



INSV Kaundinya

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

The [Indian Navy](#) recently inducted the **Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Kaundinya**, the 1st 'stitched ship' using **ancient stitched shipbuilding method** ([Tankai method](#)) to revive forgotten shipbuilding techniques.

- It is named after **Kaundinya**, a legendary **Indian mariner**, and set to embark on a historic voyage to **Oman by the end of 2025**, retracing [ancient trade routes](#).
- It is executed through a tripartite agreement between the **Indian Navy**, **Ministry of Culture**, and a **Goa-based shipbuilding company**.

What are Key Facts About INSV Kaundinya?

- **About INSV Kaundinya:** It is a **stitched ship** modeled after a vessel depicted in the **5th-century** [Ajanta cave paintings](#).
 - It is inspired by **Ajanta murals**, the ancient text **Yuktikalpataru** (written by **King Bhoja in 9th century CE**), and accounts of **foreign travellers** who described **stitched Indian ships**.
 - It features **symbolic motifs** like:
 - **Gandabherunda, two-headed eagle** of the **Kadamba dynasty** who ruled the Konkan coast
 - **Sun motifs** on sails
 - **Simha Yali (mythical lion)** on the bow
 - **Harappan-style stone anchor**.



- **About Kaundinya:** Kaundinya was a 1st-century **Indian mariner**, known for sailing to the **Mekong Delta**, where he married **warrior queen Soma** and co-founded the **Kingdom of Funan (modern-day Cambodia)**, one of the earliest **Indianised states** in Southeast Asia.
 - The **Khmer and Cham dynasties** of modern-day Cambodia and Vietnam **trace their origins** to this union.
 - His story is preserved in **Cambodian and Vietnamese sources**, though not in **Indian records**, and he is regarded as the **first named Indian mariner** to make **overseas voyages** with **global historical impact**.
- **Tankai Method:** It is a **2,000-year-old traditional Indian shipbuilding technique** known for its **manual craftsmanship, indigenous materials, and non-industrial techniques**. **Key Features include:**
 - **Stitched Plank Technique:** **Teak, sal, or mango wood planks** are drilled and stitched with **coir ropes**, then sealed with **cotton, resin, and fish oil** for waterproofing.
 - **No Metal Fasteners:** Unlike European methods using **iron nails**, the **Tankai method** avoided metal to prevent **rust**, making ships **lighter**, more **flexible**, and **easier to repair**.
 - **Unique Construction:** The **hull is built first**, then added ribs, allowing greater **flexibility** and **durability** in rough seas, unlike Western frame-first methods.
 - **Indigenous Materials:** Uses **coir rope, dammar resin, and animal fat**, all **resistant to seawater**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Belt and Road Initiative is sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of (2016)

- (a) African Union
- (b) Brazil
- (c) European Union
- (d) China

Ans: (d)

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