- Partner, Department For International Development, (DFID). United Kingdom,
- Partner, United Nation Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD).
- Member, Indian Council of Arbitration (ICA)
- The first Chamber of Commerce in India to become online. Hence the exporters can now procure the “Certificate of Origin”, “Measurement Certificate” and other export related documents online.
- **INITIATOR, KOTTAYAM PORT & CONTAINER TERMINAL**, the first minor port and Multi-Modal ICD” (Inland Container Depot) in India utilizing the inland water way.
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The Project Identification

It took almost 2 year for us to identify this unique project.

Taking into account the geographical & locational advantage, commercial viability etc and considering the specialty of our region of having minimum one person working abroad from almost every house, our team kept exploring the possibilities of inviting projects such as IT Park, BT part, airstrip, but we wanted to have unique projects beneficial to the average common man, to come in.

We also found that even though we have no sea facility at our town Kottayam, we have long inland waterway facility which is the most economical, cheapest mode of transportation available in the world.

Also noticed that the lacs and lacs of Indian especially keralites are working in gulf and European countries and leading a Kerala style of life.

We thought of plying a barge service directly to Gulf sector to transport export/import small cargos and packets to meet their demands and at the same time it will induce the export activities of the region too.

While we contacted the concerned departments, naval architects, inland water authority, for this purpose, we realized that the vessel which is sailing through an inland water way will not sail through the sea and vice versa. We got stuck.

Then we realized, that was a crazy idea.

But friends, let me tell you that was not the end of the project, but that was the beginning of it. A new beginning of executing the developing India's first minor port and ICD utilizing inland water way, an Export promotion infrastructure development project.

The company

The Joint Venture- Special Purpose Vehicle-Public Private Partnership Company.

Corporate Objectives

- To facilitate and induce exports from the districts of Idukki , kottayam and Pathanamthitta.
- Promotion of cargo consolidation.
- Promotion of Inland Water Navigation.

Location

- Project is at Muttam ,Nattokam Panchayath, Kottayam District,Kerala State, India with both road and inland waterway access(multi-modal) to Cochin port and is the first of its kind in India.

ORGANIZING AND CO-ORDINATING WITH VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

- Ministry of Commerce Government of India - for getting ICD approval
- Directorate of Ports - Govt of Kerala, Ministry of Ports – for getting Port notification Port staff allotment,
- Cochin Port- the transit port has to provide us the facility to land our barge and storage of containers, trolleys and prime movers.
- Inland Water Authority of India- Ministry of Shipping, Govt. of India - The only agency in India promoting and developing the inland waterways.
- Irrigation & Water Transport department- State agency ,Promoting and developing the inland waterways.
- Ministry of Finance & Revenue, Govt. of India – for getting Customs Notifications and providing customs staff.
- Industries department, Kerala state – for Additional Land acquisition, setting up of export promotion Industrial park adjacent to the port.
- Public works department – development of road to this facility
- Education department – surrendering the land for widening of road to this facility

- State electricity board- for power requirement.
- Local self government and its departments for all the licenses and building permission

The Project.

A multi-modal ICD & Minor port exploiting inland navigation connectivity through “vembanadu lake” to Kochi port.

Kottayam is connected to the Cochin Port by an inland waterway through National Waterway No.III at distance of 85 Kilometres.

This project is to transport containers in barges to and from Cochin port through Inland Waterway. Initially it is proposed to transport 10 Containers in a specially built container barge to Cochin port. Thus from the first year itself, estimated 7200 containers/ year will be diverted from road to waterway.

The Operation

- It is to operate barges to Cochin port through National Water way 111 in Vembanadu Lake.
- The containerized export cargo is to be transported on low-platform roll-trailers (trolleys) on barges.
- The entire operation would be based on Roll-on-Roll-off concept

Road facility

The facility is just 1 km away from the Main central Road, the State Highway.

Rail Access

The nearest railway station is only 5 Kilometers away has the potential to develop a railway siding at the facility as the rails are passing within 2 kilometer range.

The Link facility with Cochin Port

This facility will act as a satellite facility for Cochin port.

Feasibility

Studies in this field found that inland water transport is a mode of transport that is economical in non-renewable energy terms. One Horse Power moves 150 Kg by roads, 500 Kg by rail and 4000 Kg by waterways. Constituently the amount of energy consumed per ton kilometre of freight transported by waterways comes to merely 1/6 of the amount consumed by road and ½ of the amount consumed by rail.

The present rate for transportation of a 20ft container by road is INR 9500. With the advent of this project it will be reduced to INR 4500

As per the survey conducted through an external agency, we have found out that there are 1000+ exporters engaged in the export activity from Kottayam, Idukki and Pathanamthitta Districts of Kerala. And nearly 18500 containers/year are transported from Kottayam, Idukki and Pathanamthitta Districts to Cochin Port by Road.

USP's

- The first Multi Modal ICD and Minor Port in India utilizing inland navigational facility.
- The total logistics cost can be reduced by up to Rs 5000/- than the present cost by the road transportation to Cochin port from Kottayam.
- Hub port for 3 districts.
- The first Export promotion infrastructure Development project in Kerala utilizing Inland waterway.
- The first joint sector minor port & Inland Container Depot in India.
- Implementation of Ro-Ro concept

Planning & Implementation

- Breaking the mindset of the people for undertaking such a project and galvanizing the support was a big challenge.
- Raising the fund – The people believed me because of my style of performance. Seeing my passion for the project various agencies and individuals came forward to invest in this project.
- Preparation of detailed Project report – there was no previous standard set for this kind of project. Hence we had to start from the scratch we ourselves prepared the project report by collecting data from layman to experts. It said that 50 % of the project is over if you make a good project report. And finally we did it successfully.
- Identifying the suitable Land with water way and road access – The Kerala the smallest state in India, the availability of large land with water and road connectivity was difficult and at the same time its very expensive too, especially with water frontage. We had to literally tapped the satellite communication system and by roaming around through water and by road to identify the suitable land with water and road connectivity. We have bought outright 10 Acres of land

and constructed the entire facility. Another 68 Acres has been acquired by the Industries department Govt. of Kerala, for this project.

- Finding the PPP Partner – we understood that an infrastructure project like this definitely needs government support and assistance. So we needed a SPV arrangement. Hence we had find out PPP partner. Thus we found out KINFRA (A Statutory body of Govt. Kerala) as the partner.
- Development of waterway – even though we have an existing waterway, it has to be developed and maintained for a vessel movement.
- Development of road to the Port – the existing road to the facility was not sufficient enough for the container movement; hence we had to acquire the adjacent land belonging to the Education and Industries department of Kerala for the widening of the road.
- Land development – the land was water logged areas which had to converted into a useful land that was also a big challenge. Virtually we were constructing the building and business over water
- Blockade in the waterway – A bund blocking the waterway to prevent the sea water destroying the agricultural crops was already there. It has got a lock facility with 6.6 Meter vertical and 12 Meter horizontal clearance. Through this the container movement was impossible. Availability of suitable barge which will pass through also was a bottleneck.
- Construction of Barge was a big challenge – We had to use our ingenuity to Design and construct a fully hydraulic propulsion container barge with 37 Meter length, 7 Meter width with 1.25 Meter draft which can contain 10Nos of 20 feet containers and which will pass through this bund. This challenge also we took up.
- RO-RO (Roll on – Roll Off) is introduced in order to avoid two handlings –The question rose from the exporters / importers / Custom House Clearing agents whether the two crane handling is feasible. So in order to avoid two crane operations at port of origin and transit port we had implemented Ro-Ro concept. Hence we had to design and construct the low bedded container trolleys with 25 tonnes capacity. The trolley mounted containers will be loaded and rolled on to the barge and and rolled out for unloading. The handling made easy.

With all these road blocks and perseverance we have implemented this Multi faceted project and are providing the following facilities at the Port.

Facilities

- 10,000 Sqft Administrative Building for the ICD /port operation and offices of customs staff & shipping agents
- 40,000 Sqft Warehouse for export, import including hazardous goods - Facility for shipping agents and line agents
- EDI connectivity
- The fully comprehensive Self developed software for the entire management such as warehouse management, ICD operation, Export/Import application filing, yard Management, Container management, Fleet Management, Vessel Management.
- Computerized gate operation
- Computerized yard management
- Strong room for storage of valuable cargo
- Bank extension counter &ATM
- Canteen Block
- Fully computerized and paper free environment
- Single window clearance for all the ICD operation
- Hassle free export import clearance
- Online tracking of goods
- Online tracking of containers
- Jetty/Berth - The jetty would have berthing facility for barges measuring 50m X 12m
- Barges- Two barges , each of 10 TEU capacity
- Container stuffing forklift - In order to stuff / load cargo into containers
- Reach stackers
- Trolley units with Prime Movers
- Hammer lift
- Paved and unpaved Container yard
- Flood Lights with High Mast Towers
- Weighing equipment
- Fire fighting equipment
- Standby Generator

Social benefits

- Generation of employment (Direct & indirect) for nearly 5000 people
- The export/ Import activity of the neighbouring 4 districts will be increased

- Diversion of nearly 7200 containers from road to water transport from the first year itself.
- Promotion of smart waterways
- Lower maintenance (Wear & Tear) for roads & Vehicles
- Fuel Economy
- Earning of carbon credit
- Minimizing the Road congestion
- Life of the existing roads will be increased
- New roads and flyovers have planned for supporting this project will be benefitted to the public
- Development of tourism
- Earning of foreign currency
- Development of an Export promotion industrial park is setting up connected to this port is underway
- Development of Watercraft Park connected to this port by the Inds. Dept
- Modification of bridges in this waterway has been planned so the feeder vessels can ply through inland waterway.
- The Government of India constituted a commission for development of Kerala Agricultural sector. We have submitted a proposal to the commission to include the above said bund also in the report for modification. The commission has appreciated our initiative, accepted the proposal for the modification of bund and apportioned INR 1110 Million for the total modification of the bund. With this the permanent blockade in the waterway has been removed. Precisely this project has been instrumental for this development, which is beneficial to the entire central Kerala.

I am not claiming that i have made large/ huge project. But as far I'm concerned It is a large, integrated project for a small entrepreneur like me, with no inherited business back ground. I had already promoted three enterprises. The present project the Kottayam Port and Container terminal Private Limited is one which has put me to test of leadership in organizing, co-coordinating, implementing and leading to the final execution.

By doing this project I could interact with and involve a large spectrum of people to uplift the socio- economic status of the central kerala by building a good team, is considered as the greatest achievement of my life.

I believe I could win the trust of all the concerned agencies through this chamber of Commerce and this project.

Home is where the heart is, and this project is my main stay

Friends, if I could do a project like this , I'm sure my fellow YE sitting in front of me representing 24 countries could do wonders.

I wish you all the very best and great success in your life.

At this point of time, let me quote a sentence from the bible.

“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

“So let me say Impossible is nothing with God”

Thank you