

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 318
ANSWERED ON 21.07.2026

STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARITIME SECTOR

318. SMT. JEBI MATHER HISHAM:

Will the Minister of PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has reviewed its strategy to strengthen the maritime economy and strategic role in the Indian Ocean Region;
- (b) the steps taken to enhance port connectivity, maritime infrastructure and technological capabilities to improve India's global maritime competitiveness and the outcomes thereof;
- (c) whether new initiatives have been undertaken to promote regional maritime cooperation, coastal shipping and the Blue Economy with Indian Ocean neighbours, and the progress made thereon; and
- (d) the measures taken to strengthen India's shipping, shipbuilding and port sectors to enhance trade, economic growth and maritime resilience?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)

(a) India has fostered strong bilateral and multilateral partnerships with key partners and like-minded countries in Indian Ocean Region (IOR), in line with India's Neighbourhood First policy and Vision MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions). Vision MAHASAGAR encompasses the ideas of trade for development, capacity building for sustainable growth, and mutual security for a shared future.

(b) and (d) Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways under its central sector scheme Sagarmala, in order to promote port-led development in the country, provides financial assistance under 5 pillars namely, Port Modernization, Port Connectivity, Port-Led Industrialization, Coastal Community Development and Coastal Shipping & Inland Water Transport to the implementing agencies like States/UTs Governments, Major Ports and other organisations. 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 initiative has been 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.

Ministry has enacted several new legislations recently for holistic development of India's maritime sector namely., Merchant Shipping Act, 2025, Coastal Shipping Act, 2025 Indian Ports Act, 2025 Bills of Lading Act, 2025 Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 2025, Marine Aids to Navigation Act, 2021, Inland Vessel Act, 2021, The Major Port Authorities Act, 2021.

The Government has reviewed the India's Shipping and Shipbuilding sector and adopted a four-pillar strategy to revitalize shipping and shipbuilding sector. The Government has approved a comprehensive Rs. 69,725 crore package to strengthen domestic capacity, maritime financing, shipyard development, skilling, and reforms.

(c) Government of India has been focusing on development assistance, capacity building initiatives, economic cooperation, connectivity, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) support and defence & maritime security cooperation, with an aim to assist countries in the Indian Ocean Region on sustainable socio-economic development.

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways promotes regional maritime cooperation through maritime agreements. Further, The Coastal Shipping Act, 2025 was enacted to consolidate and modernize the legal framework governing coastal shipping. Also, measures such as the High Seas Fisheries Guidelines and the Exclusive Economic Zone Rules support the Blue Economy.
