

Speech by Chairperson, National Shipping Board

Gujarat Star Awards – 13 February, Kandla

Distinguished dignitaries, industry leaders, award winners, members of the maritime fraternity, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a privilege to be here at Kandla — one of India's most dynamic maritime gateways — for the Gujarat Star Awards organised by Daily Shipping Times. I congratulate the organisers for creating a platform that recognises excellence in the maritime and logistics sector.

Today's awardees represent the true strength of India's logistics ecosystem — port operators, shipping lines, freight forwarders, terminal managers, logistics innovators, customs facilitators, and countless professionals who keep trade moving seamlessly. You are not just performers; you are nation-builders.

India stands at a defining moment. Under the vision of Amrit Kaal 2047, we aspire to become a developed nation and a leading maritime power. Our coastline of over 7,500 km, 12 major ports, 200+ non-major ports, strategic location on key global trade routes, and a young, skilled workforce give us natural advantages. But geography alone does not make a maritime nation — performance does.

The Government of India has laid a strong foundation through transformative initiatives:

PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan for multimodal connectivity

National Logistics Policy to reduce logistics cost and improve efficiency

Maritime India Vision 2030 and Amrit Kaal Vision 2047

Port modernisation and capacity expansion

Sagarmala programme

Digitalisation and green shipping initiatives

However, policy frameworks alone cannot achieve transformation. The real engine of growth lies in collaboration between the public and private sectors.

The public sector provides policy clarity, infrastructure investment, regulatory stability, and strategic direction. The private sector brings efficiency, innovation,

capital, technology, and global best practices. When these two forces work in alignment, outcomes multiply.

To make India a global logistics hub and a top maritime nation, we must focus on:

Seamless multimodal connectivity

Digital and paperless trade systems

Sustainable and green maritime practices

Skill development and maritime education

Ease of Doing Business with transparency and predictability

In this journey, the National Shipping Board (NSB) stands ready to be your partner. As a statutory advisory body to the Central Government, NSB serves as a bridge between industry stakeholders and policymakers. We provide informed recommendations on policy reforms, regulatory improvements, competitiveness enhancement, and long-term maritime strategy. Your experiences, challenges, and innovations help shape our advice to the Government. Together, through structured dialogue and evidence-based recommendations, we can ensure that policy evolution keeps pace with industry aspirations and global developments.

Gujarat has already demonstrated how proactive governance and industry partnership can accelerate maritime growth. Ports in this state have set benchmarks in efficiency and private participation. Kandla stands as a symbol of India's trade resilience and ambition.

Events like the Gujarat Star Awards play a vital role in this journey. Recognition creates aspiration. Aspiration drives performance. Performance drives national progress. When we celebrate excellence, we set higher standards for the entire ecosystem.

As we move toward 2047, our goal is clear: India must not merely participate in global trade — India must shape it.

Let us work together — government, industry, regulators, investors, innovators — with a shared commitment to efficiency, sustainability, and global competitiveness. Congratulations to all award winners. May your success inspire many more to raise the bar for India's maritime future.

Thank you. Jai Hind. 