

# KPT to establish an integrated energy complex - Rear Admiral, Jamil Akhtar

*An exclusive interview of Chairman, Karachi Port Trust*

■ By Engr. Nadeem Ashraf

**T**he Karachi Port Trust (KPT) has planned to build its own coal handling terminal at its premises so that there is no negative environmental fallout from coal shipments being offloaded at the port unlike the past situation.

KPT Chairman Rear Admiral Jamil Akhtar stated this during an exclusive interview session with the Energy Update. Following are the important excerpts of his interview for our readers:

**Energy Update: Do tell our readers about the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on the shipping sector?**

**Rear Admiral Jamil Akhtar:**

The present pandemic has certainly shaken the entire world. It is now certain that, economic cost of this pandemic is going to become unbearable. It is going to hit every sector including the ports, shipping, and maritime. This sector is like the service providers for economic activities all around the world. The survival of the shipping industry becomes difficult when the economic activities come to a halt. The current situation of POL is in front of you. Only the essential cargo shipments have been continuing in the current situation. The POL ships are not coming to our port, that are like

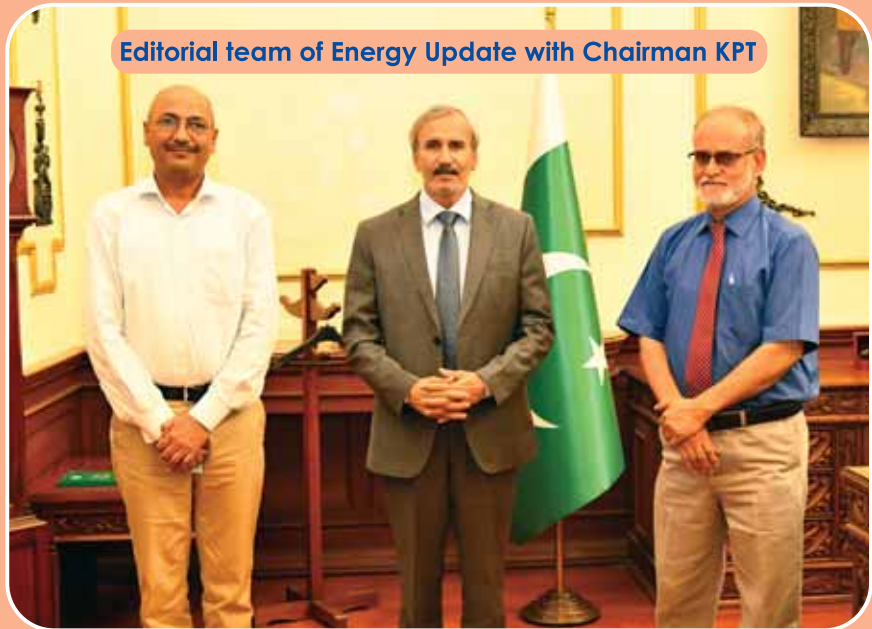
a lifeline for us. This is because the operations of public transport and aviation sectors have been suspended. The industrial activities have also not been taking place much. The refineries also stand closed as there is no consumption of their products. The cargo shipments have been impacted by over 40 per cent in just one month. But the recovery has to take place. There has to be a comeback anywhere between in next six months to two years. The Planning and Development Ministry has estimated that over 20 million people could lose jobs as the result of the pandemic. The KPT has committed that it is going to pay its daily wagers till May end this year whether or not they have been working. But such trend could not continue on an endless basis. Maybe big national organizations like the KPT would be able to do it but certainly other entities don't have the capacity to pay salaries in such a manner.

### EU: What is the current situation of the KPT in the context of the pandemic?

**Rear Admiral Akhtar:** The ports are definitely the indicators for your economic activities. The KPT is engaged in handling of cargo of every form. The present government after coming to power after the general elections 2018 discouraged imports. We came under the negative impact of this decision. In the year 2017-18 we dealt with 56 million tonnes of cargo while the same figure for the subsequent year 2018-19 was 46 m tonnes. It was planned that we will offset this impact by increasing our exports but that unfortunately couldn't happen due to various reasons. The port business, however, in the long term perspective has to grow due to acceleration in the national economic activity. What we are going to do in the present day is to make our facilities fully available to face any kind of situation.

### EU: What is the nature of involvement of the KPT in the energy business?

**Rear Admiral Akhtar:** We are going to build our own cargo handling terminal so that there is no negative impact due to this shipment activity. The Supreme Court earlier rightly took cognizance of this activity as due precautions, which should have been observed were not taken at that time. We will prepare a proper plan for the purpose. Then we have 200 acres area where we plan to do an integrated energy project. We also aim to build an LNG terminal at the same place. The integrated energy complex we aim to construct will have an LNG



Editorial team of Energy Update with Chairman KPT

terminal, LNG-based power project, and a desalination plant. The LNG-based power plant we aim to build will comprise of three to four power plants for 2,000 Megawatts low-cost energy generation. The desalination plan will generate 150 million gallons water daily. We have also got a few letters of interest for the project. There are a few companies of international stature, which have shown interest to do the LNG project at the KPT. We aim to do the LNG shipment through trucks as being an international safe practice in the energy sector while our railway track will also be used for the purpose. We are shortly going to receive bids for the project.

### EU: What is the progress of other upcoming projects of the KPT?

**Rear Admiral Akhtar:** We are going to build another bridge to facilitate the port-related traffic as this project will be used to connect the East Wharf and West Wharf. The connectivity project will ensure movement of the port-related traffic inside the KPT's premises instead of it creating congestion on the outside roads. The project will also provide an alternative connection to the Karachi Port aims to build its own coal handling terminal to mitigate environmental concerns. The NESPAK has been assigned this project that will be done from our own expenses.

### EU: What are the details of C.S.R contribution by the KPT?

**Rear Admiral Akhtar:** The CSR contributions of the KPT have been more than that of any other organization. The KPT did a number of major road traffic

projects in Karachi from its own expense including KPT Interchange, KPT Underpass, ICI Bridge, Mai Kolachi Road, Jinnah Bridge, Keamari roads, to a name a few. We have also deposited Rs 100 million in the PM Dam Fund and also now donated Rs 130 million to the government's Covid Relief Fund. Then we also invested Rs800 million for building new jetties in Keamari for local fishermen and promotion of tourism in the area. We are like among top three to four state-run entities whose CSR contributions have been more than that of the other government-run agencies.

### EU: What are the plans of KPT to tackle the serious issue of sea pollution?

**Rear Admiral Akhtar:** The KPT is definitely not responsible for the situation of untreated sewage and industrial effluents that are being constantly discharged into the sea. The Sindh government and Karachi's local government is surely responsible for this situation. We are instead victims of this sorry state of affairs as the resultant marine pollution has been constantly damaging our valuable assets and infrastructure. It is an utterly wrong perception that we are responsible for this criminal negligence. Even then we offered to renounce our claim to 150 acres land near Sultanabad. We offered to install our effluent treatment plants on our own expense. We made this offer before the judicial water commission. We are soon going to hold a meeting with Sindh Chief Secretary in this connection as per the direction of the apex judiciary. ■