

Vizhinjam gets Shipping Ministry's clearance

Other Ministries had cleared the project earlier

Special Correspondent

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The Shipping Ministry too has given its clearance for the Vizhinjam Deepwater Container Transshipment Terminal proposed to be set up at Vizhinjam, 16 km from here.

The clearance is for executing the Rs. 5,348-crore project with the involvement of a consortium of companies led by Lanco Kondappally, Hyderabad. Lanco Infrastructure Limited and a Malaysian company Pembinaan Redzai Sdn. are the other members of the consortium, selected by the Kerala government through global bidding.

Announcing the receipt of the clearance at a press confe-

• **Project to cost Rs.5,348 crore**

• **Consortium to have 76% stakes**

rence here on Wednesday, Kerala Ports Minister M. Vijayakumar said the State government and the consortium would immediately begin the formalities connected with the formation of a special purpose vehicle for carrying out this mega project that could change the economic profile of the southern part of the State.

The consortium will have 76 per cent stake in the transshipment terminal and the State government the re-

maining 24 per cent. The project will be executed under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) arrangement, with the consortium handling its affairs for 30 years. After this period, the transshipment terminal will become the State government's property. The project had earlier received the clearances of the External Affairs Ministry, the Defence Ministry and the Home Ministry. All these clearances related to security matters.

"The decks are clear now. We have overcome all hurdles," Mr. Vijayakumar said, describing the pains the State government had taken to get the proposal through after the Central Ministries had rejected it in 2006.