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In order to secure the objectivity of evaluations, JBIC has asked experts in developing countries to examine the results of all individual project evaluations, and then published their views as third-party evaluator's opinions. The summary of the opinions for each project can be seen in this evaluation report

with the profile of the evaluators. As an example, the full text of the opinion for the Merak-Bakuheni Ferry Terminal Expansion Project (2) (see p.34) is given below. (For the full texts of opinions on other projects, see JBIC's website.)

Third-Party Evaluator's Opinion 6 Merak-Bakuheni Ferry Terminal Extension Project (2)

Relevance

The Merak-Bakuheni Ferry Service which links the island of Sumatra with the island of Java is an extremely important route for goods distribution and passenger travel in Indonesia. It is well-known as the ferry service with the highest traffic volume and the most brisk business in Southeast Asia. The daily volume of traffic between the ports of Merak and Bakuheni amounts to approximately 3,500 vehicles and 13,000 to 15,000 people. The daily average passenger volume increased by 1.5 times, compared to 9,000 to 10,000 people in the 1980s and 1990s. During the tourist season, the number of passengers now reaches 80,000 per day. This is about double the 40,000 to 42,000 people transported in the 1980s and 1990s. Currently, large ferries navigate the journey in approximately 18 minutes, and small ferries navigate in approximately 30 minutes. Meanwhile, from the standpoint of policy consistency, this Merak-Bakuheni Ferry Terminal Expansion Project is in harmony with the ODA principle of supporting the Indonesian government's policy of planning for economic growth through installation of infrastructure. Moreover, the installation of infrastructure attracts a large amount of private investment. In short, this project contributed to the smooth expansion and development of transportation in the regional economy.

The ferry ports of Merak and Bakuheni were opened in 1981 and have enabled smoother transportation between the two islands of Java and Sumatra. In addition to promoting the flow of capital, goods, and services, the ferry service has played a role in improving people's access to transportation and shrinking the distance between the two islands. As a result, the comings and goings of the islands' residents, particularly movement of low and middle income people, have become significantly more frequent. As a result of the government's immigration policy, in almost all the provinces of Sumatra, half of the population is made up of Javanese. Given that the income of the immigrant residents is low, the low-cost means of transportation that the ferries provide is very important to them. Also, in the current national plan, the Merak-Bakuheni Ferry Service occupies an important position in the national transportation system, which builds and supports the unity of Indonesia.

Impact

In addition to making marine transport smoother and more convenient, the very existence of the ports of Merak and Bakuheni is extremely important for the community. In particular, considering the people who are continually emigrating from Java under the immigration policy, the ferry service is a large contribution to all of the residents of Sumatra. Likewise, because there are many Sumatrans working in the city of Tangerang, Java, which is an industrial center, the relationship between the two islands is becoming even closer. Additionally, the increase in the number of people involved in business in both ports will promote economic development and commerce between the islands. The regional economy will be further invigorated by the development of tourism, including resorts, sightseeing, hotels, and restaurants.

Sustainability

Operation and maintenance of the ports of Merak and Bakuheni is conducted comprehensively by PT. ASDP (the national ferry operation service) under the supervision of Indonesia's Ministry of Transportation. In consideration of the local residents' needs, it is necessary to conduct more precise operation and maintenance. Participation in the operation and maintenance by Banten and Lampung provinces, which receive benefits from the ports, may also be considered.

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