

Sarbananda Sonowal Unveils Advanced Machinery to Enhance Shipbuilding Capacity at Cochin Shipyard

- * Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Presides over Steel Cutting Ceremony, Sets Up Green Tug Transition Programme (GTTP)
- * *“PM Narendra Modi ji’s leadership for shipbuilding through budgetary support must be effectively utilised towards building Atmanirbhar Bharat:”*
Sarbananda Sonowal
- * Sarbananda Sonowal reviewed the progress of the construction of India’s largest Trailer Suction Hopper Dredger (TSHD) at CSL

Kochi, April 7, 2025: The **Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal** visited the Kochin Shipyard as he unveiled advanced machinery to enhance shipbuilding capacity of the country. Sonowal remarked that this is a movement towards realising the vision of PM Narendra Modi’s ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ today.

The Shipping Minister inaugurated the ProArc CNC Plasma Cum Oxy Fuel Plate Cutting Machine, an advanced, Industry 4.0-ready facility that will significantly enhance CSL’s shipbuilding

capabilities. Fully IoT-enabled, the system allows real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance, and increased production efficiency, directly aligning with the objectives of the Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Policy (SBFAP) 2.0.

Speaking on the occasion, the **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** said, *“The launch of Industry 4.0-ready facilities and the Green Tug Transition Programme marks a transformative leap in India's shipbuilding and green maritime journey. Under PM Narendra Modi ji's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, these initiatives reinforce our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and global competitiveness in the maritime sector. The indigenous development of hybrid and electric propulsion tugs is not just a technological advancement, but a symbol of India's growing capability to lead the global green maritime movement.”*

The Union Minister also presided over the steel cutting ceremony for two Green Tugs being developed under the Green Tug Transition Programme (GTTP), a flagship sustainability initiative by the Ministry. CSL is the first Indian company to undertake the construction of these hybrid and electric propulsion tugs, with a total of 16 vessels planned across major ports in India. The project is being executed in collaboration with Robert Allan Ltd., the Indian Register of Shipping, and other global experts, marking a major step in India's green maritime transition.

Speaking during the visit Cochin Shipyard, the **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** said, *“Cochin Shipyard Limited stands as the Pride of India, a testament to our indigenous shipbuilding excellence and self-reliance. From building the iconic INS Vikrant to delivering over 175 vessels and completing more than 2,500 ship*

repair projects, CSL reflects the transformative vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji towards self-reliance. Under his leadership, India's maritime sector is scaling new heights — through world-class infrastructure, national expansion, and institutions like METI that are shaping the skilled maritime workforce of tomorrow."

Sarbananda Sonowal also reviewed the progress of the construction of India's largest Trailer Suction Hopper Dredger (12,000 cu.m), being built by CSL for the Dredging Corporation of India in partnership with IHC Holland. The dredger is a strategic national asset that will reduce dependency on foreign services while enhancing coastal access and maritime infrastructure in line with the 'Maritime Amritkaal Vision, 2047'.

Highlighting the immense importance of human resources in the maritime sector, the **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** said, *"Cochin Shipyard Limited's (CSL) innovation-led initiatives like the USHUS Marine Startup Program reflect the spirit of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and PM Narendra Modi ji's vision for a tech-driven maritime sector. With investments in AI, deep-tech, and renewables, these startups are fuelling job creation and maritime innovation. CSL's strong focus on skilling—through partnerships with Maersk and initiatives like ASAP Kerala—is building a future-ready workforce and strengthening India's global leadership in shipbuilding and marine excellence."*

The Union Minister's visit comes at a pivotal time, first after the Union Budget of 2025–26 with its transformational scope of the budget, including the ₹25,000 crores Maritime Development Fund (MDF) expected to mobilise ₹1.5 lakh crore in maritime

investments by 2030. Other budget initiatives such as the revamped SBFAP 2.0, infrastructure status for large ships, and targeted support for shipbuilding clusters are poised to revolutionise the sector.

Additionally, Sarbananda Sonowal highlighted importance of new policies like the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024, the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 among others aimed at simplifying maritime regulations, promoting Indian-flagged vessels, ensuring environmental sustainability, and enhancing seafarer welfare. With a 46% increase in the Ministry's budget allocation and a 143% surge in R&D funding, the Minister called this a historic moment for the Indian maritime industry.

The visit concluded with a renewed call to accelerate India's maritime journey—driven by bold ambition, anchored in *Atmanirbhar Bharat*, guided by Maritime India Vision 2030, and propelled by the transformative spirit of *Maritime Amritkaal*.

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