Sarbananda Sonowal Lays Foundation Stones for Projects Worth Rs 560 Crore at Visakhapatnam Port

Sonowal Dedicates Port Promenade in Visakhapatnam to the nation, open for public

New Contracts to employ about 500 local people

Sonowal ties projects to PM Modi's vision of Citizens as Active Partners of development

It opens up the port to the city: Sonowal on the newly inaugurated Promenade

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Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal, in Visakhapatnam, dedicated a waterfront promenade at the Visakhapatnam Port to the public and laid foundation stones for four new projects, bringing the port's package of new works to about Rs 560 crore.

The Rs 19 crore Port Promenade runs about 710 meters (2,330 feet) along the water from the Venkateswara Temple to the International Cruise Terminal and covers about 5.5 acres. The promenade gives residents a regulated, safe place to watch ships and port operations for the first time. "It opens up the port to the city," **Sonowal** said. "This project is dedicated to the people of Visakhapatnam."

The promenade has a waterfront walkway and two view decks, one a Titanic-style viewpoint, along with a park, a public plaza, a children's play area, a food court and visitor parking. It was built on existing port land without affecting cargo operations. Its location beside the cruise terminal is also meant to add to the terminal's appeal for cruise passengers.

Sonowal tied the project to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of inclusive development, in which citizens are not just beneficiaries but active partners in building the nation. A port that was once closed to outsiders now invites residents in, he said, and the new terminal contracts will give about 500 local people jobs running its berths.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision is a development in which every citizen has a place and a part to play," **Sarbananda Sonowal** said. "A port that opens its gates to the people, and gives local youth the work of running its berths, is that vision in action."

Sonowal also laid foundation stones for three contracts to operate and maintain existing cargo terminals, together worth about Rs 580 crores. They cover the WQ-1 and WQ-1RE berths; WQ-2 and WQ-3; and EQ-3. Operators must mechanise the berths with cranes and conveyors, with environmental controls, and will employ about 500 local people. "Through these projects, VPA will secure assured cargo throughput and achieve optimum capacity utilisation in these berths," **Sarbananda Sonowal** said.

The Union Minister also laid the foundation stone for upgrading the port's sewage treatment plant from 10 million liters a day to 15 million liters, including a new 5 million-liter plant, at an estimated cost of about Rs 11 crores. Treated water is used for dust suppression, wetting roads and sprinkling at stockpile yards, and the upgrade supports the ministry's Harit Sagar green port initiative.

Sonowal said the port handled a record 91.17 million metric tons of cargo in the 2025-26 fiscal year, about 10% more than a year earlier and its fourth straight year of growth. From April 1 to Oct. 31, cargo rose by 4.44 million metric tons, or 8.88%, over the same period last year. "You must beat last year's target of 10% growth," **Sonowal** encouraged the port employees as he spoke and interacted with them.

The initiatives were launched as Sonowal is going to speak at the 31st CII Partnership Summit–2026, which the Andhra Pradesh government is hosting on November 12 and 13, which is themed under 'Navigating New World Order: Trade, Technology, Trust.'

The port has taken up four Public-Private Partnership (PPP_ projects worth about Rs 800 crores, which are under construction and expected to be commissioned by 2027. It has one of the deepest container terminals among India's major ports, with a permissible draft of 16 meters, and is shifting to a landlord-port model to cut vessel turnaround time and logistics costs.

Sonowal credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for transforming Indian ports into world-class facilities as the country works toward becoming a developed nation by 2047. He described the day's projects, from a public promenade to a cleaner sewage system, as examples of the Prime Minister's call for development that includes every section of society.

"When citizens are partners and not spectators, development lasts," Sonowal said. "That is the spirit of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas, and it is the surest road to a Viksit Bharat by 2047."

Sonowal also thanked Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and the state government for their support.

Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha member **M. Sribharat**, Rajya Sabha member **Golla Babu Rao**, Andhra Pradesh BJP president **P.V.N. Madhav**, legislators **Ch. Vamsi Krishna Srinivas** and **P. Vishnu Kumar Raju**, and port Chairperson **Jasmeet Singh Bindra** attended among other officials and employees of the port.











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