



Maritime States Development Council

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The 17th meeting of the **Maritime States Development Council (MSDC)** was held on 15th October, 2019 in New Delhi.

Key Highlights

- **National Port Grid:**

- The Ministry of Shipping is working on a plan to develop a national port grid based on the **synergy between major and minor ports** in the country.
- There are 204 Minor ports in the country, of which only 44 are currently functional.

Extensive study will be done for the revival of each port, identifying the specific cargo linked to it and the downstream industry.

- **Expansion of Port Capacity:**

- The Ministry is planning expansion of port capacity through the implementation of **well-conceived infrastructure development projects**.
- **Digitization** of processes to reduce and finally eliminate human interface.
- Making **water transport pollution free** to reduce logistics cost.

- **Other Issues:**

- Developing common and comprehensive guidelines for **inland waterways barges** so that barges of different states can move seamlessly in coastal waters.
- **Port security:** International levels of security would be ensured at every port in the country.
- Emphasis was laid on the advent of **cruise tourism** in India and the importance of **Special Economic Zones (SEZs)** being developed in Smart Industrial Port Cities at Kandla(Gujarat) and Paradip (Odisha).
- Establishment of **research based institutes** like the Centre for Inland and Coastal Maritime Technology (CICMT) at IIT, Kharagpur and the National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC), IIT, Madras will help the maritime industry to get indigenous research and skilled manpower.

- MSDC is an **apex advisory body for the development of the maritime sector** and aims to ensure integrated development of Major and non-Major Ports.
- It was constituted in **May, 1997** to assess in consultation with State Governments, the future development of existing and new Minor Ports by the respective Maritime States either directly or through captive users and private participation.

Source: PIB