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News: Vizhinjam Port Project

Vizhinjam Port Project

- Vizhinjam Port Project is a 7,525 crore port, being built under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model with Adani Ports Private Limited at Vizhinjam near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- It was laid in December 2015 and has since missed its completion deadline.
- The port is to have 30 berths, and will be able to handle giant “megamax” container ships.

Significance

- It is believed that the ultramodern port, located close to major international shipping routes, will boost India’s economy and its location is also of strategic importance.
- The port is expected to compete with Colombo, Singapore, and Dubai for a share of trans-shipment traffic.
- The port’s advantages are “availability of a 20m contour within one nautical mile from the coast, minimal littoral drift along the coast, hardly any

maintenance dredging required, and links to national/regional road, rail network, and proximity to international shipping routes.

Reasons behind the protests of Fishermen

- Fisherfolk have been protesting against the project for the past four months, alleging that its construction is causing massive sea erosion, taking away their livelihood and dwellings.
- They want an impact study conducted and the project to remain suspended until the study report comes out.

The fishing community has also put forward six other demands including:

- Rehabilitation of families who lost their homes to sea erosion;
- Effective steps to mitigate coastal erosion;
- Financial assistance to fisherfolk on days weather warnings are issued;
- Compensation to families of those who lose their lives in fishing accidents;
- Subsidised kerosene;
- A mechanism to dredge the Muthalappozhi fishing harbour in Anchuthengu in Thiruvananthapuram district.

- The kerosene subsidy has been demanded by claiming that because of the project, fishermen have to venture deeper into the ocean for catch, increasing the fuel cost burden.