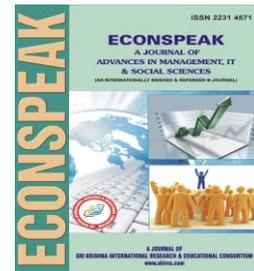




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PIPAVAV PORT IN HISTORICAL VIEW – A STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

Wind of liberalization is blowing from last few years. As a result important changes are happening in industrial field. Various states of our country have given velocity to this process. Gujarat state is forwarding ahead in the achieving of new record, by leaps and bounds. ^[1]

Pipavav port is naturally safe by three marine islands, (1) Savaii island, (2) Chanch island and (3) Shiyal island. ^[2] So it possesses so many natural facilities. Demands were there from various levels to develop it from decades. Unfortunately, development of this port was delayed due to scarcity of finance.

It was to be happened a biggest port of western India, if Pipavav was to be developed which is in centre of Mumbai, the entrance of India and Kandla, the only big port of Gujarat.

It was to be happened, status of entrance was to be obtained by it as an entrance of western India, if it was to be happened.

Permission was granted to develop it as port of private sector during the reign of Chimanbhai ministry. Government of Gujarat allocated 1750 acres land and seashore of 27 km for Pipavav port. ^[3]

Now Pipavav is taking shape as a permanent port which is situated in Rajula block of Amreli district in southern sea-shore of Saurashtra area of Gujarat state. Too much enthusiasm is increasing in establishing for industrial zones based on sea-port. Industries of millions of rupees are incoming based on sea-port.

A firm determination is published to reOthrobing shipping industry accepting new strategy according to agreement of understanding with the Government of Netherland for development of ports.

Pipavav is becoming foremost in the direction of becoming a big port of joint venture, amount of more than Rs.135 crores are already invested for this project till now. It is thought to invest approx Rs.600 corer rupees in next five years.

In this way, Pipavav is becoming a new place for employment and industry, a new chapter of sage of development of Saurashtra from here. It will be interesting to study this part in a historical perspective.

PIPAVAV PORT: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A wide range of approx 1600 K.M. Gujarat sea-shore is the biggest sea-shore in all states of India which is a valuable gift to Gujarat by the God. Development of shipping of Gujarat is traditional at sea-shore. ^[4] Among which fame of sea of Kathiawad-Saurashtra is very old. Importance and freedom of sea-shore of western India is permanently maintained from Vedic and Puranic era. Ports resided at this sea-shore were the navy and business centres for foreign countries from Vallabhi, Chalukya, Solanki, Vaghela, Muslim and then East India company and British era. ^[5] Which becomes clear from descriptions and references of Purans, Bhagvat, Tolemy, Cosmos, Periplus, Mirat – e – Sikandary and Mirat – e – Akbary. Port trade of here was famous till advent of British in Kathiawad. Development of Bombay port was started in second decade of Nineteenth century i.e. 1818 A.D. Degeneration of this native craftsmanship was started due to policy and affection followed to develop Bombay port. All the ports of Kathiawad including Bhavnagar were offered into sacrificial fire as a 'Bali' in the 'Yagna' of prosperity of Bombay port. ^[6]

The nature has gifted wide sea-shore of Bhavnagar district which is spread in approx 120 km and distributed in small or big creeks (inlets) at many places. E.g. Creek of Sonrai in Bhal region, Bhavnagar reek near Bhavnagar, Creek of Sultanpur near Talaja etc. All the three creeks are in the bay of Cambay (Khambhat). While creek of Kanpur near Mahuva and creek of Chanch near Pipavav or port Albert are in Arabian Sea. Ports (1) Bhavnagar, (2) Mahuva, (3) Talaja, (4) Pipavav, or port Albert Vihar, (5) Kathivadar, (6) Sundarai and (7) Sultanpur are situated in Bhavnagar district (Old Bhavnagar State). There was a time when goods of Bhavnagar port were brought to all the places of Kathiawad, Gujarat and Bombay port.

Port of Pipavav is situated at 20^o 58, north latitude and 71^o 33 east longitude in Mahuva sub-district of Bhavnagar district. Sant Pipa Bhagat came from Rajasthan to this place who was a king of small state during contemporary era of sant Kabir. Birth of Pipaji was at Gadh Mangrol of Badmer district of Rajasthan in 1390 A.D. His internal element was coloured with devotion. He was a disciple of Jagadguru Ramnand Acharya. Pipaji had taken observance of austerities with his seventh wife Sitadevi.

Pipa Pap Na Kijje

So Punya Barabar Hoi [9]

I.e. O Pipa, don't do sin, it will be equal to righteousness.

These lines of Pipa Bhagat are on the tongue of people after approx 600 years. Pipaji and his wife Sitadevi came here and resided here. Pipavav which is recorded in history by Pipa Bhagat is situated in Amreli district. It was in old Bhavnagar state before independence. There is a village 'Chanch' which is situated at front part of open sea-shore of sea. It is called 'creek of Chanch or 'Moto Pat' (big strip of land). Traders of Rajula were trading from this port for many years. But due to their poor economic position the port was not developed prosperously. ^[10]

Sidi, a ruler of Jafrabad tried to closed down this port in 1842-43 A.D. and started quarrel with Bhavnagar state. But political agent Cornel Gange was assigned to examine about this quarrel and to assist Major Short in 1857-58 and it was settled in favour of Bhavnagar state in 1858 D.D.

There was a quarrel with Junagadh state regarding Pipavav port in 1853-54 also. Gaga Oza, the secretary of Bhavnagar state proved unfairness of this quarrel of Junagadh state to Major Short, the assistant of the political agent on the evidences. So Pipavav port was remained in power of Bhavnagar state permanently. ^[11]

The British Government appointed Shree C. J. Davis, the collector of Bharuch district to settle the claim of Bhavnagar state. When he saw creek of 'Mota Pat' of Pipavav port, he said while giving his opinion that, "This creek of Chanch of 'Mota Pat' is worth to praise. Big boats also can come in it. Trade upto central India can be done if railway track is constructed upto Pipavav. Not only that, the boats can go to foreign countries directly. This port is so facilitate naturally. You should increase in trade by developing a city at here."

The Pipavav port is situated at 130 km from Bhavnagar, 45 km from Mahuva and 19 km from Jafrabad. Natural creation of this port is marvellous. It is safe by cape of creek which is 6.4 to 8 km long and 1 km broad. ^[12] Entrance of this port is safe by land of 1 km broad creek from sea hurricane due to Creek of Shiyal Island and Savai Island. Water remains always deep during the time of ebb in open sea here.

Old Bhavnagar had made planning of development of Pipavav port with other ports. The Pipavav port was built by expert engineer proctor Sisal in Bhavnagar state. Shri Gaga Oza, the then chief executive of royal state had taken important steps by starting facilities like Rajgadhiya building for offices of administrative, judge, P.S.I., P.I., travellers' rest house, water tank, hospital, a workshop, road, railway, post office, telegram office, grocery etc.

When Prince Albert victor, the grandson of queen of England came to Bhavnagar, this port was inaugurated by him in March 1890 A.D. with a big function. The port was named by his name as

Victor port. ^[13] Figures of export – import of goods during third decade of nineteenth century are as under. ^[14]

SR.NO.	YEAR	IMPORT IN RUPEES	EXPORT IN RUPEES
1	1870-71	71,200	6000
2	1871-72	75,500	800
3	1873-74	72,600	16,750
4	1876-77	36,400	2,700
5	1877-78	67,792	648
6	1878-79	1,15,367	47,477
7	1879-80	76,365	1,79,180
8	1881-82	1,06,168	1,68,299
9	1885-86	1,34,529	1,06,800
10	1887	1,44,520	1,35,800
11	1888-89	2,50,955	1,15,075
12	1892-93	2,10,150	2,79,425
13	1896-97	2,26,925	1,57,625
14	1899-1900	2,09,875	2,13,950

CONCLUSION

Gujarat state is prosperous with strategically ports by 1/3 of total sea shore of India i.e. 1600 km. There are total 41 ports on this sea-shore of which Kandla port is the biggest port. Out of remaining 40 ports 11 ports are of medium size and 29 are of small size. There are more ports in Saurashtra of Gujarat state. Their contribution is also remained special. More work is yet remained for their development than what is done. Industrial development of Gujarat is limited from Ahmedabad to Vapi only. Benefit of development is not obtained to Saurashtra and Kutch region. Saurashtra holds front line position in the field of cement production, brass parts, fishery industry and salt industry. A new horizon of development of Saurashtra will open if use of transport from ports of Saurashtra is started. ^[16]

In short, Pipavav port can become a big port of western India even though it remained as neglected till so many years after independence. Pipavav port can become a symbol of prosperity of Gujarat which is an 'all weather port'. It can come in line with Surat, Bharuch, Khambhat and Ghogha port as in past era.

Certainly, it is a matter of pleasure that a big jetty is constructed at Pipavav port. In this way, reputed industrialists will start (make) their industries in near future, as it is developing rapidly. Government

of Gujarat should take in hand development of this port, if they want to develop Saurashtra in real sense.

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