

Gujarat Maritime Cluster

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In News: The Gujarat Maritime Cluster coming up in the GIFT (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City) City at Gandhinagar will be a dedicated system to address logistics of ports and seaways.

What is a maritime cluster?

- It is an agglomeration of firms, institutions, and businesses in the maritime sector that are geographically located close to each other.
- This concept is new to India, but these clusters have been driving some of the most competitive ports of the world like Rotterdam, Singapore, Hong Kong, Oslo, Shanghai, and London.

Gujarat Maritime Cluster

- It is conceived as a dedicated ecosystem of Ports, Maritime Shipping and Logistics services providers.
- It will host an array of maritime, shipping industry players and service providers, along with relevant Government regulatory agencies, in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), Gandhinagar – India's first International Financial Services Centre.
- The Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB), has been trying to develop such a cluster through its subsidiary Gujarat Ports Infrastructure and Development Company Ltd (GPIDCL).
- While the project was conceptualised back in 2007, it received in-principle approval from the state government in 2015.

Unique institutions at the Gujarat Maritime Cluster:

- Gujarat Maritime University will be set up.
- Within this, an Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centre will be set up.
- This centre will provide an option to Indian players seeking to avoid availing the services of international alternative dispute resolution hubs which entail huge costs, time, and travel.
- The cluster is also expected to house the office of the Director General of Shipping.

Need for a maritime cluster

- This project will try to bring back businesses that have migrated over the years to foreign locations due to the absence of the right ecosystem in the country.
- Gujarat has a lot of ports and handles 40 per cent of the country's cargo, but it does not target the entire value chain.
- Since we didn't have the ecosystem, a lot of Indian companies have moved to foreign locations. For instance, Adani Group has the biggest port in Gujarat, but for their chartering needs, they are based out of Dubai.

GIFT City, Gandhinagar

- GIFT city is India's first operational smart city and international financial services centre (much like a modern IT park).
- The idea for GIFT was conceived during the Vibrant Gujarat Global Investor Summit 2007 and the initial planning was done by East China Architectural Design & Research Institute (ECADI).
- Currently approximately 225 units/companies are operational with more than 12000 professionals employed in the City.
- The entire city is based on the concept of FTTX (Fibre to the home / office). The fiber optic is laid in fault tolerant ring architecture so as to ensure maximum

uptime of services.

- Every building in GIFT City is an intelligent building.
- There is a piped supply of cooking gas. India's first city-level DCS (district cooling system) is also operational at GIFT City.