

Tighten the management and planning of seaports

Associate with developing logistics services



The investment and exploitation of port group no. 1 in Quang Ninh and Hai Phong hasn't met the demand; the no. 5 port groups of Cai Mep – Thi Vai area are largely invested but imbalanced in supply and demand; many ports in Central Vietnam operate under capacity... Those are the “hot” problems specified straightly at the conference on planning and managing operation of seaports and logistics held by the Ministry of Transport on 29/09 in Ha Noi.

Speaking at the conference, Mr. Do Hong Thai, Deputy Director of the Maritime Department of Vietnam admitted that there are still many shortcomings in the construction and development of the port system in Vietnam. Specifically the imbalance between the groups of ports, lack of berths for large ships, outdated loading and unloading technology, normal shipping routes doesn't match the berths scale... Besides from that, the port infrastructure network behind the port such as electricity, water, roads, railways, national road network... are not synchronized with the scale and the time when putting the port into operation. Most of the ports are located deep in the river and near the center of urban population so it's difficult to improve traffic flow and upgrade port connection. This is one of the reasons for increasing difficulties in most of the ports in Vietnam today.

Explaining why for several years of construction and development, the port system of Vietnam still have fragmented planning, representative of the Maritime Bureau of Vietnam said: The port system of Vietnam still develops based on the foundation of the old port by the French, and the American building with the style “add if lacking”. This is the cause of the current situation of unfair competition, weakening and damaging the interplay between investors and port operators. For example, in the North East region, especially Hai Phong, it's overloaded, while in the Southern area there's a redundancy of ports.

Looking straight at the lack of consistency in planning, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Transport Mr. Nguyen Hong Truong; pointed out: currently there is no coordination between the Ministry of Transport (planning authorities) and the local provinces (which directly implement land allocation and licensing for projects investment. This makes recent investment resources for seaport fragmented, not having enough ability to develop into large regional ports. Mr. Truong also confirmed: there will be sanctions in port planning management. The organizations and individuals who violate; the planning will be stopped or even demolished. At the same time will minimize the addition of short-term, fragmented planning.

Agreeing with the above point of view, the Deputy Minister of Transport, Mr. Nguyen Van Cong said: The Ministry of Transport will be conducting a statistic review of the entire port system to assess the need, the necessity and feasibility of the construction projects that have not been implemented. The Ministry will also examine, closely monitor the implementation of projects investment as planned; resolutely revoke investment licenses for projects that do not comply with the prescribed time limit. According to Mr. Cong, the Ministry of Transport is proposing to the government to focus capital investment budget on seaport infrastructures for key projects, with hinges, breakthroughs. For ports not in the range of urgency, implementation will be made in the direction of social investment.

At the conference, the Maritime Bureau of Vietnam proposed an experimental model of “Port Authority”. According to the assessment of the Ministry of Transport, this model will ensure the construction and development of ports according to the planning, able to mobilize private capital from inside and outside of the country, overcome the spread of investment...

In addition, there are many opinions expressing the worries about the construction of the port should be attached with the development of logistics in Vietnam. Presently, even though the country has about 800 businesses working in the field of Logistics, but mostly just to provide basic services, price competition; most work for multinational companies therefore, not bringing much added value for the country. Another limitation causing the logistics industry in Vietnam being difficult to develop is due to the lack of connection between roads, waterways and railways. Port management is still limited, outdated in electronic information technology, impediments in customs...

To solve this problem, the Maritime bureau of Vietnam recommended to the Prime Minister to soon deploy the plan for the development of the logistics system in the country until 2020, with the vision for 2030. At the same time, to soon construct and submit to the Government to issue regulations on the management of port activities. The operation of shallow ports model will bring many positive changes, serving as the premise for future logistics service development.

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(Translated by Portcoast)