

2.20. Ports, Light Houses & Shipping

A country's sustained growth of economy depends on adequate availability of infrastructure. Ports offer the cheapest mode of transport for bulk cargoes across continents. Tamil Nadu has a coastline of about 1,000 Kms. Along this coastline, there are three major ports viz., Chennai, Ennore and Thoothukudi and 15 minor ports. The major ports are setup under the Major Port Trust Act 1963 and come under the control of Government of India whereas the minor ports are covered under the Indian Ports Act 1908 and come under the control of the State Government. Existing ports, both major and minor have to be provided with infrastructure facilities to help them function efficiently in a competitive environment. New ports will also have to be developed in tandem with industrial requirements. Investment for these initiatives will have to be raised both from public and private sector.

Port Policy

The salient features of the minor port policy of Government of Tamil Nadu are to increase the share of Tamil Nadu state in the export/ import sector in all national and international trade and commerce, to decongest the major ports and cater to the increasing goods traffic in southern states. The policy seeks to provide port facilities to promote the export oriented industries and port-based industries along the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu, to promote port based thermal power plants, to promote tourism through water sports activity and to provide facilities to encourage ship building, repairing, etc.. The aim of the port policy is that industrial development and port development should go hand in hand and produce a synergic impact to improve the socio economic life of coastal areas and its adjoining hinterland.

Tamil Nadu Maritime Board

The Tamil Nadu Port Department, which was administering, controlling, regulating and managing the minor ports in Tamil Nadu,

was converted as the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board under the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board Act, 1995 (Tamil Nadu Act 4/96) with effect from 18.03.1997. The Tamil Nadu Maritime Board is responsible for developing a number of captive ports for the dedicated use of industries.

Plan outlay for 2008-09

The outlay approved for Ports, Lighthouses and Shipping during Annual Plan 2008-09 is Rs.15.50 crore.