IWAI/PLNW-3/2/2008

8th February, 2011

To
The Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Ministry of Shipping, Transport Bhawan
1, Parliament Street,
New Delhi-110001

[Kind attn: Sh. S.D. Kaushik-Dy. Secretary]

Subject: Note on National Waterway No.3 (West Coast Canal)-reg.

Sir,

Reference above as desired by you, I am directed to forward a note on National Waterway No.3 (West Coast Canal) for your information and necessary action please.

This issues with the approval of Chairperson, IWAI.

Yours Faithfully,

(S.S. Pandian)
Chief Engineer

Encl: As above.
Note on National Waterway No. 3 (West Coast Canal)

The West Coast Canal system (205 KM) comprising of West Coast Canal between Kottapuram - Kollam (168 KM), Udyogmandal canal between Kochi-Eloor (23KM) and Champakkara canal between Kochi- Ambalamugal (14 KM) was declared as National Waterway during February 1993.

2. The developmental works for providing fairway of 2 m Least Available Depth (LAD), width of 38/32 m with 24 hours navigational facilities and terminals equipped with mechanical cargo handling equipments are being carried out by Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAi) in a phased manner.

Fairway Development

3. National Waterway No. 3 (NW-3) is a tidal canal. At present out of 205 km length of the waterway, 2m LAD has been made available on 124 km(Udyogmandal canal-23 Km, Champakara canal-14 Km, Kochi- Alappuzha-62 km and Kochi- Kottapuram- 25 km) continuous stretch after dredging a length of 63 km (26 Lakh- Cum). In the balance sections (81 Km), there are 24 Km shallow/narrow patches to be improved for mechanised barge movement. The capital dredging for deepening of the canal and widening work is in progress in these sections to provide a minimum width of 32mtr and minimum depth of 2 mtr. The balance capital dredging (14 lakh –Cum) is expected to be completed by January 2013. Often the dredging and widening work is hampered due to resistance by local fishermen as they place their fishing nets in the fairway. Disposal of dredged material poses problem due to the resistance from the local residents, who oppose dumping of material on the banks of the canal.

Navigational Aids

4. Navigational aids comprising of navigational buoys and solar operated navigational lights have been installed on the entire stretch of NW-3 covering 205 Km to facilitate 24 hours navigation. This is the first National Waterway in the country having 24 hours navigation facilities on the entire stretch.

Terminals

5. Permanent terminals at 11 locations viz. Kottapuram, Aluva, Maradu, Kayamkulam, Vaikkom, Thanneermukkom, Thrikunapuzha, Alappuzha, Kollam, Chavara and CSEZ (Kakkadan) are proposed on NW-3 out of which seven (7) terminals at Kottapuram, Aluva, Kayamkulam, Vaikkom, Thanneermukkom (Cherthala), Thrikunapuzha and Maradu have already been constructed. Terminal at Kollam is expected to be completed by March, 2011 for handling general cargo and container. The Land acquisition process for the
9th terminal at Kappuzha has been completed during December 2019 and action initiated for construction of terminal. The remaining 2 terminals at Chavara and CSEZ (Kakkanad) will be taken subsequently after assessing the utilization of terminals which have already been constructed.

5. In view of the development of International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT) at Vallarpadam in Cochin Port Area, there is tremendous potential for transport of containerized cargo through NW-3. To capture this potential, terminals at Willingdon and Bolgatty Islands have been constructed at a cost of Rs 1560 Cr with RO-RO (Roll On- Roll Off) and LO-LO (Lift On- Lift- Off) facilities specially for transportation of containers between ICTT Vallarpadam and Willingdon Island (3.5 Km). The operation of RO-RO service will commence after commissioning of ICTT Vallarpadam.

7. Cochin Port Trust is presently handling 3 lakhs TEUs containers per annum through its existing facilities. Immediately on commissioning of ICTT at Vallarpadam, the quantum of containerized cargo handling will increase to 5 Lakhs TEU’s per annum and will further increase many fold in a phased manner. The IWT terminals at Willingdon and Bolgatty islands will provide the linkage of NW-3 to the port logistics chain.

8. Further, the Govt of India has notified SEZ status for Puthuvypeen and Vallarpadam. An industrial cluster with thrust on energy related units focusing on value added exports are planned in the SEZ area. Some of the units like LPG project have already been allotted land. A modern logistic park is also planned in the proximity to the ICTT, where supply chain consolidation and warehousing activities will take place. These developments will generate demand for transit of containerized goods through waterways.

9. Moreover, for the cargo transiting through NH-49 (Madurai-Kochi) and NH-47 (from South Kerala), the ideal transport mode would be to use NW-3 channel for moving the cargo from Willingdon Island to Vallarpadam. This mode of water bridging avoids a road transit of 35 kms through the very congested Kochi city road to Vallarpadam.

Cargo Movement

10. The major cargo being moved at present through NW-3 are sulphur, Rock Phosphate, Phosphoric acid, salt, coal, zinc, furnace oil and fertilizers from FACT to Kochi Port along Udyogmandal canal (23 Kms) and Champakkara canal (14 Km).
11. However, since the developmental work being undertaken in NW-3 are complete, cargo such as POL products from IOCL, HPCL and BPCL, Rare Earths and mineral sands from M/s IRE Ltd and KMML, coir products, cashew Kernel and container cargo are expected to move in NW-3.

**River tourism on NW-3**

12. Kerala is one of the most preferred tourism destinations as on date. Tourism in Kerala cannot be seen detached from the unique house boats of the state. The tourists get an opportunity to experience the scenic beauty, village life and traditional food of Kerala during their cruise along the backwaters. The National Waterway stretching from Kollappuram to Kollam is host to nearly 90% of house boats of Kerala.

13. IWAI is developing and maintaining the National Waterway to certain standards of minimum width and depth. Navigational aids to facilitate day and night navigation has already been installed all along the National Waterway. Two central regulations namely, (i) Rules & Regulations for Prevention of Collision on NW’s and (ii) Rules & Regulations for Safety in Navigation in NW’s have already been notified and circulated among all waterway users. More importantly, the Govt. of Kerala in consultation with the IWAI has made rapid strides towards notifying its updated and unified Inland Vessels Act applicable to the whole state aimed at achieving orderly and safe navigational practices. It is felt that a renewed commitment to create awareness on safety aspects and preservation of the natural streams from pollution combined with systematic enforcement of regulations is the most important need of the hour for sustainable waterborne tourism. IWAI is committed to fulfilling its role in this regard in full cooperation with the Govt of Kerala.

14. IWAI is willing to share its cargo terminals located at strategic places along the NW-3 for tourist operations also. The impetus in systematic development of navigation provided by IWAI through the National Waterway-3 will open up immense business opportunities in tourism, water sports and allied spheres.

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Sir,

Please find enclosed herewith a note on nw-3, which has been approved by Chairperson on 08-02-2011.

Regards,

AK Bansal
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**IWT Connectivity to ICTT:**

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