

In an Interview with *Maritime Gateway*, **Pramod K Srivastava**, Director, Allied ICD Services talks about the company's growth plans and the challenges faced by ICD operators in the country.



Q It's been almost seven years since the facility became operational. How the journey was so far and what were the change you experienced?

A I can say the experience has been tough. Slowly and steadily things started happening and people finally kept faith in me. Now we have eight major shipping lines committed to use this facility. SAIL, signing an yearly contract with us is a testimony to our efficiency. Four shipping lines having their depots here is also a major achievement. I am expecting great future. Shipping lines will yield better revenues through this ICD as port is giving them a benefit of ₹1000 per teu. For an importer in Durgapur region the cost will be less to get it cleared from our ICD than from Kolkata ICD. These are the trade gains.

Q What are the services offered to your clients?

A We faced many challenges in providing infrastructure and services to the clients. We have different departments for CHAs, warehousing and transport. So the idea is to provide an end-to-end solution to the client. We have tailor-made solutions for customers. For high value customers like Carbon Black, we do stuffing for I-cube containers. We have Eot cranes in the facility, which I can proudly say that exists nowhere in India. Still one problem is other CHAs are not coming to this ICD for their business. Though seven CHAs registered we do not see regular work happening.

Q How many containers are being handled at the facility?

A Currently, we are handling 1,200 containers per month. Our target is to reach 2,500 containers per month by March 2014.

Q What factors will drive your business growth?

A We tied up with CONCOR. Its rail terminal is six kilometres away from the ICD. An extension of the ICD has been created at the terminal in 255 sq m of space. So the factory-stuffed containers can be directly brought there to be transported directly to the destination. This will help us increase the volumes. Containers need to be de-stuffed before they are brought to Durgapur ICD.

Q What are the challenges faced by ICDs in general?

A Shipping lines should move in. There is a CONCOR run ICD in Jharkhand near Jamsshedpur. Unfortunately, no shipping line uses this facility. Another CONCOR run facility in Amingaon in Assam picked up business recently due to some policy intervention after lying unutilized for a longtime. New ICD has come up at Kalingapur. This is a much needed facility. So when ICDs are created for the benefit of customers shipping lines should create acceptance points.

Q Is there further scope for more ICDs to come in?

A Yes. I feel potential exists in the eastern region. Siliguri which is connected to seven states of north-east is an attractive destination for ICD business. ■