Government of West Bengal
Department of Industry, Commerce & Enterprises
IPI & PI Branch
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NOTIFICATION

Whereas, the State Government has aim to streamline the logistics sector, and to promote green logistics by introducing new policy in the State through an enabling environment;

Now, therefore, the Governor is hereby pleased to formulate and adopt the following new policy (Annexure-I) in consultation with the concerned departments and stakeholders, under the title '**West Bengal Logistics Policy, 2023**' for the State of West Bengal.

The said policy shall remain in force for a period of 5 (five) years from the date of issuance of the Gazette Notification or till the date of declaration of new or revised policy, whichever is earlier.

By order of the Governor,

V. Yadav 17/11

Principal Secretary to the
Government of West Bengal

Annexure-I

Draft West Bengal Logistics Policy - 2023

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West Bengal Logistics Policy 2023

Background

The logistics sector is a crucial growth driver for West Bengal's economy. The sector has witnessed a significant growth over the years, and it is expected to grow exponentially in the coming future owing to government led interventions and augmentation of trade and commerce across the global market. However, it is also pertinent to highlight that the sector has certain challenges such as high freight cost, fragmented infrastructure, limited connectivity to Northeastern states of India, weighty regulatory processes, inadequate availability of skilled labour force, etc. In order to address these gaps, the Government of West Bengal (GoWB) is relentlessly working towards building a growth promising logistics infrastructure in the state.

West Bengal is the gateway to the East and plays a crucial role in the transport & logistics network of the country. The state has the 3rd largest road network connectivity in India with 17 National Highways and 2 Asian Highways,16% of National Waterways, 5th largest metro rail network in India with over 100 km extension underway, two large container and bulk handling ports at Kolkata and Haldia,2nd largest cold storage capacity in the country and largest warehousing capacity in East India. The state has attempted to foray into expansion of all modes of transport infrastructure to make it a multi-modal logistics hub. The robust infrastructure availability and state's strategic location complemented with the Government of West Bengal's end-to-end support, makes Bengal one of the highly sought investment destinations for India.

On account of logistics sector being the cornerstone of West Bengal's economy, the GoWB is determined to take proactive interventions in providing end-to-end support for its holistic growth. Henceforth, the West Bengal Logistics Policy 2023 is a strategic intervention planned by the State Government to streamline the logistics sector, strengthen infrastructure, boost technology adoption, improve ease of doing business, promote green logistics, create availability of a skilled labour force.

In essence, the West Bengal Logistics Policy 2023 is a vision document for the logistics sector of the state. The policy will serve as a blueprint and ecosystem builder through which the various players in the sector can strive for success.

Consequently, the policy shall help West Bengal to secure a strategic position in the global supply chain and as a preferred investment destination for logistics and allied projects.[1]

[1]The West Bengal Logistics Policy, 2023 will adhere to Land Use and Development Control plan prepared under the West Bengal Town & Country (Planning & Development), Act, 1979, wherever, applicable

Key Initiatives in Bengal's Logistics Sector

The enumerated below are a few initiatives taken by the Government of West Bengal to strengthen logistics sector in the state:

Industrial Corridors - Industrial Economic Corridors from Tajpur to Raghunathpur, with spurs from Dankuni-Raghunathpur; Dankuni-Kalyani; and Dankuni-Tajpur, have been proposed to enhance industrial inter-linkages within West Bengal with an investment potential worth INR 2 lakh crore.This would support port-led development in areas such as Haldia and Tajpur as well as support other upcoming industrial corridors like East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC)(financially supported by Asian Development Bank (ADB)), Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC)project and Gati Shakti National Master plan in the State. These industrial corridors will have a positive impact on multiple economic regions, improve connectivity with surrounding industrial zones and boost development of complementary infrastructure like logistic parks, townships along with other urban amenities.

Airport Development - The state has two international airports in Kolkata and Bagdogra and a greenfield airport at Andal. For the upgradation of Bagdogra Airport, the state has allotted 87 acres of land and it is also focusing on improving regional connectivity through the expansion of existing airports and the development of new airports. In this regard, the WBIDC is conducting a Techno-economic Study for setting up airports at Malda, Balurghat (Dakshin Dinajpur), Hasimara (Alipurduar) and Charra (Purulia). Additionally, the state is committed towards development and upgradation of Andal airport to an international airport.

Rail Development - Recently, Integrated Check Post Petrapole has been linked with rail tracks to facilitate trade related activities.

Port Development -

Tajpur deep-sea port - a greenfield projectis being developed in the state,and is expected to attract investments of more than INR 25,000 crores, of which INR 15,000 crores shall be invested on developing the infrastructure around the port. The Tajpur deep-sea port shall transform the logistics infrastructure of the state and provide easy connectivity to neighboring Southeast Asian countries and nearby land-locked states such as Northeast States, Bihar, Jharkhand, etc. The project is expected to create 25,000 direct jobs and over 100,000 indirect jobs.

Additionally, the Kolkata Port Trust, officially known as the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (SMP) Trust, may attract INR2,500 crore investment over the next 3-4 years under PPP mode to achieve fully mechanized operations, capacity augmentation, and increasing efficiency at Kolkata Dock System (KDS) and Haldia Dock Complex (HDC) regions.

Logistics Hubs and Multi-modal Logistics Park - The Government of West Bengal has identified five prominent locations in the state - Dankuni, Durgapur, Tajpur, Malda and Siliguri for developing Logistics Hubs on PPP basis. The development of Logistics Parks in these locations shall strengthen the logistics ecosystem of the state holistically and significantly improve the economy.

Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) –The implementation of single window system – SilpaSathi, a 24*7 digital gateway for providing statutory compliances is a key intervention to improve ease of doing business in the state. Additionally, around 500 regulatory compliances have been reduced over last year. The state has also developed an app called Jomir Tothyato facilitate digitization of land records. Furthermore, an online facility has been rolled out for monitoring of the brick earth excavation which is to be implemented soon. Furthermore, the State has received accolades for its "Suvidha" Vehicles Facilitation System Portal recently launched by the GoWB for quick clearance and smooth movement of Vehicles at ICP Petrapole and ICP Ghojadanga to support exporters in tradevia Bangladesh border.

Green Initiatives -

Some of the initiatives that have been taken up the State are listed below -

The City Gas Distribution (CGD) project plans to develop natural gas infrastructure to supply cleaner and greener fuel to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations and Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections in households, industrial and commercial units. The project plans to set up 38 Lakh PNG connections and ~610 CNG stations. The project envisages an investment of over ~INR 16,271 Cr while generating employment for ~4,750 people in the state.

Implementation of the Electric Vehicle Policy 2021 to strengthen EV ecosystem in the state.

Initiation of a CNG Conversion Project for vehicles to ensure sustainability related practices in the state.

Allocation of new E-buses for public transport.

Planningto make Nayachar — a fishing island in East Midnapore — into a Mega Solar Park and Mega Fisheries Hub on 11,000 acres of land - a pioneer in aquaculture logistics. Around 3,000 fishermen would be trained, and steps are being taken to set up ice parks, cold storage, and fish processing centers.

Wayside Amenities- The State plans to encourage participation of private players in the operation of numerous Patha Sathis (wayside amenities) located along highways/major arterial roads to provide safe, clean and affordable services to tourists/travelers/drivers/passengers. This is likely to increase tourist footfall and boost the local economy along thereby strengthening the logistics sector.

Other Initiatives –

The Roll-on Roll-off (Ro-Ro) services have been started across several locations along river Hooghly and Sundarbans areas to facilitate goods transport through Inland Water Transport (IWT) in the near future.

The GoWB also plans to develop a central portal dedicated for warehouses and cold storages for all the districts of West Bengal.

The Urban Development & Municipal Affairs (UD&MA)Department and Panchayats & Rural Development Department plan to conduct a study to map regulations specific to the logistics sector and formulate an industry-friendly guidelines on relaxing height and other restrictions for logistics players involving mechanization and automation at their warehouses, storage units and logistics parks and promote sector specific policies.

Recently, 'West Bengal Inland Water Transport, Logistics and Spatial Development Project' has been initiated by GoWB in association with the World Bank to facilitate passenger and freight movement through inland waterways contributing to the growth of State's logistics sector.

The Government of West Bengal in collaboration with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) has planned to promote development of Multimodal Hub and Freight Village in Balagarh. This shall reduce the logistics cost and boost seamless connectivity in the state.

Definition

'Logistics' means transportation & handling of goods between points of production and consumption, storage, value addition and allied services. The logistics infrastructure comprises of nodes and connections, more recognizable as ports, stations, multimodal logistics parks (MMLPs), warehouses, and other business premises, connected by roads, railways, shipping, inland waterways, air routes, pipelines, etc., that are used by a wide range of carriers. This system is operated under a framework through a workforce with a wide range of knowledge of skills and technologies[2].

[2] Source – National Logistics Policy, 2022

Vision, Mission and Targets

Vision

"To build **integrated, seamless, efficient, sustainable and reliable network of logistics assets** in West Bengal while leveraging **advanced infrastructure &technology and skilled labor force** to position "**West Bengal as a Logistics Hub for India and generate additional employment opportunities in the sector**" in line with the Gati Shakti Master Plan.

Mission

The following are mission statements identified for the policy:

- To provide policy thrust for the coordinated development of logistics infrastructures such as last-mile connectivity, logistics hubs, freight villages, and warehousing, which enables transitions towards more efficient, economical, and environmentally sustainable logistics sector.
- To lay down the frame work for regulatory, policy and institutional reforms in the logistics sector of the state thereby enhancing ease of doing business, improving investment climate and fostering skill development.

The following are the broader principles guiding the policy:

- **Integration:** To promote inter-modality and multi-modality through seamless integration of processes, digital systems, policies/plans, and legislative requirements.
- **Optimization:** To promote and ensure optimal utilization of logistics infrastructure/assets/facilities through synergetic usage.
- **Standardization:** To regularize standardization of physical assets, processes, taxonomy, benchmarking of service quality standards, in the logistics sector.
- **Modernization:** To promote greater adoption of information communication technology, upgraded infrastructure, use of drones, automation, innovation, green logistics, international best practices and facilitate integration with global value chain.
- **Formalization:** To reduce fragmentation in the sector, promote excellence, mainstream logistics in higher education, upskilling and re-skilling of existing workforce.
- **Democratization:** To promote inclusivity by addressing needs of logistics supply and user side (agriculture and manufacturing sector and internal and external trade) and encourage public-private participation.

Target

To attain the vision of West Bengal's Logistics Policy 2023, the state aims to achieve the following key target: **Reduce logistics cost in the State by 40% by the end of the policy period**. Further, to achieve this target, the following sub-targets will be pursued:

(i) Improve quality of logistics infrastructure
(ii) Increase reliability of logistics services
(iii) Reduce operating and regulatory hindrances
(iv) Improve quality of multi-modal logistics services
(v) Improve capability of logistics service providers
(vi) Strengthen green logistics infrastructure

Policy Period

This West Bengal Logistics Policy, 2023, shall come into force from the date of notification and shall remain in operation for a period of 5 (five) years or till date the declaration of new or revised policy, whichever is earlier[3].

In the interim, the West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC), under Department of Industry, Commerce and Enterprises, Government of West Bengal, may constitute a committee to conduct review of the impact of Policy after every three years and notify revisions/ updates reflecting the latest developments of the logistics sector in the state, as may be necessary.

This Policy shall come into effect from the date of its notification in the official Gazette.

Institutional Set-up of Implementation and Monitoring Body

The State Government of West Bengal will set up West Bengal Logistics Development Council (WBLDC) that shall function as an apex advisory body to ensure smooth cooperation and partnership between multiple stakeholders and regulatory bodies at central and state level in the logistics sector. The WBLDC will consist of an Empowered Group of Secretaries (EGoS) under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Secretary of the state. The council will be represented by major departments relevant to the logistics sector, trade bodies, and representatives from the Government of India institutions, representatives from entities working in transport, energy, warehousing, and skill development amongst others. The committee will serve as the forum for the regulated dialogue; coordination among the parties involved in logistics, transport and trade operations and helps the state to facilitate private sector investments in the logistics sector.

WBLDC shall provide an integrated platform for the logistics sector development in the state acting as a single window clearance system to streamline logistics sector related activities. It

shall act as a converging body to monitor the progress of logistics in the state. The council may be responsible for coordinated development of logistics infrastructure, provide inputs for drafting rules and regulations governing logistics service providers, facilitating applicable incentives or alternate sources of funding, time bound clearances, introducing cutting edge technology in the sector, developing standard operating procedures for grant of permissions and development of supporting infrastructure and enabling timely multimodal cargo evacuation or intermodal cargo transfer to and from terminal points within the state to minimize the cost of logistics. Regulatory agencies (related to land acquisition, road transportation, industrial development, logistics parks, trade and commerce etc.) will work with WBLDC to reduce clearance times and for grievance redressals.

Under the aegis of WBLDC, the West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. (WBIDC) shall operate and function as a nodal agency for implementation of the Logistics Policy under the overall guidance of Department of Industries, Commerce & Enterprise (IC&E). It shall also carry out the inter-departmental coordination, whenever required.

To foster the state's growth potential in the logistics sector, WBIDC is empowered to set up a Logistics Division or Agency in due course. The Logistics Division/Agency will be involved in activities such as –

- Assist in promotion of logistics-led growth in West Bengal & help in evaluation of logistics infrastructure proposals (e.g., Logistics Parks etc.) for necessary approval
- Develop a framework and carry out monitoring & evaluation of implementation of West Bengal Logistics Policy & infrastructure projects as well as publish annual reports
- Develop & implement West Bengal Integrated Logistics Action Plan (WBILAP) & conduct regular monitoring of development & performance of logistics sector under the provisions of this policy
- Address queries related to logistics infrastructure in the state & assist in providing regulatory approvals for logistics sector proposals/projects; improve the ease of doing business ecosystem in the state
- Build resilience for crisis management; facilitate movement of commodities & coordinate with other regulatory agencies in state to address the logistics sector's bottlenecks under emergency situations
- Provide additional support or assistance through regulatory interventions to promote multimodal transportation infrastructure, digitization & green interventions[4]
- Seek inputs from West Bengal Logistics Development Council & other regulatory agencies in the state concerning to improve the overall ecosystem for the logistics sector in West Bengal

[4]These developments/projects would be carried out by relevant departments and additional support be invoked when feasible and necessary

- Assist in carrying out study to find scope of PPP and private investments in all modes of transports
- Facilitate study to delineate measures to reduce logistics cost and improve efficiency and promote safe transportation of hazardous materials and goods
- Attend stakeholders' meetings or conferences to gather and provide relevant inputs as well as regularly update useful information as post-program reports
- Support in identifying of strategic logistics routes to strengthen and develop resiliency & backup routes for critical cargo like food & medicines

West Bengal Integrated Logistics Action Plan (WBILAP)

The Government of West Bengal plans to implement the State Logistics Policy through West Bengal Integrated Logistics Action Plan (WBILAP). The WBILAP consists of thirteen interventions to strengthen the state's logistics sector holistically. These interventions include:

1. Granting 'Industry Status' to Logistics Sector

The state plans to grant 'Industry Status' to the Logistics Sector to ensure maximum support for accelerated development of the sector. The status shall provide (i) seamless development of trunk infrastructure for logistics projects, (ii) access to land banks developed by the State Government for industrial development purposes, (iii) benefits of the State Government's schemes, if eligible (iv) industry grade power tariffs, if eligible (v) easier access to capital (vi) single window support for the evaluation of logistics sector's proposals leading to faster turnaround and realization of investment proposals.

2. Developing Multi-Modal Logistics Parks

The state envisages to set up multi-modal logistics parks with excellent state-of-art infrastructure and modern class facilities such as cargo aggregation/ segregation, distribution, inter-modal transfer of cargo and containers, open and/or closed storage, temperature controlled and/or ambient storage, custom bonded warehouse, material handling equipment, parking, value added services and other related facilities as per requirements for efficient movement and distribution of semi-finished or finished products. The parks shall have high-end e-warehousing facilities equipped with latest technologies and in line with highest standards. Furthermore, the state plans to ensure digitalization of inventory management to improve reliability, facilitate tracking, improved predictability and visibility of replenishment orders, improvements in speed of transit by adoption of smarter enforcement, and de-risking of supply chains through resilient infrastructure planning and implementation.

The multi-modal logistics parks shall be equipped with supporting infrastructure such as internal roads, communication facilities, open and green spaces, Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP), water pipelines, power lines, and other facilities as per the requirements of the park. The

parks shall also have e-warehousing hubs, including e-registry of warehouses, cold storages, container depots, and other logistics facilities with geotagging and other updated technology interventions.

In this regard, the Government of West Bengal has identified a few locations within the state such as Tajpur, Dankuni, Malda, Siliguri and Durgapur as potential destinations to develop multi-modal logistics parks[5].

3. Creating support infrastructure through freight villages

The state intends to set up freight villages to strengthen the cargo infrastructure in the state by developing dedicated freight transfer facilities and multimodal access, port facilities to transfer cargo thereby reducing port and city related congestion and thus reducing cost of logistics and stimulating growth of logistics industry in the state.

The objective of developing freight village is to streamline transportation, distribution of goods and other logistics at a significant scale. The development of freight corridor will also to achieve economic efficiency and ease of doing business, by delivery and coordination of various freight related activities under one ceiling.

4. Establishing Dedicated Land Banks

The state plansset up dedicated land banks with pre-determined locations specific approach for multimodal terminals, trans-shipment and distribution centers as well as logistics clusters. These land banks shall provide digital land repository with the help of GIS Digital mapping, specifically for the development of logistics projects with faster disposal of certificates.

Additional consideration would be given to proposed logistics parks that are envisaged through multi-modal connectivity. Also, relaxations for utilization of space would be facilitated as per extant norms.

5. Improving Ease of Doing Business

The state plans to improve ease of doing business in the logistics sector through following interventions:

- Streamline cumbersome processes by simplifying business regulations, procedures, clearances, elimination of multiple windows, reduction in turnaround time for approvals and removal of redundant asks.
- Provide speedy availability of power, water, other necessary infrastructure and facilities through hassle-free coordination with relevant departments.

[5]land purchase, if any, and all land allotment would follow the extant policies

- Develop a digital single window system to provide quick approval to potential investors, it shall allow to track time-lags across supply chain route to facilitate decision making for Logistics Operators in real time.
- Set up a robust grievance redressal mechanism to address concerns in a time-bound manner.
- Facilitate the Department of Urban and Municipal Affairs (UDMA) and Panchayat & Rural Development Department to provide nodal officers to assist the logistics sector in understanding building codes while improving ceiling clearance laws to help logistics companies that often require high clearance for their machines.

6. Integrated Portal of Cold Storages and Warehouses

The state aims to develop an integrated portal for real time monitoring of cold storages and warehouses. The portal shall support end-to-end supply chain management of cold chain storage units and warehouses to ensure the highest quality and safety of agriculture, horticulture, dairy, fish & marine, poultry & meat products, pharma products etc. with a direct linkage from source to the consumer.

7. Boosting Technology Adoption

The state plans to boost penetration of technology in logistics sector through following interventions:

- Development of digital platform for efficient data management of freight and cargo for surface, air and waterways and such information may be integrated with national information systems that may come up in near future.
- Establishment of e-warehousing hub, including e-registry of warehouses, cold storages, container depots, and other logistics facilities with geotagging and other updated technology interventions.
- Development of Real-time information management systems to be put in place to track time-lags across supply chain route to facilitate decision making for Logistics Operators.
- Set up IT & data-driven, and risk assessment-based enforcement of regulatory compliances.
- Development of a customized Risk Management System (RMS).
- Development of a common and connected infrastructure of traffic cameras, Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) readers, sensors, Windows Imaging Format (WIM), weighbridges and use of body cameras by enforcement teams.
- Encourage usage of new-age technologies like block chain and artificial intelligence, robotics and automation in cargo transportation and storage.
- Undertake measures to incubate and promote start-up ecosystem in collaboration with industry/academia.

8. Promoting Private Sector Participation through Public Private Partnerships

The State plans to introduce a framework for implementing projects under Public Private Partnership (PPP) mechanism to leverage private financing and undertake logistics infrastructure development projects.

The WBLDC may also oversee the implementation of PPP frameworks, which lay out the guidelines for projects qualifying for under PPP framework, establish Model Concessionaire Agreement for implementing the projects and represent a legal framework providing clarity on government actions and assurance to the private sector that its legitimate rights would be adequately protected.

9. Setting up of West Bengal Logistics Center of Excellence (WBLCOE)

The state government plans to set up a West Bengal Logistics Center of Excellence (WBLCOE) that shall offer a centralized platform for bringing together stakeholders across the value chain of logistics sector (including industry experts, academic and research professionals, logistics players, industry associations, students etc.) to devise efficient and innovative solutions around logistics service delivery. The WBLCOE's primary roles and responsibilities may include:

- Performance measurement and benchmarking of logistics service delivery in the state
- Origin-destination study of cargo movement
- Assessment of emerging digital solutions for offering integrated and efficient logistics solutions
- Identify innovative transportation models
- Promote start-ups in logistics and transportation sector
- Host internationally benchmarked curricula and courses suited to the Logistics and Transportation industry

10. Promoting Skill Development and Capacity Building

With expansion in logistics industry, the demand for skilled labour force such as warehouse managers, logistics managers, professional heavy vehicle drivers, etc. is rising significantly. In order to address this demand, the state government is setting up a skill development facility along with the West Bengal Logistics Center of Excellence (WBLCOE), in coordination with the Department of Technical Education, Training and Skill Development and Private stakeholders. The proposed skill development infrastructure shall boost the availability of a skilled workforce across the entire value chain of the logistics sector.

For capacity and employability augmentation, the State plans to implement two types of skill development programs; one for internal/ government staff to improve the administrative works; and other for external entities to improve the employment generation in West Bengal's logistics sector. The state also plans to leverage the existing scheme 'Utkarsh Bangla' for capacity building.

The state government envisages to carry out the following activities to boost in-house capabilities:

- Developing a curated programme for capacity-enhancement of in-house staff in different departments of the State government
- Benchmarking of international best practices and guidelines with respect to logistics infrastructure and network
- Organizing International & National educational tours and field trips
- Providing guidance for development of tenders and bid evaluation

11. Creating Green Logistics

In view of climate change and the need for environment sustainability, the Government of West Bengal plans to promote green measures and sustainable practices in the logistics sector. To promote green logistics in the state, listed below a few interventions that may be adopted:

- Encouraging use of renewable energy sources, installation of solar panels (especially for Multi-modal logistics park, warehouses, etc.), rainwater harvesting systems, solid waste management systems, etc.
- Promoting use of EVs for internal/shorter movement of freight at logistics facilities
- Promoting alternate greener modes of cargo movement
- Prioritizing corridors for charging infrastructure for EVs and promoting usage of EVs by e-commerce companies for city logistics
- Promoting greater open sourcing of power to improve energy efficiency across the grid
- Developing green rating systems for the logistics infrastructure assets in the state, etc.

12. Fortifying EXIM Logistics

The state aims to strengthen inter-country trade facilitation and boost trade competitiveness and achieve stronger positioning in the global supply chain. This shall involve development of infrastructure at strategic border points to streamline logistics network for smooth movement.

13. Improving City Logistics

The state plans to develop a master plan to strengthen city level logistics infrastructure to improve urban freight efficiency, ease cargo movement and reduce logistics cost.

Towards Transforming Bengal as Logistics Hub

The West Bengal Logistics Policy, 2023 is a dedicated attempt of the state to build logistics ecosystem. The State Government envisages to build high-end sustainable logistics infrastructure, improve ease of doing business, boost technology adoption, generate skilled labour force availability in the state and transform Bengal as Logistics Hub of the nation.