

## ferry service to Sri Lanka by February end

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India on Monday announced that the ferry service between Tuticorin and Colombo is expected to commence by the end of next month.

Inaugurating the passenger terminal at Tuticorin Port, India's Union Minister of Shipping G. K. Vasan has said the ferry service suspended due to the security situation of Sri Lanka during the three decades of conflict would commence service by the end of February.

The ferry will be operated three times a week initially and the frequency would be increased later, the Minister has said.

"Since Tuticorin remains the gateway of southern Tamil Nadu, there is a huge potential for business in export and import with the logistic support of Tuticorin Port Trust. Following the commencement of ferry services between the two countries, people will witness developments in tourism and trade," The Hindu quoted the Minister.

The Minister has also announced plans to develop the Tuticorin Port to comply with standards on a par with international ports.

A ferry service between Rameswaram and Thalaimannar is expected to commence soon once the requisite infrastructure is put in place on both sides. An Indian company, IRCON, has already commenced survey work for this purpose to restore the damaged pier in Thalaimannar.

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