

Protests against Adani port in Vizhinjam

Why in news?

Tension gripped the construction site of Adani group's Vizhinjam Port after the protesting fishermen came face to face with activists of various Hindu outfits which want immediate completion of the project.

Where is the Vizhinjam port located?

- Vizhinjam is an all-weather port that lies south of Thiruvananthapuram, **Kerala**.
- Vizhinjam International Deep Water Multipurpose Seaport is a Greenfield port.
- It is known as the '**Port of the Future**.'



- **Advantages of Vizhinjam** - Availability of 20m contour within one nautical mile from the coast
- Minimal littoral drift along the coast
- Requires less maintenance dredging
- Links to national/regional road, rail network
- Flexibility in design and expansion being a Greenfield project
- Proximity to International shipping route

What is the Vizhinjam port project?

- The Kerala Government has formed a separate company - Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited (VISL) as a special purpose Government company (fully owned by Kerala Government) to develop the port.
- The port is to be built under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model with Adani Ports Private Limited at Vizhinjam.
- Then foundation stone of the Rs 7,525 crore port was laid in 2015.
- **Significance** - The port is to have 30 berths, and will be able to handle giant megamax container ships.
- The Vizhinjam port is located on the southern tip of the Indian Peninsula.
- Since the ultramodern port is located close to major international shipping routes, it will boost India's economy.
- The port is expected to compete with Colombo, Singapore, and Dubai for a share of trans-shipment traffic.
- It also satisfies the physical and hydrographical parameters of modern seaports.

Why fisherfolk are protesting?

- Fisherfolk have been 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.
- Kerala High Court order allowed the project causing the standoff that led to the recent violence.
- **Demands of the fishing community**
 - 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 Thiruvananthapuram district
- The government has conceded all demands except the kerosene subsidy and stopping the port construction.

What are the other issues with the project?

- **Communal divide** - The fishermen's protests are supported by the Latin Catholic Church.
- But, a local people's action committee, backed by various Hindu community outfits, is demanding speedy completion of the project.
- **Financial viability** - The Comptroller and Auditor General Report 2017 had said that the conditions of the concession agreement were not favourable to the state government.

References

1. [The Indian Express | Protests against Adani port in Vizhinjam](#)
2. [The Indian Express | Tension at Adani group's Vizhinjam project](#)