

**VPA WELCOMES BANGLADESH DELEGATION**

Dr. M. Angamuthu, IAS, Chairperson of the Visakhapatnam Port Authority (VPA), warmly welcomed Mr. S.M. Mostafa Kamal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Shipping, Bangladesh, and Mr. Sheikh Saleh Ahammed, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bangladesh, along with a 10-member delegation on 8th July 2024.

The visit is part of Bangladesh's efforts to explore EXIM (Export-Import) trade opportunities with India, positioning it as a third trading partner after Colombo and Singapore, particularly along India's Eastern Coast. The delegation's focus is on evaluating the commercial and technical viability of Eastern Ports to enhance trade benefits for both countries.

During the visit, several key issues were discussed in detail, including the ease of doing business, turn-round-time, customs clearance, port connectivity, transshipment, cruise passenger handling, congestion management, and dredging activities. The discussions aimed at identifying potential areas of collaboration and improvement to facilitate smoother trade operations between the two nations.

Dr. M. Angamuthu provided an overview of the facilities and infrastructure available, strategic initiatives taken up at Visakhapatnam Port through a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation. He assured the delegation of VPA's commitment to supporting trade with Bangladesh in the coming years and highlighted the port's capabilities in handling diverse cargo, its state-of-the-art mechanization, and green initiatives.

Mr. S.M. Mostafa Kamal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Shipping, Bangladesh, expressed his gratitude for the hospitality extended by VPA. He emphasized that Bangladesh is keen on extending all necessary inputs for EXIM trade, aiming to create a mutually beneficial relationship that enhances trade efficiency and economic growth for both countries. He commended the efforts of VPA in providing an informative and hospitable environment for the delegation.

The visit marks a significant step towards strengthening bilateral trade relations between India and Bangladesh. Both parties acknowledged the potential for increased collaboration and the importance of addressing logistical challenges to streamline trade operations. The delegation appreciated the insights shared by VPA and looked forward to future engagements that would foster a robust trading partnership.

The visit concluded with a reaffirmation of the commitment from both sides to work towards enhancing trade and exploring new avenues for cooperation. The VPA Chairperson assured the delegation of continued support and collaboration to facilitate trade growth and improve connectivity between the two nations.

The VPA team, includes Heads of Departments and Senior Officers.

Shri T. Venu Gopal, Secretary of VPA, released this information to the press and media.

