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CMEC

Centre for Maritime Economy
and Connectivity

समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था व संयोजन केंद्र

MARITIME BRIEFING

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From the Editorial Desk

The Centre for Maritime Economy & Connectivity (CMEC), established by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPS&W) at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, is pleased to present the March 2026 issue of the *Maritime Briefing*. This edition covers key developments across Maritime Technology, Maritime Economy, Maritime Sustainability, International Collaboration, and Blue Economy initiatives during the period February–March 2026.

This issue captures a dynamic phase in India's maritime sector marked by record port performance, resilient export growth, and strategic responses to evolving geopolitical challenges, particularly the ongoing West Asia conflict and its implications for global shipping and seafarer safety. It also highlights India's continued push toward self-reliance in shipbuilding, expansion of inland waterways for multimodal logistics, and the emergence of next-generation maritime technologies, including autonomous systems, AI-enabled navigation, and satellite-based connectivity.

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MARITIME TECHNOLOGY

MDA–Maharashtra Vessel Tracking App



The MDA - Maharashtra vessel tracking app, developed by the National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways & Coasts (NTCPWC) at IIT Madras in collaboration with maritime and security agencies, enables real-time tracking of small, non-AIS vessels along the Maharashtra coast. By integrating positional data from fishing boats and other local craft

into coastal monitoring systems, the app significantly strengthens maritime domain awareness and supports quicker detection of distress, illegal activities or safety incidents. It is expected to improve coordination among enforcement agencies, enhance search-and-rescue response and provide safer operating conditions for fishermen and coastal communities dependent on near-shore navigation...[read more](#)

Autonomous Shipbuilding Systems Centre in Andhra



Sagar Defence Engineering is establishing an Autonomous Maritime Shipbuilding & Systems Centre near Juvvaladinne fishing harbour in SPSR Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh, positioned as a pioneering dedicated hub for unmanned and autonomous maritime systems. Phase-I of the project will span about 30 acres with direct sea access and will focus on

developing Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs), Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs) and AI-driven maritime systems tailored for defence, security and commercial applications. The facility will house research and development labs, testing ranges, maintenance and repair (MRO) infrastructure, and training areas, and is expected to generate more than 300 high-skilled jobs while strengthening India's indigenous next-generation maritime technology ecosystem...[read more](#)



Nuclear-Powered Containership Design Project



American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering (HD KSOE) and HD Hyundai Samho Heavy Industries (HD HSHI) have launched a Joint Development Project (JDP) to develop the conceptual design of a nuclear-powered electric propulsion system for a 16,000-TEU container ship. The partnership will evaluate the integration of small modular reactor (SMR)

technology with electric propulsion architecture, focusing on safety, regulatory compliance, risk management and lifecycle performance. This initiative aims to assess whether nuclear-electric propulsion can offer a viable pathway for deep decarbonisation of long-distance liner shipping, potentially delivering near-zero operational emissions while maintaining reliability on key global trade routes, subject to international acceptance and robust governance frameworks....[read more](#)

AI-Enabled Collision Avoidance Systems Reshape Maritime Safety



The maritime industry has witnessed groundbreaking advances in autonomous maritime technology, with AI systems (particularly SMART-SEA) designed to prevent accidents by identifying moving and stationary objects in adverse weather conditions. These systems provide real-time navigation instructions compliant with

COLREGs (International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea), significantly reducing bridge team workload and enhancing decision-making in complex maritime environments. This development aligns with India's commitment to IMO 2050 net-zero standards and positions technological innovation as a cornerstone of maritime safety governance....[read more](#)



Satellite Connectivity Revolution: OneWeb LEO Integration in Commercial Fleets



In a landmark technology deployment, Eutelsat, Marlink, and CMA CGM have announced a multi-year agreement to roll out OneWeb Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite connectivity across more than 300 vessels in CMA CGM's global fleet over

the next nine months. This hybrid LEO + GEO network architecture delivers high-throughput, low-latency connectivity at sea, bringing ship operations closer to shore-level digital performance. The integration represents a paradigm shift in maritime digital transformation, enabling real-time data transmission, predictive maintenance, and enhanced crew connectivity across global supply chains....[read more](#)

MARITIME ECONOMY

Review of West Asia Conflict Impact



Hon'ble Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways Shri Sarbananda Sonowal chaired a high-level stakeholder meeting to review the impact of the ongoing West Asia conflict on India's maritime sector. The discussion covered route deviations, higher freight and insurance costs, and heightened risks to seafarer safety and welfare. Industry representatives and officials assessed

options to maintain continuity in critical supply chains while managing operational and financial pressures on shipping lines and exporters. The Government reaffirmed that it is closely monitoring developments and is taking calibrated steps, in coordination with relevant ministries and agencies, to safeguard Indian seafarers and ensure uninterrupted maritime operations amid geopolitical tensions....[read more](#)



Sagarmala Programme: 11 Years of Progress



Marking 11 years of implementation, the Sagarmala Programme continues to anchor India's port-led development strategy through integrated infrastructure and connectivity initiatives. As per official data, 315 projects have been completed, including major gains in port modernisation and multimodal connectivity. Over 400 MTPA of

capacity has been added, while enhanced road, rail and inland waterway linkages have improved cargo evacuation and reduced logistics costs. Coastal shipping cargo has nearly doubled, and inland waterways have seen significant growth, reflecting a shift towards more efficient and sustainable transport modes. The programme is also expected to generate substantial employment, reinforcing its role in strengthening India's maritime competitiveness and supporting long-term economic growth....[read more](#)

RELIEF Scheme for Export Support



To cushion exporters from external shocks, the Government has approved the RELIEF (Resilience & Logistics Intervention for Export Facilitation) scheme with an outlay of ₹497 crore, to be implemented through ECGC Ltd. The initiative provides enhanced risk cover and tailored support for

exporters, particularly MSMEs, affected by disruptions arising from the West Asia conflict, including elevated freight rates, route uncertainties and higher insurance costs. By strengthening credit insurance backstops and confidence in high-risk markets, RELIEF aims to prevent payment defaults from derailing viable businesses. The scheme complements broader efforts to diversify markets, stabilise logistics and sustain India's export growth trajectory in a volatile external environment....[read more](#)



Robust Export Performance Continues



India's cumulative exports of merchandise and services reached US\$ 790.86 billion during April–February 2025 - 26, recording growth of 5.79% over the same period in the previous year. Engineering goods, electronic products, chemicals, gems and jewellery, and meat, dairy and poultry items were among the major contributors to this performance. In February 2026, exports stood at US\$

76.13 billion, an 11.05% year-on-year increase, signalling sustained demand for Indian products and services despite global uncertainties. The figures highlight the growing diversification of India's export basket and underscore the critical role of efficient ports, logistics and trade facilitation measures in supporting this momentum.....[read more](#)

Record Port Performance Across Major Ports



Deendayal Port Authority (Kandla) achieved a historic milestone by handling 150 million tonnes (MMT) of cargo in FY 2025 - 26, crossing the mark 18 days ahead of the previous financial year, the fastest-ever 150 MMT recorded by any Indian major port....[read more](#) Paradip Port Authority simultaneously surpassed 150 MMT cargo throughput, establishing a new national benchmark for eastern ports and demonstrating the

success of capacity augmentation and mechanisation initiatives....[read more](#) Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) reported record-breaking performance with over 8 million TEUs in container handling alongside 100 MMT of total cargo throughput, both all-time highs since inception....[read more](#) These achievements across western and eastern gateways reflect sustained operational efficiency, terminal productivity gains, strategic infrastructure investments and robust hinterland connectivity, positioning India's major ports to support expanding trade volumes linked to new FTAs and manufacturing growth.



PSA International's Best Annual Throughput



Global port operator PSA International has reported its strongest annual performance to date, handling 105 million TEUs in 2025, a 5% increase over the previous year. Terminals in Singapore led the growth, supported by robust transshipment flows, network optimisation and advanced digital and

automation solutions. The achievement comes despite challenging geopolitical conditions and supply chain disruptions, highlighting the importance of highly connected hub ports within global liner networks. PSA's performance provides an indicative benchmark for throughput, resilience and productivity, and offers learnings for ports worldwide, including Indian gateways, on leveraging technology, collaboration and network design to handle rising cargo volumes....[read more](#)

Mundra Port Containership Incident



During a sudden thunderstorm at Mundra Port's CT3 terminal, strong winds caused the containership MSC Alexandra to part its mooring lines and drift across the harbour, alliding bow-first with a pier under construction. Port workers were safely cleared from the waterfront ahead of the impact, and the

vessel sounded her horn to warn personnel in the vicinity. No casualties were reported, and damage assessments and remedial works are underway. The incident has prompted a review of storm preparedness, mooring arrangements and emergency protocols, underscoring the need for robust infrastructure design, real-time weather monitoring and regular safety drills at high-capacity terminals....[read more](#)



Adani Ports and Regional Hubs Set New Operational Records



Adani Gangavaram Port achieved a historic milestone by recording its highest-ever monthly container throughput of 12,637 TEUs in February 2026, surpassing the previous record of 11,545 TEUs. This achievement reflects the port's continued focus on operational efficiency and robust infrastructure, positioning it as a

key logistics gateway on India's East Coast...[read more](#) Similarly, Vizhinjam International Seaport in Kerala sustained strong performance, handling significant container and bulk volumes with 20%+ year-on-year growth driven by new vessel calls and feeder services...[read more](#)

Shipping Corp. Orders Six Feeder Box Ships



Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) announced plans to order six feeder box ships at local shipyards in a \$360 million deal, signaling growing confidence in India's shipbuilding capabilities. The order reflects a strategic shift toward domestically built vessels and underscores India's competitiveness in the global maritime sector. This development is

expected to stimulate employment in Indian shipyards and strengthen coastal shipping operations...[read more](#)



UCSL and Yeoman Marine Advance Shipbuilding Milestones



India's shipbuilding sector continues to gain momentum with significant progress reported by Udupi Cochin Shipyard Limited (UCSL) and Yeoman Marine Services across commercial and defence segments. UCSL is executing an export order for six 3,800 DWT and eight 6,300 DWT general cargo vessels for Norway-based Wilson ASA, with deliveries progressing steadily following the commissioning of the first vessel in April 2025....[read more](#) In the domestic segment, UCSL delivered the

fourth of thirteen 70-tonne bollard pull tugs, Ocean Royal, to Ocean Sparkle Ltd ahead of schedule, highlighting improved execution capability and yard productivity....[read more](#) Parallely, Yeoman Marine Services has marked key milestones in defence shipbuilding, including the launch of the second Next-Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV) for the Indian Navy and keel laying of subsequent vessels under the series. These developments reflect growing capacity across Indian shipyards in both export-oriented commercial shipbuilding and complex defence platforms, reinforcing the country's push toward self-reliance and global competitiveness in the maritime manufacturing ecosystem....[read more](#)

MARITIME SUSTAINABILITY

Renovation of Kolkata's Bascule Bridge



The Government of India has approved ₹117.54 crore, including approximately ₹41 crore under the Sagarmala Programme, for the comprehensive renovation of the nearly 60-year-old double-leaf Bascule Bridge at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata. To be implemented by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL), the project encompasses structural rehabilitation, complete electro-mechanical system upgrades, and modern

operational controls. These enhancements will ensure safer, faster, and more reliable movement of cargo and vehicular traffic within the port's historic Kolkata Dock System. The initiative preserves critical legacy infrastructure while boosting operational efficiency to support eastern India's growing maritime trade volumes.....[read more](#)



Vizhinjam Port's Industrial Land Acquisition



The Kerala Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, approved acquisition of 230 acres valued at ₹810 crore across Kottukal, Maranalloor, and Amaravila near Thiruvananthapuram to catalyze port-led industrialization around Vizhinjam International Seaport.

This strategic land bank will enable development of integrated logistics parks, cold chain warehousing, manufacturing clusters, and ancillary services directly linked to the emerging transshipment hub. The decision positions Vizhinjam to attract anchor investments, generate thousands of direct and indirect jobs, and establish Kerala as a major player in containerized trade while fostering sustainable port-city economic ecosystems through coordinated infrastructure planning....[read more](#)

Maritime Training Partnership



On 27 February 2026, the Indian Maritime University (IMU) and Institute of Marine Engineers (India) (IMEI) formalized a Memorandum of Agreement to significantly enhance practical maritime training capabilities. Under this industry-academia collaboration, IMEI will utilize IMU's advanced simulators and training facilities to deliver specialized hands on modules covering oil, chemical, and gas

tanker operations. The partnership addresses critical competency gaps in complex tanker vessel handling, aligns training programs with International Maritime Organization (IMO) standards, and strengthens India's position as a reliable supplier of skilled maritime professionals for global energy transportation requirements....[read more](#)



Inland Waterways Cargo Movement



Tug MV Trishul, supported by barges Ajay and Dikhu, successfully transported 1,500 tonnes of industrial cargo, 1,200 tonnes of Tata Steel slag cement and 300 tonnes of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) TMT bars from Haldia to Pandu Port in Guwahati, Assam via inland waterways. This

operation validates the commercial viability and environmental benefits of riverine logistics for bulk construction materials, substantially reducing road congestion, carbon emissions, and overall transport costs. It strengthens supply chain integration between eastern manufacturing hubs and northeastern markets, reinforcing National Waterway-1's strategic role in India's multimodal logistics architecture....[read more](#)

Support for Indian Seafarers



Hon'ble Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways Shri Sarbananda Sonowal personally interacted with the crews of Indian flagged LPG carriers Shivalik and Nanda Devi upon their safe return to Indian

shores following operations in challenging maritime conditions. He commended their exceptional professionalism, resilience, and unwavering commitment in ensuring uninterrupted delivery of essential LPG cargoes despite dynamic security threats and adverse weather patterns. This engagement reaffirms the Government's strong commitment to seafarer welfare, formal recognition of their indispensable role in national energy security, and emphasis on strengthening the human dimension within India's maritime operations ecosystem....[read more](#)



Tamil Nadu Shipbuilding Policy 2026



Tamil Nadu released its Shipbuilding Policy 2026, positioning the state as a global leader in sustainable maritime technology, with focused incentives for zero-emission vessels powered by green hydrogen, ammonia, and electric propulsion. The policy

aligns with India's Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 and targets significant reductions in carbon emissions across the shipping fleet. Notably, investments of at least Rs 50 crore in eco-friendly marine component manufacturing will be eligible for a "Sunrise Sector" status with structured incentive packages. The state plans to collaborate with Indian Maritime University to introduce a specialised curriculum in "Green Shipping Technology," ensuring workforce competence in Industry 4.0 standards and alternative fuel systems....[read more](#)

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

India-Hapag-Lloyd Maritime Cooperation



In the presence of Hon'ble Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, the Government of India and global container line Hapag-Lloyd signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) to deepen strategic cooperation across shipping and logistics sectors. Key focus areas include reflagging vessels under the Indian flag to expand the national fleet, developing a sustainable and

world-class ship-recycling ecosystem compliant with international environmental standards, and exploring investments in critical port infrastructure at the upcoming Vadhavan Port. This landmark partnership is expected to significantly bolster India's maritime capabilities, enhance global trade connectivity, and accelerate progress toward self-reliant shipping under Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047....[read more](#)



India–UAE Shipbuilding & Repair Talks



Shri Vijay Kumar (IAS), Secretary (Shipping), held strategic discussions with Dr. Rado Antolovic, CEO of Drydocks World (Dubai, UAE), to explore expanded collaboration in ship repair, maritime infrastructure development, and integrated logistics solutions. The talks focused on leveraging

Drydocks World's global expertise alongside India's growing shipbuilding and repair ecosystem to establish joint ventures and technology transfer programs. This engagement aims to create world-class facilities, enhance service capabilities, generate employment opportunities, and strengthen the strategic maritime partnership between India and UAE as part of broader bilateral economic cooperation frameworks....[read more](#)

India–Nordic Trade Corridor Alliance



Jeena & Company and Nordic carrier Scan-Shipping signed a strategic alliance to enhance multimodal connectivity between India and major Nordic markets including Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland. The partnership will develop optimized trade routes, expand

container feeder services, and facilitate growing bilateral commerce in pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, renewable energy equipment, and automotive components. By combining India's manufacturing strengths with Nordic innovation and sustainability focus, the alliance aims to streamline supply chains, reduce transit times, lower logistics costs, and unlock new market opportunities for both regions' exporters and importers....[read more](#)



Indian Ocean Ship (IOS) SAGAR: Second Edition and IONS Chairmanship



The second edition of Indian Ocean Ship (IOS) SAGAR commenced on March 16, 2026, with India assuming the chair of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in February 2026. This edition included participation from 16 IONS nations of the Indian Ocean Region, continuing India's commitment to collaborative maritime

security and regional partnership. The IONS chairmanship represents a significant diplomatic achievement in consolidating India's maritime leadership in the Indian Ocean Region....[read more](#)

BBNJ Treaty Preparatory Commission (PrepCom) Meeting



The Preparatory Commission (PrepCom) meeting for the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) is being convened under the United Nations to advance the operationalisation of the landmark treaty on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. The session focuses on progressing institutional arrangements and administrative frameworks required for

the Agreement's effective implementation ahead of its entry into force. The PrepCom process represents a critical transitional phase in establishing the governance architecture for high seas biodiversity conservation, reflecting growing global commitment to strengthening international ocean governance...[read more](#)



BLUE ECONOMY INITIATIVES

Inland Waterways Projects in Assam



Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated inland waterways and maritime infrastructure projects worth ₹526 crore in Assam, in the presence of Governor Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharya, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, and Union Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal. Key initiatives include foundation stones for cruise

terminals at Neamati and Biswanath Ghat on National Waterway-2 (Brahmaputra River), strengthening connectivity and promoting river-based tourism in Northeast India. The Prime Minister emphasized that comprehensive waterways development will unlock trade opportunities, boost tourism circuits, generate livelihoods for local communities, artisans and traders, and integrate the region into national economic growth pathways....[read more](#)

Odisha's Blue Economy Vision



At the Global Summit on Blue Economy 2026 held at Lok Seva Bhawan, Bhubaneswar, Odisha Chief Secretary Smt. Anu Garg outlined the state's ambitious roadmap to achieve "Viksit Odisha 2036" by harnessing its 575 km coastline and blue economy potential. She highlighted Odisha's EDGE, strong economic fundamentals, favourable demographics, strategic geography, and

robust ecosystem, as key enablers for growth in ports, fisheries, coastal tourism, offshore renewables, shipbuilding, and marine services. The summit brought together global experts, investors and policymakers to chart sustainable pathways for ocean-based economic development, positioning Odisha as a leading blue economy hub on India's eastern seaboard....[read more](#)
