GALATHEA BAY PORT : GEOGRAPHY

NEWS : Gateway at Galathea Bay: the new major port can be a game changer

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

The notification of the International Container Transshipment Port at Great Nicobar Island as India's 13th major port marks a significant step in enhancing maritime trade in the Indo-Pacific region.However, its development must address ecological sensitivities in the area.

Strategic Importance of Galathea Bay Port

- **Location & Trade Route**: Galathea Bay, located on Great Nicobar Island, is strategically positioned along the East-West international shipping route. It is close to major transshipment hubs like Singapore, Colombo, and Klang, making it a key location for handling cargo from India's east coast, Bangladesh, and Myanmar.

- **Proximity to Global Shipping Channels**: The port is 40 nautical miles from the Malacca Strait, which handles 35% of the world's annual sea trade. Currently, 75% of India's transshipment cargo is routed through foreign ports, with Colombo handling 45%. Developing the International Container Transshipment Port (ICTP) at Galathea Bay can save India $200-220 million annually in transshipment fees.

- **Reduction in Transshipment Costs**: India's transshipment cargo is mostly handled by foreign ports, leading to revenue loss. The Galathea Bay port can significantly cut these costs and boost maritime trade efficiency.

- **Boost to the Indo-Pacific Region**: The port's development will enhance India's influence in the Indo-Pacific region, acting as a gateway for both trade and security.

Four-Phase Development Plan of Galathea Bay Port

1. **Phase 1 (by 2028)**: Handling capacity of 4 million TEUs, requiring ₹18,000 crore for dredging, reclamation, breakwater, and infrastructure.
2. **Phase 2**: Increased capacity with additional berths and logistical expansions.
3. **Phase 3**: Advanced cargo handling capabilities with improved equipment and operational efficiency.
4. **Phase 4**: Full development to handle 16 million TEUs, establishing the port as a global transshipment hub.

Kamarajar Port (India's 12th Major Port)

- Located in **Ennore, Tamil Nadu**, and corporatized in 1999 as India's 12th major port.
- Named after **K. Kamaraj**, a prominent Indian politician, to honor his contribution to public welfare.
- The port serves Tamil Nadu's industrial needs and eases congestion at Chennai Port by handling bulk and liquid cargo like coal, iron ore, and petroleum.

Indian Ports Overview

- India has 12 major ports and 205 minor/intermediate ports, handling 95% by volume and 70% by value of India's international trade.
- Major ports are controlled by the **Ministry of Shipping**, while non-major ports are under respective **State Maritime Boards**.
- **Mumbai** is the largest natural port in India.

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