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Govt Signs Two MoUs to Establish Bharat Container Shipping Line

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The Government of India signed two key Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to establish the Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL) and to finance the Outer Harbour Development Project. The event took place in New Delhi in the presence of Union Ministers Ashwini Vaishnaw and Sarbananda Sonowal.

Purpose of MoUs:

BCSL MoU: To create a national container shipping line that strengthens India's container ecosystem and reduces dependence on foreign shipping operators.

Outer Harbour MoU: To provide funding for the Outer Harbour Project at V.O. Chidambaranar Port (Tuticorin) under the Sagarmala Programme and PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan.

What is Bharat Container Shipping Line (BCSL)?

BCSL is a joint venture being created by major Indian maritime and logistics entities—including the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), Container Corporation of India (CONCOR), Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority, Chennai Port Authority, and Sagarmala Finance Corporation Ltd (SMFCL)—to operate container vessels and logistics assets for EXIM and coastal trade.

Budgetary Linkage:

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The initiative aligns with the Container Manufacturing Assistance Scheme (CMAS) announced in the Union Budget 2026–27, which allocates ₹10,000 crore for container manufacturing and ecosystem development.

Infrastructure Financing:

The Outer Harbour Project MoU involves joint funding up to ₹15,000 crore, using a Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) for port capacity expansion and associated onshore/offshore infrastructure.

Policy Linkages:

The BCSL supports the Sagarmala Programme, India's flagship maritime infrastructure initiative that aims to modernise ports, improve connectivity, and reduce logistics costs.

It also aligns with the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, designed to integrate transport networks and logistics.