# Vizhinjam port receives its first import container – direct import operations begin

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## News

Vizhinjam International Seaport near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, received its first import container on 31 Oct 2026, starting direct import operations. The container came from Ningbo, China, aboard 'MSC Sabrina III' and carried engineered building boards (a plywood substitute), booked for a Thiruvananthapuram firm. It was cleared by customs at Vizhinjam itself and trucked out, flagged off by Jeromic George, MD of Vizhinjam International Seaport Ltd (VISL). Kerala importers, who relied on other ports, will save cost and time.

## Key facts

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| **Date** | 31 Oct 2026 |
| **Ship / origin** | MSC Sabrina III – Ningbo, China |
| **Cargo** | Engineered building boards (plywood substitute) |
| **EXIM start** | 18 Aug 2026; first export containers – Valencia (Spain), Sep 2026 |
| **CFS** | Balaramapuram – ₹25 crore (KSIE); full operation expected Feb 2027 |
| **Port** | Natural depth nearly 20 m; 800 m container berth; 40-year PPP with APSEZ |

## Background

- Economy: Vizhinjam International Seaport Ltd (VISL) is a Kerala government-owned special-purpose company; Adani Ports & SEZ (APSEZ) builds and runs it under a 40-year PPP. It was dedicated to the nation on 2 May 2025. Kerala's ₹400-crore 'Mission Samudra' aims to make it a 'port State'.
- Terms: EXIM – export-import. A gateway port handles domestic cargo directly; transshipment is moving cargo from one ship to another. A Container Freight Station (CFS) is a customs-bonded area outside the port for stuffing/destuffing containers, temporary storage and customs clearance.
- Global trade: MSC (Mediterranean Shipping Company) is the world's largest container shipping line, headquartered in Geneva (Switzerland). Ningbo–Zhoushan (China) is one of the world's busiest ports.
- History: Vizhinjam was the capital of the Ay rulers (8th–11th century CE), whose kingdom stretched from Nagercoil to Thiruvalla. The Srivaramangalam plates of the Pandya king Nedunjadaiyan and the Kalingattuparani mention Vizhinjam; the Cholas attacked it.

**Tamil Nadu link:** the Ay kingdom, with Vizhinjam as capital, extended to Nagercoil in today's Kanyakumari district; Tamil literature and Pandya copper plates mention Vizhinjam. Today Tamil Nadu has three major ports – Chennai, Kamarajar (Ennore) and V.O. Chidambaranar (Thoothukudi).


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