

POLICY

Skilling for the Seas: PM SETU and India's Maritime Ambitions

The PM SETU Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched in October 2025 with a budget of ₹60,000 crore to modernise 1,000 Government ITIs into industry-aligned training institutions. Implemented through a Hub-and-Spoke model linking 200 hub ITIs and 800 spoke ITIs, the scheme aims to strengthen India's vocational training ecosystem and create a more employable workforce. Among the sectors expected to benefit significantly from this initiative is India's shipbuilding industry, which is witnessing renewed policy support and expansion.

India currently ranks 16th globally in shipbuilding and accounts for less than 1% of the global market, which remains dominated by China, South Korea, and Japan. To strengthen its position, India is expanding its shipbuilding capacity through major public and private shipyards and the development of mega shipbuilding clusters under the ₹19,989 crore Shipbuilding Development Scheme. These developments are expected to generate substantial demand for skilled manpower across shipbuilding and marine engineering trades.

In this context, PM SETU presents a major opportunity for India's shipbuilding sector. Under the scheme, industry partners known as Anchor Industry Partners (AIPs) manage and modernise ITI clusters through co-investment, industry-led curriculum reforms, apprenticeships, and workplace training. This enables shipyards to build a steady pipeline of skilled manpower from nearby regions while supporting India's long-term vision of becoming a major global shipbuilding nation by 2047.



MILESTONES IN MOTION

Framework & Launch

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 04 Sep
2025 | The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship issued the PM SETU scheme guidelines. |
| 04 Oct
2025 | The Prime Minister officially launched PM SETU during the 4th Kaushal Deekshant Samaroh in New Delhi. |
| 19 Nov
2025 | Assam released one of the first state-level EOIs, marking the beginning of implementation at the state level. |
| 05 Feb
2026 | States began issuing cluster-specific RFPs under PM SETU, beginning with the Visakhapatnam cluster in Andhra Pradesh. |

INDIAN SHIPBUILDING NEWS



NATIONAL INITIATIVE

01 May 2026

Structured Tender Model for Shipbuilding



[Photo credit: The Times of India]

The Indian government plans to introduce a ‘**Structured Tender**’ model for specialized vessels. Under this approach, some vessels will be built overseas while the remaining vessels must be manufactured in India.

The initiative aims to promote technology transfer and strengthen domestic shipbuilding capabilities. The government has already aggregated demand for 437 vessels as part of its push for a self-reliant maritime sector.

SHIP REPAIR INFRASTRUCTURE

05 May 2026

Cabinet approves ₹1,570 crore ship repair facility at Vadinar



[Photo credit: India Shipping News]

The Union Cabinet approved a ₹1,570 crore project to develop a modern Ship Repair Facility at Vadinar, Gujarat, jointly implemented by **Deendayal Port Authority (DPA)** and **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)**.

The facility will include floating dry docks, workshops, and infrastructure for repairing large vessels up to 300 meters long. The project aims to strengthen India’s ship repair capability, reduce dependence on foreign shipyards, and support the goals of MIV 2030 and MAKV 2047.

GREEN PORT INITIATIVE

11 May 2026

KMEW Group selects Berg Propulsion for GTTP electric tug project



[Photo credit: Berg Propulsion]

KMEW selected Berg Propulsion to supply propulsion systems for two all-electric harbour tugs under the government’s **Green Tug Transition Programme (GTTP)**.

The electric tugs, being built by KMEW Group, will support India’s net-zero goals and cleaner port operations. The vessels are equipped with advanced battery systems and energy-efficient propulsion technology.

The GTTP aims to deploy 50 green tugs across major Indian ports by 2030 to reduce emissions and promote sustainable maritime operations.

MARITIME NEWS ALERT

13 May 2026

₹13,000 crore Insurance pool for Indian ships



[Photo credit : ANI]

The Government of India has launched the **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP)** with an estimated coverage capacity of ₹13,000 crore backed by a sovereign guarantee. The scheme provides insurance cover for Indian vessels and aims to reduce insurance premiums and ensure protection during global crises. Coverage includes hull and machinery insurance, cargo protection, as well as indemnity and war-risk coverage for Indian vessels operating on international routes. The scheme applies to Indian-flagged vessels and ships carrying Indian cargo.

PARTNERSHIP

14 May 2026

Landmark MoU for India's First Mega Greenfield Shipyard



[Photo credit: India Shipping News]

India and South Korea signed a landmark MoU to establish India’s first Mega **Greenfield Shipyard at Thoothukudi** under the India – ROK VOYAGES maritime cooperation framework.

The proposed shipyard will have an annual capacity of 2.5 Million GT and is expected to generate around 15,000 direct jobs. The project will strengthen India’s shipbuilding sector through green technologies, digital shipbuilding, and industrial growth while supporting the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.

DEFENCE EXPANSION

18 May 2026

GRSE Eyes ₹1.5 Lakh Crore Defence Pipeline



[Photo credit: Indian Defence News]

GRSE has identified a defence shipbuilding pipeline worth nearly ₹1.5 lakh crore, with major Indian Navy projects expected to enter the tender stage soon. Key upcoming programmes include the ₹70,000 crore P17 Bravo frigate project, mine countermeasure vessels, and landing platform docks.

The company is also expanding its shipbuilding capacity through new facilities in West Bengal and Gujarat while exploring opportunities in commercial shipbuilding. GRSE stated that these developments support India’s naval modernisation and the ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat’ initiative.

NAVAL MODERNISATION

18 May 2026

Project-76 Strengthens India's Underwater Capability



[Photo credit: Indian Defence News]

India’s Project-76 submarine programme aims to develop 12 advanced indigenous submarines equipped with **Air Independent Propulsion (AIP)** and lithium battery technology for the Indian Navy.

The submarines are designed for long-endurance underwater patrols, stealth operations, and enhanced combat capability in the Indian Ocean Region. The project also supports India’s vision of self-reliant defence manufacturing and reduced dependence on foreign technology.

Project-76 is expected to play a major role in strengthening the Indian Navy’s future underwater warfare capability.

MARITIME MILESTONE

20 May 2026

GRSE Launches NGOPV “Sanghmitra” for Indian Navy



[Photo credit: PSU Connect]

GRSE launched the first Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV), *INS Sanghmitra*, for the Indian Navy in Kolkata. The vessel is part of India’s Indigenous naval shipbuilding programme and strengthens maritime security capabilities. The warship is designed for surveillance, anti-piracy, coastal security, and humanitarian missions.

The launch marks another milestone in India’s indigenous naval shipbuilding and self-reliant defence manufacturing efforts.

STARTUP & INNOVATION

21 May 2026

Cochin Shipyard Limited Invests in Maritech Integrated Maritime Pvt. Ltd. Under USHUS Programme



[Photo credit: The Week]

Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) has signed an agreement to acquire a 5% stake in Maritech Integrated Maritime Pvt. Ltd. under its USHUS startup initiative.

The Dehradun-based startup has developed the Integrated Maritime Exchange (IME), a digital platform connecting maritime stakeholders and supporting logistics and port-related services. The investment reflects CSL’s commitment to innovation and digital transformation in India’s maritime sector.

VESSEL DELIVERY

14 May 2026

Chowgule Shipyards Delivers First General Cargo Vessel from Mangaluru Facility



[Photo credit: The Hindu]

Chowgule Shipyards has delivered *Frisian Future*, the first vessel built at its Mangaluru shipyard, to Netherlands-based Boomsma Shipping. The 8,500 DWT general cargo vessel is equipped with diesel-electric and wind-assisted propulsion systems, reducing emissions by nearly 30% compared to conventional vessels. The vessel also complies with IMO Tier, SOLAS, and MARPOL standards. The delivery marks a significant milestone for the redeveloped and recommissioned Mangaluru shipyard.

MARITIME DEVELOPMENT

21 May 2026

Andhra Pradesh Mega Shipbuilding Cluster Set for Approval



[Photo credit: The Economic Times]

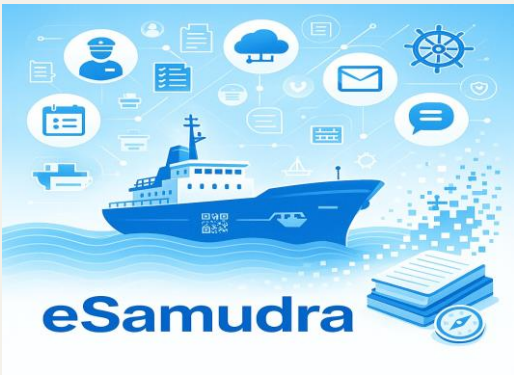
Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal stated that the proposed ₹30,000 crore mega shipbuilding cluster in Andhra Pradesh is likely to receive approval this month.

The project aims to boost India’s shipbuilding capacity, increase India-flagged vessels, and strengthen maritime infrastructure. The proposed cluster at Dugarajapatnam is expected to become India’s first mega shipbuilding hub.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

25 May 2026

DG Shipping Operationalises Ship Registration Module on eSamudra



[Image credit : DG Shipping]

The Directorate General of Shipping has operationalised the Indian Ship Registration Module on the eSamudra portal, marking a significant step towards digitisation and ease of doing business in India’s maritime sector. The module enables a completely paperless and end-to-end online registration process, secure digital record management, and faster processing timelines. This reflects DG Shipping’s continued focus on modernisation, and efficient service delivery for the maritime community.

GLOBAL SHIPBUILDING NEWS

GREEN SHIPBUILDING

11 May 2026

China shipbuilding industry surges 46% in Q1 2026



[Photo credit : Times Kuwait]

China’s shipbuilding industry recorded a 46% growth in Q1 2026, reaching 15.68 million DWT and securing 57.3% of the global market share. New ship orders increased significantly, with China leading in major vessel categories including VLCCs and large container ships.

The growth was mainly driven by rising demand for green vessels powered by methanol, LNG, and electric technology. AI and smart manufacturing also helped improve production efficiency and strengthen China’s global maritime position.

CONTRACT TARGETS

11 May 2026

Fincantieri Beats Contract Targets, Revises 2026 Guidance



[Photo credit : MarineLink]

Italian shipbuilding company Fincantieri has raised its 2026 revenue and profit guidance after securing major contracts beyond its targets.

The company expects revenue between 9.3 and 9.4 billion euros in 2026. Growth in the defence sector and rising demand for cruise ships supported the company’s performance.

CEO Pierroberto Folgiero stated that the record order backlog of 74.2 billion euros ensures delivery stability through 2039.

LNG SHIPPING

11 May 2026

Malaysian group adds two new-generation LNG carriers



[Photo credit: Clean Shipping International]

Malaysia’s MISC Group introduced two new-generation LNG carriers, Seri Dian and Seri Dayang, strengthening its partnership with SeaRiver Maritime, a subsidiary of ExxonMobil.

The 174,000 m3 LNG carriers were built by Hanwha Ocean and equipped with advanced energy-efficient technologies, including intelligent exhaust recycling and improved cargo containment systems.

The vessels are designed to improve operational efficiency, reduce boil-off rates, and support safer LNG transportation operations.

GLOBAL SHIPBUILDING

11 May 2026

Trump Urged to Stand Strong on Shipbuilding in Talks with Xi



[Photo credit: Adobe Stock]

A bipartisan group of U.S. senators urged President Donald Trump to maintain strict trade measures against China during talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The senators said China now controls over 50% of the global shipbuilding market, while the U.S. share remains below 1%, weakening U.S. competitiveness.

Lawmakers also supported continued U.S. port fees on Chinese-built ships to strengthen domestic shipyards and national security.

GLOBAL NAVAL NEWS

12 May 2026

US Navy Considers Overseas Shipbuilding Amid Fleet Expansion



[Photo credit: US Navy]

The U.S. Navy’s fiscal 2027 shipbuilding plan proposes overseas construction of certain support and auxiliary vessels if domestic shipyards cannot meet delivery timelines.

The Navy plans to invest \$2.3 billion over the next five years for fuel-support tankers, some of which could be built overseas. The proposal also seeks flexibility for overseas fabrication of certain combat ship modules.

The service aims to expand its fleet from over 290 ships to 450 vessels by 2031 under a proposed \$65.8 billion shipbuilding budget, with increased focus on distributed shipbuilding and unmanned platforms.

NEW INVESTMENTS

13 May 2026

Japanese shipping giant MOL plans shipbuilding in India



[Photo credit: Rising India Updates]

Japanese shipping company **Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL)** is planning to build ships in India and is reportedly in talks with Indian shipyards, including possible collaboration with Public Sector Shipyards.

MOL stated that India has become a priority market due to its expanding manufacturing sector and growing exports. The move is expected to strengthen India’s shipbuilding industry and create new job opportunities.

SAFETY UPDATE

21 May 2026

IMO Releases Revised Rescue Guide



[Photo credit: IMO / MarineLink]

IMO, UNHCR, and ICS released a revised Rescue Guide to improve rescue operations for refugees and migrants in distress at sea.

The guide explains legal responsibilities, safe disembarkation procedures, and practical rescue measures for governments, shipmasters, and maritime agencies.

The update comes amid rising deaths along global migration sea routes, including the Mediterranean and South-East Asia. IMO stated that the guide aims to strengthen coordination and save lives at sea.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

21 May 2026

DLR Celebrates Keel-Laying of Seagoing Technology Platform



[Photo credit: DLR / MarineLink]

The German Aerospace Center (DLR) celebrated the keel-laying of its new maritime research platform, *Modularis*.

The vessel will be used to test climate-friendly propulsion systems, automation technologies, batteries, fuel cells, and alternative fuels such as hydrogen and methanol under real sea conditions.

The 48-meter-long research vessel can accommodate up to 20 people and will support advanced maritime technology development and testing. DLR stated that the project is expected to be completed in 2027.



Digital Seas

Steering Towards
Autonomous Shipping

The 111th session of the International Maritime Organisation’s (IMO) Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 111) marked a major milestone in the development of autonomous shipping with the adoption of the non-mandatory International Code for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS Code). The Code establishes an initial international framework for the safe operation of autonomous and remotely operated ships and supports the maritime industry’s transition towards digitalised and intelligent vessel operations. IMO is expected to develop a mandatory MASS Code by 1 January 2032 following further operational experience and industry feedback.

The MASS Code addresses several technical and operational aspects including remote operation centres, communication and control systems, navigation safety, machinery monitoring, cybersecurity, emergency response procedures and human oversight arrangements. The framework also considers the integration of autonomous technologies with existing SOLAS requirements and defines responsibilities for onboard personnel and remote operators under different levels of ship autonomy. The discussions at MSC 111 highlighted the growing importance of reliable digital communication, system redundancy and cyber risk management for the safe implementation of autonomous shipping technologies.



MARITIME SAFETY

Indian delegates at IMO MSC 111

IMO MSC 111: Key Outcomes Shaping
the Future of Maritime Safety

The 111th session of the International Maritime Organisation’s (IMO) Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 111), held from 13 to 22 May 2026, addressed major developments related to maritime safety, alternative fuels, digitalisation and future shipping technologies, with several important regulatory outcomes for the global maritime sector.

One of the key highlights of MSC 111 was the adoption of the non-mandatory International Code for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS Code), marking an important step towards the future regulation and safe operation of autonomous and remotely operated ships.

A major focus of the session was the development of safety regulations for alternative fuels such as hydrogen, ammonia and methanol. Discussions covered technical safety aspects including fuel containment, ventilation systems, fire protection, toxic gas management, emergency shutdown systems and crew safety measures. Work also continued on amendments and interim guidelines under the IGF and IGC Codes to support the safe adoption of low and zero-carbon fuels onboard ships.

MSC 111 also approved the VHF Data Exchange System (VDES) as an advanced alternative to the existing Automatic Identification System (AIS), enabling improved vessel tracking, digital navigation services and enhanced ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communication. In addition, amendments related to Remote Inspection Techniques (RIT) for bulk carriers and oil tankers were approved, supporting the increased use of drones, remote cameras and digital inspection technologies for safer and more efficient ship surveys.

The Committee further progressed amendments to international maritime regulations including SOLAS, the IGF Code, the IGC Code, the IMDG Code and the LSA Code, covering areas such as dangerous goods transportation, battery systems, life-saving appliances and industrial personnel safety requirements. Overall, MSC 111 reflected the maritime sector’s continued transition towards safer, cleaner and more technologically advanced shipping operations.

MARITIME INNOVATION

Autonomous Horizons

“IMO has adopted the first-ever MASS Code — a global framework for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships,” the organisation said in a social media post. “A milestone that puts IMO at the forefront of regulating emerging technologies, enabling innovation while keeping safety, accountability and the human element central to shipping.”



A conceptual design by Rolls-Royce of a 1,000 TEU unmanned feeder vessel.
Image credit: Rolls-Royce

FROM THE CEO'S DESK

From Classrooms to Shipyards

The imperative of school-level skilling for India's shipbuilding ambition

BY

Jathesh Chandra G

CEO, India Ship Technology Centre

India's Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 aims to place the country among the world's leading shipbuilding nations by the centenary of independence. For the maritime sector, this is not just a policy goal but a responsibility that requires immediate action. The Vision targets an increase in annual shipbuilding output from about 0.07 million Gross Tonnes today to 4.5 million GT by 2047, placing India among the top five shipbuilding nations globally. Achieving this scale will require a strong and diverse workforce, including ITI-qualified tradespeople, diploma technicians, naval architects, marine engineers, designers, computational specialists, and professionals in maritime finance, law, project management, and business administration. This is as much a human-capital challenge as it is an engineering one, and it requires urgent attention.

An important demographic reality is often overlooked in discussions on shipbuilding. Students currently studying in Classes 7 and 8 will complete their education and become industry-ready over the next 15–16 years. Some will enter trades through ITIs, others through polytechnics and engineering institutions into technical, managerial, and leadership roles. By 2047, this generation will form the productive backbone of India's shipbuilding workforce. This opportunity exists today but will shrink with every year of delay. The discussion on shipbuilding skilling must therefore begin at the school level.

Shipbuilding is still not widely seen as a career option among school students, even in coastal regions. The lack of maritime orientation in school education and weak links with technical education have created a major talent pipeline gap.

"The vessels of 2047 will be built by the students of 2026, and the responsibility to prepare them begins now...."



[AI generated image]

The National Education Policy 2020 provides an opportunity to address this through vocational exposure from Class 6 and structured vocational pathways under the National Skills Qualifications Framework from Classes 9 to 12. In addition, the recently launched PM SETU scheme (Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs), with a five-year outlay of ₹60,000 crore, aims to upgrade 1,000 government ITIs through a Hub-and-Spoke model of 200 Hub ITIs and 800 Spoke ITIs under industry-led Special Purpose Vehicles. Shipbuilding clusters along India's coastline can become natural Anchor Industry Partners by developing specialised trades such as hull fabrication, marine pipe-fitting, marine electrical work, and outfitting, while strengthening existing NCVT trades like Marine Fitter and Marine Engine Fitter. India must also expand polytechnic diploma programmes in shipbuilding, increase seats in naval architecture and marine engineering, and create specialised post-graduate programmes in maritime finance, maritime law, shipbuilding project management, and yard operations.

India's expanding public and private shipyards are well placed to support a School-to-Shipyard model. ISTC, along with regional capability development centres, academia, government, and the wider maritime training ecosystem, will work to strengthen this bridge across all levels of education. The need before us is clear: today's students must be introduced to the full range of opportunities in shipbuilding, from welding and pipe-fitting to naval architecture, finance, and maritime law, so they can become the skilled workforce that will support India's shipbuilding leadership in the years ahead. The responsibility to achieve this vision lies with the Shipbuilding Industry. The vessels of 2047 will be built by the students of 2026, and the responsibility to prepare them begins now.



UAE VISIT

15
MAY

PM Modi’s UAE Visit Strengthens Maritime Skills and Ship Repair Collaboration

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the UAE marked a significant step in strengthening India-UAE maritime cooperation. A key outcome was the collaboration between Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Drydocks World (DDW), and the Centre of Excellence in Maritime & Shipbuilding (CEMS) to enhance ship repair capabilities and promote maritime skill development.

The partnership focuses on specialised training, technical upskilling, and capacity building to create a highly skilled, future-ready maritime workforce. By combining global expertise with industry-oriented training, the initiative aims to support the growing demands of the ship repair sector while improving employment opportunities for maritime professionals. This collaboration reflects the shared commitment of India and the UAE to advancing maritime excellence, fostering innovation, and developing a strong talent pipeline to support the long-term growth of the maritime industry.



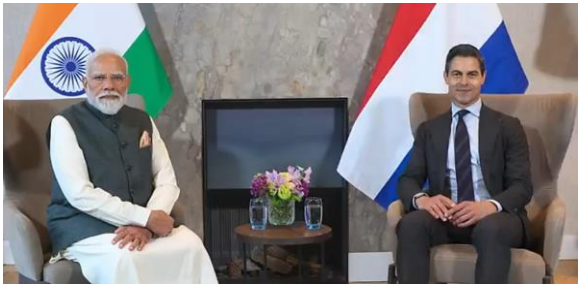
Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during discussions.
[Photo credit : MoPSW]

EUROPE VISIT

17
MAY

India–Netherlands Maritime Cooperation Gains Momentum

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the Netherlands, India and the Netherlands reinforced their maritime partnership with renewed emphasis on sustainable and technology-driven shipping initiatives. The discussions focused on developing a Green and Digital Sea Corridor through collaboration in smart ports, inland waterways, green shipping, and resilient supply chains. Both countries also agreed to enhance cooperation on maritime security and cyber resilience in ports. An MoU was further signed for cooperation in the development of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal, highlighting shared efforts in preserving maritime heritage while promoting innovation in the maritime sector.



Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Dick Schoof during discussions.
[Photo credit : MoPSW]

EUROPE VISIT

18
MAY

India–Sweden Maritime Partnership: Advancing Blue Economy and Sustainable Shipping

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Sweden, India and Sweden strengthened their maritime partnership with a strong focus on sustainable development and innovation in the blue economy sector. The discussions highlighted cooperation in promoting a sustainable blue economy through low-carbon shipping, maritime innovation, and technology exchange between the two nations. Both countries also emphasized collaboration in sustainable ship recycling practices aligned with the Hong Kong Convention, reinforcing their shared commitment towards environmentally responsible maritime operations and green shipping initiatives.



Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Ulf Kristersson during the India–Sweden partnership discussions
[Photo credit : MoPSW]



“

ISTC is here to bridge ship design technologies, software capability, research, skilling and industry to strengthen India’s maritime future. ”



Research

R&D on Ship design, Ship technology



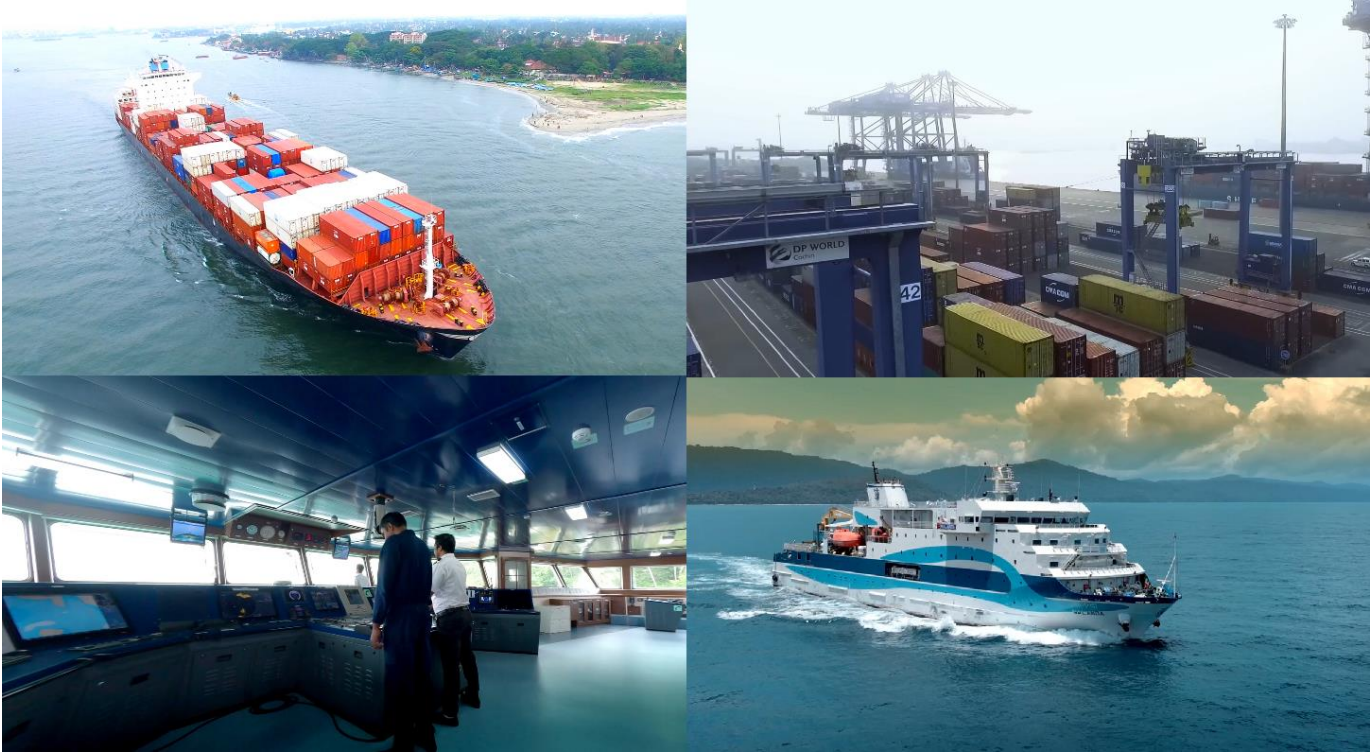
Collaborate

Industry · Academia · Government



Support

Design houses, Shipyards, Industry



From the Editor's Desk

Welcome to the second monthly issue of the ISTC newsletter. The June 2026 edition covers maritime -related milestones alongside the wider currents shaping India's and the world's shipbuilding future for last month. Your feedback, story leads, and contributions for future issues are warmly invited and may be sent to jathesh.chandra@cochinshipyard.in.

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