

National Maritime Day 2026

National Maritime Day in India, celebrated annually on April 5th, commemorates the 1919 maiden voyage of the SS Loyalty, the first Indian-owned ship to travel from Mumbai to London, marking a major step toward self-reliance in shipping. It highlights the sector's 95% contribution to India's trade volume, honors seafarers, and promotes sustainable "green" shipping initiative

Theme

"Maritime India-Empowering Progress"

The Theme signifies India's strategic pivot to leverage its 7,500 km coastline as a central engine for economic growth, aiming to transform the nation into a global maritime powerhouse. It represents a comprehensive vision where modern, efficient, and green maritime infrastructure drives trade, boosts employment, and ensures national prosperity by 2030 and 2047. Key aspects of this vision include:

1. Modernization & Infrastructure (Sagarmala)

- Port-Led Development: Modernizing 12 major and 200+ non-major ports to increase capacity, aiming for over 10,000 Million Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA) by 2047.
- Reduced Turnaround Time: Major ports have reduced vessel turnaround time from 93 hours to 48 hours, with some, like Mundra, leading global efficiency.
- Cargo Efficiency: 95% of India's trade by volume moves via maritime routes, with Sagarmala driving connectivity between ports and hinterlands.

2. Economic Growth & the Blue Economy

- Boosting Trade: Aiming to become a top-five shipbuilding nation by 2047 and significantly increasing the share of Indian-flagged vessels.
- Job Creation: The sector aims to create 10 million jobs by 2047.
- Inland Waterways: Shifting cargo movement from road/rail to inland waterways, which grew 710% in cargo movement between 2014 and 2025.
- Financial Power: The sector is aimed at contributing up to 12% of India's GDP (up from ~4%).

3. Sustainability (Green Maritime Future)

- Green Ports & Shipping: Implementing "Harit Sagar" guidelines to achieve carbon neutrality, using renewable energy (solar/wind) at ports, and establishing green hydrogen/ammonia hubs.
- Green Tugs & Vessels: Launching India's first hydrogen fuel cell vessel and aiming for 100% green fuel in inland vessels by 2045.

4. Strategic & Global Leadership

- SAGAR Initiative: "Security and Growth for All in the Region" (SAGAR) ensures that India acts as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean, protecting vital sea lanes of communication.
- Global Hub: Positioning India as a leading destination for shipbuilding, ship repair, and recycling (second globally in recycling).
- "Maritime India Empowering Progress" is thus a multi-faceted approach linking the Blue Economy, "Make in India" initiatives, and Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) to secure a prosperous future.