

# Sri Lanka Ports Authority orders US\$280 million cranes from China

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The Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) is set to receive twelve state-of-the-art STS Gantry cranes and forty ARMG cranes from China, totalling US\$282 million in investment.

On 2 February, three STS Gantry cranes arrived at the SLPA's East Container Terminal (ECT) in the Port of Colombo. These cranes, fully funded by the SLPA, will enhance operations at the ECT. The delivery of the remaining cranes is underway, with the vessel ZHEN HUA 24 currently en route to Sri Lanka carrying the new STS container cranes.

Furthermore, the specifications for these cutting-edge STS Gantry cranes include a 72-meter outreach, allowing them to handle 26 TEUs across. They boast a back reach of 25 meters, with lifting heights above and below the rail of 55 meters and 18 meters respectively. These cranes can efficiently

manage loads of up to 65T under the spreader and 75T under the lifting beam.

Also, the ECT at the Colombo South Harbour is designed to accommodate three Ultra Large Container Carriers (ULCC) on a 1,300-meter quay, with depths ranging from -18 to -20 meters. The terminal covers approximately 720 thousand square meters and has an annual capacity of 2.4 million TEUs. Phase-I of the project, completed in 2015, includes a 600-meter quay wall and related facilities, operational since October 2020.

Following a Cabinet decision in February 2021, the SLPA assumed responsibility for developing and operating the ECT. Subsequently, the contract for Phase-II civil construction works was awarded to a Joint Venture of Access-CHEC JVT, with construction commencing in January 2023.

The ECT is strategically crucial among the terminals at the Port of Colombo, operated by the SLPA. Despite challenges such as the post-COVID-19 pandemic and economic crises, prudent financial management has enabled the SLPA to secure funds for these vital investments.

According to a statement, the completion of the ECT by the end of 2025, facilitated by these investments, will maximize its operational capacity and attract more deep-draught vessels, thereby increasing volumes at the Port of Colombo. This development will elevate the port's status as a central commercial and maritime hub in the Asian region.