

Minutes of the 25th meeting of National Shipping Board (NSB) New Delhi held on 16th July 2025 at 10:00 hrs in the Conference Hall of Directorate General of Shipping (DGS), Mumbai

The 25th Meeting of the National Shipping Board (NSB) New Delhi was held on 16th Jul 2025 at 10:00 hours in the conference hall of Directorate General of Shipping (DGS), Mumbai. The list of participants/attendees (including online) is as follows:

Attendees:

Board Members:

1. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, IAS (Retired), Chairperson, National Shipping Board, New Delhi
2. Shri Ajithkumar Sukumaran, Chief Surveyor, Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai
3. Shri Rakesh Singh, President, Indian Coastal Conference Shipping Association, Mumbai
4. Shri Anil Laxman Devli, Chief Executive Officer, Indian National Shipowners Association, Mumbai
5. Shri Rahul Modi, President, Coastal Containers Transporters Association
6. Shri Milind Kandalgaokar, General Secretary, National Union of Seafarers of India, Mumbai
7. Captain Tushar Pradhan, General Secretary, Maritime Union of India, Mumbai
8. Shri Arun Sharma, Executive Chairman, Indian Register of Shipping, Mumbai
9. Shri Madhu S Nair, CMD, Cochin Shipyard Limited, Kochi (online)
10. Dr. K. Murali, Professor, IIT Madras, Chennai (online)
11. Ms. Sanjam Sahi Gupta, Director, Sitara Shipping Limited, Mumbai
12. Shri Shantanu Kalita, Advisor, Indian Ports Association, New Delhi
13. Shri Pankaj Verma, DIG, Coast Guard Headquarters, New Delhi (online)

14. Following Ministry has yet to nominate its representative in the Board.

A representative of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, New Delhi (Absent)

15. Following Member of the Board remained absent without prior authorisation of leave of absence from the Chair.

Shri Mandeep Singh Randhawa, In-charge Maritime Administration Division, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, New Delhi (Absent)

16. Following Member sent his representative without any prior authorisation from the Chair as well as from the Ministry or Organization which has nominated him.

Shri Raghu R Nair, Commodore, Naval Operations, Indian Navy, New Delhi

Secretary:

17. Shri Nebu Oommen, SS-cum-DDG, DG Shipping, Secretary National Shipping Board, Mumbai

Permanent Invitees:

18. **Shri Sushil Mansing Khopde, Additional Director General of Shipping**, as representative from DG Shipping Mumbai

19. Shri AK Bansal, Representative from Inland Waterways Authority of India, Noida, U.P. (online)

Special Invitee:

20. Shri Vikas Narwal, MD IPA as Representative from Indian Ports Association (online)

21. Dr. Arvind Bhisikar, ED(IT) IPA as Representative from Indian Ports Association (online)

22. Haresh Parmar Secretary Ship Recycling Industry Association Alang Gujarat (online)

22. Shri Arun Bhal as Representative of Ship Recycling Industry Association Alang Gujarat (online)

23. Shri Uday Bhatt, SRIA Bhal as Representative of Ship Recycling Industry Association Alang Gujarat (online)

25. Vidhyadhar Rane, General Secretary Alang Sosiya Ship Recycling & General Workers' Association Alang

26. Ash Mohammad, DDG (Finance), DG Shipping Mumbai

27. Captain Nitin Mukesh, Deputy Nautical Advisor, DG Shipping Mumbai

Opening of the Meeting:

1.1. At the outset, the Chairperson, NSB welcomed all the Board Members of National shipping Board, New Delhi (constituted vide Gazette Notification No. S.O.1935(E). dated 30/04/2025 of Government of India, Ministry of Shipping, Ports & Waterways File No. ST-16011/4/2016-MA), representatives of the permanent invitees & Special Invitee and the staff of DG Shipping & NSB Secretariat who were present (both physically and virtually) & attending this 25th meeting of the NSB.

1.2. **Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB** stated that terming of this meeting as 25 meeting of NSB would not be right as this is the presently counted as 25th meeting of NSB since the time when the minutes of the NSB were first uploaded on the DG Shipping website in 2020. Prior to that more than 150+ meetings of the NSB were already held. **Emphasizing the importance of recognizing the legacy of the National Shipping Board, which has been operational since 1958, the Board agreed to request the Secretary NSB to reconcile the numbering of the meeting from the old records and apprise the Board in the next meeting. Recognizing the importance of collating and making available the extensive data available with the members of the predecessor boards, which has been documented over many years, the Board also agreed to request the members of the predecessors Boards who are also continuing in the present Board to help in this reconciliation from the old minutes available with them.**

Action: Secretary NSB / Members of the predecessors Boards who are also continuing in the present Board

1.3. The Board further agreed to request Secretary NSB / Members of the predecessors Boards who are also continuing in the present Board to share the copies of the old minutes / reports etc. available with them so that they can be collated and uploaded on the website in an easy retrievable manner.

Action: Secretary NSB / Members of the predecessors Boards who are also continuing in the present Board

1.4. The Board observed that Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG) has yet to nominate its representative on the Board. It was also observed by the Board that MoPNG is an important Stakeholder in the Shipping Sector and its representation on the Board would add immense value to the effective functioning of the Board. **The Board advised the Secretary NSB to take up with MoPNG for early nomination of its representative on the Board and to use the good offices of Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) for taking up with MoPNG for early nomination.**

Action: Secretary NSB

1.5. The Board observed that few members were absent without the prior authorization of leave of absence from the Chair. The absence of the members without the prior authorization of leave of absence from the Chair was noted by the Board with concern. **It was agreed by the Board to take it on records for the purpose of minutes. It was stressed by the Board that no members should be absent without the prior authorization of leave of absence in the future. The Secretary NSB was advised in writing to all the members.**

Action: Secretary NSB / All members of the Board

1.6. The Board observed that one member was absent and instead he has deputed his representative for the meeting without prior authorization from the Chair as well as from their respective Ministries / organizations which have nominated them on the Board. The absence of the members and nomination of their representative instead without the prior authorization from the Chair as well as their respective Ministries / organizations which have nominated them on the Board was noted by the Board with concern. **It was agreed by the Board to take it on records for the purpose of minutes. It was stressed by the Board that sending representative of the representative of the Ministry / organization is not an acceptable practice. It is an exception and not a rule.** The Board observed that no members should be absent without prior authorization from the Chair as well as their respective Ministries / organizations which have nominated them on the Board. The Secretary NSB was advised in writing to all the members.

Action: Secretary NSB / All members of the Board

1.7. Thereafter the Chairperson of the Board requested Shri, Nebu Oommen Secretary NSB to initiate the meeting with the agenda of the day.

2. Confirmation of the minutes of last NSB meeting held on 30/05/2025:

2.1. The minutes of the last meeting which was held on 30/05/2025 (the minutes of were circulated to the members of the predecessor Board) **were considered as confirmed** as no comments to the contrary were received after the circulation the minutes as informed by Secretary NSB.

3. Status of the action taken on the minutes of the meeting held on 25/06/2023:

3.1. The status of the action taken on the minutes of the meeting held on 25/06/2023 was presented before the Board as given in **Annexure I. The Board perused the status action taken and advised the Secretary NSB to update the status on the unfinished action points in the next meeting.**

Action: Secretary NSB

4. Status of the action taken on the minutes of the meeting held on 30/05/2025:

4.1. The status of the action taken on the minutes of the meeting held on 30/05/2025 was presented before the Board as given in **Annexure II. The Board perused the status action taken and advised the Secretary NSB to update the status on the unfinished action points in the next meeting.**

Action: Secretary NSB

5. Nomination of a NSB member on the Governing Council of NMIS Mumbai:

5.1. As the minutes of the meeting held on 30/05/2025 were confirmed, the Board authorized the Secretary NSB to inform Narottam Morarji Institute of Shipping Mumbai about Nomination of Shri Anil Devli, a member of present NSB as the NSB Nominee on their Governing Council.

Action: Secretary NSB

6. Issues of Shipping Building & Ship Repairing Sector:

6.1. Shri Arun Sharma, Executive Chairman, Indian Register of Shipping, Mumbai addressed the current state and prospects of India's shipbuilding and ship repair industries. He began by highlighting how these sectors, once significant contributors to India's maritime strength, have lost their global standing over time. Nations such as Dubai, Singapore, and Colombo have emerged as dominant players, replacing India despite its favourable geographic location and maritime heritage. He emphasized that the Government of India is now committed to revitalizing shipbuilding as a key strategic and economic priority. However, India remains far behind in global rankings, with most shipyards currently engaged in building smaller crafts and naval vessels. This has led to reduced productivity, especially due to long construction timelines for defence vessels, which lack strict delivery schedules. For instance, small naval ships often take 5–7 years to complete, while aircraft carriers may take as long as 25 years. Such practices have discouraged commercial ship owners from engaging with Indian yards, as they demand high quality and speedy delivery—areas where India falls short. He outlined three key strategies to revive the industry. First, he called for strategic tie-ups with leading global shipbuilding nations such as Japan, Korea, and China. These partnerships could help India adopt better technologies, improve management practices, and enhance quality standards. He emphasized that commercial shipowners are primarily concerned with two things—quality and delivery timelines—which can only be achieved through advanced infrastructure and a skilled workforce. Secondly, he spoke about the critical need for skill development. He highlighted the recently signed MoU with Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers in Kolkata, which aims to train 100 individuals in key areas such as welding, electrical systems, mechanical work, and piping at the “Centre of Excellence” in Vizag. This program is expected to commence within the next 10–15 days. He noted that the lack of skilled manpower is a common issue across industries and suggested that similar initiatives are being explored by other shipyards like Cochin Shipyard and Dubai Drydocks. Importantly, he stated that skilling must extend beyond workers to include management and planning personnel, who are essential for efficient production. The third critical area he discussed was the need to build a robust ecosystem around shipbuilding. While Indian yards are capable of building hulls, the delivery of essential components—particularly engines—can take several years due to import dependencies. This delays overall ship completion and limits the competitiveness of

Indian yards. He stressed the importance of developing domestic manufacturing capabilities in areas such as marine engines, electronics, valves, and other mechanical systems. He also called for reducing bureaucratic hurdles, particularly in customs and taxation, to streamline imports and promote ease of doing business in this sector. The creation of a holistic ecosystem, he emphasized, is vital for India to compete globally in shipbuilding. Turning to the ship repair industry, he acknowledged that India has seen relatively more success in this space. Yards such as Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) and Cochin Shipyard have developed solid reputation for ship repair, servicing clients like the Shipping Corporation of India, ONGC, and others. However, ship repair remains seasonal and infrastructure dependent. While shipyards provide dry docks and services like blasting, painting, and propeller maintenance, many specialized repairs—such as those involving electronics, engines, or boilers—still rely heavily on ancillary industries. He praised the efficiency and ecosystem of global hubs like Dubai and Singapore, where everything from engine repair to electronics servicing is readily available near shipyards, ensuring swift turnaround times. In contrast, Indian yards like HSL often struggle with even basic servicing tasks due to the lack of approved vendors, as seen in the case of lifeboat maintenance. He concluded by reiterating the need for a detailed, strategic approach to improve both shipbuilding and ship repair capabilities in India. He stressed the importance of building an integrated ecosystem, investing in infrastructure, developing skilled human resources, and fostering international collaboration. Although India currently lacks the capacity to attract global shipbuilding contracts, he expressed confidence that with the right planning and execution, the country could reposition itself as a competitive and preferred destination in the global maritime industry. He noted, a more comprehensive presentation and report are being prepared to guide the way forward.

6.2. Following this, Shri Madhu Nair, the CMD of Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) intervened to build upon Shri Arun Sharma's remarks. He mentioned that although he did not have a detailed report to share now, he felt it was important to contribute, especially since Arun Sharma had initiated the discussion on shipbuilding. The CMD expressed that due to synergies between shipbuilding, ship repairs and green initiatives—such as the development of green tugs, these should be considered together rather than in isolation. He emphasized the importance of linking the action points across these interrelated domains to create a more comprehensive and cohesive maritime strategy. He further suggested to the Chair that the subgroup working on green shipping and sustainability should be closely integrated with the shipbuilding and ship repair subgroups, enabling coordinated action and potentially more impactful outcomes. This integration would ensure that India's maritime strategy is aligned not only with growth goals but also with sustainability and environmental standards. At the NSB level, he also emphasized the broader policy landscape shaping the future of India's shipbuilding industry. He began by providing context about several key developments driven by the Maritime India Vision

2030 and the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, which have laid down clear timelines and policy guidelines. Since late 2024, high-level delegations have visited countries like Korea and Japan to build strategic ties. The Union Budget 2025 also provided a significant boost through measures like the Maritime Development Fund and customs duty extensions. The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways is working actively with states, as currently only CSL is under the Ministry, alongside four defence shipyards and a few private players like L&T and Chowgule & Co. Several previously defunct shipyards are now being revived through the IBC-NCLT route—for instance, Pipavav Shipyards limited is taken over by Swan Energy and Bharati Shipyard's assets by Square Port and Chowgule & Co. Smaller boatyards are also showing active interest, and several states including Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Odisha have initiated policy-level work to boost local shipbuilding ecosystems. Japanese companies have already initiated discussions at state levels, such as with the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and the Tamil Nadu Industries Department. He further noted that Cochin Shipyard recently signed a comprehensive MoU with Hyundai, the world's leading shipbuilder, supported by the Ministry. However, he cautioned that the real bottleneck remains the aggregation of Indian demand. Setting up a Greenfield shipyard requires a colossal investment of USD 3–4 billion and around 1500–2500 acres of land—an endeavour that necessitates long-term (15–25 year) policy assurance due to the capital-intensive and cyclical nature of the industry. He warned against policy flip-flops, emphasizing the need for sustained government support during downturns. Aggregation of cargo—especially in liquid, bulk, and container segments—must be pursued, and Indian shipping companies must be nurtured so that the country can move beyond its current <10% share in global shipping. Shipbuilding, Indian shipping ownership, and cargo aggregation are interlinked and must be addressed at the policy level. On ship repair, he shared that CSL is spearheading two major clusters in Kochi and Vadinar, in partnership with Dry Docks World Dubai and Kandla Port Trust. While INR 1,000 crores have been invested in Kochi and INR 1,500 crores planned for Vadinar, he noted that global best practices in turnaround time must be introduced to scale up competitiveness. Quality is no longer a concern, but scaling and speed remain a key. The CMD also lauded the NSB's pivotal role in promoting green transitions—especially the Green Tug and Green Craft Transition Programs under 'Harit Nauka'—which were first recommended during the 2023 Chintan Shivir in Munnar. Today, most major ports have tendered or awarded contracts under these schemes, with Kandla Port already having awarded implementation. He urged NSB to continue pushing such initiatives while reiterating that training, skilling, and international partnerships will only be fruitful if India ensures demand aggregation and strong policy continuity.

6.3. Shri Anil Laxman Devli, Chief Executive Officer, Indian National Shipowners Association, Mumbai emphasized the need for greater involvement of shipowners in national shipbuilding plans, stating that excluding them undermines both industry sentiment and practical viability. He expressed concern that Indian shipowners are being

sidelined in favor of directives from oil companies and government agencies, particularly in decisions related to the construction of MR (Medium Range) tankers. It was noted that there is no immediate shortage of MR tankers for Indian oil companies — current demand is already covered. Despite this, there is pressure from the government on oil companies (IOC, BPCL, HPCL) to build more MR tankers without clear justification or consultation with existing shipowners. Indian shipowners are already operating 15 MR tankers domestically, with 25 more being trained or stationed abroad due to lack of deployment opportunities at home. He cautioned that such decisions may risk alienating Indian shipowners, possibly encouraging them to flag out or move operations overseas due to lack of support and clarity. He emphasized that shipping is a mobile, global business, and national policy must acknowledge its commercial realities.

6.4. Shri Rakesh Singh, President, Indian Coastal Conference Shipping Association, Mumbai added that government investment in segments where capacity does not yet exist, such as small coastal container vessels (300–500 TEU) or customised size Ro-Ro vessels, could support meaningful coastal shipping development. He referenced previous Planning Commission discussions highlighting the need for vessels stated as above to operate on “hub and scope” method using major ports as Hub. Together, the discussion highlighted an urgent need for transparent, consultative policymaking that includes shipowners, support for viable and needed capacities instead of arbitrary mandates, recognition of existing private investment and capacity in Indian shipping and consideration of sustainable and fit-for-purpose fleet development, including short-sea/coastal vessels.

6.5. Shri Shantanu Kalita, Advisor, Indian Ports Association, New Delhi highlighted that over the past few months, the Ministry has been aggregating vessel requirements from key government sectors such as Petroleum, Fertilizers, and Steel. Of these, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has emerged with the largest demand, particularly for MR tankers and other vessel types like Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs), Long Range 1 (LR1s) and Suezmaxes—totalling approximately 112 vessels. He informed that there are already around 47 MR tankers under Indian ownership, of which about 15 are actively engaged in domestic operations, while the rest are forced to trade globally due to lack of sufficient business in India. Kalita cautioned that further vessel procurement mandates should not be pushed without thorough consultation with the industry. He emphasized that with India aiming to procure approximately 200 ships over the next 10 years, it is crucial to ensure that shipowners’ interests are protected, and that domestic capacity is meaningfully utilized. He urged that NSB must step in and play an active role at the policy formulation level, ensuring the industry’s voice is part of government-level decision-making—especially now when key frameworks like the National Maritime Development Agenda (NMDA) are being finalized. With the policy expected to reach the Cabinet within a month, he stressed that this is a crucial moment

for NSB to convene discussions, gather stakeholder views, and intervene effectively so that future actions are balanced, transparent, and inclusive.

7. Issues of Ship Recycling Sector:

7.1. Haresh Parmar Secretary Ship Recycling Industry Association (SRIA) at Alang, who was a special Invitee in the Board meeting to highlight the current issues of the Ship recycling industry before the Board and to apprise whether intervention of the Board is necessary in any of the issues at this stage. He informed that there is ongoing confusion regarding the applicability of double GST, especially for ships of Indian origin which are recycled at Alang. The industry has already sought urgent clarification on such double taxation as it affects business viability. The industry is expecting an early resolution in the matter. He further informed that 2–3 critical issues remain unresolved with regards to compliance with the Hong Kong Convention on Ship Recycling. He informed that the industry has requested a joint meeting with DG Shipping and the Ministry to ensure these are clarified, enabling smooth implementation. He also informed that on use of recycled steel as construction material, a meeting is underway in Delhi involving the BIS, Ministry of Science and Technology, DG Shipping, and other stakeholders to discuss the way forward. He thanked the Board for providing him this opportunity and stated that intervention of the Board on these issues is not needed at this stage. When asked about the perception that India is losing ship recycling business to Bangladesh is true, and if so, what the underlying reasons are - **low scrap rate for ships or non-compliance of Hongkong Convention by other countries or uneconomical use of recycled steel or absence of carbon trading mechanisms & so on.** He stated that due to non-compliance of Hongkong Convention the yards in Pakistan, Bangladesh & Turkey are having a cost advantage over the Indian yards. However, with strict implementation of the Hong Kong Convention across the globe starting from 26th June this year, now on non-green yards will not be preferred for ship recycling and ships will not be sent to such yards for recycling. This will bring back business to India. The Directorate General of Shipping, along with the Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB), has been proactive on this front and has already organized a major seminar to address the situation and create awareness. He stressed that India has made significant investments in upgrading recycling yards to meet Hong Kong Convention standards and this compliance should be enforced to maintain India's competitive edge in the global ship recycling market. However, he also pointed out practical concerns, noting that implementation won't be immediate, and there might be a six-month window period post-deadline for actual enforcement. He stressed the need to utilize this time effectively to prepare yards for pre-compliance.

7.2. Shri Vidhyadhar Rane, General Secretary Alang Sosia Ship Recycling & General Workers' Association at Alang stated that Bangladesh currently has 7 green-certified yards, while Pakistan has none, even though Pakistan has ratified the Hong Kong

Convention. He emphasized that India took the right steps early on, not only by ratifying the convention but also by actively aligning its practices with the requirements. He noted that India began working on compliance with the Hong Kong Convention several years ago, showing early and continued commitment to safe and environmentally sound ship recycling practices. He highlighted that India has a well-established hazardous waste management system and India disposes of waste safely, including advanced methods like tablet encapsulation. He emphasized that India is actively engaging with international organizations like IMO, Basel, and UN bodies to strengthen its position in global ship recycling. While India already leads in upstream ship recycling due to strong regulations and compliance, greater focus is now needed on downstream integration—specifically, the effective and sustainable utilization of scrap material.

7.3. Shri Anil Laxman Devli, Chief Executive Officer, Indian National Shipowners Association, Mumbai highlighted that the core issue influencing ship recycling decisions is pricing rather than compliance. As of last week, scrap rates were approximately \$415 per ton in India, \$435 in Bangladesh, and \$452 in Pakistan. He noted that despite Pakistan being non-compliant with the Hong Kong Convention, it still offers the highest rate, which makes it more attractive for ship scrapping purely for financial gain. He explained that cash buyers play a major role in this system. For example, a ship may be purchased at \$405–406 per ton in India and then resold to Pakistan at \$450 per ton, allowing the cash buyer to make a profit margin of \$30–40 per ton. This arbitrage opportunity is what ultimately dictates the flow of ships, emphasizing that economic incentives often outweigh environmental or regulatory considerations.

7.4. Ms. Sanjam Sahi Gupta, Director, Sitara Shipping Limited, Mumbai stated that Bangladesh has invested significantly in upgrading its ship recycling yards, giving it an advantage in obtaining certifications. She mentioned a Norwegian company called Green Jakobsen, which is introducing a green scorecard system to rate ship recycling yards based on several sustainability and safety parameters. Ship owners will use this green scorecard to choose certified and higher-rated yards, making it crucial for Indian yards to register and meet these standards to remain competitive—especially in the eyes of European shipowners. She urged that Indian yards must proactively engage with such platforms to improve visibility and credibility in the global ship recycling market. She shared insights on the Green Ship Recycling Scorecard (Craig Score), emphasizing that it includes a dedicated gender component, which she personally helped draft. Though it may seem unconventional, she noted that organizations like the European Shipowners Association take gender inclusivity seriously and award additional scores for gender compliance. While India may still be far from fully adopting these norms, aligning with such scorecards could be highly beneficial for Indian yards, especially as many global ship owning companies have committed to following these frameworks. She highlighted the importance of conducting a proper audit to support the data entered into any digital

system for ship recycling compliance, especially concerning gender-related indicators. She explained that while stakeholders can input data, there must be auditable backups and documentation available for verification. She emphasized that this is practical and achievable in India, just as it is in Europe. Drawing from her experience in designing the gender section of the Green Ship Recycling Scorecard, she stressed that if India adopts such systems from the beginning, it will help establish a robust and credible framework. She affirmed that the necessary mechanisms and content for gender-based compliance are already well-developed and can be effectively implemented.

7.5. Shri Arun Sharma, Executive Chairman, IRS, highlighted that many ship recycling yards in Alang have already achieved Hong Kong Convention (HKC) compliance, with certification handled by bodies like the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS), Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (NK), and Bureau Veritas (BV). However, when it comes to yards in Bangladesh seeking compliance certification, he stressed that there will be no shortcuts—certification will follow strict protocols. A concern was raised that if IRS enforces stricter standards, yards may shift to other agencies for more lenient compliance certification. He also highlighted the speculative nature of the scrapping business, driven largely by wealthy cash buyers like Global Marketing Systems (GMS), who purchase ships and sell to yards based on market conditions. Post-HKC enforcement, he was uncertain if cash buyers would continue to engage with non-compliant yards, hinting that only India and Bangladesh will remain as viable destinations. He added that India has provided free training to yards on safety, gas-free certifications, and responsible dismantling practices. However, the EU's added restrictions—requiring not just HKC compliance but also EU-specific compliance—remain a challenge, with only a yard in Bahrain fully meeting both standards so far.

7.6. Shri Shantanu Kalita, Advisor, IPA, shared insights from a recent meeting in Copenhagen, where it was emphasized that reputed ship owners will only send vessels to certified yards, implying a stricter adherence to compliance and environmental standards. He also mentioned that a presentation during the meeting projected that approximately 15,000 ships may come up for scrapping in the next 10 years, a figure he wasn't sure was fully accurate but acknowledged as a significant opportunity for the ship recycling industry. Kalita concluded by saying that despite existing group-level challenges and a difficult transition phase, there is enough scrapping business for all major players—including India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan—if they maintain standards and collaborate. He raised a concern regarding the use of recycled steel in shipbuilding. He clarified that recycled steel is not necessarily required for rebuilding ships. The key issue lies in the purity and grade of the recycled steel—only if it meets the necessary metallurgical standards can it be used effectively, otherwise it may not be suitable for such high-grade applications.

7.7. Shri Ajithkumar Sukumaran (Chief Surveyor, DGS) acknowledged that India already has about 114 HKC certified yards, in contrast to Pakistan, where there's uncertainty around how certifications were issued. He implied that India is better positioned in terms of recognized, compliant ship recycling facilities. He emphasized that after 2026, IMO-compliant ships should ideally go only to certified ship recycling yards, such as those compliant with the Hong Kong Convention (HKC). However, he pointed out a gap between certification and actual compliance and stated that many yards may continue receiving ships despite lacking full compliance. He noted that while India maintains a strict ethical stand—only recognizing compliant yards—other countries may not follow the same rigor, and secondary verification processes may emerge from ship owners to ensure real-time compliance. He also highlighted that in the short term, there may be a temporary surge in business to non-compliant yards due to demand but in the long run, only compliant yards will sustain once stronger enforcement kicks in. The effectiveness of IMO's implementation and physical monitoring will be crucial. If countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan continue receiving ships despite non-compliance, India should raise concerns to ensure fair enforcement of international standards. He even explained that while the International Maritime Organization (IMO) provides guidelines for ship recycling through the Hong Kong Convention (HKC), it does not enforce these directly. Instead, the responsibility of implementation lies with the national governments, which in turn delegate it to state governments. At the state level, bodies such as the State Maritime Board determine how these guidelines are to be executed, including decisions on yard certification and compliance processes. He emphasized that although IMO states that only certified yards should be used, the actual enforcement varies across countries. Therefore, if countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan continue to receive ships despite non-compliance, India must raise this issue at the IMO level to ensure fairness for its compliant ship recycling yards. He also elaborated on the evolving challenges related to the quality and certification of steel derived from ship recycling. He explained that earlier, nearly 4 million tonnes (MT) of steel directly went for re-rolling without the need for melting or refining, making it cost-effective and widely accepted. However, post-2008, with the introduction of the Quality Control Order (QCO) specifying chemical compositions under IS 7566 and 7568, the traceability and homogeneity of such steel became a major concern. Since ship steel varies significantly across different sections—such as hull, deck, and bulk—it gets mixed during dismantling, making chemical uniformity difficult. This issue, combined with a lack of traceability, is why the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) hesitates to certify such steel. He pointed out that many firms have now shifted from re-rolling to induction melting—nearly 50 out of 120 units—addressing some of the traceability issues, though challenges around refining and purity persist. Induction furnaces help with homogenization but lack refining capabilities unless electric arc furnaces or refined furnaces are used, which are more expensive. He emphasized that integrating ship recycling into the carbon credit

system could offset some of the additional costs, with a potential saving of around ₹5 per tonne through carbon credit schemes. He suggested that India should adhere strictly to quality norms and compositional compliance and look for transitional support during the initial phase. He highlighted that companies like Tata Steel are shifting focus to scrap steel due to its cleaner production and carbon credit benefits, especially with the EU mandating green steel for imports. Even re-rolled steel can reduce carbon emissions by up to 70%, and furnace-based steel could offer even more reductions. Hence, he recommended setting a long-term policy direction that supports initial certification assistance but ultimately ensures compliance and quality to project a strong image in the international market. He highlighted that currently the ship recycling sector is not covered under the carbon credit system due to classification and scoring issues. He suggested that India should explore ways to monetize carbon credits specifically for ship recycling by projecting it under a dedicated carbon or ship credit scheme. This would help in legally integrating ship recycling into the broader energy and sustainability frameworks, enhancing its financial viability. He emphasized that any shipping construction going forward must be integrated with frameworks like the carbon credit scheme. He stressed the importance of grading shipyards and ensuring transparency in certification. With nearly 15 agencies currently issuing various certificates, and around 20–25 other approvals needed, he advocated for complete digitization of the process. This would help maintain a transparent system, where anyone could verify compliance with ease, making India's case stronger globally. He further added that ethical, value-added processes would place India a step ahead in international standards. On the topic of EUSRR (European Union Ship Recycling Regulations) certification, he mentioned that it may not stand as a long-term legal tool, especially once the Hong Kong Convention is fully operational. EUSRR, in its current form, serves as an initial verification of compliance, but over time it would need to be integrated with the Hong Kong Convention standards, which have been ratified by most countries. Therefore, while EUSRR is currently useful for demonstrating India's commitment to safe ship recycling—especially in areas where European compliance is not required—it will eventually evolve into part of a more globally accepted framework. He also highlighted that the utilization of recycled shipboard steel in India is currently low due to limited domestic demand. However, if India's shipbuilding industry grows and begins demanding more graded steel, the recycled steel from shipbreaking yards can be effectively channelled into this sector, leading to better resource utilization and economic value. He further emphasized that while adopting the European model of scoring and certification may not be necessary, India should develop its own transparent and customized system for evaluating compliance in ship recycling. He noted that currently, no agency has been formally identified in India to handle such scoring or certification, particularly regarding aspects like gender diversity. He stressed that the entire process must be digitized, where all data—including worker attendance and gender details—flows automatically into the system. The certification should come from a third-party agency, not a government body, similar to how social certifications are

issued in other sectors. A fully digital and transparent framework would ensure credibility and could strengthen India's position in global ship recycling practices.

9. Issues of Ship Acquisitions and Operations:

9.1. Shri Anil Laxman Devli, Chief Executive Officer, Indian National Shipowners Association, Mumbai stated that the Central Government imposes 5% GST on capital expenditure (CapEx) for vessel acquisition by Companies with Indian Flags when vessels enter Indian Waters for the first time. Though Indian companies acquiring such vessels can claim Input Tax Credit (ITC) against this IGST, such adjustments take time and the capital remains blocked till such time adjustment is complete. As there is no such tax on Foreign Flagged vessels entering for the first time, there is a strong case for its abolition on Indian Flagged Ships. He also the prolonged concerns surrounding operational expenditure (OpEx). The Indian Flagged Ships have to pay 5% tax on reverse charge basis for undergoing repairs abroad. In addition, custom duty is also payable on these repairs. As there is no such tax on Foreign Flagged vessels undergoing abroad, there is a strong case for their abolition on Indian Flagged Ships.

9.2. Shri Rakesh Singh, President, Indian Coastal Conference Shipping Association, Mumbai emphasized from a business perspective the challenges faced by shipowners when approaching banks for financing. Despite being willing to offer ships as collateral, banks remain hesitant due to the perception of regulatory ambiguity. This inconsistency makes bankers reluctant, demanding personal property as collateral instead of accepting ships or even business contracts like charter parties. He specifically raised concerns about bankers' hesitation to finance shipping due to the non-applicability of the SARFAESI Act to ships, aircrafts and agricultural lands and suggested that amendment to the Act could build confidence of bankers in India shipowners. On being asked whether exemptions are the reason ships alone aren't accepted as collateral, to which Singh responded that even when a ship is offered, banks prefer traditional collateral like real estate. He criticized that the role of various revenue regulations that complicate matters, including the 5% GST on ship acquisition. Singh suggested that these issues be formally included in the agenda, as they hinder the growth of shipping businesses and discourage investment in the sector.

10. Issues of Coastal Shipping:

10.1. Shri Rahul Modi, President, Coastal Containers Transporters Association raised concerns regarding the disconnect between existing incentive schemes and their actual benefit to the target stakeholders. Although the government has introduced several incentive measures—some of which are published online (and then taken back without implementing)—these schemes often do not reach the intended beneficiaries, resulting

in minimal impact. He highlighted that many cargo owners and vessel operators, particularly in the coastal and inland water transport sectors, are disengaged due to lack of tangible support. For instance, he pointed out that even though Indian Waterways is structurally prepared, the uptake is low because incentives are not translating into commercial viability. He cited examples such as the public sector undertaking SCI's current operations and recent vessel diversions by (Sci) & other players (to Exim trade from coastal), demonstrating that operators are still prioritizing international routes as these routes are offering better freight rates. Despite a clear and growing demand for coastal shipping—especially for essential goods like wheat transported from states like Punjab and Rajasthan to southern India—the high operational rates and lack of integrated planning continue to deter consistent coastal movement. He emphasized that the cargo demand exists, as shown during covid period where coastal traffic continued uninterrupted, even when other modes halted. However, he stressed the urgent need to address commercial viability through rationalized freight rates and effective incentive distribution. Reiterating his longstanding appeal to the Ministry, he urged for stronger alignment from the top down to the PSUs and called for active steps to make coastal shipping a sustainable and attractive option for cargo operators. He concluded by affirming that cargo availability is not the issue—rather, it is the inefficiencies in implementation and cost dynamics that need resolution. He also suggested that if cargo owners provide the Bill of Coastal Goods (BCG) in their name, it confirms their commitment to transformation through targeted schemes, and the incentive should be directly credited to their account. He mentioned that departments like FCI and Fertilizer are already aligned with this approach and offered to share relevant work done. He further added that this should be taken up formally by the NSB. He also highlighted the urgent need to focus on Ro-Ro (Roll-on/Roll-off) services as a key future demand for India. He pointed out that although small-scale Ro-Ro operations exist, the service has not been successful nationally. He cited the failure of earlier Ro-Ro models and explained that one major issue was the regulatory requirement that drivers travel separately from their vehicles, as current safety protocols restrict carrying drivers and cleaners beyond the certified capacity of a Ro-Ro vessel, which discouraged participation due to safety and trust concerns—especially when transporting high-value cargo. Mr. Modi mentioned that he had submitted a detailed report proposing a Ro-Ro route between Vadingar (vadinar) and Mundra, but the service has yet to commence due to pending government permissions, which he stressed are relatively simple to obtain. He raised the issue of GST on coastal shipping under the multimodal logistics framework, highlighting the inconsistency where multimodal services attract 12% GST even though coastal shipping when billed separately attracts a GST rate of 5%, as part of multimodal, ideally should be charged only 5%. He emphasized that in India, multimodal logistics includes not just coastal but also rail, (road) modes of transport, and imposing 12% GST reduces cost competitiveness. He also noted that with changes coming, the 12% rate might be revised to 5%, 8%. He clarified that although there was no specific multimodal category when

GST was introduced in 2017, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes later accepted the 12% rate for multimodal logistics in 2018 following various presentations made by CCTA on the matter. The discussion emphasized the need to realign GST rates to support coastal shipping's viability within the multimodal framework.

10.2. Shri Rakesh Singh, President, Indian Coastal Conference Shipping Association, Mumbai noted that despite India consuming 200 million metric tons of fossil fuel, coastal shipping accounts for less than 1% of that — as cited in the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) annual reports — and this minimal consumption could justify a low GST regime for fuel (HSD/MGO) used by coastal ships due to negligible revenue loss for the government and potential benefits of “modal shift”. He stressed that mandatory reporting under the Merchant Shipping Act provides reliable data on actual fuel consumption by Indian ships, supporting transparency and policy decisions. He also referenced a 2017 circular allowing fuel supply (IFO) with 5% GST to container vessels on Indian coast as a precedent, reinforcing that the coastal sector deserves tax relief to encourage Indian flagging and coastal cargo movement. He stated the MoPSW was in agreement with the supply of fuel to the coastal vessels (HSD/MGO) at 5% GST which forms the major of the operating cost.

He further shared that about 8–9 years ago, under the ministry's direction, ICC shipping association (ICCSA) commissioned a study by KPMG spending ₹15 lakhs. The report, which he is willing to share with NSB with his committee's permission, recommended an incentive to shippers amounting ₹5,00 per ton per kilometre. Although the report was appreciated by the ministry, it could not be taken forward and implemented. He stressed the importance of learning from previous efforts. He also highlighted the persistent disconnect between cargo and ships in coastal shipping, describing it as a the persistent chicken-and-egg situation regarding cargo ownership and the lack of strong connectivity between cargo owners and coastal shipping operators. He emphasized the need for continued awareness and education about the economic and environmental benefits of coastal shipping. He emphasized that coastal shipping in India should not be generalized and instead adopt the global model of short sea shipping, which involves smaller vessels (~400 TEUs) operating on shorter routes from regional hubs. Citing the Asian Development Bank (ADB) report, he recommended commissioning a study to identify vital routes, cargo availability, and appropriate ship sizes.

He also discussed regional cooperation under BIMSTEC and signing agreement and SOP with neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka (as was done with Bangladesh) to integrate trade between ECI and WCI.

10.3. Captain Tushar Pradhan, General Secretary, Maritime Union of India, Mumbai highlighted the importance of Ro-Ro (roll-on/roll-off) services for cargo movement in India, drawing parallels with countries like Japan and Korea where Ro-Ro forms a

backbone of their transport system. He emphasized that, despite challenges like tidal variations—especially along the Gujarat coast—India can adopt adaptable infrastructure such as floating pontoons, which allow ramps to be lowered for smooth cargo transfer regardless of tide. This approach can facilitate larger business operations, require less draft, and prove cost-effective and environmentally friendly. He further emphasized that although Ro-Ro services were once introduced with certain relaxations under special provisions—such as charter route allowances—they eventually failed due to multiple reasons, including financial viability. He mentioned that his team possesses detailed, first-hand insights into why the service failed. One of the critical challenges he highlighted was the inefficiency of first-mile and last-mile connectivity. Despite Ro-Ro's potential, only about 40% of cargo is currently handled effectively, as poor port entry and exit infrastructure hinder the seamless movement of vehicles and goods. Strengthening these connections is essential for making Ro-Ro a successful and sustainable mode of transport in India.

10.4. Shri Shantanu Kalita, Advisor, IPA remarked that within the BIMSTEC framework, there is now a strong network and personal rapport among the heads of organizations, which presents a valuable opportunity for collaboration. Reflecting on recent interactions, he acknowledged that it may have been a missed opportunity not to have invited representatives from the BIMSTEC region to the current discussions or events, as their participation could have added significant value and outcomes.

10.5. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB emphasized that while the government promotes the concept of “Ease of Doing Business,” there appears to be a gap between policy and practical implementation.

10.6. The Board observed that if regulatory barriers are hindering progress—particularly in initiatives like Ro-Ro services—then the DG Shipping must clearly identify and recommend the specific regulatory changes required.

Action: DG Shipping

11. Workers' issues in Ship Recycling Sector:

11.1. Shri Vidhyadhar Rane General Secretary Alang Sosiya Ship Recycling & General Workers' Association at Alang emphasized the need to view shipbuilding, ship repair, and ship recycling as one integrated industrial cycle. With the Hong Kong Convention coming into force from 26th June, he highlighted India's leading position in the ship recycling sector. He noted that workers have played a crucial role in this success, with earlier employment figures reaching over 60,000, though official data now reflects only

15,000. In fact, full capacity operations at Alang require about 25,000–30,000 workers, and over 100,000 individuals are employed in the downstream industries. Despite the sector being governed by multiple labour laws such as the Factories Act, Minimum Wages Act, ESI Act, and Contract Labour Act, the implementation of these laws remains weak. Workers face issues like lack of appointment letters, irregular employment terms, non-payment through banks, and absence of proper overtime or weekly off compensation. One critical concern raised was the absence of a gratuity system that considers a worker's cumulative service across various yards / plots. There is also no clarity regarding retirement age, pension benefits, or post-retirement support. He stressed the need for accident reporting transparency and called for the establishment of dedicated healthcare facilities and family accommodation policies. Currently, workers often lose their housing when their employment changes. He demanded improved attendance systems, issuance of wage slips, and legally mandated rest periods, lunchrooms, and welfare shelters. A proposal was also made to create a benevolent fund for workers' welfare. Further, he suggested that Alang should be officially designated as a recycling hub not only for ships but also for vehicles, with dedicated welfare systems modelled after the Mathadi Board in Maharashtra or the seafarers' welfare model. The downstream industry must be recognized and brought under regulation. He concluded by stating that Alang is no longer a hazardous site, with over 90% of the plots being green. He urged that for Alang to remain viable and progressive, the rights, safety, and upskilling of workers must be given utmost priority.

11.2. Ms. Sanjam Sahi Gupta, Director, Sitara Shipping Limited, Mumbai highlighted the example of the “neighbour quarters”, which include family rooms and multiple other facilities, describing it as a world-class setup that could serve as a model for others in the ship recycling industry. She noted that many employers, such as Cell Group and Priya Blue, already provide such accommodations.

11.3. Shri Ajithkumar Sukumaran (Chief Surveyor, DGS) emphasized the need for a formal policy on this matter. They pointed out that while accommodations may be available, there is fear among workers regarding job continuity. Workers worry that if their employment at a particular yard end, they may also lose their housing. Therefore, to ensure stability and security for workers and their families, it is essential to frame a clear and supportive accommodation policy.

11.4. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB stated that at NSB, the Board has adopted a dual approach: one to assess the direction in which the ministry's efforts are moving, and the other to understand stakeholder perspectives and implementation / policy gaps. He emphasized that wherever gaps are identified—where things are not working—those issues must be clearly communicated to the government, highlighting the specific handicaps that need to be addressed. He stressed the

importance of focusing not on what is already working, but on what more is required to effectively facilitate growth and development in the sector. He stated that the concerns raised regarding workers' welfare—such as lack of housing, appointment letters, and social security—are valid and should typically be addressed under existing laws.

11.5. The Board expressed surprise that these basic provisions are not being provided and asked the workers' representative to submit a formal representation. The Board agreed that the Directorate of Shipping should take up the matter with the Government of Gujarat to understand why these entitlements are being denied and whether the issue is specific to the nature of trade in Alang or due to other underlying reasons.

Action: DG Shipping

12. Issues of Indian Seafarers:

A. Difficulties in signing on / off:

12.1. Captain Tushar Pradhan, General Secretary, Maritime Union of India, Mumbai highlighted the continued challenges faced by seafarers in **signing on and off** at non-major ports, particularly in Gujarat. He informed that a detailed list of affected ports had already been shared with DDG (Crew) in DGS yet the issue remains unresolved. Referring to earlier practices, he suggested that in the absence of Immigration Check Posts (ICP), local Superintendents of Police (SPs) should be permitted to act as Verification Officers (VOs) for immigration-related formalities. He shared that this concern has been raised on several occasions and also brought to the attention of higher authorities, including the Directorate. However, there has been limited progress in streamlining the process. He pointed out that even in cases of emergency, seafarers face procedural delays, such as requiring special permissions to disembark, particularly in ports like Sikka. He noted that these constraints are causing concern among Indian seafarers, who possess valid documents like passports, Continuous Discharge Certificates (CDCs), and Seafarer's Identity Document (SIVs). He emphasized that when operating within port corridors, such stringent restrictions create unnecessary barriers for Indian nationals engaged in legitimate maritime work. He further mentioned that such delays are being closely observed internationally, and it is important that India's systems remain efficient and credible. He added that around 2 lakh Indian seafarers are employed by foreign shipping companies, and if such issues persist, it may affect the employability of Indian talent in global markets. He urged that the matter be treated on priority and be escalated to the highest level, so that a clear directive can be issued to state governments and concerned authorities, ensuring smoother procedures for Indian seafarers at all ports.

12.2. Shri Anil Laxman Devli CEO, INSA added that this ongoing issue is now becoming a serious concern for foreign employers of Indian seafarers. He mentioned that while

there remains a strong preference for hiring Indian seafarers, the government must acknowledge that this may not remain sustainable if procedural challenges persist. He emphasized that most of the employment for Indian seafarers comes from international companies, and unless smoother facilitation is ensured, India risks losing its standing in the global maritime workforce. He shared that they received three complaints regarding seafarers who have completed seven months of service and are now at the edge, needing to be signed off but unable to do so. He mentioned that unless such issues are formally raised through complaints, they often go unnoticed. Therefore, he emphasized the importance of communicating these concerns, suggesting that such cases can be conveyed to DDG (Crew) in DGS for further action.

12.3. Shri Rakesh Singh, President, ICCSA, highlighted that the grave issue around the requirement of immigration clearance to embark/disembark Indian crew from Indian ships in Indian ports. Despite consistent follow-ups, over the past 7–8 ~~working~~ years with the Directorate and the ministry, there has been no resolution or action from the concerned authorities. A number of non-major ports on the coast do not have Immigration check post (ICP), hence Indian crew is not allowed to embark/disembark from Indian ships and often need to sail the ship to some other convenient port just for crew change with huge unnecessary costs. He mentioned that an assurance was given previously to establish ICPs (Immigration Check Posts) at all ~~relevant~~ ports. However, he observed that due to complex requirements, this process may take a long time to materialize.

He further mentioned that Indian crew on Indian ships in Indian port shall not be subject to immigration checks/controls at all. To address security concerns, as a more practical approach, he suggested implementing an online system (immigration portal) where all movements of crew can be registered by the shipowners. As such, there is a requirement of reporting all “crew movement” to and from ships on e-governance system of the D G Shipping. He suggested, perhaps with a hint of exasperation, that if these challenges persist without resolution, they might as well halt ship deployment altogether highlighting the urgency and impact of the ongoing issues on operational continuity.

12.4. Shri Ajithkumar Sukumaran (Chief Surveyor, DGS) raised a fundamental concern regarding port operations and regulatory compliance. He emphasized that the issue needs to be viewed at a much larger level, especially when it comes to port-related activities and approvals. He pointed out that while all ports under the Ministry of Shipping or central government adhere to established requirements, there are over 200 ports under state governments that operate without any mandated oversight from the Ministry of Shipping. He stressed that opening or inaugurating a port should not be merely ceremonial—such ports must meet minimum infrastructure and security standards, especially considering the movement of trade and people. Highlighting a human rights concern, he noted that even an Indian citizen holding an Indian passport is sometimes

not allowed to enter Indian territory from a ship due to these regulatory gaps. Referring to the MMC incident, he mentioned how a port lacking the necessary facilities failed to handle a crisis, despite being the commercial beneficiary. Unlike many state ports, central government ports are expected to comply with the ISPS (International Ship and Port Facility Security) Code. He mentioned that once a port's security level is raised to Level 1, there is often no subsequent review or downgrade to Level 2, even when the heightened threat level no longer applies. This leads to unnecessary and prolonged enforcement of the highest level of restrictions, creating bottlenecks and operational challenges. He highlighted that most security-related notifications and orders are issued without clear timelines or revocation protocols, and these orders often originate from higher authorities but trickle down in a manner that causes confusion. For example, when a vessel arrives, the master (captain) is required to queue up and undergo repeated verification or integration checks, even when the purpose is routine and the procedures could be streamlined. He pointed out that the gangway crew, who are familiar with on-ground operations, as well as the master of the vessel, understand the impracticality of such rigid procedures. He emphasized that such procedural inefficiencies are the root cause of operational delays, especially when ships are interacting with Indian ports.

12.5. Shri Sushil Mansing Khopde, Additional Director General, Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) stated that the DG Shipping has also responded to concerns raised by NUSI, particularly around immigration-related challenges. These issues are especially prevalent at non-major ports, where local police or state governments manage immigration instead of central authorities. Gujarat was mentioned as a key area of concern, and the Chief Secretary of Gujarat as well as officials in MHA and the Bureau of Immigration have been informed. The Directorate is attempting to resolve these issues through consistent communication and coordination with both central and state authorities. The Additional Director General further elaborated on the challenges faced in Gujarat, despite the presence of major ports like Kandla, Bedi Bunder, Mundra, and Pipavav. He highlighted that due to procedural and jurisdictional complications, crew members often have to travel to Maharashtra for immigration clearances. However, upon arrival, they are frequently questioned or suspected of wrongdoing by port authorities unfamiliar with the situation. The root of the issue lies in the fact that only major ports are managed by the Bureau of Immigration, while others—like those around Sikka and Kandla—are handled by local police who lack adequate experience in maritime immigration matters. This has led to operational hurdles. To address the problem, the Directorate has reached out to the Chief Secretary of Gujarat and suggested that the industry could support by leading a delegation to strengthen the case. However, the MHA has previously issued a directive to all Chief Secretaries stating that non-major ports must be handled at the state level, and external intervention should be avoided. This directive is now a bottleneck. The DG Shipping is therefore requesting that the MHA to revisit or revise this letter, as only then can further coordination with Chief Secretaries or

DGPs be pursued effectively. The DG emphasized that efforts are ongoing, and such systemic corrections are necessary for smoother crew mobility and port access procedures. He shared further updates on the ongoing efforts to resolve crew immigration issues at non-major ports, particularly in Gujarat. He mentioned that the Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is overseeing this matter and that several letters have already been sent. He personally met the Additional Secretary at MHA to discuss the issue. AS MHA assured cooperation and mentioned the possibility of escalating the matter to the Minister. A recent meeting, held approximately 8 to 10 days ago and chaired by AS MHA, was attended by Mr. Meena, DDG (Crew) from the Directorate General of Shipping. In that meeting, the key issues were discussed, particularly concerning 12 to 13 ports where recurring problems have been identified, with Gujarat's Sikka and nearby ports being the most affected. He stated that a detailed letter is being finalized, listing all the problematic ports. The letter has already been drafted and is undergoing final verification to ensure that no port is overlooked. Once confirmed, the letter will be sent to the concerned authorities, after which further discussions will take place to push for necessary action and resolution. He acknowledged the concerns and affirmed the validity of the points raised. He stated that security requirements have intensified over the years—just like how airport security has evolved significantly in the last 30–40 years with baggage screening and ID verification becoming mandatory. These escalations in security protocols have occurred due to various incidents over time. In this context, certain issues have become more complicated. However, he assured that efforts are underway to resolve them, and the recent meeting and the forthcoming letter should help address the matter effectively.

B. Shore Leave:

12.6. Shri Sushil Mansing Khopde, Additional Director General, Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) informed that the issue of Shore Leave, is being directly monitored by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) at the Additional Secretary level. Meetings have been held, letters outlining the industry's requirements have been submitted but issue is unresolved.

C. E-Migrate:

12.7. Shri Sushil Mansing Khopde, Additional Director General, Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) informed that another critical matter pertains to the E-Migrate portal, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

D. Lack of Provident Fund (PF), Pension and Gratuity benefits for Indian seafarers working on foreign-flagged vessels:

12.8. Shri Milind Kandalgaokar, General Secretary, National Union of Seafarers of India, Mumbai raised a long-pending issue regarding the lack of Provident Fund (PF) and Gratuity benefits for Indian seafarers working on foreign-flagged vessels. While such benefits are mandated under Indian law for those working on Indian-flagged ships, nearly 80% of Indian seafarers are employed on foreign flags, where no such statutory provision exists. Despite multiple meetings with Trustees of Seamen's Provident Fund and discussions on a CAP amendment—forwarded to the government on 11 January 2020—no action has been taken. He emphasized the growing concern that foreign-flagged employers are not contributing to the Seamen's Provident Fund in India. He likened the situation to that of an employee in any office in India, who is entitled to PF upon service. Similarly, he stressed, Indian seafarers working on foreign ships should also be entitled to these benefits, even if the employer's office is located outside India. The core issue remains whether such enforcement is possible in absence of jurisdiction over foreign-based employers. He explained that a cap of ₹15,000 was proposed as the maximum wage for PF contribution for sailing seafarers, aligned with the limit fixed for shore-based workers under EPF guidelines. However, this was not accepted by foreign employers, who argued that seafarers are on duty 24x7. He emphasized that if this concern can be deliberated upon, suitable amendments to the bill could be made.

12.9. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB inquired about the status of the CAP amendment that was sent to the Ministry of Shipping in January 2021, seeking clarity on the follow-up actions taken since then.

12.10. Shri Anil Laxman Devli CEO, INSA informed the group that a draft amendment was prepared to include both pension and provident fund provisions under the Seamen's Provident Fund. He mentioned that this draft was developed after discussions with industry stakeholders, where a mutually agreed percentage was finalized. Although there were differing views initially, the final decision rests with the government. He stated that the draft amendment was sent from the Directorate General of Shipping to the Ministry of Shipping, and as per his understanding, it is currently pending with the Ministry. The amendment seeks to ensure that not only Indian shipowners, but also non-Indian shipowners are mandated to contribute to the fund. He mentioned that during the Seafarers' Provident Fund Organization's (SPFO's) Board meeting, they had met the Commissioner, who informed him that the draft amendment has already been sent to the Ministry. However, it appears to be pending or stuck at the Ministry's end. He stated that once the amendment is issued, all seafarers will be entitled to Provident Fund, Pension, and Gratuity—like shore-based employees. He further added that during the meeting with Shri Amitabh Kumar, the then DG Shipping, it was understood that the intention was to include Recruitment & Placement Services License (RPSL) and International Shipping Logistics (ISL) as employers under the meaning of the Act. He recommended that the

SPFO Board deliberate the issue carefully, noting that unclear or heavy provisions might discourage foreign employers from hiring Indian seafarers.

12.11. Shri Ajithkumar Sukumaran (Chief Surveyor, DGS) noted that Indian-flagged vessels should be considered an extension of Indian territory, and therefore the rights and benefits applicable to Indian employees must logically extend to seafarers working on these ships. He questioned whether seafarers employed through RPS (Recruiting and Placement Services) agencies could be treated as employees of those agencies for the purpose of ensuring benefits like Provident Fund and Gratuity. This suggestion was made in the context of identifying responsible entities for statutory contributions, especially when seafarers are deployed on foreign-flagged vessels via Indian intermediaries. He raised a concern regarding the definition of "employer" under the proposed amendment. He pointed out that if the RPSL (Recruiting and Placement Service Licensee) is designated as the employer, it would shift the burden and responsibility entirely onto them, thereby absolving the actual foreign shipowner of their obligations. He highlighted that RPSLs may not be financially equipped to handle such responsibilities, especially in terms of large payments or insurance-related claims. This structure could lead to exploitation or misuse, where RPSLs shut shop and re-emerge under a different name, while the real employer remains unaccountable. He clarified that while international conventions (IT) do not mandate specific structures, they do require that social security measures be in place for seafarers. The responsibility for implementing these measures lies with the flag state, i.e., the country under whose flag the ship is registered. For Indian-flagged ships, it is governed by Indian law ("law of the land"). He emphasized that the discussion around social security provisions—like Provident Fund, pension, and gratuity—should therefore differentiate between Indian-flagged and foreign-flagged ships, as the legal responsibilities vary accordingly. Referring to the Seamen's Provident Fund Act of 1966, he remarked that it is extremely outdated—having roots as far back as 1963—and does not reflect the realities of present-day seafaring. The Act, unlike EPF or PPF schemes, lacks clarity on mechanisms like salary deductions or voluntary enrolment. He stressed the need for meaningful amendments to the SPFO to bring it in line with current requirements and to ensure proper social security coverage for seafarers, especially those working under foreign flags.

12.12. Capt. Nitin Mukesh, Deputy Nautical Advisor, DG Shipping Mumbai stated that Seamen's Provident Fund Act (SPFO Act), 1966, which currently mandates a 12% contribution each from shipowners and seafarers, typically applicable to Indian flag ships or foreign ships under specific agreements. He noted that the draft amendment to the Act has been prepared, which proposes to extend applicability to all seafarers, including those on foreign flag vessels. The amendment also aims to incorporate gratuity and certain pension provisions. A concern raised by shipowners relates to the proposed 12% contribution, which they argue is aligned with land-based labour norms fixed by the

Ministry of Labour. The issue is pending further action from the SPFO Trustees and needs to be followed up. He stated that this matter can be actively followed up by the NSB to ensure that the Seamen's Provident Fund Act amendment bill is passed.

12.13. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB requested to state the legal position regarding enforceability of Indian guidelines on foreign employers who do not have a registered office in India. He questioned the legal admissibility of mandating such employers to follow Indian laws, unless it falls under an international convention framework. He questioned whether Indian seafarers employed on foreign-flagged ships—such as those registered in Greece—are receiving the social security benefits they are entitled to on which Shri Rakesh Singh pointed out that a large majority of Indian seafarers, nearly 90%, are working under what are known as Flags of Convenience. These are registries that often serve only a nominal purpose and may not rigorously enforce seafarer welfare provisions. He noted that the legal position has consistently been that seafarers form a special category of employees who are not governed by the typical industrial or labour laws applicable on land. This distinction is maintained deliberately to avoid the imposition of state and central labour laws that do not suit the maritime context. The Chairperson emphasized that any provision under the proposed amendment must be applied uniformly across the country. A separate dispensation exclusively for seafarers would not be readily acceptable. He added that if different standards are allowed, then a comparison will be drawn where land-based workers may also demand parity in pay scale with seafarers, which could lead to complications. He emphasized three fundamental principles that must guide any amendment to the SPFO Act or related legislative proposals. Firstly, he insisted that any change must be legally tenable it should override existing domestic laws unless expressly provided for. Secondly, no provision should contradict or supersede obligations under any international conventions to which India is a signatory. Thirdly, the intent behind any change must not result in harm or loss to the seafarers.

E. Declaring Seafarers as Keyworker:

12.14. Capt. Nitin Mukesh, Deputy Nautical Advisor, DG Shipping, Mumbai informed that the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024 which has already been introduced in Parliament, includes a specific provision based on prior demands. This provision states that "**seafarers shall be deemed as key workers for the purpose of facilitation of safe and unhindered movement for embarking or disembarking a vessel, and whenever necessary, for shore-based medical treatment.**" He added that once the Act is passed, further action would be required from the Ministry of Labour on this matter.

F. Abandonment of seafarers:

12.15. Shri Milind Kandalgaokar, General Secretary, National Union of Seafarers of India, Mumbai raised the concern that abandonment of seafarers is on the rise and questioned whether this is a routine issue or one that the NSB should actively intervene.

12.16. Shri Rakesh Singh, President, ICCSA recalled that the matter was discussed in the last MLC compliance board meeting, where it was highlighted that some RPS agents adopt various unscrupulous means to evade responsibility including shutting down their businesses and reopening under new names. He noted that under the MS Act, there is insufficient manpower to take strong action, and hence suggested exploring the applicability of invoking human trafficking provisions. The DG had agreed to consult legal experts on this matter, and it is currently being investigated.

G. Officers in captivity:

12.17. Captain Tushar Pradhan, General Secretary, Maritime Union of India, Mumbai shared a concerning case discussed recently in an MLC meeting, involving a third officer held captive nearly five years ago in Tanzania. Despite there being no clear jurisdiction, the judge claimed authority based on the vessel being in their EEZ. Although the case was forwarded, especially through efforts of DDG (crew) of DGS, no significant progress has been made. The officer's family continues to suffer emotionally and financially, with the seafarer's child having grown from six months to six years without seeing his father. The family still approaches the authorities, desperate for support, often without even the chance to speak to their loved one. He emphasized that such cases are initially taken up but tend to stagnate afterward, calling for greater sensitization and follow-through in handling such matters. He highlighted that China adopts a very proactive approach—pressuring foreign governments and even establishing embassies wherever needed to ensure the release of their nationals. This reflects the seriousness with which they protect their citizens abroad.

12.18. Shri Sushil Mansing Khopde, Additional Director General, Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) shared a recent example where a seafarer was brought back from Italy after being held in jail there. Following sustained efforts over a period of six months to a year, the individual was finally transferred to an Indian jail.

H. Seafarer taxation:

12.19. Captain Tushar Pradhan, General Secretary, Maritime Union of India, Mumbai pointed out that Indian seafarers working on Indian-flagged ships in coastal waters are

subject to income tax and TDS. As a result, many of them prefer taking up jobs on foreign ships, which offer tax exemptions, instead of serving on Indian coastal vessels. He explained that earlier, companies had to withhold and deposit TDS for Indian seafarers if they completed 183 days in India. However, a directive was later issued (after discussions with the CBDT Chairman) allowing companies to withhold but not deposit the tax until the seafarer crossed the 183-day limit. If the seafarer remained outside India for over 183 days (qualifying as NRI), the withheld tax could be refunded by the company. This policy helped retain seafarers and was implemented in companies like Great Eastern and India Steamship. However, issues persisted for coastal vessels, where Indian officers had to be paid higher salaries to compensate for the tax deductions. Even with those relaxations, seafarers started demanding more compensation.

12.20. Shri Anil Laxman Devli CEO INSA raised concerns over the taxation disparity that exists between Indian and foreign shipping companies, which directly impacts Indian seafarers' employment choices. He pointed out that even if an Indian seafarer is serving on a foreign flagship operating along the Indian coast, the foreign employer is not mandated to deduct tax at source. However, Indian companies like SCI are required to deduct TDS from the seafarer's salary, irrespective of the employee's NRI status or place of operation. He illustrated how this becomes a deciding factor for many seafarers. For example, if an Indian company deducts ₹30 from a ₹100 salary as tax, the employee only receives ₹70 upfront. Even though the employee may later claim a refund through ITR and recover some amount, the immediate financial burden makes working for a foreign company—which pays the full ₹100 without deduction—more attractive. He emphasized that this issue is not about coastal or international waters but lies in the inconsistent enforcement of withholding tax provisions. The law mandates Indian companies to withhold tax, but the same cannot be enforced on foreign companies like Maersk, CMA, or Dynacom. As a result, Indian companies are at a competitive disadvantage even on Indian routes. He concluded that unless this structural taxation policy is reformed, Indian seafarers will continue to prefer foreign employers. He added that the current TDS regime creates unfair disadvantages. Indian companies must deduct around 30% TDS from salaries, while foreign companies hiring Indians on similar ships are not subject to this. This results in seafarers choosing foreign companies over Indian ones. He clarified that they are not asking for full tax exemption, just a uniform and reduced TDS rate. They proposed 5% TDS under Section 192J of the Income Tax Act, which allows the government to fix a lower TDS rate without amending the law—just as is done for dividends or contractor payments. The demand is not for a policy amendment, but for persuasion from the Finance Ministry to enforce this lower TDS rate, making Indian companies more competitive and helping retain talent. He highlighted that while the Ministry is supportive and actively pushing for the reduction in TDS for Indian seafarers, the actual decision-making meetings with CBDT lack proper industry representation. He stressed that although senior officials like RS are involved, officers representing the trade

or technical experts are not included in discussions. As a result, important issues like TDS reduction are often dismissed without proper debate or understanding. He likened it to handling an engineering issue without bringing an engineer to the table—emphasizing the need to involve trade experts in such policy conversations for effective advocacy. With subsequent changes in Revenue Secretaries (RS), including the latest one they have met, he emphasized that although the ministry supports their case, more active follow-up and discussions are needed to see it through. He also referred to a Rakesh Mohan Committee formed in the late '90s, which proposed two reforms: tonnage tax and taxation relief for Indian seafarers. The then FM only accepted tonnage tax but the issue concerning seafarer taxation still remains unresolved even after all these years.

I. Shortage of NCV (Near Coastal Voyage) staff:

12.22. Captain Tushar Pradhan, General Secretary, Maritime Union of India, Mumbai raised the issue of a shortage of NCV (Near Coastal Voyage) staff, particularly at the chief and mid-level ranks. He noted that the current requirement of 18 months sea time for certification is proving to be a hurdle. Reducing this to 12 months would benefit coastal navigators and help fill the staffing gap. A joint representation on this matter will be made by Capt. Tushar Pradhan GS MUI and Shri Anil Laxman Devli CEO INSA to the Directorate General of Shipping.

12.23. Shri Rakesh Singh President ICCSA acknowledged that there are new employment opportunities emerging abroad—such as in Bangkok, where Indian officers are being welcomed. However, he emphasized that within India, the supply of NCV officers for Indian ships remains seriously inadequate for variety of reasons. He proposed allowing Indian nationals holding foreign Certificates of Competency (CoCs) to temporarily serve on Indian coastal ships as an interim solution. He suggested that interim measures, possibly for one year, should be considered while long-term solutions are implemented. The lack of accommodation space on coastal is a significant bottleneck in increasing training slots. He raised the issue of a previous DGS circular allowing hybrid training for engineers and emphasized that this must be extended to nautical side as well.

12.24. Shri Ajithkumar Sukuraman Chief Surveyor DGS initiated the discussion by highlighting the persistent shortage of trained officers to man Indian ships, particularly in coastal operations. He pointed out that despite the Directorate General of Shipping having provided several frameworks and proposals, the maritime industry has not taken sufficient initiative to implement them effectively. He further suggested that companies should be encouraged to recruit ITI-trained individuals as ratings and support them through on-the-job training. Over a period of one or two years, these individuals could become certified and potentially transition into other maritime roles, including forward

migration. However, he cautioned that a key gap remains in the industry's willingness to invest in and commit to this foundational capacity-building. He responded by pointing out the lack of adequate training sponsorships from the industry itself. He cited an alarming statistic—only 23 candidates appeared for the NWQ exam last year—which underscores the scale of disengagement in building crew capacity. He urged the shipping companies to step up efforts in sponsoring and supporting trainees. He reiterated that while the DG Shipping has provided mechanisms and pathways, the onus lies with the maritime industry to actively support and invest in training programs. Without industry participation, resolving the crew shortage—especially for coastal shipping—will remain a long-term challenge. He emphasized during the seafarer session that a major issue lies in onboard training, particularly due to limitations in accommodation on ships. He noted that although companies may have multiple ships, they are still not employing enough trained seafarers, which reflects the broader capacity constraints in the sector. He pointed out that despite efforts in meetings like C4, many candidates still struggle to get jobs after certification, which discourages others from entering the profession. He added that a hybrid training model—where simulator-based training can partially substitute sea time—is one of the only practical solutions. However, this would require investment in quality simulators and infrastructure. He noted that exams like Chief Engineer or Master cannot be cleared without building foundational capacity, and a structured training mechanism must be created. If hybrid training is to be implemented seriously, then accommodation, resources, and investment must follow. A formal representation advocating for relationship-based and simulator-supported training programs will be made to address this need.

12.25. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson raised a critical question on the practicality of such interim measures. He stressed the importance of ensuring that any temporary solutions do not dilute certification standards and suggested that capacity-building and structured training should remain the focus.

J. Constitution of the National Welfare Board for Seafarers [NWBS]:

12.26. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB noted that it seems there are numerous issues faced by seafarers and there is a need for a dedicated forum like National Welfare Board for Seafarers [NWBS] which should be the appropriate platform to address them such issues. NWBS is a statutory board to be constituted under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act 1958, like the National Shipping Board, but it is not in existence now. He enquired for the reasons why it has not been formed.

12.27. Shri Rahul Modi, President, Coastal Containers Transporters Association clarified that the National Welfare Board for Seafarers was officially gazetted in 1963,

confirming its formal constitution and legal authority. He mentioned the “**National Welfare Board for Seafarers Rules**” define the composition and authority of the board,

12.28. Captain Nitin Mukesh, Deputy Nautical Advisor, DG Shipping Mumbai, explained that under Section 218, the Central Government may, at its discretion, constitute a National Welfare Board for Seafarers through an official gazette notification. The board’s role would be to advise on welfare measures for seafarers, including establishing facilities like hostels, hospitals, canteens, and libraries, as well as ensuring medical and educational support. He emphasized that the government also needs to frame rules for the board’s composition and functioning, with the Minister serving as its Chair.

12.29. Mr. Anil Devli CEO INSA added that once this board is constituted, it would be a significant development.

K. Issues of Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity in Maritime Sector:

12.30. Ms. Sanjam Sahi Gupta, Director, Sitara Shipping Limited, Mumbai mentioned her proposal for incorporating gender inclusion in school and college curricula and welcomed feedback on the same. She has already begun work on children’s books inspired by real-life women role models in the maritime sector. She emphasized three key focus areas: documenting case studies of best practices in companies to avoid reinventing the wheel, empowering women through technology and AI to prepare for the future of work, and launching leadership initiatives that push top management to set measurable targets for employing women—especially in senior leadership roles. She also proposed hosting CEO roundtables with major shipping companies to discuss and commit to increasing women’s representation in decision-making roles. She concluded by inviting feedback from attendees.

L. Training policy, education, and research initiatives in Maritime Sector:

12.31. Prof. Murali K from IIT Madras Chennai explained the delay in preparing and sharing the required reports of his existing sub group, attributing it to his overseas travel and the retirement of the IMU subcommittee member during that period, which necessitated the appointment of a new member. Additionally, he mentioned the emergence of two important documents—one from the Ministry and another from the Navik Cell—pertaining to training policy, education, and research initiatives. He stated that these documents are needed to be reconciled, particularly since the Navik Cell’s document is a recent development. Given these factors, he requested more time to reconstitute the committee and present a consolidated report to the board.

13. Indian Representation in the IMO:

13.1. The members discussed India's representation at the IMO, noting a recent development where the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has approved the posting of a director-level officer at the IMO. This officer will serve a three-year tenure and will be posted in the Indian High Commission, similar to how other UN organizations and defence attachés operate. This move was considered a major achievement in strengthening India's presence at the international maritime platform.

14. Creation of New Sub Group on "Maritime Emergency Preparedness and Response":

14.1. Indian Coastal Guards' DIG Pankaj Verma raised serious national concerns regarding maritime safety, particularly in the context of recurring incidents during the monsoon season, citing over 50 casualties in the past 15 years. While acknowledging the proactive efforts of DG Shipping, he highlighted key capacity gaps such as the unavailability of ocean-going tugs with high bollard pull, firefighting-capable vessels, designated ports of refuge, and deep-sea salvage capabilities, including diving, ROVs, and wreck removal equipment. He also flagged critical policy shortcomings, notably the absence of domestic legislation to support international conventions like International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness 1990 [OPRC 90] and the newly approved Contingency Plan for Hazardous & Noxious Substances [HNS contingency plan]. Furthermore, he emphasized the lack of pre-contractual oil spill response agreements for foreign ships, causing delays of several weeks in professional salvage response. DIG Verma recalled that the 17th Maritime States Development Council [MSDC] in 2019 had agreed to set up regional oil spill response centres, but no progress has been made since then. He raised serious concerns regarding the lack of tangible outcomes from repeated discussions and agreements on maritime emergency preparedness. He pointed out that while there is unanimous agreement on the need for Emergency Towing Vessels (ETVs), tugs, and designated ports of refuge, in practice these facilities are consistently denied. Even when vessels request refuge for emergency repairs, ports often refuse shelter. Similarly, despite acknowledging the need for tug support during maritime emergencies, ports do not provide these services. He highlighted that although salvage services are rendered during emergencies, there are no provisions in domestic legislation to claim compensation for environmental damage, fisheries losses, or other consequential impacts, even though India is a signatory to relevant IMO conventions. This legal gap makes post-incident recovery difficult. Therefore, he strongly recommended the creation of a dedicated subgroup to address these persistent operational and policy issues, and suggested that the resulting recommendations should be made binding on all relevant stakeholders, including ports, shipping companies, and government agencies.

14.2. Shri Anil Devli CEO INSA emphasized the critical gaps in maritime emergency assets, echoing concerns raised by the Indian Coast Guard and Navy. He specifically referred to the non-availability of ROVs (Remotely Operated Vehicles) and specialized vessels necessary for effective salvage and emergency response operations. He noted that although some member companies possess such assets, they are not always accessible during emergencies. The core challenge, he explained, is commercial viability—Indian companies are willing to invest, but without consistent demand (i.e., in the absence of accidents), the assets lie idle and underutilized, leading to financial loss. He suggested that some internal assessments and evaluations would be carried out before seeking support from the Directorate General of Shipping and ICG. Lastly, he proposed that a structured salvage strategy and financial support mechanism should be developed and submitted to the government, possibly drawing lessons from how other countries incentivize and sustain such capabilities.

14.3. Shri Ajithkumar Sukuraman CS DGS acknowledged the pressing concerns raised by the Coast Guard and industry representatives regarding the lack of emergency and salvage assets, especially ROVs and ocean-going tugs. He emphasized the need for a clear distinction between emergency response and salvage operations, pointing out that while salvage can be treated as a business opportunity, emergency response is a sovereign responsibility and must be institutionalized. Referring to recent incidents like the MSC vessel case, he highlighted the unpreparedness of ports, some of which lacked even a single tug to assist in an emergency. He supported the idea of issuing mandates requiring ports handling significant cargo volumes to maintain at least one ocean-going tug. Additionally, he mentioned that foreign ports ensure salvage readiness by requiring ships to have agreements with designated salvage agencies, a model India could explore. He further stressed the importance of judicious utilization of assets and suggested that while each marine casualty is unique, proactive infrastructure and policy mechanisms must be in place. He concluded by supporting the Coast Guard's suggestion to document their field-level observations, which could then be supplemented by the Directorate for a comprehensive solution. He emphasized that the most effective way to address maritime incidents is through prevention, and this can be achieved by strengthening the Port State Control (PSC) mechanism. He noted that while India does have a PSC regime in place, it is currently inadequate due to limited manpower and outdated norms, some dating back to the 1940s. The existing system was not designed to handle the current volume and complexity of global maritime traffic, making it necessary to augment both the capacity and effectiveness of PSC operations. He shared that a proposal for this enhancement is already under consideration. Additionally, he mentioned that the Nautical Wing has already conducted two to three meetings and compiled relevant materials, which can be shared and reviewed collectively to create a comprehensive protocol. This, he suggested, would serve as a collaborative and practical approach to strengthen maritime emergency preparedness and response.

14.4. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB emphasized the need for a collaborative effort between the Indian Coast Guard, Navy, INSA, IPA and Directorate General of Shipping to develop a standard protocol for addressing maritime emergencies and salvage operations. He suggested forming a sub group to make structured recommendations to the government, particularly focusing on mandatory requirements for ports based on traffic volumes, such as the availability of rescue and salvage facilities. He emphasized that the subgroup should not only highlight challenges but also propose concrete solutions and clearly articulate the expectations from the government to effectively resolve these issues. This subgroup would function as an open-ended platform where all identified issues—including those related to the availability of tugs, ports of refuge, environmental damage claims, and emergency preparedness—can be raised and deliberated upon. Highlighting the critical role of the Indian Coast Guard as the first responder, he acknowledged their capital constraints and proposed exploring ways to optimize and share existing resources to create a more robust and responsive emergency infrastructure across major ports.

14.5. The Board agreed for the formation of a dedicated new subgroup on “Maritime Emergency Preparedness and Response” comprising representatives from the Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy, Directorate General of Shipping, INSA, IPA and other relevant stakeholders. The Secretary NSB was advised to notify the sub group.

Action: Secretary NSB

15. Creation of a new sub group on “Authentic documentation of India’s Maritime Heritage & Legacy”:

15.1. Shri Shantanu Kalita Advisor IPA emphasized the importance of conducting a thorough study regarding authentic documentation of India’s Maritime Heritage & Legacy. Currently, the important historical milestones in Indian Maritime history are based on the milestones achieved by the Britishers in Modern Indian History. One such example is celebration of “National Maritime Day” which is celebrated on April 15th every year to commemorate the historic Voyage of SS Loyalty in 1919 marking the country’s entry into International Shipping. This is just belittling the rich Indian Culture & Maritime Legacy. He stressed that the historical milestones since the days of Indus / Harrapan Civilization in past thousands of years of Indian Maritime History needs to be documented by conducting a thorough study under the guidance of the experts. He mentioned that the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal Gujrat already has a team of Maritime historians who could be involved and Indian Maritime University could be mandated to carry out such study through its researchers under the expert guidance of Maritime Historians. The VC IMU was identified as a key person to lead this effort.

15.2. The Board agreed that a sub group under VC IMU may be set up to take this study forward in collaboration with researchers of IMU and Maritime Historians currently involved in setting up of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal. The Secretary NSB was advised to notify the sub group.

Action: Secretary NSB

16. Development of Maritime Single Window:

16.1. Captain Nitin Mukesh, Deputy Nautical Advisor, DG Shipping Mumbai, provided a detailed update on the status and challenges of the Maritime Single Window (MSW) system. He mentioned that MSW 1.0 has been officially launched and is operational from 1st January 2024, with ports and shipping agents already reporting through it. However, the major challenge lies in the lack of integration with key stakeholders such as Customs and Immigration. While the 85 Exim ports and the Port Health Organisation (PHO) have been onboarded, Customs and Immigration are yet to be integrated. This disconnection is leading to the system's partial failure, as other entities involved in the pre-arrival process are not receiving or acting upon the data being submitted. He emphasized that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) needs to take this matter forward since Customs has expressed that the MSW portal must be compatible with their internal systems and data requirements. Despite recent training, the onboarding process remains under consideration at the Ministry level. Shri Mukesh added that the MSW 2.0 version is in development to address these gaps.

16.2. In response, **Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB** noted that although the portal has been launched, the financial and integration issues persist—particularly the non-integration of Customs.

16.3. The Board observed that the working group dealing with the Maritime Single Window will continue its efforts until all critical stakeholders are fully onboarded and the system is made fully operational. The Secretary NSB was advised to notify continuation of the sub group.

Action: Secretary NSB

17. Rationalization of existing Sub Groups & Formation of new sub groups:

17.1. Shri Rakesh Singh President ICCSA highlighted that the overall development of shipping is a vast domain encompassing numerous critical fields such as financing,) operational expenditure (OpEx), manpower and training, regulatory regime, shipbuilding, ship repair, cargo connect, supply of equipment, spares, etc. He emphasized that aspects like green fuel are substantial topics in themselves and merit focused attention.

He questioned whether elements like ship building, ship repairs, utilization of 2nd hand (scrap) steel utilization, etc. should be treated as separate subgroups or integrated under the broader shipping development subgroup, considering their scale and relevance. He highlighted that the agenda of seafarers goes beyond just the onboarding hurdles related to Customs and Immigration. He emphasized that the broader objective is to increase employment of Indian nationals on Indian/foreign tonnage, which is a key priority area for the Ministry. Given the distinct nature of the employment issue, involving different stakeholders such as FOSMA and MASA, he suggested treating it as a separate topic.

17.2. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB then proposed separating the shipping issues and creating a distinct subgroup focused specifically on seafarers, given the complexity and unique stakeholder involvement in that area. He suggested that all existing subgroups should be formally closed, as some have achieved their objectives while many others have remained inactive with no tangible outputs. He requested all members to share any reports or documents they may possess from these subgroups so that the Secretary NSB can compile and upload them on the official website. This would ensure transparency, centralized access to the information, and help preserve the institutional knowledge generated through the subgroup activities. He emphasized the significance of this meeting, stating that it follows the preliminary meeting held previously on 30/05/2025. He stated that this meeting is crucial as it will outline the roadmap for the NSB for the next two years determining the expected outcomes of the board within that timeframe. The discussions in the meeting will include review of relevance of the subgroups that were established by the predecessor Boards, evaluating whether modifications / deletions are required in them or altogether new subgroups need be created to facilitate effective planning and achievement of goals over the next two years.

17.3. The Board deliberated on the rationalization of each of the existing subgroups as under.

Sub Group No	Details of subgroup	Action Proposed
1	Shipping Policy and Merchant Shipping Act Subgroup Composition Shri Rajesh Kumar Sinha, AS Shipping - Convener Shri Mandeep Singh Randhawa, Dir Shipping, Shri Dipesh Shah, MD IFSCA	To be closed as the draft bills have been formulated.

	Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA DMD EXIM Bank Shri Prashant Seth, FIEO	
2	Increases in Indian Tonnage Subgroup Composition: Shri. Anil Devli, CEO INSA - Convener Shri Madhu S Nair, CMD, CSL Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA Shri Rahul Modi, President, CCTA Shri Prashant Seth, FIEO DMD EXIM Bank Shri Dipesh Shah, MD, IFSCA	The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Making Indian Shipping Sector Viable”
3	Multimodal Transportation Subgroup Composition Shri. Shantanu Bhadkamkar, AMTOI - Convener Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA Shri Prashant Seth, FIEO Shri Rahul Modi, President, CCTA Shri Arun Sharma, IRS Member CONCOR	The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Making Indian Shipping Sector Viable”
4	Increase in Employment of Seafarers, seafarer welfare and other issues related to seafarer Subgroup Composition Additional DG (Shipping)– Convener Capt. Tushar Pradhan, MUI Shri Milind Kandalgaonkar, NUSI Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA Shri Ashish Kumar Bose, MD IPA	The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Creating a pool of skilled & Employable Manpower for Shipping Sector that is based on diversity, equity & Inclusivity and addressing Seafarer Welfare issues”
5	Promotion of Ship Building and Making India Global hub for Manufacturing of Green Tugs, Port/Pilot crafts, Coastal vessels and Ferries Subgroup Composition: Shri. Madhu S Nair, CMD CSL - Convener Shri Pradeep Sudhakar, Dy. CSS DGS Shri Arun Sharma, MD IRS	The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Making Indian Shipping Sector Viable”

	<p>Shri Praveen Kumar Singh, VOCPT Tuticorin</p> <p>Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA</p> <p>Member from IPA, Operators- Adani, Polestar</p> <p>Member from IMDA</p> <p>Member from Engine Maker (MAN), Cummins</p> <p>Dr. Raju, NTCPW</p> <p>Member from NCoEGPS</p>	
6	<p>Promotion of Energy Efficient and Low-cost Coastal Shipping for Passenger and Freight.</p> <p>Subgroup Composition</p> <p>Dr. P Raut DDG DGS - Convener</p> <p>Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA</p> <p>Shri Rahul Modi, President, CCTA</p> <p>Shri ShrikantItagi,Chowgule Shipyard</p> <p>Shri Shantanu Bhadkamkar— AMTOI</p> <p>Shri Arun Sharma, MD IRS</p> <p>Member from IWAI</p> <p>Member from FCI</p> <p>Member from SCI</p>	<p>The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Making Indian Shipping Sector Viable”</p>
7	<p>Creation of National Single portal for Pre arrival Notification.</p> <p>Subgroup Composition</p> <p>Additional DG (Shipping) – Convener</p> <p>Capt Nitin Mukesh, Dy NA, DG Shipping</p> <p>Dr. Arvind Bhisikar, IPA</p> <p>Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA</p> <p>Member from CDAC</p> <p>Commandant Harshvardhan, Indian NAVY</p> <p>Shri Pankaj Verma, DIG ICG</p>	<p>The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Creating an Integrated National Single Maritime Window that is Globally compliant”</p>
8	<p>Transition to IMO’s Maritime Single Window by 01/01/2024 and Digital Enablement</p> <p>Shri. Rajiv Jalota, Chairman IPA – Convener, ikas Narwal, MD IPAMD IPA,</p>	<p>The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Creating an Integrated National Single Maritime Window that is Globally compliant”</p>

	<p>Shri Prashant Manchalwar, DDG Shipping, Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA Dy Chairman of all Major Ports Member from CUSTOMS, Shri Shantanu Bhadkamkar— AMTOI</p>	
9	<p>Development of Galathea Bay as Shipping transshipment hub for BIMSTEC Countries. Subgroup Composition DG Shipping - Convener Chairman, Kolkata Port Authority Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA Shri Rahul Modi, President, CCTA Shri Shantanu Bhadkamkar, AMTOI Member from IWAI Dy. Chairmans of Paradip, Tuticorin, Chennai, Vishkhapatnam Ports. Member from EXIM Bank Member from Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity</p>	<p>The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Making India a Regional Transhipment Hub”</p>
10	<p>Partner Institutions for developing Human Resources, Training, Automation, Digitalization and Research Subgroup Composition Dr. K Murali, IIT Chennai - Convener Dr Raju NTCPW Member from IMU Member from DGS handling Training Member from Training Institute</p>	<p>The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Creating a pool of skilled & Employable Manpower for Shipping Sector that is based on diversity, equity & Inclusivity and addressing Seafarer Welfare issues”</p>
11	<p>Review of Two Pre independence Acts viz ‘Indian Bill of Lading Act 1856’ and ‘Carriage of Goods by Sea Act 1925 Additional DG (Shipping)- Convener Shri Ash Mohomad, DDG, DG Shipping - Co-Convener Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA Shri Shantanu Bhadkamkar, AMTOI Shri Rahul Modi, President, CCTA</p>	<p>Act is amended as on date.</p>

	<p>Shri Prashant Seth, FIEO Member from DPIIT Member from Customs Member from FICCI Member from CII Member from ASSOCHAM Member from CSLA Member from Freight Forwarders Association Member from IPA Member from NALSAR</p>	
12	<p>Container Tracking and Tracing System Shri Prashant Seth, FIEO-Convener Shri Vikas Narwal, MD IPA Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA Shri Shantanu Bhadkamkar, AMTOI Shri Rahul Modi, President, CCTA Member from NICDC Logistics Data Services Ltd. Member from Customs Member from CSLA Member from CONCOR</p>	<p>The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Creating an Integrated National Single Maritime Window that is Globally compliant”</p>
13	<p>Regional Maritime Transport Grid Subgroup Composition Shri Sanjay Bandopadhyaya Convener Shri. Ratendra Raman, Chairman, Kolkata Port, Co-Convener DDG Coastal, DG Shipping Shri Anil Devli, CEO INSA Shri Aditya Suklikar, ICCSA Shri Rahul Modi, President, CCTA Shri. S Bhattacharjee CMEC Member from Customs Member from Immigration</p>	<p>The work is ongoing and it is to be merged under a larger Sub Group “Making India a Regional Transhipment Hub”</p>

17.3.1. The Board agreed to **close** the following sub groups as the draft bills on repeal of the acts under reference and new draft bills in their place have already been introduced in the Parliament.

- Sub Group 1 on “Shipping Policy and Merchant Shipping Act”
- Sub Group 11 on “Review of Two Pre Independence Acts viz ‘Indian Bill of Lading Act 1856’ and ‘Carriage of Goods by Sea Act 1925’”

17.3.2. The Board agreed to club following sub groups and name as Sub Group on **“Making the Indian Shipping Sector Viable”**

- Sub Group 2 on “Increase in Indian Tonnage”
- Sub Group 3 on “Multimodal Transportation”
- Sub Group 5 on “Promotion of Ship Building and Making India a Global hub for Manufacturing of Green Tugs, Port/Pilot Craft, Coastal Vessels and Ferries”
- Sub Group 6 on “Promotion of energy efficient and low-cost coastal shipping for passenger and freight”
- Sub Group 12 on “Container Tracking and Tracing Systems”

The new Sub Group will have following aspects:

- Competitive Ship Building
- Competitive Ship Repairs
- Competitive Ship Recycling
- Competitive Indian Ship Flagging
- Promoting Indian Ship Classification
- Developing Green Ecosystem in Shipping
- Promotion of Merchant & Coastal Cargo (Liquid, Bulk, Container etc.) & passenger Traffic
- Promotion of Coastal Shipping
- Promotion of Waterways infrastructure, Waterways operations & Waterways efficiency
- Promotion of Maritime Tourism
- Port infrastructure, Port operations & Port efficiency
- Container Tracking and Tracing Systems

17.3.3. The Board agreed to club following sub groups and name as Subgroup on **“Creating a pool of skilled & Employable Manpower for Shipping Sector that is based on diversity, equity & Inclusivity and addressing Seafarer Welfare issues”**

- Sub Group 4 on “Increase in Employment of seafarers, seafarer welfare and other issues related to seafarer”
- Sub Group 10 on **“Partner Institutions for developing Human Resources, Training, Automation, Digitalization and Research”**

The new Sub Group will have following verticals:

- Making available skilled & Employable Manpower for Ship Building, Ship Repairs & Recycling

- Making available skilled & Employable Manpower for Merchant & Coastal Shipping
- Making available skilled & Employable Manpower for Waterways operations
- Making available skilled & Employable Manpower for Maritime Tourism
- Making available skilled & Employable Manpower for Port operations
- Promoting Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity in skilled & Employable Manpower in the Shipping Sector
- Building partnerships with Institutions for developing Human resource, Training, Automation, Digitization and Research specific to Shipping sector
- Gender diversity and matters related to ship recycling industry workers

17.3.4. The Board agreed to club following sub groups and name as Sub Group on **“Creating an Integrated National Single Maritime Window that is Globally compliant”**

- Sub Group 7 on “Creation of National Single Portal for Pre Arrival Notification”
- Sub Group 8 on “Transition to IMO’s Maritime Single Window by 01/01/2024 and Digital Enablement”

The new Sub Group will have following verticals:

- Pre Arrival Notification
- Maritime Single Window

17.3.5. The Board agreed to club following subgroups and name as SubGroup on **“Making India a Regional Transhipment Hub”**

-Sub Group 13 on “Regional Maritime Transport Grid”

The new Subgroup will have following verticals:

- Making India a Regional Maritime Transport Grid for waterways

17.3.6. The Secretary NSB was advised to notify the closure / merger / creation of sub groups.

Action: Secretary NSB

17.3.7. It was decided to finalize TOR & composition of each new sub group in next Board meeting.

Action: All Members

18. Submission of Reports by existing Sub Groups:

18.1. The Secretary NSB informed the Board that out of existing 13 sub-groups, only three subgroups have submitted their final reports as under:

- **Promotion of Energy Efficient and Low-cost Coastal Shipping for Passenger and Freight,**
- **Creation of National Single Portal for Pre-Arrival Notification, and**
- **Transition to IMO's Maritime Single Window by 01.01.2024 and Digital Enablement**

18.2. The Board advised the Secretary NSB to upload these reports of Sub Group on the NSB website.

Action: Secretary NSB

19. Membership of the NSB in the India Maritime Centre (IMC) Mumbai:

19.1. The Secretary NSB informed that a proposal has been received by the Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson, NSB from CEO IMC Mumbai giving an offer to NSB to join IMC as a member on payment of fees. He stated that the proposal was circulated to all the members of the Board for information and their views. The Board after deliberations observed that the NSB is the highest apex level independent statutory body under the Merchant Shipping Act 1958 which has been mandated to provide advice to the Central Government on the matters arising out of the implementation of the said Act. By virtue of its status and an independent advisory role, it cannot play any subordinate role as a member of the IMC. By virtue of its unique status, it is different in nature as compared to other members of the IMC.

19.2. As such, the Board observed that the NSB cannot join IMC as a member though the NSB would be happy to corroborate with the IMC [as an important stakeholder] on policy issues. The Secretary NSB was advised to communicate the decision of the Board to the CEO IMC.

Action: Secretary NSB

20. Holding of the meetings of the NSB in the Coastal States:

20.1. It was observed by the Board that to understand the issues of the various stakeholders present in the maritime sector in various coastal regions, there is a need to hold future meetings of the Board in various Coastal States one by one. It was also observed that in such meeting the concerned State Maritime Board should also be invited as a special Invitee to share the important maritime developments in their State with the Board. It was further observed by the board that the meetings of the Board should be held alternatively in one of the coastal State on the East Coast and the West Coast of India. This would provide an opportunity to the Board to interact not only with the regional

maritime boards but also to engage with the representatives from those organizations which not currently represented on the Board, especially from the regions other than Mumbai. **The Secretary NSB was advised to take up with Directorate of the Shipping & IPA to make necessary arrangements for such meetings in future.**

Action: Secretary NSB

21. Publication of monthly newsletter of the National Shipping Board:

21.1. Shri Rahul Modi, President, Coastal Containers Transporters Association proposed that to further institutionalize communication, a monthly newsletter be introduced, with members submitting inputs for the previous month by the 10th of succeeding months. He suggested that newsletters should capture all engagements of NSB members with stakeholders, including both national and international organizations, ministries, industry associations, and maritime boards. This would help document the efforts of members, provide greater visibility into their engagements, and ensure that the wider board is informed of key developments and collaborations taking place across the sector.

21.2. Shri Shantanu Kalita Advisor IPA mentioned that he can provide design resources to support the development of the National Shipping Board's monthly newsletter, if the Board decides to publish such a monthly newsletter.

21.3. It was observed by the Board that a monthly newsletter will help bridge communication gaps amongst its members and ensure recognition of individual contributions of the Board members that otherwise go unnoticed. It was observed by the board that it is necessary to document and showcase the activities / engagements (both official and non-official) of its members which they are undertaking in the shipping sector with the Government Bodies / International Bodies / their parent organizations / NGOs etc., every month. **The Board advised the Secretary NSB to coordinate with all members so that each of the Board Member share their inputs for each month by the 10th of the succeeding month to facilitate timely compilation. The first such newsletter should be published for the month of July 2025.**

Action: Secretary NSB / All members of the NSB

22. Issue of Email ID & Photo Identity cards to the members of the Board:

22.1. The board deliberated on strengthening institutional visibility and coordination mechanisms for the National Shipping Board (NSB). It was agreed that all NSB members would be assigned official email IDs to streamline communication and Photo Identity cards would be issued to formalize their association. **The Board advised Secretary NSB to take the needful action immediately.**

Action: Secretary NSB / All members of the NSB

23. Secretarial Assistance to the Board:

23.1. The Board urged the Ministry to issue orders for providing Secretarial Assistance immediately to the Board as per the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958. The office of the Chairperson NSB is running with just one outsourced DEO and one outsourced part time MTS. **The Board advised Secretary NSB & Director (MA) MoPSW to do the needful immediately.**

Action: Secretary NSB & Director (MA) MoPSW

24. Office Accommodation for the Board in New Delhi:

24.1. The Board observed that despite the statutory creation of NSB under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act since 1958, there is no permanent office of the Board where the documents / records / reports etc. can be kept for succeeding Boards. Due to this the collective wisdom of the Board is lost every time a new board is constituted. The Chairperson of the Board has to run pillars to posts for office accommodation every time the new Board is constituted as the old accommodation is either released or allotted to different sections in the Ministry. To enhance outreach and maintain institutional continuity, it was agreed by the Board to request Ministry to allot permanent office space in New Delhi, The Chairperson informed that the Ministry has advised that the Board should use the vacant space available in the Shipping Corporation of India premises at Janpath New Delhi, for which the formal order by the Ministry is still awaited. The Board has started using the office partly as basic facilities like computers / printers / copiers / internet / conference setup / washroom etc. are lacking. The DG Shipping has been very proactive and the renovation / provisioning of basic facilities has been approved by him. **The Board urged the Ministry to issue orders for providing office space for the Board immediately. The Board advised Secretary NSB & Director (MA) MoPSW to do the needful immediately.**

Action: Secretary NSB & Director (MA) MoPSW

25. Upgradation of the NSB Website:

25.1. It was informed to the Board that NSB website's final proposal is already under discussion with the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS). **The Board advised the Secretary NSB to do the needful immediately.**

Action: Secretary NSB

26. Logo for the NSB:

26.1. It was observed by the Board that at present two logos of NSB are in use. One logo is on the NSB letter head while another is on the twitter handle / WhatsApp DP. One logo symbolizes **a ship moving forward with wings to represent the growth of Shipping Industry** while the other depicts **a container ship in the sea with driving wheel in tri-color in the foreground** as under:



One of these logos was unveiled by the then Union Minister PSW Shri Nitin Gadkari in 2016. The board discussed retrieving the archived material related to these logos to decide which is the approved logo. **The Board advised the Secretary NSB to locate these records from its archives and present the factual position in the next Board meeting.**

Action: Secretary NSB

27. Tagline for the NSB Logo:

27.1. It was observed by the Board that both the Logos in use are without a tagline. The Board requested the members to offer suggestions for a tagline in Sanskrit reflecting NSB's vision. **It was decided that this matter will be discussed & finalized in the next meeting.**

Action: All NSB Members

28. NSB Social Media handle:

28.1. It was observed by the Board that NSB Social Media Presence is very weak. It was agreed that NSB should have its presence on Linkedin, Whatsapp, Youtube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

28.2. Shri Shantanu Kalita Advisor IPA and Ms Sanjam Shahi Gupta Director Sitara Shipping Private Limited Mumbai offered their services in this endeavour. **The Board agreed to finalise its social Media Strategy in the next meeting.**

Action: All Board Members

29. Next Board Meeting:

29.1. The Board agreed to hold its next meeting after Independence Day. It was decided to align the meeting with an upcoming delegation visit of Norwegian Embassy officials & officials from ILO to conduct a training program scheduled at Bhavnagar on the 21st and 22nd of August 2025.

29.2. Ms Sanjam Shahi Gupta Director Sitara Shipping Private Limited Mumbai suggested clubbing the NSB visit with this event to maximize engagement, given the existing momentum and infrastructure already being mobilized.

29.3. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB proposed organizing the meeting at the Major port at Kandla in Gujrat, and expressed his willingness to attend the training workshop and seminar at Bhavnagar on 21 / 22 August 2025 prior to next Board meeting at Kandla. Shri Shantanu Kalita Advisor IPA too confirmed his desire to attend. Shri Shantanu Kalita Advisor IPA stated that institutional infrastructure and the logistical support for the NSB meeting would be in place at Kandla Gujrat.

29.4. Accordingly, it was decided to hold the next meeting of the Board in Kandla Gujrat in third / Fourth week of August 2025 and the Secretary NSB was advised to take up with Directorate of the Shipping & IPA to make necessary arrangements for the meeting.

Action: Secretary NSB

30. Way forward:

30.1. Shri Shantanu Kalita, Advisor, IPA suggested that some of the immediate issues raised during the today's discussion should be taken up with the Honourable Minister PSW and the Ministry of PSW without delay. He emphasized the need to organize a meeting and flag these concerns at the highest level for prompt attention. He emphasized the importance of leveraging the upcoming Parliament session from July 21st to August 21st as a strategic window to push forward critical discussions and policy suggestions for the shipping sector. Since all key ministers and officials will be present in Delhi during this time, he suggested utilizing the opportunity to organize 2-3 focused meetings—starting with the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, and then extending to the Ministry of Finance / Ministry of Home Affairs. He highlighted the need for coordination among ministries and stressed that such in-person engagements are essential for translating discussions into meaningful actions. According to him, the role of the forum should be to guide the ministry effectively, ensuring that the sector's priorities are addressed during this critical legislative period.

30.2. Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Retired IAS, Chairperson NSB emphasized the need to prepare a comprehensive presentation for the Hon'ble Minister, categorizing the agenda points into two main themes: one addressing issues under the Ministry of Home Affairs—including immigration and related matters—and the other covering concerns under Ministry of Finance related to customs, direct and indirect taxation, and labour. He

urged all the members to get involved in its development and ensure alignment on the key issues to be presented. He assigned this task to be coordinated with Shri Anil Devli and Shri Rahul Modi.

Action: All Members

31. Vote of thanks: In the end, the Chairperson NSB thanked all the NSB members, the permanent invitees and the special invitees present in the meeting for their presence (physical as well as virtual) and their active participation in the meeting.

Annexure I

Action taken on the decisions taken in the 23rd Hybrid meeting of National Shipping Board held on 26th June 2023 at 1500 hrs. at Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, New Delhi.

S.No.	Para No. in the minutes	Action to be taken	Who was to take action	Status on 15/7/2025
1.	1.2(i)	The Chairperson requested CMD, CSL to finalize the recommendations and the Discussion Paper with the implementation road map for the presentation to the Ministry.	CMD, CSL	Report is awaited from CMD CSL.
2.	1.2(ii)	The Chairperson, NSB urged the Sub-Group also include the measures recommended in Group NSB	Concerned Sub Group NSB	Report is Submitted and circulated to the

		the Blue Economy Action Plan 2047 and finalize the Discussion Paper for the presentation.		members for comments.
3.	1.2(iii)	The Chairperson urged the Sub-Group to submit the recommendations/report along with the implementation road map for the presentation.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	Report is awaited from Dr. K Murali.
4.	1.2(iv)	The Chairperson suggested that IFSC may be developed as a jurisdiction for promoting Indian tonnage and the Sub-Group may work on the policy/regulatory issues that require to be addressed to make IFSC the favored jurisdiction all such shipping related services.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	The action is ongoing.
5.	1.2(v)	The Chairperson advised that Sub-Group may further develop the proposal so that DGS may get PAN information for all vessels visiting Indian ports on a single portal, for effective monitoring and to be able to provide PAN information to all the concerned agencies from the single portal to promote ease of doing business.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	Work is ongoing. The working group dealing with the Maritime Single Window will continue its efforts until all critical stakeholders are fully onboarded and the system is made fully operational.
6.	1.2(vi)	The Chairperson advised that the MD, IPA may be the Co-Convener of the and the Sub-Group may prepare a Port Wise/Agency Wise action plan for addressing the gaps identified and also list out the measures to be taken for the complete transition to MSW NSB/01/2023 I/16517/2023 by all agencies by the stipulated date.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	Interim Report submitted, Work is ongoing. The working group dealing with the Maritime Single Window will continue its efforts until all critical stakeholders are fully onboarded and the system is made fully operational.
7.	1.2(vii)	The Chairperson advised that Sub-Group may develop an action plan for first starting some ancillary activities/services from Galathea Bay for the ships moving on the trunk route. Projects and issues that need to be included in Coastal Shipping/ Multi-modal Agreements/Connectivity Plans with the BIMSTEC and other countries that so the Galathea bay may develop as a transshipment hub may also be identified	Concerned Sub Group NSB	The work is ongoing.
8.	1.2(viii)	The Sub-Group was requested by the board to finalize the recommendations and submit a report.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	The report is awaited.
9.	1.2(ix)	In view of the leave of absence granted to Convener of the Sub-Group Shri K S Bariar, it was decided by the board to defer the discussion on the subject subgroup to the next NSB meeting.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	No discussions took place and the term of the Board expired.

10.	1.2(x)	Sub-Group was requested by the board to identify some low hanging fruits that can be easily be addressed and submit the first report with the suggested action plan so that the same may be followed up.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	The report is awaited.
11.	2(i)	The Chairperson advised that Sub-group may be constituted under the Convener-ship of Addl. DG, DG Shipping along with Shri Ash Mohomad, DDG, DG Shipping as Co-Convener and members from Member Ministry of Commerce (DPIIT), Customs, FICCI, CII, ASOCHAM, INSA, ICCSA, CSLA, Freight Forwarders Association, AMTOI, CCTA, FIEO, IPA, NALSAR etc to further deliberate on the issues and submit a report.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	The draft bill has been formulated.
12.	2(ii)	It was agreed by the board that a Sub-Group be constituted under the Convener-ship of Shri Prashant Seth, FIEO along with Members from NICDC Logistics Data Services Ltd., Customs, CSLA, CONCOR, INSA, ICCSA, AMTOI, CCTA etc. to develop on the issues and further submit a report.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	The report is awaited.
13.	2(iii)	It was agreed by the board that a Sub-Group be constituted under the Convener-ship of Shri Sanjay Bandopadhyaya, Chairman, IWAI along with Members from Customs, Immigration, Chairman, Kolkata Port, DDG Coastal DG Shipping, INSA, ICCSA, CMEC, CCTA etc., to develop on the issues and further prepare a report.	Concerned Sub Group NSB	The report is awaited.

Annexure II

Status of Action Taken on the decisions taken in the 24th meeting of National Shipping Board (NSB) New Delhi held on 30th May 2025 at 10:30 hrs in the Conference Hall of Directorate General of Shipping (DGS), Mumbai

S.No.	Para No. in the minutes	Action to be taken	Who was to take action	Status on 15/7/2025
1.	5.1	Action Taken report on the decisions of the last NSB meeting:	Secretary NSB	Secretary NSB informed that email and personal call was made to all the previous coordinators of the sub groups to provide latest updates. Since many of them did not respond, it was suggested that the new group may

		<p>It was felt by the board that the Secretary NSB should write to all concerned to collect the latest status on the action taken on the minutes on board meeting dated 26/06/2023 and to present the same to the board in the next meeting.</p>		<p>collect latest information, as available from the members involved and take actions appropriately in the work of the new group ahead.</p>
2.	6.1	<p>The status of the reports of sub-groups constituted by the predecessor board:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that the Secretary NSB should write to all concerned to submit the subgroup reports in a uniform format and to present the same to the board in the next meeting.</p>	Secretary NSB	<p>Out of the 13 existing subgroups, only 3 subgroups submitted their reports as under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Energy Efficient and Low-cost Coastal Shipping for Passenger and Freight • Creation of National Single Portal for Pre-Arrival Notification • Transition to IMO's Maritime Single Window by 01012024 and Digital Enablement Report <p>Secretary NSB informed that email and personal call was made to all the previous coordinators of the sub groups to provide latest updates. Since many of them did not respond, it was suggested that the new group may collect latest information, as available from the members involved and take actions appropriately in the work of the new group ahead.</p>
3.	7.1	<p>Time Gap between constitution of the consecutive boards:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that to ensure continuity of the board / sub group work, the Maritime Division in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways should be requested to take advance action on selection and notification of the board members so that there is no break between constitution of two consecutive boards.</p>	Director MA, MoPSW	<p>No update was provided by the Ministry of PSW (Director MA).</p>
4.	7.2	<p>Permanent Office address and setup for the board:</p>	Director MA, MoPSW	<p>No update was provided by the MoPSW (Director MA).</p>

		<p>It was felt by the board that the Maritime Division in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways should be requested to do the needful for greater interests of maritime sector.</p>		
5.	7.3	<p>Development of a dedicated website for the Board and designing of a programme to increase social media presence / public outreach of the board amongst stakeholders:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that the DGS Mumbai should be requested to do the needful in time bound manner.</p>	DG Shipping	The proposal is under finalization in the DG Shipping.
6.	7.4	<p>Dedicated Phone Numbers for the Chairperson and the Secretary of the board:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that the DGS Mumbai should be requested to do the needful in a time bound manner.</p>	DG Shipping	The dedicated phone numbers provided by the DG shipping are not operational due to merger issues of MTNL & BSNL. Efforts are on to port to different Service Provider.
7.	7.5	<p>Dedicated email IDs for the Board (Chairperson & Members) & Board Secretariat Staff:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that the DGS Mumbai should be requested to do the needful in time bound manner.</p>	DG Shipping	Action is completed.
8.	7.6	<p>Invitation of the representative of Maritime State Development Council (MSDC):</p> <p>It was felt by the board that the Maritime Division in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways should be requested to do the needful for greater interests of maritime sector.</p>	Director MA, MoPSW	No update was provided by the MoPSW (Director MA).
9.	7.7	<p>Monthly Updates:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that the monthly updates on the action initiated based of the decisions taken by the board should be provided on the website to the board members as the official board meetings in the past have</p>	Secretary NSB	The matter of upgradation of the website pending with DG Shipping. Once the Website is upgraded, the monthly updates would be provided.

		occurred once in every three months		
10.	7.8	Roadmap for the Shipping Building & Ship Repairs Sector: It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.	NSB	A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to prepare Roadmap on shipbuilding, ship repair, ship recycling, classification and flagging to enhance overall sector viability.
11.	7.9	Roadmap for Increasing number of Ships with Indian Flags: It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.	NSB	A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to prepare Roadmap on shipbuilding, ship repair, ship recycling, classification and flagging to enhance overall sector viability.
12.	7.10	Road Map to resolve long pending issues of Indian Seafarers as raised by NUSI: It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.	NSB	A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to prepare a Roadmap to address Seafarers Issues.
13.	7.11	Road Map to resolve long pending issues of Indian Seafarers as raised by MUI: It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.	NSB	
14.	7.12	Indian Representation in the IMO: It was felt by the board that the Maritime Division in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways should be requested to do the needful for greater interests of maritime sector.	Director MA, MoPSW	DoPT has already agreed for a permanent Indian Representation in the IMO:

15.	7.13	<p>Road Map to address pending issues of Ship Breaking / Ship recycling Industries:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.</p>	NSB	<p>A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to prepare Roadmap on shipbuilding, ship repair, ship recycling, classification and flagging to enhance overall sector viability.</p>
16.	7.14	<p>Roadmap to address Coastal Trading Issues:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.</p>	NSB	<p>A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to prepare Roadmap on shipbuilding, ship repair, ship recycling, classification and flagging to enhance overall sector viability.</p>
17.	7.15	<p>Roadmap to address Gender issues in Maritime Sector:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.</p>	NSB	<p>A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to address issues of Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity in Maritime Sector.</p>
18.	7.16	<p>Road map to address issues pertaining to Indian Coast Guard:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.</p>	NSB	<p>A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to prepare Roadmap on maritime safety, including the availability of emergency response assets. A collaborative effort is proposed to be initiated amongst the Indian Coast Guard, Navy, and Directorate General of Shipping to develop a standard protocol for maritime emergencies and salvage operations.</p>
19.	7.17	<p>Roadmap for the Regional Maritime Transport Grid:</p> <p>It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.</p>	NSB	<p>A subgroup is proposed to be setup to make India a Regional Transshipment Hub.</p>

20.	7.18	Study for authentic documentation of India's Maritime Legacy: It was felt by the board that a roadmap should be prepared by NSB on these lines to outline strategies and recommendations that could be taken forward for further discussion and implementation.	NSB	It is proposed to set up a sub group consisting of maritime historians and academic institutions, to conduct a thorough study on identifying significant maritime milestones in India's Maritime history. Indian Maritime University (IMU) Chennai, will be invited to participate in the research and brainstorming.
21.	7.19	Roadmap for Green Tugboats: It was felt by the board that this green initiative should be given further impetus with suitable policy support and the board should gather feedback from various ports on its replicability and scalability.	NSB	A dedicated subgroup is proposed to be formed to prepare Roadmap on shipbuilding including green tugboats, ship repair, ship recycling, classification and flagging to enhance overall sector viability.
22.	7.20	Synchronization between Board activities and various cells in MoPSW: The board felt that all subgroups including this subgroup should submit their reports by June 30, 2025, so that they can be taken forward in the next meeting.	All NSB members	It is proposed to grant Prof. Murali K additional time to reconstitute the committee and prepare a consolidated report, taking into account the recent developments and the need to reconcile the documents from the Ministry and the Navik Cell.
23.	7.21	Nomination of NSB member in the Governing Council Narotam Morarji Institute of Technology: The board decided to nominate Shri Anil Devli as NSB nominee on the Governing Council of the Institute from FY 25-26 to 27-28 as was done by previous board.	Secretary NSB	Nomination will be sent once the draft minutes of the meeting dated 30/05/2025 will be confirmed on 16/07/2025.
24.	8.1	Presentation 1: Sagar Setu (NLP-M) Maritime Single Window: It was felt by the board that the Maritime Division in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways should be requested to do the needful for greater interests of maritime sector.	Director MA, MoPSW	No update was provided by the MoPSW (Director MA).
25.	8.2	Presentation 2: Directorate General of Lighthouse and Lightships:	Director MA, MoPSW	No update was provided by the MoPSW (Director MA).

		Overall, the discussions highlighted challenges in data sharing, staffing, and maintaining security and efficiency in maritime operations. It was felt by the board that the Maritime Division in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways should be requested to do the needful for greater interests of maritime sector.		
26.	9.1	<p>NSB next meeting should be held within the next 45 days</p> <p>The last date for issue of the notice for the next NSB meeting by the Board Secretariat was fixed on or before 30/06/2025.</p>	Secretary NSB	Complied with.
27.	9.2	<p>Final report of the old subgroups in the standard template:</p> <p>The last date for communication of the status update / final report of the old subgroups by the members to the Board Secretariat was fixed as 30/06/2025.</p>	NSB Members	Only three out of 13 subgroups submitted their reports as mentioned in Sl No. 2 above.
28.	9.3	<p>Suggestions on continuation / modification / deletion of existing Sub groups</p> <p>The last date for communication of the views by the members including NO VIEWS to the Board Secretariat was fixed as 30/06/2025.</p>	NSB Members	Views from few members were received which were circulated.
29.	9.4	<p>Suggestions to continue, modify, or drop any of the ongoing issues from the previous board's agenda.</p> <p>The last date for communication of the views by the members including NO VIEWS to the Board Secretariat was fixed as 30/06/2025.</p>	NSB Members	Views from few members were received which were circulated..
30.	9.5	<p>Suggestions based on Government initiatives like MIV 2030, MAKV 2047, Ease of Doing Business / Ease of Living, Make in India, and PM Gati Shakti:</p> <p>The last date for communication of the views by the members</p>	NSB Members	Views from few members were received which were circulated.

		including NO VIEWS to the Board Secretariat was fixed as 30/06/2025.		
31.	9.6	<p>Suggestions on social media presence of NSB, website development of NSB, stakeholders' engagement etc. :</p> <p>The last date for communication of the views by the members including NO VIEWS to the Board Secretariat was fixed as 30/06/2025.</p>	NSB Members	Views from few members were received which were circulated.
32.	9.7	<p>Invitation to NSB meeting</p> <p>Representative from the BIS should to be invited along-with representatives from Ship Breaking / Recycling Industries from Alang & Bhavnagar.</p>	Secretary NSB	Invitation sent to BIS along-with representatives from Ship Breaking / Recycling Industries from Alang & Bhavnagar to attend NSB meeting on 15/07/2025.