

National Maritime Day

April 6, 2021

In News: The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways celebrated 58th National Maritime Day in commemoration of the maiden voyage of the first Indian flag merchant vessel 'S.S.LOYALTY' , from Mumbai to London, on the 5th April ,1919.

About National Maritime Day

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
- **This Year Theme:** 'Sustainable Shipping beyond COVID-19'
- National Maritime Day is an annual celebration on April 5th.
- The first celebration took place in 1964 to spread awareness about intercontinental commerce and the economy.
- This year, India will mark its 58th edition of National Maritime Day.
- The day is celebrated every year to support the global economy, the most well-organized, safe and sound environmentally responsive way of transporting goods from one corner to another corner in this world.

History Behind National Maritime Day

- The legacy of Indian shipping first started on April 5th, 1919, when the first ship The SS Loyalty manufactured by The Scindia Steam Navigation Company Ltd. sailed from Mumbai to the United Kingdom.
- India became a member of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in 1959.
- IMO is responsible for maritime protection and preventing pollution from ships.

National Maritime Day awards

- **The Varuna Award:** Consists of a statue of Lord Varuna and a scroll is awarded to them for their long and exceptional contribution.
- **The NMD Award:** Given to the people for their excellence for their lifelong contribution and distinguished achievements at the senior functional level in the maritime sector.
- **The Outstanding Contribution to Maritime Education and Training Award:** In order to acknowledge the efforts of distinguished individuals in the sector of maritime education and training, award is given to them.

Importance of National Maritime Day

- Celebrated to encourage the merchant shipping industry of India.
- At present, 90% of India's international trade in terms of volume and 77% in terms of value is moved by sea.
- Indian merchant captains, officers and sailors are highly regarded round the world- one of the maximum captains of VLCC- very large crude carriers are Indians.
- Issues of piracy which was moving towards India's west coast but was pushed back by Indian Navy.
- Despite being the 13th largest shipping nation in the world, India depends on foreign ships to bring goods into India. Therefore, growth of Indian navy is important.