

SoBo-Alibaug Ro-Ro service likely to start in 3 months

TNN | Feb 7, 2019, 04.53 AM IST



MUMBAI: Come May, Mumbaikars wanting to take their car to Alibaug won't have to worry about driving for three hours. A roll-on-roll-off ship—popularly called RoRo—which can accommodate cars and private buses, is likely to be launched between the Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT) and Mandwa/Dighi by April-end or early May.

The Ro-Ro will have space for 10 buses, 40 cars and 250 passengers and reduce the journey to an hour. “We are floating tenders in a day or two,” said MbPT chairman Sanjay Bhatia.

Sources said the rates would be finalised only through the tendering process, and are expected to be around Rs 300-400 for a car, Rs 700-800

for a bus and Rs 200-300 for an individual passenger.

Later, RoRo to be extended to Nerul

The service will be a boon to those travelling to Mandwa, Alibaug and beaches like Murud-Janjira, Velas, Shreewardhan which are near the Dighi port.

The service will be operated between the newly built Ro-Ro terminal at MbPT and Mandwa/Dighi. “Eventually, services will be extended to Nerul and the upcoming Navi Mumbai airport between Panvel and Belapur as and when the jetties get ready,” Bhatia said.

“The MbPT, Maharashtra Maritime Board, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust and City and Industrial Development Corporation will jointly procure a Rs40 crore Ro-Ro ship by shelling out Rs 10 crore each,” Bhatia said. An earlier bid, which had been floated to get passenger and Ro-Ro shipping companies to run similar services, has been caught up in a legal battle for the last eight months.

Bhatia said that for 2019-20 around 300 arrivals have been confirmed by domestic and international cruiseliners—a 100% jump over the current cruising season. “Mostly, the tender will be floated on Thursday. The tendering process should be done by the first week of April. By end of April or early May, the ship should run services,” said Bhatia.

Passengers said that it takes up to three hours to reach Alibaug and more than four hours to reach the Dighi port in Raigad.

The Ro-Ro service will reduce the distances to an hour and two hours respectively. Officials said the move will cut pollution by saving fuel and expense on fuel for passengers using their private vehicles. Besides, bus fare to the Konkan could go down once this service begins.