

## Ferry service between Sri Lanka and India

Posted by Sri Lanka Guide - 2011/02/14 00:48

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Ferry service between Sri Lanka and India to commence next month

Colombo: The ferry service between India and Sri Lanka, that was suspended decades ago due to the terrorist activities in Sri Lanka, is to be resumed next month.

A high-level nine-member team led by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Sri Lanka, Anura Jayawickrama, is now in India to inspect the infrastructure and arrangements at the passenger terminal for the ferry service between Colombo and Tuticorin in South India.

The team comprised members from Sri Lanka Port Authority, Shipping Corporation, Sri Lankan Navy and other liaison agencies, including Customs.

The team has inspected the amenities established for passengers on the premises for ferry service expected to be launched on March 01st. Sri Lanka will deploy two ships while India deploys three ships for the service.

Sri Lanka Navy and Indian Navy are to provide security for the ferry service.

Indian authorities have installed an Electronic Access Control System and Closed Circuit Televisions (CCTVs) to monitor the Tuticorin Port.

Personnel of bomb detection squad are also in place and two patrolling boats will be engaged at the sea round-the-clock to enhance security, the Indian daily The Hindu reported.

The ferry will be operated three times a week initially and the frequency would be increased later, India's Union Minister of Shipping G. K. Vasan said last month.

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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