

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding establishment of international container transshipment hub at VOC port in Thoothukkudi Tamil Nadu.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI (THOOTHUKKUDI): Sir, the Ministry of Shipping must establish an international container trans-shipment hub at the VOC Port, Thoothukkudi, given the strategic location and the facilities already available there. The geopolitical advantage offers an opportunity to combat increasing investment and presence of China in the Sri Lankan port sector.

Currently, 60 per cent of Indian containers are trans-shipped at Colombo because of which our exporters and importers have to pay an additional cost for every container. This causes us to become uncompetitive, makes the trade costlier and leads to the outflow of foreign exchange. The establishment of the hub at Thoothukkudi would enhance the prospects for projects like the Sethusamundram Project and facilitate the movement of containers from east coast ports to Thoothukkudi for trans-shipment at a lesser cost and time by avoiding the circuitous route by Sri Lanka.