

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3674
ANSWERED ON 24.03.2026

**GEO-POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SETHUSAMUDRAM SHIP CANAL PROJECT IN
TAMIL NADU**

3674. SHRI R. GIRIRAJAN:

Will the Minister of PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has initiated connectivity between Chennai Port, Ennore Port and Thoothukudi Port with ports in various foreign countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the current status of Chennai-Vladivostok port connectivity project;
- (d) whether the condition of Chabahar Port in Iran is under peril due to the Iran-Israel war and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether Sethusamudram Ship Canal project in Tamil Nadu is geo-politically important and if so, the steps taken to expedite the construction of Sethusamudram Ship Canal project?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)

(a) &(b) Yes, the Government has initiated connectivity between Chennai Port, Kamarajar Port (Ennore), and V.O. Chidambaranar Port (Thoothukudi) with various foreign ports. Chennai Port is well connected with major ports in Asia, Europe, Australia and South America, with regular cargo vessel calls from Asia, Europe and US. It has also entered into Memorandum of Understanding/Intent with Russia, Thailand and Bangladesh to enhance trade. Kamarajar Port maintains export-import trade links with international ports, including those in Australia, China, Singapore, Malaysia, Colombo, Middle East, South Africa, Europe and North America. Similarly, V.O. Chidambaranar Port has regular connectivity with various foreign ports including Colombo, Male, UAE, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, China, Indonesia, South Africa, Australia, Egypt, Russia, Morocco etc.

(c) The Chennai Port Authority commissioned a feasibility study to assess the viability of establishing a maritime link between major Indian ports on the East Coast and Vladivostok and other ports in Russia's Far East, under the proposed Eastern Maritime Corridor (EMC). The study indicates that the Chennai-Vladivostok route would be approximately 45% shorter than the

conventional Mumbai-Saint Petersburg route, offering the potential for reduced transit time and cost efficiencies. It also identifies five key commodities coal, crude oil, LNG, fertilizers, and container cargo with strong potential for trade via the EMC. There has been significant growth in Coal and Crude trade volume. Major Ports in India's East Coast has handled 2.574 MMT (Million Metric Tonnes) of Coal in FY 2024-25 via EMC as compared to 1.379 MMT in FY2023-24 registering a surge of 87% in Coal Import via EMC. Major Ports in India's East Coast handled 1.613 MMT of Crude Oil FY 2024-25 via EMC as compared to 1.089 MMT in FY2023-24 registering a growth of 48% in Crude Oil Import via EMC.

(d) As informed by Ministry of External Affairs, as on 18 March 2026 and reports available, the ShahidBeheshti Terminal, ChabaharPort has not come under any attack.

(e) The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India passed an interim order on 14.09.2007 to suspend the dredging works at Adam's Bridge (Ram Sethu).
