

## 5. Indian Maritime Sector – I R

Recently, the Prime Minister of India, addressing the Maritime Leaders' Conclave during India Maritime Week 2025, declared that India's maritime sector has undergone 'historic progress', positioning the nation as a rising force in global maritime trade

### Background – Strategic Importance of India's Maritime Sector

India has a 7,500 km coastline, 14,500 km navigable waterways, and a strategic position on key Indian Ocean shipping lanes. ~95% of India's trade by volume and ~70% by value moves via maritime routes, making the sector a backbone of foreign trade & logistics competitiveness. Maritime development is aligned with –

1. Make in India & Atmanirbhar Bharat
2. Gati Shakti & National Logistics Policy
3. Blue Economy & Coastal Community Development
4. Viksit Bharat 2047

### Growth Performance – Ports & Maritime Infrastructure

**Port Capacity & Cargo Handling** – Port capacity nearly doubled (2014 → 2025) – 1,400 MMTPA → 2,762 MMTPA. Cargo handling at major + non-major ports – 972 MMT → 1,594 MMT. Major ports handled 855 MMT in FY 2024–25 (up from 819 MMT).

#### Operational Efficiency Gains

**Turnaround time** improved – 93 hours → 48 hours

Operational ratio improved – 73% → 43%

Net annual surplus – ₹1,026 crore → ₹9,352 crore

Indicates financial strengthening + capacity utilisation improvement.

#### Indian Shipping Expansion

Fleet strength increased – 1,205 → 1,549 vessels

Gross tonnage – 10 MGT → 13.52 MGT

Coastal shipping growth – 87 MMT → 165 MMT

Reduces logistics cost and carbon footprint.

#### Seafarers & Maritime Workforce

Seafarers increased – 1.25 lakh → 3 lakh

India now supplies ~12% of global seafarers

India ranks top 3 globally in trained maritime manpower.

#### Inland Waterways – Transformational Growth

Inland cargo movement – 18 MMT (2014) → 146 MMT (2025) (+710%)

Operational waterways – 3 → 29

Major milestone – Haldia Multi-Modal Terminal, WB (World Bank support) – 3.08 MMTPA capacity

#### Passenger Mobility Boom

Ferry & Ro-Pax users – 7.5 crore passengers (2024–25) – redefining public transport along coasts & rivers.

### Policy Roadmap & Institutional Initiatives

**Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030** – 150+ initiatives, ₹3–3.5 lakh crore investment

Focus –

1. Port modernization
2. Green & digital supply chains
3. Shipbuilding ecosystem

#### Key Funding Mechanisms

Maritime Development Fund – ₹25,000 crore

Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme – ₹24,736 crore

Shipbuilding Development Scheme – ₹19,989 crore

Indian Ship Technology Centre (Visakhapatnam) – ₹305 crore

### **Sagarmala Programme**

840 projects | ₹5.8 lakh crore.

Completed – 272 projects (₹1.41 lakh crore)

Ongoing – 217 projects (₹1.65 lakh crore)

Includes –

1. Coastal economic zones
2. Smart logistics hubs
3. Port-led industrialization

### **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**

Investment target – ₹80 lakh crore

Focus on –

1. Green ports & green shipping
2. Methanol/Green hydrogen bunkering
3. Digital logistics corridors
4. Marine tourism, cruise networks
5. Indigenous shipbuilding leadership

### **Key Flagship Projects**

**Bahuda Greenfield Port (Odisha)** – 150 MTPA, ₹21,500 crore

**Patna Water Metro** – ₹908 crore (electric ferries)

**Cruise Bharat Mission** – new inland & coastal cruise tourism hubs

**Lothal Lighthouse Museum** – ₹266 crore heritage & tourism boost

### **Issues & Challenges**

**Governance & Regulation Gaps** – Legacy legal framework – Indian Ports Act 1908, Indian Ports Bill 2025 aims to update, but federal power-sharing concerns persist.

**Non-Major Ports & Regional Inequality** – Infrastructure gaps & capacity under-utilization, Limited connectivity & skilled manpower.

**Logistics & Infrastructure Constraints** – Land acquisition delays, Environmental clearances, Inter-agency coordination issues.

### **Environmental & Sustainability Challenges**

Need for –

1. Shore power systems
2. Renewable fuel bunkering
3. Waste-to-energy ports

Green hydrogen hubs planned (Paradip, Tuticorin, Kandla) – still early stage

### **Domestic Shipping Capacity Limitations**

High dependence on foreign shipping fleet. Tax & financing disadvantages for Indian shipowners and shipyards

### **Skill & Training Gaps**

Need modernization in –

1. Marine engineering institutes
2. Logistics & port operations training
3. Maritime safety & environmental training

### **Maritime Security Vulnerabilities**

Piracy, IUU fishing, and geopolitical tensions. Need stronger coastal radar, underwater domain awareness, naval coordination

### **Way Forward**

1. Modernize maritime laws with cooperative federalism

2. Expand shipbuilding incentives & tonnage tax reforms
3. Accelerate Sagarmala + Gati Shakti linkages
4. Green energy transition at ports
5. Digital maritime governance
6. Strengthen inland waterway cargo corridors & river-cruise ecosystem
7. Boost marine skill universities & global-standard academies
8. Enhance naval-coast guard-state maritime security grid

Source - [https - //www.thehindu.com/news/national/when-global-seas-are-rough-world-looks-for-a-steady-lighthouse-pm-modi-at-maritime-leaders-conclave/article70216840.ece](https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/when-global-seas-are-rough-world-looks-for-a-steady-lighthouse-pm-modi-at-maritime-leaders-conclave/article70216840.ece)

