

BANGLADESH REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY PROJECT -1 (P154580)**Terms of Reference for Consulting Services****CONSULTANT FOR**

Construction supervision of the designed works at Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra, and Benapole.

(BLPA-S2)

1. Introduction and Background

The Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received an USD 150 million Credit from the International Development Association (IDA) – a member of the World Bank Group – for financing the cost of the *Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project 1* (BRCP-1), being jointly implemented by the Bangladesh Land Port Authority (BLPA), National Board of Revenue (NBR) and Ministry of Commerce (MoC). Now the BLPA intends to apply part of the IDA Credit for procuring consulting services for construction supervision at Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra, and Benapole land ports.

The Project Development Objective is to improve conditions for trade through improving connectivity, reducing logistics bottlenecks and supporting the adoption of modern approaches to border management and trade facilitation.

The Project consists of three (3) major components of which the below component will be implemented by BLPA:

Component 1: Invest in infrastructure, systems and procedures to modernize key selected land ports essential for trade with India, Bhutan and Nepal. The key activities under this component are: Development and improvement works at four land ports along the Southwest to Northeast Corridor that are key to facilitating regional and transit trade. These include: (i) Bhomra on the southwest border of Bangladesh, which has surpassed Benapole in terms of trade value, and is experiencing severe congestion as trading volume has exceeded the land port's capacity; (ii) Sheola on the border with Assam, Northeast India, which would be a greenfield land port. It is currently a Land Customs Station with almost no infrastructure; (iii) Ramgarh on the border with Tripura State, Northeast India, where potentially a co-location modern border management concept could be piloted; and (iv) Benapole land port, Bangladesh's largest and busiest land port, which experiences significant security and leakage problems. Activities at Benapole will include a perimeter fence, gates, junctions, security tower, drainages, a CCTV system, and a gate pass system.

Under the Bank financed Regional Trade and Transport Facilitation Studies the BLPA conducted feasibility study of Bhomra and Sheola in 2016. The feasibility study, proposed the land ports to be developed in phases. It is required to review the available feasibility study report of Bhomra and Sheola and the recommended option for the detailed design.

Annex 1 provides the physical and other available information for the proposed land ports namely Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra, and Benapole. The Consultant is advised to use this information as reference and are required to conduct due verification, as necessary.

2. Objective of Consulting Service/Study and Scope

The main objective of this Consulting service (the Services) is for the following:

- a) Review and validate the detailed design prepared by BPLA for development of land ports at Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra, and Benapole
- b) Construction supervision of the designed works at Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra, and Benapole.
- c) Post-construction Phase responsibilities

2.1 Detailed scope of services

2.1.1 Part 1: Construction Phase responsibilities

The scope of the services under Construction Phase shall be as follows:

- a) Review and validate the previously drafted detailed design of the perimeter fencing, gates and security tower at Benapole Land Port.
- b) Review and validate the previously drafted detailed design of the Ramgarh Land Port.
- c) Review and validate the previously drafted detailed design of Bhomra Land Port.
- d) Review and validate the previously drafted detailed design of the Sheola Land Port.
- e) In order to facilitate existing use of the land ports during construction period, modify the Work Schedule, Mobilization Plan, Material Procurement Schedule and Manning Schedule proposed by the contractors. Scrutinize and approve the contractors' detailed work program including the resource planning.
- f) Check the Performance Guarantee, Advance Payment Guarantee and insurance certificates submitted by the contractors for adequacy as well as ensure their timely renewal up to the duration required.
- g) Scrutinize and approve construction methods proposed by the contractors with modifications as necessary.
- h) Monitor environmental and social safeguard requirements provisioned in EIA, SIA and RAP. Scrutinize and approve the contractor's Environmental Management Action Plan (EMAP) as required under the project EIA and EMP, and its monthly updates.
- i) Assess and enforce, as per standard Construction Management System, the adequacy of contractor's mobilization and inputs in terms of materials, equipment, construction machinery, workers and funds.
- j) Supervise and monitor construction of all project components. Interpret the technical specifications, where required.
- k) Check line level, layout of construction to ensure conformity with the contract, propose any change in the plans, if required.
- l) Prepare and issue construction drawings with sufficient details to permit contractors to carry out construction work effectively and unambiguously and with highest standards of quality. Check and approve shop drawings submitted by the contractors.
- m) Maintain detailed records of measurement of the completed works, correspondence, detailed diaries, photographs, daily site records submitted by the contractors on ambient conditions and contractors' resources at the site and their use including other documents concerning relevant events and activities;
- n) Check interim certificates for progress payments, verify the quantities for such certificates and recommend the Employer for payment with special emphasis on minimizing the time taken from receiving the interim certificates to disbursement against it.
- o) Ensure timely offsetting of mobilization advance, deduction of retention, taxes, liquidated damages as well as repayment of retention to be included in the corresponding interim payment certificates.
- p) Carry out periodic awareness raising /orientation and training sessions on environment, health and safety aspects of the project with contractors' staff, BLPA officials, and project stakeholders. Work with the contractors to develop and ensure implementation of an appropriate EHS and SMP training program for all workers. Scrutinize and approve and enforce the contractors' Quality Management Plan. Issue instructions to the contractors as required in accordance with the contract specification and the plan.
- q) Carry out monthly field compliance reviews to report on and enforce the provisions of the Specifications, EMP and agreed EMAP. Issue instructions to the contractors as required for any corrective actions or remedial measures. If and when required, invoke contractual provisions

including penalty clauses to motivate and ensure ongoing contractors' compliance with all environment, health and safety (EHS) requirements of the works contract.

- r) Submit Monthly Progress Reports as per agreed format to the Employer within 3 days of the successive months. The report shall include mobilization status, physical/financial progress status, validity of bank guarantees and insurance policies, quality control tests, material at site, status of EHS compliance, status of compliance with statutory requirements, status of compliance to the project-specific EMP and agreed EMAP, status of implementation of SMP, content and status of grievances received as well as actions taken /instructions issued to address all non-compliances.
- s) Attend third party inspections, as necessary, and provide certification on the quality of the supplies based on such inspections.
- t) Provide necessary technical support to the Employer on its project management, including risk management, cost control, scheduling, monitoring and reporting.
- u) Assess and make recommendations to the Employer on the contractor's claim for additional payment, extension of time and any other matters related to contract administration.

2.1.2 Part 2: Post-construction Phase responsibilities

The scope of the Services under post-construction Phase shall be as follows:

- a) Inspect the works at appropriate intervals during Defects Notification Period and issue instructions for rectification if any.
- b) Ensure that the contractors' demobilization is as per the agreed Mobilization Plan.
- c) Check and certify As-Built Drawings prepared by the contractors before issuance of Taking-Over Certificates.
- d) At the completion of the works, assist the Employer in preparing a consolidated Project Completion Report in the format as prescribed by World Bank.

3. Duration of Services

The Services are required to be rendered during a construction period of 24 months or extended period as agreed by both the party and a defects notification period of further 12 months.

Considering parallel activities to be executed in Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra, and Benapole, the Consultant will be required to mobilize more than one team so that the all the tasks could be completed within the stipulated duration.

4. The Consultant's Team and Inputs

The proposed services under this Terms of Reference shall be carried out by a consulting firm (Consultant) with adequate experience in construction supervision of civil engineering structures within a framework set by EIA, EMP, SIA, RAP and stakeholder engagement.

4.1 Staff Inputs

Indicative staff inputs are as follows:

S. No.	Positions	Expert inputs (month)
A	Infrastructure Engineer/ Team Leader	24.0
B	Structural Engineer/ Residential Engineer	24.0
C	Architect/ Landscape Specialist	1.0
D	Geotechnical /Materials Engineer	4.0
E	Environmental Specialist	10.0

F	Social Safeguard Specialist	7.0
G	Procurement and Contract Specialist	2.0
H	Site Engineer (4 numbers)	85.0
	Total	157.0

Note:

- a) List of key professionals and estimated person month is for reference only. The Consultant is responsible to review the required services and may propose own requirements for additional key professionals and other support staff (eg: Surveyors with helpers, Inspector of Works, Laboratory Assistants, ESHS Monitors, CAD operators, Traffic Enumerators, etc.) required to complete the proposed services in a satisfactory manner.
- b) Financial proposal should include all the direct and indirect costs necessary to execute the services and reporting including organization of meetings with PAFs as well as stakeholders workshop in Dhaka and at site.
- c) The number of experts proposed for different positions shall match with the Consultant's Technical Proposal.

4.2 Qualifications of Key Personnel

The broad qualifications of the Key personnel are given below. Their responsibilities shall be per judgment of the Consultant in order to complete all the deliverables in a professional manner.

A. Infrastructure Engineer/ Team Leader

Academic Qualification and Experience

- Education: Graduate in Civil Engineering; preferably Masters in Civil Engineering/Ports or related field; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: 15 year as Civil Engineer in design and construction of civil engineering projects; 5 year as Team Leader in works of similar nature and complexity (detail design and supervision of ports or land customs stations) including 2 numbers of donor funded projects.

B. Architect/ Landscape planner

Academic Qualification and Experience

- Education: Graduate in Architecture; preferably masters in architecture; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: 15 year as architect/ designer in design of buildings, ports or customs facilities; 5 year experience as project architect in at least 2 works of similar nature and complexity.

C. Structural Engineer/ Residential Engineer

Academic Qualification and Experience

- Education: Graduate in Civil Engineering; preferably Master's in Structural Engineering; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: 10 year as structural engineer for design and construction of buildings, ports or land customs; 5 year as Structural Designer and 5 years as Residential Engineer in works of similar nature and with RCC as well as steel structures.

D. Geotechnical/Materials EngineerAcademic Qualifications and Experience:

- Education: Graduate in civil Engineering; Master's degree in Geotechnics/ Material/ Quality Control Engineering preferred; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: 10 years in sub-soil exploration, foundation design/construction; 5 year as Material Engineer/ Quality Assurance Engineer in building infrastructures and pavement construction projects.

E. Environmental Specialist (2 numbers)Academic Qualification and Experience:

- Education: Graduate in Ecology, Forestry, Environmental Science or Engineering; Master's in Environmental Engineering, Environment Science or equivalent preferred; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: Minimum of 8 years of experience in leading and/or monitoring/supervising construction stage implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study and Environmental Management Plan requirements for comparable projects. Construction stage environmental monitoring, familiarity and prior experience with World Bank Safeguard Policies will be a plus.

F. Social Safeguard SpecialistAcademic Qualification and Experience:

- Education: Graduate in civil engineering, social science or sociology; Master's in Social Science, Sociology or equivalent preferred; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: Minimum of 10 years of experience as Social and Resettlement Specialist in comparable projects, preferably those supported by the World Bank, ADB or other multi/bi-lateral donors. Previous experience in SIA, review/preparation and implementation of RAP, and stakeholder engagement is necessary.

G. Procurement and Contract SpecialistAcademic Qualifications and Experience:

- Education: Minimum Graduate in Engineering, Law, Management or relevant subject. Preferably Master's Degree in relevant subject and trainings on public procurement; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: Should have at least 10 years of relevant experience with the specialization in procurement/contract management. Training on public procurement, dispute resolution and handling procurement of works and goods under World Bank/Donor funded projects will be an added qualification. He should have handled procurement and contract management of a similar infrastructure like building/ port/ roads contract on ICB/NCB norms, including experience of handling variation orders to contracts, claims of contractors and their appropriate disposal.

H. Site Engineer (4 numbers)Academic Qualification and Experience:

- Education: Graduate in Civil Engineering; Master's degree in engineering preferred; relevant trainings and membership in a relevant professional organization will be an advantage.
- Experience: 5 year as Civil Engineer/Quantity Surveyor in analyzing the various rates for construction, estimating quantities, and preparing cost estimate of buildings, ports or highways; 5 year in construction supervision of multi-story buildings, steel structures and ports.

5. Implementation Schedule and Reporting Requirements

The total duration of contract is estimated to be 36 months including the defects notification period of 12 months. The Consultant is expected to achieve the following key activities and reporting's for each land port at Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra, and Benapole as follows:

Key Activities	Timing	Reporting	Delivery Conditions
Desk study of the Detailed Designs and Bid Documents of the contract packages; Review of the Detailed Design prepared by BLPA Finalization of contractor's Work Schedule, Mobilization Plan, Quality Assurance Plan and EMAP	2 month from Start Date of the Works Contract packages	Inception Report for Construction Phase	5 hard/ 1 soft copy
Summarization of monthly activities	1 st week of each consecutive month	Monthly Progress Report	5 hard/ 1 soft copy
Summarization of quarterly activities	1 st week of each consecutive quarter	Quarterly Progress Report, in 5 hard copies and a soft copy, including a presentation in the Progress Review Meeting at the Employer's office	5 hard/ 1 soft copy; including a presentation at the Employer's office
Monthly updated EMAP	1 st week of each consecutive month	Updated EMAP	5 hard/ 1 soft copy
Approved as-built documents including drawings, quantities and costs	On completion of each works contract package	As-built Documents	separate volumes; 5 hard/ 1 soft copy
Compilation of all project related documents including from the contractors	On completion of Defects Notification Periods of all work packages	Consolidated Project Completion Report	5 hard/ 1 soft copy

Note:

On presentation of any deliverables to the BLPA project team as well as other stakeholders of the Employer for discussion and deliberations, the Consultant shall submit the minutes of the meeting with proposed modifications in the report to the Project Coordinator within 48 hours for review and comments. The Employer shall provide their comments within 7 days of the submission of the minutes.

6. Facilities and Equipment

6.1 To be provided by the Consultant

The Consultant shall provide required facilities for their staff and other logistical requirements on their own to fulfill their obligations. These will also include support staff and office facilities, office equipment and supplies, required equipment and materials for field data collection, vehicles, and communications as required for each land port. The Financial Proposal of the Consultant shall cover all the direct and indirect expenses to be made by the Consultant to render the Services.

6.2 To be provided by the Government

The Government will provide the Consultant with all available studies and reports and data relevant to the services. BLPA will provide access to the related land ports and information required for the study and provide assistance where the Consultant, for the purpose of executing these services, needs to coordinate with other Government agencies, and non-government agencies. The BLPA will also participate in all stakeholder consultation events related to the environmental and social assessments, with the technical and logistical support of the consultant as required.

Annexes: Physical and other available information for the proposed land ports namely Ramgarh, Sheola, Bhomra and Benapole_**1. Ramgarh****1.1. Background and context**

Ramgarh is a now non-existent border crossing between Bangladesh and India, although it is occupying a key strategic location between Northeast India and Chittagong Port. It is on the road to Chittagong from the southern border of Tripura, and the closest point in Northeast India to Chittagong Port. The opening of new trade routes between Bangladesh and the north-eastern states of India through Ramgarh-Sabroom border point is considered as a high potential commercial route in the near future, should a formal border station be erected. Chittagong Port can serve as the main port of Northeast India, and bilateral trade is expected to increase significantly. Ramgarh could also serve as a transit point between West Bengal, Tripura, and the rest of Northeast India.

Ramgarh is located at the southeast border of Bangladesh in Ramgarh Upazilla of Khagrachari District. The closest Indian border area is Sabroom of South Tripura district of Tripura Province. Ramgarh is about 50 km and about 58 km away from Khagrachari and Feni District, and Sadar, respectively. The Upazilla has a number of tribal community inhabitants, some of them within the radius of 2/3 kilometers of the proposed site of the land port.

1.2. Position

The Ramgarh/Sabroom land port site is adjacent to the River Feni and the natural borderline between Bangladesh and India. There is currently no bridge crossing the river Feni, and no approach/access road, although the Government of Tripura is currently working on the survey and design of the bridge. There is decent road connectivity with Ramgarh from Khagrachari District, Sadar, and junction point of Dhaka-Chittagong highway to Chittagong Port, Dhaka and other parts of the country. There are some narrow and defective Bailey bridges on the road from Ramgarh to the junction point of the side road with Dhaka-Chittagong Highway. The Upazilla Sadar Ramgarh is approx. 1.5 km away from the proposed land port area. Electricity is available at Upazilla Sadar, which the land port can connect to. There is mobile network coverage in the area. There are currently no Customs and Immigration facilities in this area although a BOP of BGB is located at Mohamoni very close to the proposed land port area. Other Upazilla level government offices are located nearby. Villages are also located near the area.

1.3. Traffic

While it would be difficult to extrapolate from current figures any meaningful projection, some indication of anticipated traffic flows could be derived from macro data, such as population, volume of trade within the region from both sides of the border (and to Chittagong in Bangladesh), and diversion of traffic from other border crossing points when Ramgarh becomes an operational land port. For this reason, the design of the station should be modular, with reserved space for future expansion.

Similarly, a breakdown between different categories of traffic is uneasy, but can be estimated based on the assumptions that:

- The local population will probably cross the border regularly, as it is basically the same in both countries; this will generate border market trade.
- There are already exchanges across the river, which will increase when new and more convenient infrastructure is built.
- The access roads on both sides will determine the size of motorised traffic.
- An analysis of existing – and potential – traffic based on evaluating existing and potential production capacity and trade capacity.

This traffic breakdown will affect the design of the Ramgarh facility in terms of specific infrastructure (special routing for pedestrian traffic and border trade, dedicated lanes for trucks, bullock carts, small buses, etc.), and the location of control positions and equipment. Here again, the design should be flexible enough to allow temporary or future permanent re-assignment of parts of the facility dedicated to the different categories identified above.

2. Sheola

2.1. Background and context

Sheola Land Customs (LC) Station started its function in 1948. It is situated in Borogram at Beanibazar of Shylet District. From the starting of the LC Station, export and import activities were conducted through the Kushiyara river route. In 1996, this LC station was transferred to the Borogram, 2km away from the previous place. Nevertheless, the name of this LC station remained the same.

At present, Sheola Land Port is connected by road network only. However, there was an operational railway track before the partition at a 10 kilometers distance at south of Sheola. The route was used for transportation even twenty years ago (1995). There is a river route at five kilometer north of Sheola without any Jetty or port facility. Moreover this is having better navigation and mobility of river crafts with load in rainy season or monsoon period from the month of June to September (4 months only). As a result, road is the only option now for having an access to the site.

There is an immigration check post on 1.3 acre land with a semi-pucca building situated near the Zero point. But the official activities of customs are conducted from a rented Semi-Pucca building. Electricity connection is available in this LC station.

2.2. Position

The distance of Sheola Land Customs (LC) station from Beanibazar Upazila Parishad is 13km and 45km from Sylhet district Headquarter. The Indian part of it is called Sutarkandi, which is situated under Karimganj district of Assam State. A 16 km paved road exists from Sheola to Karimganj district. The distance from Sheola/Sutarkandi to Gouhati, capital of Assam is 264 km.

The topographic map collected from the office of the Surveyor General, GOB and Topographic survey that has been done shows that the area is a low lying one with few high lands. It has an area of about 10.83 acres of land. The project area lies at 24°52'22.33" (N) latitude and 92°14'48.84" (E) longitude.

The most significant climatic character in this area is humid subtropical with a predominantly hot and humid summer and a relatively cool winter. The area is within the monsoon climatic zone, with annual average highest temperatures of 23 °C (August-October) and average lowest temperature of 7 °C (January). Nearly 80% of the annual average rainfall of 3,334 mm occurs between May and September.

Hydrological data station for Sheola is situated on Kushiyara River and very near to the project. As such, this station of BWDB represents the project. Both water level and as well as discharge data has been collected from BWDB. Analysis from the data shows a 100 years Return period for the flood level to be 14.884mPWD.

2.3. Traffic

The trade in Sheola land port is 134,162 ton/year (12,809,753 USD/year) in 2014/15. The amount of import (99,325 ton) is much higher than that of export (34,837 ton) in their weights. However, the amount of export (11,155,225 USD) is much higher than that of import (1,654,528 USD) in their monetary values. Number of people coming in and going out from Bangladesh are 9,000~11,000 persons per year in 2014~2015.

Goods from India entering Bangladesh through the border are carried by Indian registered trebles. On entry through the border crossing, the custom Offices at the border truck entry point manually record the details of imported goods in a register and receive import documents. The documents are subsequently forwarded to the customs house for assessment of import duties. The trucklers then

proceed to BLP for goods to loaded and stored in the warehouse and open yard. Delivery of goods form BLP is affected after customs clearance and duty on the imported goods is paid.

Most export goods are not subject to duty. Export documents are collected by the same customs cargo section at the border before the good vehicle cross into India. The Bangladesh exports are transferred directly on Indian trucks at the Indian land port. The empty Bangladesh trucks returns to Bangladesh upon completion of the transfer.

3. Bhomra

3.1. Background and context

Bhomra Land Customs (LC) Station started its operation on May 25, 1996. In the meanwhile, it has become the second largest land port of Bangladesh. Even, last year through this port, highest amount of trade among the land ports have been performed. The land port is named after the name of the Union. It is located at the south-western border of Bangladesh. Shrimp culture and crop production (especially jute and paddy) are the major sectors of local economy.

Trade volume through Bhomra is increasing at an average rate of 19.03 percent for the last three (3) years. The trend will get pace after the construction of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge as this would reduce the travel distance from Kalkata. Consequently, the port will have to accommodate a huge traffic (both inbound and outbound). For this reason, the land port will have to have a scope for expansion its capacity. These facilities will require 100 acres of land for orderly development of the land port. If planned, this will ensure maximum utilization of the lot and that will result orderly growth of the port which will ultimately improve the cross-border trade and as well as cross border economy.

The site is flooded with rain water during rainy season and during dry season it is used for parking of trucks and temporary storage area for the imported stone. The Ichamati River is located about 3 km South-West of the site and the river is connected with the site through an inland drainage basin.

For operation of the port facilities, an existing power line from Satkhira Sadar to the proposed land port needs to be extended. The length of this power line will be 19 km. About 714000 cubic meters of the borrow material would be required for filling of the land above the flood levels. The borrow material will be extracted from the abandon fallow land and pond of the area within 10 km.

3.2. Position

The locality opposite to Bhomra across the border is Ghojadanga, a small urban area of West Bengal, India. Ghojadanga and its neighbouring town Bashirhat was connected to Satkhira through this border crossing point by Old Satkhira Road. Though, it was not a corridor of bulk trade but, prior to 1990s, there was a free connection among the said places. People used this route to trade Rice, Kerosin and Salt to India and Sugar, Condiments and Sarees to Bangladesh.

Bhomra Land Port is operating as a full fledge Land Port now. The LC station was set up here in 1996. After a long 17 years, it was declared a land port in 2013. The place has basic infrastructure support like electricity, telephone (OTD), road etc. Existing road network from Satkhira to Bhomra Land Port is constructed by Roads and Highways (R&H) Division and the entire road is paved. The first one kilometer from the border is composed of 15 meter wide carriageway with divider and the rest portion has a 7.62 meter wide carriageway.

The distance from Satkhira to Calcutta, capital of West Bengal is around 77 km and it is about 15 kilometers away from Satkhira District Head Quarter. A large and well-designed building was recently built at the LP station for accommodating Customs, Immigration and the Land Port Administration. There is no Truck terminal here, rather the vehicles waits in a queue on the road.

3.3. Traffic

Based on the economic and demographic growth scenario, forecast results of export/import quantities has been calculated by scenario. Total trade amount in 2040 is expected to be in the range of 7.5 ~ 8.8 million tons a year. At present, the volume is 1.87million tons and it is increasing at an increasing rate.

In consideration of industrial development policies of the government of Bangladesh, the future trade volumes at Bhomra land port are 4.8 million tons in 2030 and 8.2 million tons in 2040.

Based on the two-growth scenario in the future, total number of people who come in to Bangladesh and go out from Bangladesh will be 187,800~371,200 persons.

4. Benapole

4.1. Background and context

On the Bangladesh-India land border, Benapole is the most important checkpoint of Bangladesh and is operated by the Bangladesh Land Port Authority (BLPA). Geographically Benapole is a major strategical point for border trading between India and Bangladesh owing to its proximity to Kolkata. Almost 90% of the total imported items from India come through Benapole. Primarily Benapole land port was a Land Customs station and gradually it turned into a Customs Division (1984) and later Custom House (1997) in response to its rising importance as in terms of import volume. In 2009, the newly constructed building of Benapole Customs and Immigration Check post came into operation.

As of 2009, 143 staff including 9 officials and 134 employees are working at the Benapole land port. In fiscal year 1996-97 revenue realized from Benapole land port was around Taka 5 billion, at present it is Taka 8.50 billion.

Benapole land port is also lucrative for Indian exporters for its cheaper service and equipment charges. Indian goods receive duty exemption advantage in this land port. The Indian Government has also decided to give priority to export in Bangladesh through Benapole-Petrapole border. Kolkata, one of the commercial hubs of India, is only 80 kilometers away from the Petrapole-Benapole border and is involved in development in the area.

In 2008, 5.9 acres of land has been acquired and developed with port facilities such as 7063.2 sqm transit shed, 20365 sqm open stack yard, 4300 sqm bituminous road, some section of boundary wall, RCC drain, electrification and 2 numbers of 100 MT weighbridge scale. It is high time that the security arrangement at the port be enhance to address the present operational challenges.

Land ports are now known to be one of the places that are vulnerable to the risk of terrorism. Exploiting its strategic importance and vast number of daily port users, Benapole has been the focus of petty protests as well interfering with port operations. BLPA is sensitive to these and puts a high priority on the safety and security of its facilities and operations. A dedicated Port Police has been deployed at the port. The port authority is working in close collaboration with multiple government entities to monitor safety aspects. Following the present consulting task, security fencing circumscribing the port will be built. A separate study is ongoing to install CCTV camera and other plethora of security arrangement to augment security monitoring.

4.2. Position

Benapole is a township in Sharsha Upazilla in the Jessore District of Bangladesh. The Petrapole Customs station of India is situated across the border and since 1971 (some sources say 1947), a large number of people have travelled between Bangladesh and India through Benapole Customs station. The railway link between Bangladesh and India through Benapole was discontinued when war broke out between Pakistan and India in September 1965 (during this time, modern day Bangladesh was part of Pakistan, known as East Pakistan). Urbanization of Benapole started in the 1990s along the Grand Trunk Road. In April 1971, the operational area of the sector 8 comprised the districts of Kushtia, Jessore, Khulna, Barisal, Faridpur and Patuakhali. At the end of May, the sector was reconstituted and comprised the districts of Kuhstia, Jessore, Khulna, Satkhira and the northern part of Faridpur district.

4.3. Traffic

Benapole had witnessed a rise of imports by 15% to 20% each year. It has become a significant revenue generator for the government since late 1980s. However, port facilities remain underdeveloped as yet. Carriability of the road from Benapole to Jessore is limited notwithstanding regular maintenance. Studies are ongoing to sort out improvement areas in the immigration and customs of the land port and also studying feasibility of Benapole-Petropole border as a corridor of transit in this South Asian region.

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