

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Regarding coastal erosion along the South Kerala Coastline

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): I wish to draw the kind attention of the Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying to the recent protests being undertaken by the coastal community in Vizhinjam in Thiruvananthapuram, demanding stoppage of works related to the Vizhinjam Seaport, citing increased coastal erosion that is affecting their lives and livelihoods.

I have repeatedly raised the plight of the fishing community in Parliament as well as the issue of coastal erosion. Whether Vizhinjam Seaport, located on an important international sea-trade channel, is responsible for the plight of the fishing community, is a matter to be studied, but it is beyond dispute that their other grievances are fully justified and must be resolved.

At the same time, the development of Vizhinjam is of vital national importance since 70 per cent of India's imports are currently trans-shipped in foreign ports. The protests have seriously impeded the port construction. It is imperative that the coastal community's concerns are duly addressed and steps are taken to alleviate them, now that an amicable resolution has been reached to the current impasse.

I urge upon the Government to conduct an expert study of coastal erosion along southern Kerala's coastline, recommend measures to check and reverse its effects and meanwhile, provide immediate relief and rehabilitation to the affected persons.