

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS IN SHIPPING SECTOR

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The Government has been actively engaging with foreign Governments, multilateral organisations and global maritime industry partners for collaboration in ports, shipping and maritime logistics. These include partnerships for port modernisation, development of shipping infrastructure, green shipping initiatives, digitization and maritime skill development.

Notable recent engagements include India- Russia partnership to explore Northern Sea Route, Eastern Maritime Corridor & training of Indian Seafarers in Polar Waters, Indo-Danish Centre of Excellence in Green Shipping and India-Singapore partnership for Green & Digital Shipping Corridor. Further, Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) in the state of Gujarat has collaborated with Port of Rotterdam for setting up technically advanced, state of the art supply side facilities including storage, handling, transportation and dispatch facilities for green hydrogen/green ammonia and derivatives at DPA, Kandla.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is also allowed in port sector in India. DP World, UAE currently operates container terminals at various location such as Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Maharashtra, Cochin Port in Kerala, Chennai Port in Tamil Nadu. Further, DP World is also developing a container terminal at Tuna Tekra, Deendayal Port in state of Gujarat. Similarly, PSA Singapore operates terminals at Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Maharashtra.

The Government, through Joint Working Group meetings/bilateral meetings and Memorandum of Understanding/ letter of Intent etc. has engaged with maritime countries like Norway, Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, South Korea, Singapore, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Oman etc. to explore avenues for possible collaboration. India Maritime Week 2025, which was organised in Mumbai from 27–31 October 2025, elicited participation from over 93 countries, and involved more than 100,000 delegates and stakeholders.

Key legislations that have been passed recently include:

- The Merchant Shipping Act, 2025, to promote tonnage under the Indian flag
- The Coastal Shipping Act, 2025, to simplify license regime for coastal vessels
- The Indian Ports Act, 2025, for long-term planning & integrated development of ports
- The Bills of Lading Act, 2025 and the Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 2025 to eliminate outdated colonial-era laws
- The Marine Aids to Navigation Act, 2021, and Inland Vessel Act, 2021, modernizing inland water transport, replacing outdated legislation to enhance safety, efficiency, and environmental protection
- The Major Port Authorities Act, 2021 to enhance autonomy, provide greater flexibility, and attract private investment, replaced the Major Port Trust Act,

Various projects have been undertaken for technological, operational or capacity enhancement to strengthen the cargo handling at ports, coastal shipping, cruise tourism and fisheries etc. Projects worth more than Rs 40,000 crores to enhance the capacity and efficiency of Major Ports have been completed in the last ten years.

Further, to strengthen digitalization, green shipping and maritime innovation across ports and waterways, several initiatives have been/are being undertaken as follows:

Digitalization efforts across ports and waterways are focused on standardizing procedures, reducing manual interventions, and improving information exchange between stakeholders. The One Nation One Port Process (ONOP) initiative is being undertaken to standardize documentation processes and re-engineer operational steps to lower transaction volumes and reduce cargo processing times. Other initiatives such as, the Maritime Single Window (Sagar Setu), e-Samudra, e-Pariksha, and Jalyan & Navic are strengthening IT systems, to increase operational efficiency in maritime sector.

Measures are being undertaken to support environmental objectives in maritime sector. “Harit Sagar” Green Port guidelines, launched in 2023 provide a framework to Indian ports for reducing carbon footprint. Other measures include adoption of alternate fuels, low/zero-emission equipment, and integration of renewable energy. Three ports are being developed as Green Hydrogen hub ports, and the Green Tug Transition Programme outlines a phased shift from conventional tug vessels to low-emission alternatives.

Further, the Government of India, approved a comprehensive package of

₹69,725 Crore to revitalize the country’s shipbuilding and maritime ecosystem. The initiative adopts a four-pillar approach aimed at developing a globally competitive, technologically advanced, and sustainable maritime sector. These include Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme (SBFAS), Maritime Development Fund (MDF), Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS) and policy, technology, and institutional reforms. National Shipbuilding Mission (NSbM) will serve as the nodal body for coordination, implementation, and monitoring of all initiatives under this framework.

This information was given by the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Ji, in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

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