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Title: Need to take necessary steps for setting up of Trans-shipment Terminal at Colachel Port in Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu-laid.

SHRI S.S. RAMASUBBU (TIRUNELVELI): Colachel is an important minor port situated in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu. It is a natural harbour situated near international shipping channel which can attract major international carriers plying between Dubai and Singapore. For all round development of the country, setting up of Transshipment Terminal at Colachel port is the need of the hour. The port does not require dredging and therefore maintenance costs would be minimal.

Presently, international carriers do not enter Indian ports and dump the cargo at Colombo port. Similar vessels take this cargo from Colombo to East Indian Ports of Chennai, Ennore, Vizag, Paradip and Haldia. It is time consuming and leads to cost escalation. Besides, Colombo Port, Sri Lanka has commissioned Hambantata port to attract international shipping traffic.

Union Government is taking steps to set up Vizhinjam Port at Kerala to attract the international traffic. However, there is a need to upgrade Colachel as a major port. The Government of Tamil Nadu has also requested the Central Government for upgradation of Colachel Port in 2007. Once Colachel becomes a major port, it will become easier for the Union Government to convert it into a Transshipment Terminal. If this project takes off, it will give fillip to industrial activity in the area. Therefore, setting up of the Transshipment Terminal at Colachel port will complete the process of overall industrial development in southern Tamil Nadu.

I, therefore, urge upon the Union Government to take necessary steps for setting up of Transshipment Terminal at Colachel Port.