



Press Release

Colombo, 30 June 2022

Bangladesh High Commission in Colombo hosts a forum on "Enhancing shipping connectivity between Chattogram and Colombo Ports"

Bangladesh High Commission to Sri Lanka organized in Colombo a stakeholders' consultation forum on enhancing shipping connectivity between Chattogram and Colombo Ports on 29 June 2022 pursuant to observance of the First Economic Diplomacy Week. The purpose was to facilitate greater understanding of operational issues between Chattogram and Colombo Ports and ensure greater connectivity and supply chain security and stronger partnership between the two ports. Representatives from port authorities of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, terminal operators, main line operators, feeder operators, freight forwarders as well as users of the two ports presented their respective perspectives.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Tareq Md Ariful Islam in his opening remarks shared Bangladesh's remarkable economic developments and the potential it holds for Colombo Port. He also mentioned of the changes in the global logistics operations due to the pandemic and now the war, the resultant trends in shipping and necessity of offer of possible incentives from Colombo Port.

Chairman, Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) Dr. Prasantha Jayamanna briefed about the present facilities as well as ongoing & future expansion plan of Colombo Port which when completed in 2025-26, would increase their container handling capacity to 15 million TEUs. He announced that state-owned Jaya Container Terminal (JCT) of Colombo Port would extend priority berthing to Bangladesh feeder vessels. It may be mentioned that Bangladesh High Commission has been pursuing this priority berthing issue with SLPA for long.

The Chairman of SLPA, private terminal operators and Sri Lankan shipping community at large assured of giving continued priority to Bangladesh users. Referring to the recent negative media reporting on Colombo Port, they clarified that their Port's operation remains unaffected by the crisis situation in the country. In this connection, both sides emphasized the importance of real time communication among all the stakeholders of the two countries.

Representative of Chattogram Port Authority shared, inter alia, that Bangladesh's container traffic through Colombo Port has increased significantly last year. Representatives of Bangladesh stakeholders shared the users' perspective about Colombo Port, emerging trends and challenges in shipping operations.

In the interactive session that followed, the panelists from both sides responded to the queries from the participants which cleared many of the issues involving Chattogram-Colombo connectivity.

The networking event was appreciated by both sides. It was physically attended by a large number of top/senior representatives from the Sri Lankan shipping community. From Bangladesh side, Senior Executive Director of Karnaphuli Group and HR Lines Mr. Anis Ud Dowla, Head of Operation and Marketing of Mohammadi Group and Country Head of DSV Logistics joined through zoomlink.

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