

THE HISTORY OF KOLKATA PORT AND
THE HOOGHLY RIVER AND ITS FUTURE

Barun De

(Member, Indian Council of Historical Research and
Vice-President of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata)

When I was invited to lecture on the occasion of the 135th Anniversary of the Port Trust, I felt intimidated as well as honoured. Basically I am a landlubber, knowing next to nothing about shipping, beyond the fact that I must be one of the few people here who have travelled by ship to and back from England. That was in November 1939, when I came back with my parents in one of the last Destroyer convoys that braved the Mediterranean just after the Second World War had begun. I stood with my mother, who practiced lifeboat drill with the women on the lower boat deck, while my father with other men gazed down at us from below the bridge; there would be no room for them in the lifeboats if we were torpedoed. I really have no knowledge about the technical problems that ships or ports face. However, the invitation was a challenge and tempted me to speak to the very many distinguished people here who have served our Port in various capacities in

the last quarter of the twentieth century. The Port, of course, goes back much further than 135 years.

The Chairman, Dr.Chanda, has, with admirable brevity, clarified the principal features of the past and what he sees as the future. Dr.Mitra has given another point of view. I am proud to be speaking after him. He inducted me into the Indian Institute of Management and I had the privilege of working in the same room as his in our old Emerald Bower Campus (now the Rabindra Bharati University). Many years later, he introduced me to West Bengal's ground level problems by arranging for my appointment as Honorary State Editor of the West Bengal District Gazetteers' office. His distinction of Kolkata as a river port from Haldia as a seaport could lead to a discussion about alternative plans for the future; whether, in the last resort, the entire Port – as part of the international oceanic system – will stagnate, or whether the Port has within itself the capacity to innovate, transform and change towards a more land-oriented (as well as sea-oriented) commercial growth pattern. That should be a topic of wider public debate.

For my part, I shall try to present a backdrop of certain historical constraints in the way that the Port has evolved from the many anchorages that have made it up.

1. The Pre-Port Anchorages :-

The first docks in the city were moorings on the east bank of the Hughli River, far to the north of the present Dockland. The earliest were in north central Calcutta, what used to be called, three hundred years ago, Dihi Kolikata and Bazar Kolikata around Lal Dighi (later known as the Great Tank and briefly for about hundred years, only Dalhousie Square), now B.B.D Bag. These two villages close to the Hooghly Bank were incidentally not the spot where Job Charnock landed – he landed further north at Sutanuti to which his pilot steered him by an ancient banyan tree in Ahiritollah Ghat or a ghat nearby. Charnock lived and died in Sutanuti -- only his remains were removed later to the grave in St.John's Churchyard near Lal Dighi.

I was interested to find in a recent Commemorative Volume, published by the Port Commissioners, an article by Shri P.Thankappan Nair, the chronicler of the Calcutta streets and early British inhabitants, which says – without any reference or footnotes – that originally there was a creek, that ran along the side of the old Fort William. He says that in 1712, a dry dock was constructed which “was not equipped for warships and the Dalhousie tank was converted into a wet dock with facilities for launching vessels’. Apart from the solecism of attributing Lord Dalhousie's name to the place long before Dalhousie was born, Shri Nair proceeds to tell us that

this wet dock conversion took place at Colonel Clive's suggestion in 1759 after the Battle of Plassey. He says " the Bankshall, Marine Store Yard and the dry dock erection in 1716 were situated (at a) site now occupied by the Bankshall Street, Bankshall Court" etc. ¹. He tells us all these were removed in 1808. We have not been favoured in this article by any means of checking these facts, beyond the solecisms mentioned. Prof. Satyesh Chakraborty, in his introductory lecture last year, referred to the Bankshall docks and canal as a known fact. We need to know the exact archival references. In their absence, let us hypothesise that in the early eighteenth century, the East India Company converted the Lal Dighi area into docks with a canal running towards the eastern levee that bounds the Hooghly east bank.

In the early eighteenth century, the Hooghly river always had distributaries running east towards the Sundarbans through, what is today, Kolkata. The old dried up bed of the Saraswati channel through eastern Howrah District used to flow across the present Garden Reach South-east, what is now the Adi Ganga channel. North of it, was a creek that does not exist any more, through the area south of Chittaranjan Avenue and Bowbazar, whose memory still remains as Creek Row, the narrow canyon of

¹ P.Thankappan Nair, "Early Days of Calcutta and the Port" in Dr.Satyesh C.Chakraborty, Port of Calcutta 125 Years, Calcutta, Calcutta Port Trust, 1995 p.6

very old houses between Azad Hind Bagh and Entally. It used to be recalled in the books of the early twentieth century about old Calcutta history that in the early eighteenth century, boats were stranded here in a cyclone in the locality called Dingabhangra (broken skiffs). In fact, the East India Company's settlement itself changed the course of the Hooghly River : “the sinking of the (ship Royal) James and Mary in 1696 and the formation of the Sumatra Sand resulted in the gradual formation of sandbanks on the left bank. The river withdrew from the left to the right bank, throwing (sic) the large chunk of land called the Strand The construction of the Strand Road was taken up by the Lottery or Calcutta Improvement Committee in 1820 and the shipbuilders of Clive Street were obliged to shift their establishments to Howrah. The Strand Bank lands from Chandpal Ghat to Ahiritola were leased to the Port Trust on its formation by the Government in perpetuity”².

The southern distributory is known as Tolly's Nullah at the point of its link with the River. Major Tolly was a Briton, who according to the histories, was the first person to think of building docks here. He “dug” - or perhaps only widened for navigation – the old creek, which takes off from

² Ibid.p.6. As noted above, Mr.Thankappan Nair cites no reference to the original source of this valuable information

where the old Saraswati is presumed to have lost itself on the west bank of the River, where today it runs towards the south base of the Zoological Gardens then under a bridge and then the Taj Bengal Hotel and the Presidency Jail. He was not able to complete new docks. Another attempt was made by one, Colonel Watson who founded a marine yard in what is now called Kidderpore. The actual docks were, in what was called after him, Watgunge, now a street leading to Dock no.1, where he launched three beautiful vessels. After he retired, the sons of the Company's Chief Engineer, Col. Kyd, took up the work and are commemorated by Kidderpore Docks³.

2. The Strand Waterfront :

The point being made is that the earliest Calcutta Port was the Strand Bank; then Watgunge was followed by the decisive southern end shift along the broadening bends of the Hooghly river. A folding map at the back of the basic source book of Calcutta Port history, Prof.Nilmoni Mukherjee's concisely excellent Short History (1968) gives a pre-independence listing of the shifting expansion of jetties and moorings, ruins of which still exist (on either side of the southern Ghats of the River) – from where the

^{3 and 4} N.Mukherjee, The Port of Calcutta. A Short History [The Commissioners of the Port of Calcutta, 1968 pp.31 and map at the end of volume]

Customs House stands (on the site of old Fort William) through the Calcutta and the Hastings Moorings, till just ahead of Tolly's Nullah ⁴. When I was a boy about the time of the Second World War, my father would drive my mother and me in his old Austin 12 to the Strand for a walk along the still unfenced river path. He would park at a place, I was surprised to learn some Port Trust people have already forgotten (perhaps because the Marine Headquarters has enclosed it), in front of the Lascar Memorial, commemorating the Indian seamen who took part in the First World War. This should be protected as a heritage monument in the same way INTACH, in the 1990s, restored the Prinsep Ghat nearby. Near it is the old Takta Ghat (plank landing stage) where I remember till early Independence days (if I am not incorrect) the good ship Maharaja used to dock ferrying people to and from the Andaman Islands (occasionally to the Penitentiary there). That anchorage too has now shifted south to Kidderpore Dock No.1. All through the Second World War and till the 1950s, from Man of War Jetty to Outram Ghat, there would be ships at moorings filling the River.

I often wonder what happened to them. Why did they suddenly disappear in the Fifties and Sixties. By that time, you could get a clear view across to the dead, graying derelict buildings on the Howrah side of the river. I am told that one of the reasons, (and I presume the only big reason),

was that all along the river, behind the jetties, particularly on the Howrah side, where after the Bengal Partition of 1947, there was a slump in the inputs of factories, jute mills, principally along the Foreshore Road and then on the other side of Howrah Station at a place which I have very pleasant memories of, the Golabari, the long black godowns of Howrah, just ahead of Salkia. In the 1950s, friends of mine, Sambit Chatterjee and his younger brother, later the eminent actor Soumitra Chatterjee, used to live with their father who was the head of the salt 'gollahs'. The salt would be unloaded in the GOLABARIS. Then jute would be loaded on the cargo boats and there were tea sheds also. These were commodities which suddenly slumped after the Partition that the British imposed on India as their price for independence.

Apart from the many natural causes - Dr. Mitra has very correctly identified those - first of all, apart from the siltage of the river, one of the big blows to Kolkata as a port, (I am now not talking about Haldia) was the blow given by the second Partition of Bengal. Whatever happened to the jute industry, at any rate, it shifted towards Narayangunj for several years. The salt trade of the river was felled by a shift in the policy of transportation according to which, it moved from river to rail, so that rail transportation took the river's place for the big movements of salt. The anchorages of the

Strand Bank jetties disappeared after the first half of the twentieth century. The active port moved South in the second half. Only the Customs Warehouses, some disused jetties, and the later wall of the circular railway remain as mute testimony of a waterfront that was.

As regards tea, we know the history. The creation of East Pakistan and then its secession into Bangladesh meant that the traffic down the Brahmaputra – Yamuna system to Goalundo and then through, what we remember, at least those of us who are old enough to remember, as the Inner Channel or even the Outer Channel through the Sunderbans, going past Khulna towards Barisal. This was completely disrupted, throwing out of gear companies like the Rivers Steam Navigation Company.

The independence of Burma, which came at the same time from the British Empire, only solidified what had begun in 1935, when Burma was made a Crown Colony outside the scope of British India's purview. This meant, of course, difference in the pattern of the rice trade which had been initially disrupted in the Second World War and which now was consumed by the home market of Burma. This meant a complete disruption of the Rangoon – Kolkata Port links. In general, there was an obsolescence in the traditional industries of Bengal. Industries which had not been very much capital forming, industries which had been based indeed on very

considerable exploitation of primary producers, whether the tea garden labour or the jute cultivating peasants of East Bengal or the coal industry, were then in a dismal condition of crisis. But for whatever value they had, they had created the pattern of the base of the industries of Bengal on which there had been reared a certain structure of engineering, related largely to the Railways, but also to the Port and to the industries of the northern suburban, in machine tools, in mechanical work. On the other side of the river from Kolkata and Howrah, the clang of tools could be heard, as one came from Dasnagar to Ramrajatala into Howrah Station. This stretched up to the very famous machine tool workshops of Belilious Road and similar areas of Howrah.

A very senior member of the Trust told me that he had joined in 1972. I said that must have been at the nadir of the port. He said, yes, those were very dark years and when one thought twice about one's job. In those days, I am sure it needed an act of faith for people to stay on in the port. One has to see all this as part of the general collapse of colonial Kolkata however, beautiful it may have been. Dr. Mitra has mentioned the freight equalisation policy by which, regional imbalances were supposed to be removed. When this regional imbalance was removed, no one bothered about the fact that the Partition imposed on West Bengal had "over

determined” the regional imbalance by taking away the jute industry, creating transport problems for the tea industry and truncating the ports of Bengal, so that Khulna and Chittagong were lost as supplements to Kolkata Port. A large number of ports on the West Coast of India, as well as Visakhapatnam, as well as the newer and smaller port of Paradip, came up and developed in terms of equality of market choices. And then there was the transformation of cargo boats to flatter, broader bottoms to permit containerization. This precluded upriver navigation and called for broader estuarial ports. As a result of this, and along with a general attack on Kolkata in terms of the historical developments, there was a particular sort of shift from Kolkata. The condition of the port has to be seen as a part of the condition of Kolkata as a whole.

I wouldn't go so far as to support a metaphor that Dr. Pratap Chandra Chunder has made, in his wisdom, in Dr. Satyesh Chakraborty's compilation on 125 years of Kolkata Port in the first article. He says that the port and the city were Siamese Twins.⁵ I don't know about that. It is certainly true that when the Port Trust was set up, for the first two years, the idea was that it would be run by the Municipal Corporation. It was only by special legislation that the Port Trust was then set up with its own purposes in view.

⁵ Pratap Chandra Chunder “Calcutta City and Port : Siamese Twins” in Satyesh C. Chakraborty, [op.cit.pp.1-3](#)

However, between 1947 and the revival of the Calcutta dockland in the recent decades, the port reflected the general lack of faith of the city in its own future.

Kolkata is a set of anchorages which have moved southwards - all the way from the Customs House to the Screw Pile Jetty Area, to what I used to know as King George's Dock, but I now find that according to our usual practice of heaping all the name changes on one or two devoted figures, King George's Dock is now called Netaji Subhas Dock - we have an amplitude of Netaji Subhas transportation terminals in our city. It is only a logical development as has been said before, today, that the port is shifting itself towards Haldia and in an attempt to obviate what people call "the bends, bores and bars" of the river, the shift will finally take place according to projections, to Diamond Harbour and even further southwards towards Saugor. The point still remains, these are all anchorages of a relatively new river course in a process of change and decay; how does one handle that aspect?

3. UPSTREAM FROM THE ESTUARIAL REACHES :-

I am addressing myself to a particular question, Dr. Ashok Mitra raised. Let us look at Calcutta, for hypothetical purposes, as distinct from Haldia. The glory of the last two or three years, the remarkable and laudable

change that has taken place in the river borne traffic of Kolkata includes the fact of the existence of Haldia. In fact, the development of Haldia as a sea port has made it easier to focus on the renovation of work in the Calcutta Dockland, on upriver traffic into the city and to rail and road terminals taking goods further inland. Supposing one leaves the seaward, southward, shift out, is there any possibility of reversing the trend, according to which, in the 1970s and 1980s, we thought of the decrepitude of Kolkata itself as a port.

Hydrographically speaking, the Hooghly river should be seen as distinct from the Bhagirathi. We learn in school, we teach our children that *Hooghly Bhagirathi ekee nadeer naam. (Hooghly Bhagirathi, they are names of the same river)*. There is some material in two articles in the Commemorative Volume edited by Dr. Chakraborty to lead us to look at the upper (**Bhagirathi**) and the lower, estuarial reaches of this river as a case of amalgamation of the Bhagirathi, the Damodar and the Rupnarayan, sometimes before the Europeans navigated it for their trade.⁶

D.M. McDowell, who served as Chief Hydraulic Engineer of the Port Trust and was later Prof. Emeritus of Hydrology in Manchester has shown

⁶ Vide the maps (Figure 4 on p.64) of Index Plan of Bhagirathi – Hooghly River System in Tapabrata Sanyal and Kalyan Chakraborty “Dredging the Ghosuri Sand - Some lessons” and (Figures 5 and 6 on pp.68 and 70) of the The Hooghly Estuary, and of the Ganges – Brahmaputra Delta in Donald Malcolm McDowell, “The Development of the River Hooghly for Navigation” in Satyesh C.Chakraborty op.cit.

in detail that the Bhagirathi, as a distributary of the river Ganges, got entangled with what is known as the Nadia river system - the Mathabhanga and the Jalangi, lower distributaries, all of which had tied up together and gone in for river capture in a big way, as happens in estuaries and deltas. This river capture between Murshidabad and Ranaghat has meant that the flow of the Ganga is depleting and has led to the Bhagirathi itself being a very narrow river. How narrow I recall, seeing with horror and surprise, about forty two years ago in 1963, when I had occasion to lecture in the Berhampore Krishnath College. I was taken by rickshaw to Murshidabad to see where the later Nawabs used to live. If you go to Hazar Duari, the big 19th century palace and you walk past it to the river, you will find the Bhagirathi flowing past ; the great river beside whose mammoth bends I had grown up, was just a narrow little nullah which flowed roughly from this table up to the wall there. A veteran jumper could pole-vault across the Bhagirathi there: the water level was very low. I don't know what the situation is now, but I doubt if the Bhagirathi has really broadened.

McDowell makes the point that south of Kalna, the river broadens out and where it flows past, what used to be Adi Saptagram, past what still at Bandel remains a church. Bandel is the Portuguese corruption of Bandar of Hooghly . I imagine that the tides do not come up to Hooghly , any more, I

am sure, but pretty much up the river. The tidal portion of this estuary of the Ganga is quite different in its development, its pattern, and its morphology.

I imagine this is due to the rivers on the west bank of the Hooghly – the Ajoy and the Mayurakshi, which comes down near Katwa then the Saraswati which lost itself in the Amta area in Howrah (and of which the Adi Ganga, east of the Hooghly may be a remnant) , and finally the Damodar, which in early mid-20th century near Amta in Howrah District used to be called “Kana Damodar” below Uluberia when, in the 1930s and early 1940s, we crossed it, going along the Bengal – Nagpur Railway Line. Today you can hardly see the Kana Damodar, probably now a ditch. Then there are the rivers Mundeswari, and Rupnarayan which river-captured the Damodar and dried up the whole swampy tract of Howrah and southern Hooghly districts.

It is significant that many of the great bars that make pilotage on the Hooghly , such a tricky and technical business, have been created perhaps because of the inflow of silt from these lower tributaries of the Hooghly. I am told that even in Haldia, the Nayachar, that is coming up is being created by the inflow of water, from the Haldi river.

4. ROAD – RIVER COMPLEMENTARITIES:-

Is it not necessary for us to think of a transportation model which includes a massive increase of traffic from the north bank of Ganga, all the way from Basti, Baraich, and Gonda in Uttar Pradesh through Muzaffarpur and Mithila which crosses by the bridge over the Ganga, to the east of Patna. Improvements are necessary in goods movements to and from North – East India and more traffic from the Himalayan states. This of course takes us into the realm of political decision in an arena that is specifically uncertain, since we have, not to put it too exaggeratedly, a most unnatural dynasty in Nepal which has massacred most of its kin and embattled large segments of its democratic as well as backwards/ underclasses. We cannot exclude the possibility of political uncertainty, the lack of political stability, hampering the sort of economic development that had begun in Nepal and that has begun again to be a bit wary, given the development of violence along the Terai region of Nepal. One always takes note of uncertainty when one thinks of any pattern of development.

It is just the point that if Kolkata Port has to develop its landward connectivities, then it will have to think not only of the tremendous development of containerization, ease of movement, shortening of turn-around-time, better clearing facilities. All these exist, they have taken place,

as the Chairman pointed out, yet a long-term planner's horizon has to move further from that. Whatever the southward movement, whatever the movement seaward and shipping improvement, Kolkata, as distinct from Haldia, will never again compete with Colombo or Singapore. There is a certain limit to the capacity of even a tidal river port, as compared with the open sea ports of the West Coast or even of Vishakapatnam or, on the other hand, the ports in the Kra Isthmus, and Malaysian Peninsula.

Planning for improved hinterland distributary networks for Kolkata Port one has to think, not only of the development or rather re-establishment of river borne traffic but of the development of road-rail- river co-operation, a co-operation that does not neglect the point of the principal advantage that Kolkata Port has suddenly rediscovered with the switch to containerization, the renewal of access to the commodities of the Indian Ocean that Trincomalee, Vizag and Singapore link it up with. This is the model in which the thinking must go forward. It has to be a model of sea-river-transportation highway co-ordination and co-operation in what is coming to be known as the BIMSTEC⁷ area compassing the Eastern, South Asian and the Western South-Eastern nations around the Bay of Bengal, the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea. We have to think, not just in terms

⁷ The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation or BIMSTEC, set up in 1997, groups together Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand and aims to achieve its own Free Trade Area by 2017.

of competition for markets but of road-water route co-operation.

5. A DIGRESSION : PRESERVING PORT HERITAGE : -

I would like to take your indulgence to move away from the essentials of port clearance to a point, which may be a trifle esoteric but of which I have some more knowledge; of preservation of the heritage of the old elements within the Calcutta Port Trust area. When a KMDA Committee in 1997-98, of which I happened to be Chairman, was listing Heritage Buildings of Kolkata, that were later notified by the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, our Committee's report to Government said that the Port Area should be listed as a Heritage Zone. When you list some part of a city as a Heritage Zone, it does not mean that that you cannot redevelop within it. It only means that it would be useful if specifically all old buildings of any significance vis-a-vis architecture, vis-a-vis aesthetic beauty and environmental health and also vis-a-vis relationship with eminent personalities are listed, described and photographed and maintained as far as possible, as they were. It means that a category be imputed to such buildings 'A' or 'B' class, i.e. higher preservation necessity and lower preservation necessity. It means that these categories should be respected when development goes on, at least by maintaining the outer façade.

I am sorry to say that the Kolkata Municipal Corporation Heritage Committee, of which I have been a member since its inception, did very little except considering applications for de-classification of buildings or sanctioning a few projects for re-use for commercial profit. It is still open to other bodies to begin exemplary action in this regard. The Port Trust, like the Railways, the Police, the Posts and Telegraphs, the Army have a tradition of being cognate organizations that have preserved their heritage buildings. I am sure that the residential bungalows in Portland Park and the mansions in Remount Road deserve preservation, in one way or another, as the buildings of the old Bengal – Assam Railway quarters in Belvedere Park on Belvedere Road deserve similar preservation; or as Mr. Bhandari, the General Manager of the South-Eastern Railway tried to preserve and create heritage awareness for the historic buildings in Garden Reach, such as the Bengal Nagpur Railway's Agent and General Manager's Bungalow, (inhabited once by Lord Inchcape of Mackinnon and Mackenzie) or the Godfrey Mansions I and II, all remarkable examples of mansion buildings in old colonial Calcutta. The Postal authorities too are trying to show off some of their old post offices in the city. I am sure that Kolkata Port Trust can do something in this direction.

Having been taken recently to visit Netaji Subhas Dock, I came across the old Clock Tower, a very elegant piece of architecture that could easily beat the Ghantaghar of Allahabad, in terms of beauty. People, thirty years ago, used to talk of the Ghantaghar only when they went to eat grimy kebabs there. No one really takes notice of the Clock Tower which was used to keep work time for the whole of the old King George's Dock. There is a notice affixed to it, difficult to read; or at least my eyesight is bad but others also found it difficult to read, it is so high up. Some clear signs along the older buildings, marking their original significance, would be interesting. The port has some of the fine old red brick buildings that were once the hallmark of old Calcutta. Most of the red brick buildings, including the one in which I was born in the then lovely Theatre Road, had been pulled down to build the very ugly present Shakespeare Sarani. At least some of these old red brick buildings in Dockland could be identified, placarded and treated with whatever care or concern that the Port Trust believes that they deserve.

I remember feeling very sorry about ten or fifteen years ago, when I was approached by the then River Surveyor, who told me that he had under his care some of the very old, beautifully painted, river maps of the Hooghly . It was suggested to him at that juncture that he could work through the Victoria Memorial for their good preservation, because they

seemed to be in a state of decay and these were very valuable maps of the Hooghly . The Hooghly may have changed its course since then, shoals may have developed, but these were historical records of 18th and 19th century cartography which certainly deserved preservation. But then the Chairman of that time decided the Victoria Memorial need have nothing to do with it. The Port Trust should look after its own materials. I wonder whether these maps have retained interest of those who are now concerned with the history, either of cartography or of the river. A easily accessible volume of full reproduction could be entrusted to expert bodies like INTACH's Calcutta chapter, which is now sponsoring an excellent guide to Calcutta's heritage buildings.

In many old institutions of imperial vintage such as the Port Trust, there are many elements which deserve commemoration. The other day, in Netaji Subhas Dock, the officer who very kindly showed me around, showed the area where the ships enter the dock from the river, where the Lockgates are. Pointing at the brickwork on either side of the Lockgates, he said, ‘ Sayebra ei dharaner jinish kore giye chhilo, amra parbo kina janina, tobe amra samprati ei dharaner jinish tairi korini’ (The British made these sorts of things, I don't know if we will be able to repeat them, but we have not recently done so). Of course, we can do it but why not preserve what

was done earlier, no matter whether the Sahibs made it or the non - Sahibs made it according to Sahebi technology. It is always good to plan for the future but quite often, when we plan for the future we write an old history which we then forget.

I wonder if there are any among you who have read Dr. Nilmoni Mukherjee's very lucid, panegyric of the way the Port was built which he wrote about thirty five years ago and which the port itself sponsored. All I am asking for is to keep note of the past, and on the basis of the constraints of the past, work out what is feasible for the future. That feasibility requires research and planning but it also requires a certain courageous vision, a vision which will be broad and which will take into note the fact that our futures are not statically fixed, that there are going to be changes. The point is, from what base line and how do we visualize those changes and what part does the Port Trust itself think will be played by Kolkata Port in those changes, as you visualize them over the next twenty years. Or will it merely rest on the laurels that Haldia and containerization, as well the lack of necessity to bother about river traffic movement as much as before, have gained it in the last twenty or thirty years ?

Thank you,

Barun De
