CHAPTER - 14

FARAKKA BARRAGE PROJECT

The Farakka Barrage Project with headquarters at Farakka in West Bengal, is designed to serve the need of preservation and maintenance of Calcutta Port by improving the regime and navigability of the Bhagirath-Hoogly river system. The increased upland supplies from Ganga at Farakka into Bhagirathi will also reduce salinity in the system and will ensure sweet water supply to Calcutta and surrounding areas. The rail-cum-road bridge built across the river Ganga at Farakka establishes direct road and rail communication link to the North-Eastern States. The Bhagirathi, the Feeder Canal and the Navigation Lock at Farakka form part of the Haldia-Allahabad Inland Waterway (National Waterway No. 1). The principal components of the Project are :-

- A 2245 metre long barrage across the River Ganga with rail-cum-road bridge, necessary river training works and a Head Regulator on the right side.
- A 213 metre long barrage across the River Bhagirathi at Jangipur.
- Feeder canal of 1133 cumec (40000 cusec) carrying capacity and 38.38 km. long, taken off the head regulator on the right of the Farakka Barrage.
- Navigation works such as Locks, Lock channels, Shelter basins, Control tower building, navigational lights and other infrastructure.

PROGRESS OF WORKS

All the principal works concerned with the two Barrages and Feeder Canal have been completed. The Farakka Barrage was inaugurated in 1975. Ancillary works like bridge at RD 29.50 of Feeder Canal, installation of lock gates at Kalindri etc., are in progress. The Farakka barrage with rail-cum-road bridge over it has provided a communication link between North Bengal, North-Eastern States, Sikkim and Bhutan with the rest of the country. The navigation lock at Farakka was substantially completed and inaugurated in November, 1987. The Navigation Control Tower has also been completed during 1996. This has opened a new era of inland navigation on the Haldia-Allahabad inland waterway. The navigation lock at Jangipur has been completed substantially except for some navigation aids and equipments.
The works like Road Bridge at RD 29.50 of the Feeder Canal, permanent establishment and special repair works of residential and non-residential buildings, roads, water supply, sanitation etc., of the Farakka Barrage colonies at Farakka, Khejuriaghat and Ahiran, Kalindri etc., continued during the year.

**SPECIAL REPAIR OF HEAD REGULATOR AND MAIN BARRAGE GATES**

Repair/rectification of eleven gates of Head Regulator, including hoists, gantry crane etc. were substantially completed at a cost of Rs. 2.45 crore. Repair/rectification works of spillway gates, under sluice/river sluice gates, fish lock gates, gantry cranes with gantry rail, over hoist bridge, control panels, hoist system etc. of the Farakka Barrage are being done by M/s NPCC Limited and M/s Jessop & Co. (both Government of India undertakings) on 50:50 basis. Progress of rectification works is being monitored closely to ensure its completion within a reasonable time.

**PROTECTION WORKS**

The protection works on the right bank of the River Ganga downstream of the Farakka Barrage is in progress and, so far a length of 3.85 KM has been completed. Execution of protection work between Ch. 5300 M to 5500 M is in progress. Tendering action is under process for execution of protection work of further length of 100 M i.e. from Ch. 5500 M to Ch. 5600 M.

The protection works against bank erosion on the right bank of the River Ganga along Left Afflux Bundh of Jangipur Barrage covering a length of 3.25 KM out of a total length of 16.3 KM has been completed. During the flood of 1999 the entire river side zone was fully inundated. Efforts were made to check the break in the embankment by countering the percolation and profuse flow through rat holes. As a result the embankment was saved. After flood of 1999 it is observed that the distance between the toe of Afflux Bundh of Jangipur Barrage and the bank of river Ganga/Padma is only 230 Metres. The situation is being monitored closely and if the condition deteriorates, the anti-erosion measures would be taken up as per recommendations of the TAC of FBP.

The Project authority has taken up the tendering action for strengthening of Jangipur afflux bundh in the reaches where seepage problem has become acute.

Marginal embankment of the Left Bank upstream of the river Ganga from the Guide bundh of Barrage upto Manikchak Ghat is about 40 KM. Out of this, 11 KM (upto spur No. 7) from Guide bundh is under the jurisdiction of Farakka Barrage Authority. During the flood of 1998 discharge in the River
Ganga exceeded all previous records with highest discharge recorded as 26,78,781 Cusecs and this year the discharge recorded as 21,01,401 Cusecs. Due to high water level and discharges there were chances of breach near the junction of upstream and downstream of the Ninth and Tenth marginal embankment. But due to timely execution of protective measures, the breach in the marginal embankment was prevented.

Action has been initiated by Farakka Barrage to take up protective measures in the vulnerable reaches after flood of 1999 as per approved drawing of the Central Water Commission.

**NEW SCHEMES FOR THE NINTH PLAN**

In view of the excessive bank erosion of the River Ganga in the districts of Malda & Murshidabad, the Planning Commission had set up an expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Member (River Management), Central Water Commission, which recommended long term and short term measures costing Rs. 927 crore, out of which short term measures cost Rs. 315 crore and long term measures cost Rs. 612 crore. As suggested by the expert Committee the Farakka Barrage Project authority has prepared an estimate amounting to Rs. 160.84 crore for the work "Anti Erosion, flood protection and river training measures" and submitted the same to the Ministry for approval. As desired by the Ministry, the EFC memo was revised restricting only those emergent works which could be executed during the remaining period of the IX Five Year Plan.

The EFC memo amounting to Rs. 19.68 crore has since been approved by the Ministry for undertaking the following schemes:

i. Anti Erosion, Flood protection and River Training measures.

ii. Special repair works of the existing assets/structures.

**FARAKKA HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT**

The proposed Hydro-Electric Project at Farakka Barrage involves construction of a power station with installed capacity of 125 MW downstream of Barrage to generate hydro-electric power. The Project Report has been prepared by the Central Water Commission and has been techno-economically apprised by the Central Electricity Authority. It has been decided to implement this project through private entrepreneurs on "Build, Own and Operate" (BOO) basis. Global tenders were invited for pre-qualification of prospective developers. Three firms which have shown interest to undertake the work have yet to submit their final offers.
A special Committee for environmental assessment of Farakka Hydro-Electric Project, constituted by the Ministry of Water Resources, visited the Project site in November, 1998. After inspection of sites the Committee suggested that the present cost of the Project including funds provided for environmental aspect should be worked out and preparation of an Action Plan for aforesation programme should be taken up. The Committee also asked the environmental impact assessment report which is under preparation.

**VIGILANCE ACTIVITIES**

During the current year, four complaints were received. Fifty one complaints were already pending of which three have been disposed off upto November, 1999.

**REDRESSAL OF STAFF GRIEVANCES**

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