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Shri Gadkari also laid foundation stone for National Highways project in Munnar

The Minister of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Shri Nitin Gadkari has said that Cochin is all set to become a global ship repair hub. He was speaking at Cochin today, after laying the foundation stone for a Rs 970-crore International Ship Repair Facility (ISRF) for Cochin Shipyard Limited. The facility is being built at Cochin Port Trust where CSL has leased out a 40-acre plot for the project.

The International Ship Repair facility will be a State of the Art facility that can handle a major chunk of small and medium sized vessels plying in India. CSL will set up a ship lift system of size 130 m x 25 m with lifting capacity of 6000 tonnes and 6 work stations. The facility can repair up to 85 vessels, and CSL will thereby be almost doubling the number of ships that can be repaired every year.

Pointing out that this facility will help boost India's share in commercial ship repair market, Shri Gadkari said that the industry will also generate about 6000 direct and indirect jobs, besides giving rise to a number of ancillary industries in the state, thus having a multiplier effect on employment and economy.

Shri Gadkari also inaugurated the conference **Build The Ship – 2017** organized by the Ministry of Shipping in Cochin today. The event deliberated upon the recommendations of a study regarding the growth strategies for promotion of Shipbuilding, Ship Design, Ship Repair and Marine Ancillaries in India.

At the conference the Minister announced the start of **Center of Excellence in Maritime and Shipbuilding (CEMS)**, a start up in skill development for maritime and shipbuilding sector. CEMS will have campuses at Vishakhapatnam and Mumbai. It is being set up by the Ministry of Shipping in collaboration with Siemens under the flagship programme Sagarmala. CEMS will provide industry-relevant skill development, equip students with employable engineering and technical skills in the port and maritime sector and contribute to the Government of India's ambitious Sagarmala programme. It will help meet the domestic skill requirement in ship design, manufacturing, operating and Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) and aims to become an international nodal centre in South Asia, attracting students from neighboring countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia for skill development in the Port and Maritime sector. This initiative will also add to the **Make in India** and **Skill India** efforts in the maritime sector. Shri Gadkari unveiled the logo of CEMS at the launch event in Cochin today.

A joint venture b/w CSL & HDPEL- Hooghly Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (HCSL) has been incorporated with CSL 74% and HDPEL 26% shares in HCSL. A Shareholders agreement was signed between CSL and HDEPL at the conference today, for taking over manufacturing facilities of HDEPL in Kolkata. With this, CSL is setting the stage for revival and strengthening of maritime heritage in Kolkata.

Shri Gadkari also visited Munnar today, where he laid the foundation stone for rehabilitation and upgradation of NH 85 from Bodimettu to Munnar to two laned with paved shoulder. The 42 km project has an estimated cost of Rs 380.76 Crores.

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