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Title: Need to develop the Vizhinjam Port Project in Kerala as India's International trans shipment hub.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Madam Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the Central Government to this evolving national scandal about the development of the Vizhinjam Port in my constituency.

This is a port that has been in existence for 2000 years since Roman times. It has a record 24 metres of undredged depth. The Central Government has invested money and credibility in much lesser ports with much less depth. They are spending money everyday in dredging. Right now our transshipment is going through Colombo which is a Chinese built port. Foreigners are profiting from it. Our own transshipments should be coming to our country.

I would like to request the Central Government to take a much more active interest in this matter. So far they have left it to the State Government which is resource strapped. They have recently approved some viability gap funding. It is not enough. We need more support for developing a major port that can bring Indian goods to India and keep Indian money and Indian resources in India. Why should we be allowing foreigners to profit? I beg the Central Government to take this project as a Central project and create a major international transshipment hub in Vizhinjam.

Thank you.