

Development of Coastal Shipping will give new Lease of life to Trade by sea Routes: Mansukh Mandaviya

Posted On: 25 OCT 2018 6:55PM by PIB Delhi

The Minister of State for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Chemicals & Fertilizers Shri Mansukh L Mandaviyainan interview said that several significant steps have been taken by the present Government to boost and develop coastal shipping as the most efficient mode of transportation of cargo.

During this interview, Shri Mandaviya said that development of coastal shipping will facilitate movement of cargo through inland water transport to coast and vice-versa, which is the cheapest way of transport. This would also result in diversion of cargo from rail/ road to sea route. At present, transportation of cargo through coastal shipping is significantly lower than by road or rail transport. As per study, the cost of per ton cargo movement per KM by road is Rs. 2.50/, by rail is Rs. 1.36/- while by water route, it is Rs. 1.06/- only. As per estimates, diversion of about 5% of cargo to coastal shipping will not only reduce pressure on rail/ road traffic but also save around Rs. 230 billion and result in 6% reduction in harmful chemicals and pollutants.

Shri Mandaviya said that the Directorate General of Shipping has issued an order in August, 2018 that will boost coastal shipping as this facilitates Inland Vessels (IV vessels) of less than 3000 Gross Tonnage to carry cargo except 'dangerous good' within 5 Nautical Miles of the base line or up to 2 Meters of significant wave height condition, whichever is less in fair weather season, to trade along East & West coast of the country which was not allowed earlier.

He said the relaxation in cabotage for coastal movement of EXIM transshipment and empty containers/ agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and animal husbandry commodities/ fertilizers by foreign flag vessels have shown a positive growth in coastal shipping/ trade. This kind of new initiatives will not only boost coastal shipping/ trade but also enhance the country's FOREX and economy.

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