

RESISTING DEVELOPMENT OF PORT IN GUJARAT



Issue

Public protests have started in Nargol village of Valsad district in South Gujarat after the government floated tender for construction of an all-weather port.

Background

The idea of developing a port in south Gujarat was first conceived 21 years ago but was shelved after protests from locals.

Details

- The new port has been planned as an alternative to Jawaharlal Nehru Port or JNPT in Mumbai. It is about 140 km north of Mumbai and 120 km south of Surat.
- The bid was placed at Rs 3,800 crore by the government. The port will be readied to handle solid, liquid and also containers.

The opposition

- The land for the port was chosen around the village, which is very fertile for fruit orchards and also marine life.
- The majority of people are fishermen. They catch their fishes around the fertile breeding ground of this village and later sell them for exports.
- After port starts functioning, fishermen will have to venture far into the sea to catch fishes. The traditional orchards of chikoo and Mango will be destroyed. Paddy fields will no longer exist.

- Spillage and traffic of ships will destroy marine life and also contaminate seas around the coast. The ecosystem will be heavily affected.

Challenges

- The port will face competition from Vadhavan port located just 45 km south in Maharashtra. There is also the Hazira port near Surat.
- The project is expected to face strong protests from local villagers. The government is planning to move ahead with better returns but the takeoff is slow.

NOTES

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