

Fishermen stage protest against Enayam port

- Staff Reporter

They claim that the project would displace over 50,000 fishermen families



In protest: Peoples' Movement Against Enayam International Container Transhipment Terminal staging an agitation at the seashore in Ramanthurai in Kanniyakumari district on Sunday.

Hundreds of fishermen and their family members staged a protest against the proposed Enayam International Container Transhipment Terminal (EICTT) at Ramanthurai seashore near here on Sunday.

The protest, spearheaded by Peoples' Movement Against Enayam International Container Transhipment Terminal (PMAEICTT), saw the participation of women and children belonging to the fishermen community.

The fishermen expressed fear of severe sea erosion, which could affect their livelihood, if the port, proposed to be established on over 500 acres of sea area, was shifted to Enayam. The project would displace over 50,000 fishermen families, they claimed.

If the project was implemented, the seashore would vanish, leaving the fishermen with no space to carry out fishing and other related activities.

The six-km-long breakwater structure to be constructed as part of the project would cause severe sea erosion affecting 27 villages, they alleged.

Spain-based consultant firm TYPASA had made a feasibility study and said Kanniyakumari, Manavalakurichi, Colachel and Enayam were fit for establishing the port. But the Centre had chosen Enayam, which was a thickly populated place, they pointed out.

Fr. Churchill, general secretary, South Asian Fishermen Fraternity (SAFF), told *The Hindu* that the PMAEICTT had been opposing the project for the last one year and had staged various agitations, including a mammoth human chain at Kodimunai seashore a month ago.

The PMAEICTT condemned the statement made by Union Minister of State for Shipping Pon. Radhakrishnan after meeting Chief Minister Jayalithaa that the State government had extended its support for the project.

It was for the State government to announce its support, he said.

Killyoor Congress MLA S. Rajesh Kumar participated in the agitation, which was presided over by Jordhan, district president, Tamil Nadu Meenavar Peravai. George Robin, president, Desiya Meenavar Sangam, Yesudasan, president, Alanji Vicariat, T.P. Rajan, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam district organiser, Magesh, former deputy secretary of All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, and Tharagai, district Congress (Kanniyakumari East) vice-president, participated.

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