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A Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster for Porbandar

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ECONOMY

GS3

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A Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster for Porbandar

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WHY IN NEWS

*On July 15, 2026, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) approved an integrated **greenfield shipbuilding cluster** at Kuchhadi, Porbandar in Gujarat, spread over about **2,000 acres**, along with a **Rs 1,570 crore ship-repair facility** at Vadinar. Both projects fall under the **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**.*

For a nation with a **7,500-plus kilometre coastline** and rising strategic stakes in the Indian Ocean, India builds surprisingly few ships. The country holds **under 1 per cent** of the global shipbuilding market and ranks around **20th** worldwide. The Porbandar cluster is a **deliberate** attempt to change that trajectory.

THE TWO PROJECTS

The Shipbuilding Cluster

The greenfield cluster at **Kuchhadi, near Porbandar**, is planned as an integrated ecosystem rather than a single yard. Spread over roughly **2,000 acres**, it is designed to bring builders, component suppliers and **ancillary** industries into one location, mirroring the cluster model that made shipbuilding nations like South Korea and China globally dominant.

FEATURE	DETAIL
Cluster site	Kuchhadi, Porbandar, Gujarat
Cluster area	About 2,000 acres
Target capacity	1.2 to 1.5 million gross tonnage (GT) per year
Ship-repair facility	Vadinar, Gujarat
Repair-facility outlay	Rs 1,570 crore
Special purpose vehicle	NSHIP-Gujarat
Parent framework	Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047
Approval date	July 15, 2026

The Ship-Repair Facility

The separate **Rs 1,570 crore facility at Vadinar** targets the ship-repair segment, which is strategically important because Indian-flagged and even Indian Navy vessels have historically sailed to Singapore, Colombo or Dubai for major repairs. Keeping that work, and the foreign exchange it earns, within India is a core goal.

THE DELIVERY MECHANISM

The cluster will be developed through a **special purpose vehicle (SPV) named NSHIP-Gujarat**, a joint venture between the **MoPSW** and the **Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB)**. The SPV model allows the project to raise capital, hold land and enter contracts with the agility of a company while remaining under public policy direction.

Setting the Scale

A target of **1.2 to 1.5 million gross tonnage (GT)** per year is ambitious for a country that today captures a sliver of the world market. **Gross tonnage** is a measure of a ship's overall internal volume and is the standard unit for expressing a yard's output capacity.

WHY IT MATTERS

Make in India in a Strategic Sector

Shipbuilding is a classic strategic industry: it is capital-intensive, employment-heavy and deeply linked to defence and trade security. Building ships domestically supports the **Make in India** vision, reduces reliance on foreign yards for both commercial and naval vessels, and builds a skilled industrial workforce.

The Blue Economy Link

The cluster advances India's **blue economy** agenda, which seeks to harness ocean resources for growth while ensuring sustainability. A domestic shipbuilding base is foundational to expanding merchant shipping, coastal trade and port-led development.

Import Substitution in Ship Repair

By capturing repair work that currently flows abroad, the Vadinar facility is a direct exercise in **import substitution**, retaining value and jobs onshore.

Policy Support

The projects draw on the government's broader push, including the **Shipbuilding Development Scheme** and financial-assistance policies designed to offset the cost disadvantage Indian yards face against heavily subsidised competitors in East Asia. The **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047** is the umbrella framework guiding India's ports and shipping ambitions toward the centenary of independence.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 3: Indian economy; infrastructure; growth and development; effects of liberalisation; industrial policy and Make in India; blue economy.

Prelims pointers:

- The cluster is at **Kuchhadi, Porbandar**; the ship-repair facility is at **Vadinar**, both in Gujarat.
- It is developed via the SPV **NSHIP-Gujarat**, with the **Gujarat Maritime Board**.
- India holds **under 1 per cent** of the global shipbuilding market, ranking around **20th**.
- The umbrella framework is the **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**.

Mains question: “Despite a long coastline and strong maritime tradition, India remains a marginal player in global shipbuilding.” Analyse the constraints and evaluate how recent initiatives such as the Porbandar cluster seek to change this.

FACTS CORNER

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India's coastline exceeds 7,500 km, spanning nine coastal states and Union Territories.

Gross tonnage (GT) measures a ship's total internal volume and is the standard unit for shipyard capacity.

The Gujarat Maritime Board is one of India's largest state maritime boards, managing dozens of non-major ports.

The Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 succeeds the earlier Maritime India Vision 2030 as the guiding roadmap for the sector.

South Korea, China and Japan together account for the vast majority of global shipbuilding output, leaving India with under 1 per cent.

Sources: PIB / Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Gujarat Maritime Board, Sagarmala Programme

Source: A Greenfield Shipbuilding Cluster for Porbandar — Ujiyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

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