

AMTOI

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NEWS

Living Legacy Mapping the Future Journey

Atmanirbhar Bharat and Multimodal Logistics



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Content



About AMTOI	4
From the President's Desk	5
<i>Shantanu Bhadkamkar</i>	
This Is Our Moment! This Is Our Calling!	
Editorial	8
<i>Anand Sheth</i>	
Atmanirbhar Bharat & Multimodal Logistics	
Special Feature	11
<i>Rajesh Menon</i>	
The Role Of Sme Maritime Enterprises In Shaping India's Logistics Self-Reliance	
Feature 1	14
<i>Sam Katgara</i>	
125 Years Of Jeena - Connecting India To The World	
Feature 2	16
<i>CKB Group</i>	
Over a Century of Leadership and Innovation in Logistics	
Feature 3	19
<i>Bal Malkit Singh</i>	
Living Legacy - Mapping the Future Journey Atmanirbhar Bharat and Multimodal Logistics	
Feature 4	20
<i>Dushyant Mulani</i>	
The Living Legacy	
Feature 5	21
<i>Ashok Gupta</i>	
Redefining Connectivity: AI-Driven Multimodal Logistics for a Atmanirbhar Bharat	
Feature 6	24
<i>Rajen Bhatia</i>	
Living Legacy — Mapping the Future Journey TKPL: 130 Years of Vision, Leadership & Nation Building in Indian Logistics	
Feature 7	28
<i>PDP Group®</i>	
Living Legacy - Mapping the Future Journey The PDP Group®: Five Decades of Building India's Multimodal Backbone	
Feature 8	30
<i>Nailesh Gandhi</i>	
EXG: Now Eight Decades Young Shaping Projects with Expertise, Innovation, and Trust.	
Feature 9	33
<i>Devendra Shah</i>	
Kal, Aaj aur Kal: Generational Collaboration for Future Leadership in India's Logistics Legacy	
Feature 10	36
<i>Dr. Joshua Ebenezer</i>	
Customs Provisional Assessments, 2025: A Time Bound Regime Bringing Predictability for Trade	
Feature 11	40
<i>Dr. Pramod Sant</i>	
Redefining Connectivity: AI-Driven Multimodal Logistics for a Atmanirbhar Bharat	
Special Feature	43
<i>Arun Kumar</i>	
AMTOI Day 2025 — Defending Our Waters, Protecting Our Future	
Photo Gallery	46
Officer Bearers 2025-26	49
Managing Committee List	49
AMTOI Membership Benefits	49
AMTOI SUB - COMMITTEE LIST	50



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About us

AMTOI, The Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India, was formed with the object of organizing Multimodal Transport Operators at the national level and improving the quality of their services. The members of the Association are Multimodal Transport Operators registered with the Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai under the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act, 1993 which also includes some associate members like CFS operators, tank container operators etc.

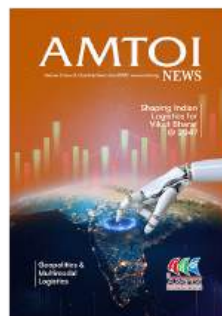
The Association is a non-profit making body registered under the Indian Companies Act and is managed by the Managing Committee comprising of 7 members elected by the Operator members. The Committee is assisted by a Board of Advisors consisting of the representatives of Government / Public Sector Organizations. Also, it has various trade association representatives on its extended board and is thus likened to an apex body. As a unique initiative, AMTOI has set up a forum called the Grievance Redressal Forum (GRF). The objective of this Forum is to create

a platform for dispute resolution and thereby addressing grievances of the members of the trade.

The Association has a two-tier membership Ordinary members who are registered as MTOs and Associate members who are not MTOs themselves but who are involved in operations connected with multimodal transport. The Associate members are not eligible for voting rights or contest in the Elections. The Association from time to time has made suggestions for the consideration of Government and in fact the suggestion for amending the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act and for adopting other related measures. AMTOI has been able to secure representation on Government bodies like the Standing Committee on Promotion of Exports, (SCOPE Shipping and SCOPE Air), Task Force on Multimodal Transport and various other forums of the Ministries of Shipping, Commerce & Finance of the Government of India. The Association is also a member of the International Multimodal Transport Association based in Geneva and has thus acquired international

recognition. For the benefit of its members, regular training courses are conducted be it on tax issues, insurance or other such related subjects.

An awaited event of the year is the MULTI-MODAL DAY or an AMTOI DAY which the Association organizes as an 'Annual Day' for the last many years wherein the entire shipping fraternity of Shipping Lines, Ports CFS operators, Freight Forwarders, NVOCC's, CHA's, Airlines, Government authorities in addition to MTO's come together to network and interact with each other under one roof. Members are kept abreast of the happenings in the industry by MULTIMODAL TIMES or AMTOI Newsletter which is published as a quarterly magazine currently and we hope to graduate into a monthly publication which will attempt to capture critical issues that are close to the industry and along with opinions of the industry leaders. Lastly, keeping abreast with the advancing technologies, AMTOI continuously improvises its website and offers tools for various industry players to come together and thus endeavoring to be a leader in its class





From The President's Desk

Shantanu Bhadkamkar

President, AMTOI
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This Is Our Moment! This Is Our Calling!

My Dear Colleagues and Friends, We stand at a remarkable confluence in our nation's history. The vision of '**Viksit Bharat 2047**' a developed India by its 100th year is not just a distant dream, but a tangible, time-bound mission of immense significance. For this dream to become a reality, India needs a world-class economy, and no such economy can exist without a world-class logistics backbone. As Multimodal Transport Operators (MTOs), we are not merely service providers; we are the **architects of connectivity** and the essential catalysts for this national ambition.

Our Association is entering a new term, 2025-2026, and I address you with renewed energy and profound optimism. We are operating in an environment of unprecedented support and transformational change. Consider the recent launch of the Bharat Container Shipping

Line (BCSL), India's first national container shipping line. This critical initiative, which AMTOI has been vociferously advocating for the past two decades, marks a monumental step toward maritime self-reliance and reducing our reliance on foreign shipping carriers. This is proof of our influence and the impact we can have on the industry.

This is our moment! This is our calling!

The challenge is stark, but the opportunity is immense. For a nation's growth strategy, logistics resilience and self-reliance are paramount. Our current mandate is to transform this ecosystem. In this vast undertaking, AMTOI identifies a '**Golden Triangle**' of strength. This strategic focus leverages a synergy of three powerful forces unique to India that will define the success of our term. This is where our collective efforts should be directed.

1. Our Multimodal Mandate: The seamless physical network we build.
2. Our Digital Infrastructure: The revolutionary data and financial 'highways'.
3. Our Legacy Businesses: The bedrock of experience and trust.

Individually, each is a powerful asset. Together, they are the unstoppable force, to quote Victor Hugo, of "an idea whose time has come." The future of Indian logistics belongs to the MTO who can seamlessly integrate all three.

The Bedrock: Our Legacy of Resilience

Let us first speak of our greatest, and perhaps most underestimated, asset: our legacy. Many AMTOI members are multi-generational family businesses. These institutions have weathered the storms of trade

for **over fifty, seventy-five, and in some remarkable cases, more than one hundred years.**

We are not “old” businesses; we are resilient businesses. We are the backbone of the economy. We are the original logistics ecosystem. For decades, these firms have been the stable pillars of their local economies, performing the following key functions:

- Providing customers with reliable and optimal solutions.
- Offering consistent and dependable employment, often when other sectors faced instability.

More profoundly, we are the first employers. Think of the millions of Indians who got their first job, their first paycheck, their first sense of professional dignity, within one of our family-run companies. We have been the entry point for an aspiring workforce, training generations and serving as vital engines of social mobility and **first-time employment.**

Our value is not just in the assets we own, but in the trust we have built. It is in the deep, personal relationships with partners, the ground-level wisdom of our people, and the “skin in the game” that only decades of commitment can forge. In an age of algorithms, this trust capital is our anchor and our differentiator. As my predecessors so often embodied in their tenure, our strength comes from this deep-rooted engagement and shared passion for the growth of Multimodal Transport.

The Arteries: Our Multimodal Mandate

This legacy serves our core mission: facilitating and advancing multimodal transport. This is the physical manifestation of our contribution to Viksit Bharat the

trains, trucks, ships, and planes moving in perfect, seamless harmony.

Today, this mission is supercharged by the Government’s unprecedented focus. Initiatives like the **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan** and the **National Logistics Policy (NLP)** are not just policies; they are our new operating system. GatiShakti provides the digital blueprint for integrated infrastructure planning, while the NLP delivers the execution framework. The development of Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs) and Multi-Modal Logistics Parks (MMLPs) is the new arterial infrastructure we will use physical infrastructure designed to end fragmentation and build a truly interconnected network. Our role as MTOs is to be the ‘single point of contact’ that leverages this new hardware for the good of the trade.

The Superpower: India’s Digital Public Infrastructure

If GatiShakti is about the hardware, our Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) is about the software that will make us unbeatable. This is the game-changer for our sector, a revolution waiting to happen, and we are at the forefront of it.

We have all witnessed the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**. It revolutionised the movement of money, making it instant, frictionless, and accessible to all. Now, we must turn our full attention to its siblings, poised to revolutionise the world of credit and data.

We speak of the **Account Aggregator (AA) framework** and the **Unified Lending Interface (ULI)**.

Let us be candid. One of the single most significant challenges our members face a challenge identified in high-level analyses of our sector

is the unfavourable payment cycle. We incur upfront custodian charges, performing carriers’ outlay, costs for fuel, tolls, and operations, but often wait 60 to 90 days, crossing the government-mandated 45-day limit for MSME, for payment. This chokes our working capital, stifles our growth, and prevents investment in new technology.

This is where ULI and AA change the game. The AA framework acts as a secure “data bridge,” allowing a business to securely share its own financial data (bank statements, GST filings, etc.) with its consent. The ULI, built on top of this, is a platform designed to do for credit what UPI did for payments: make it frictionless.

This is no threat to our business model. It is the single most incredible tool we have ever been given to solve our most persistent problem. It is the lubricant for the Seamless Multimodal Engine.

Our Unbeatable Synergy: The Path to Viksit Bharat

This brings me back to our “golden triangle.”

“The only constant in life is change.”
- Heraclitus

The future does not belong to legacy companies fearing technology. Nor does it belong to the digital startup with no grounding in the complex, physical reality of logistics.

The future belongs to us!

It belongs as much to the Young Entrepreneurs as to Multigenerational 100+ year-old family businesses

that have their clients’ trust, now use the physical arteries of the DFCs, track their containers on the digital ULIP platform, and finance their operations frictionlessly through ULI.

This is the synergy. We are not just

“digital-first.” We are “trust-first, digital-enabled.”

Driving Connectivity through Seamless Multimodal Synergy

As we embark on this new term, the Managing Committee has identified AMTOI’s top priorities to ensure we successfully harness this synergy:

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

As President, my focus will be to ensure that AMTOI leads the conversation at every table.

- We engage with other logistics and Importers & Exporters’ Associations to advocate for comprehensive and inclusive policy changes with government departments.
- While GST on Goods is settled, compliance in the service sector remains a challenge due to disputed interpretations.

- We advocate for a simpler regime with more transparent compliance processes, consistent rule interpretation, increased stakeholder engagement, and prompt, practical resolution.

India’s Resilience in the Global Arena

Geopolitical shifts and disruptions have posed challenges globally, but sentiment in India remains exceptionally positive. Following recent visits to Southeast Asia, Europe, and the United States, I can confirm that Indian entrepreneurs and policymakers are highly optimistic and confident. India’s strategic positioning is a testament to our deep-seated resilience.

Over many centuries, we have developed strong capabilities in managing uncertainty. For example,

when the Suez Canal disruption rerouted shipments via the Cape of Good Hope, our EXIM and logistics communities adapted faster. Indians tend to handle last-minute challenges better than most, giving us a clear advantage in navigating



global volatility. As nations recognise the size of our market, they also acknowledge our capabilities and significance.

As we look to the new decade, we must remember the adage: “You’re either at the table or on the menu.” Our legacy, experience, and resilience have earned us a seat at the table. Now, we must use the powerful new tools of digitalisation ULI, AA, and the entire GatiShakti ecosystem to not just participate, but to lead the conversation.

This is how we will build a resilient logistics ecosystem. This is how we will enhance our global competitiveness. And this is how we, the members of AMTOI, will create the seamless, efficient, and resilient arteries of a Viksit Bharat.

Let us embrace this future with confidence.

Thank you, and Jai Hind.

Priority Focus Area	Strategic Objective
Infrastructure Alignment	Aligning new infrastructure (DFCs, MMLPs) for seamless compatibility across rail, road, coastal, and air transport to maximise operational efficiency.
Self-Governance & Ethics	Strengthening AMTOI’s self-regulatory role by establishing a ‘Service Level Agreement’ framework and leveraging the Grievance Redressal Forum to promote dispute settlement through consensus and conciliation, thereby avoiding litigation.
Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration	Expanding the Extended Board (uniting 16 EXIM Logistics Associations) and reinstating the Strategic Stakeholders Group to include non-logistics service providers (e.g., banks, insurance, IT) for robust policy advocacy.
Ease of Doing Business	Advocating for a simpler GST regime in the service sector and promoting fair and transparent contracts, especially concerning the recovery of dues from the contracting party.



From The Editor's Desk

Anand Sheth

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“Atmanirbhar Bharat Is Not About Self-Containment; It Is About Self-Confidence”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

AMTOI conducts annual elections to appoint its Executive Committee, which in turn elects the President and other office bearers from among its members. The Executive Committee also establishes various subcommittees, councils, specialized wings, and Regional Chapters all of which collectively form the Managing Committee of AMTOI.

We are privileged to have an Executive Committee that brings together both experience and youthful energy. With the new Executive and Managing Committee at the helm, we look forward to an exciting and productive year ahead.

Editorial: Atmanirbhar Bharat & Multimodal Logistics - The Journey Toward Atmanirbharta

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi articulated the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, it was far more than an economic agenda it was a call for national self-reliance and renewal. The idea underscored the importance of strengthening India's core capabilities; to design, produce, and innovate within the country, while remaining an active and confident participant in the global economy.

Today, that vision is transforming the very backbone of India's growth the sectors of shipping, aviation, logistics, manufacturing, and skill development. Together, these sectors determine how India moves, builds, trades, and works. They form the interconnected arteries and muscles of a nation striving toward Atmanirbharta a self-reliant, resilient, and globally competitive India.

Anchoring Sovereignty: India's Maritime Resurgence

India's maritime sector carries over 95% of its trade by volume and approximately 70% by value. However, for decades our dependence on Foreign Flagged vessels and imported ships undermined our natural maritime strength. Atmanirbharta in Shipping is not just economics - it is strategic.

Under the Sagarmala programme, over 800 projects in ports and coastal infrastructure worth Rs 5.5 lakh crore are transforming the shipping Sector.

INS VIKRANT built at the Cochin Shipyard is a landmark of our technological prowess a true emblem of Atmanirbharta at sea.

The Jal Marg Vikas Project and

many others are reviving Inland Waterways around the country and the Maritime India vision 2047 envisions India a Global Shipbuilding and Logistics Hub.

The focus is on shifting freight from congested roads networks to a greener cost-efficient mode.

The recent announcement by our Honourable Prime Minister at the India Maritime Summit of the launch of BHARAT CONTAINER SHIPPING LINE is another example of moving forward in realising our dreams of being self-reliant and having control on our seaborne trade.

It is to start with 51 vessels and an investment of US\$ 6.9 billion shows the seriousness and intent of our government of moving forward in this sector and reducing dependence on foreign flagged vessels and exercising a greater control on India's growing container trade.

These are not just projects these are statements of sovereignty. The future of Indian Shipping surely lies in indigenous ship design capabilities, adoption of green fuel and a robust fleet of Indian Flagged vessels capable of competing globally.

“The Launch of INS VIKRANT is not just about a ship — its about India’s capability to build for itself and the world.”

Flying High: Self-reliance in Aviation

India’s aviation sector is soaring to new heights. From being totally import-dependent to emerging as a manufacturing, design and maintenance hub, the transformation is visible and growing at a fast pace.

The Government’s thrust on manufacturing and maintenance is showing results. HAL’s Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopter reflect the growth in indigenous design and engineering.

The Airbus Tata C 295 aircraft project marks the first time that a full military transport aircraft will be manufactured in India in the Private Sector, generating jobs and supply chains linkages and opportunities.

The UDAN scheme has already connected small towns to the national air grid and revolutionised the way people travel while stimulating local economies. The MRO policy has incentivised domestic maintenance hubs and are ensuring aircraft stay in the sky without the need to fly overseas for servicing.

Drone manufacturing supported by transparent rules and the PLI scheme is another area where Indian Start-ups are flying high. From precision agriculture to defence surveillance, this embodies the spirit of ATMANIRBHARTA.

To deepen Atmanirbharta, India must invest and give a greater push and focus on indigenous avionics, design, materials and

drone ecosystems.

The Logistics Backbone: Seamless, Smart and Self Reliant

Logistics often unseen, always essential is undergoing a silent revolution. Logistics is the silent enabler of economic growth. Atmanirbharta in logistics means improving efficiency through technology, integration and indigenous capability and capacity.

The NLP National Logistics Policy aligns all stakeholders ministries, states and private players under one digital umbrella. The policy is driving and pushing multimodal transport and lays great importance to data driven decision making through digital platforms like ULIP and ELOGS.

The PM GatiShakti are transforming fragmented systems into integrated corridors of movement. With DFCs Dedicated Freight Corridors, MMLPs Multimodal Logistics Parks, Modernised Railway Terminals huge improvements are seen in the first and last mile connectivity.

Technology is the new driver, Indian Start-ups are revolutionising logistics with AI Based tracking, warehouse automation, GPS enabled trucks, Electric Cargo Vehicles that reduce both costs and support sustainability goals.

A future ready logistics system will depend on indigenous manufacturing of heavy transport equipment, predictive analytics and skilling millions of logistics professionals.

The Goal is crystal clear seamless, smart, sustainable and efficient logistics designed in India powered by India.

Manufacturing: The Engine of Self-reliant Growth

“When India manufactures with innovation, it doesn’t just make products — it shapes possibilities.”

Manufacturing remains the cornerstone of Atmanirbhar Bharat and where this vision turns tangible. Factories are not just places of production they are the workshops of national resilience.

Under the Make in India and PLI Production Linked Incentive Schemes, more than 14 sectors are in focus from electronics and semiconductors to renewable energy and defence are all being turbocharged. India is now the second largest mobile phone producer in the world.

In Defence with over 470 items placed in the import embargo list have spurred innovation and created a robust domestic ecosystem for military equipment, missiles, tanks, aircraft components, naval equipment are all now being manufactured domestically.

Atmanirbharta in manufacturing is not just about quantity its more about capability. Samarth Udyog Bharat 4.0 and the National Mission on Advanced Manufacturing, India is now promoting robotics, IoT, additive manufacturing. The Semicon India Mission is designed to make India self-sufficient in chip design and production — a true leap towards digital sovereignty.

The next phase of Atmanirbharta will depend on R&D, design innovation and ownership and supply chain resilience. Public Private partnerships, research hubs and cross sector collaboration will help sustain momentum.

Empowering People: Skill

Development as the Foundation

Every Revolution is powered by people. No self-reliant economy can thrive without a skilled and adaptable workforce. Our demographic dividend, our youthful population will be our strength only if matched with world class skills

The Skill India Mission and PMKVY Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana have already trained over 1.4 crore youth across emerging industries like logistics, manufacturing and renewable energy. Sector Specific Skill Councils in aviation, logistics and manufacturing are aligning youth with real industry needs.

The focus is now shifting to future skills AI, robotics, drones and digital literacy so that India's workforce will be prepared for a fast changing industrial landscape. Initiatives such as Skill hubs, National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme and India Skills Competitions ensure that opportunities reach every corner of the country and ensure that India's youth are not just employable but are future ready.

Atmanirbharta is not just about employability it is about empowerment enabling every Indian to meaningfully participate in nation building.

"Atmanirbhar Bharat will be built not only by machines, but

by minds."

Atmanirbhar Bharat is an ambition. It envisions that India designs its ships, builds its aircraft, manages its logistics, manufactures for the world and empowers its youth to innovate fearlessly.

These sectors Shipping, Aviation, Logistics, Manufacturing and Skill Developments are not isolated Silos, they form an ecosystem. Efficient logistics boost manufacturing competitiveness. Manufacturing creates demand for skilled workers. Skilled workers innovate better systems. Aviation and Shipping connect India to the world.

By strengthening shipping and aviation, modernising logistics, empowering manufacturing and investing in skills, India is moving towards an economy that is resilient, inclusive and globally competitive.

Let us contribute by doing our bit to ensure that India succeeds and every Indian — entrepreneur, worker, innovator or policy maker is a protagonist.

"Atmanirbhar Bharat is not a destination — it is a direction."

AMTOI would also like to sincerely thank, Mr Rajesh Menon, Associate Director, SME Maritime, DPIT Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade,

Ministry of Commerce and Industry for his valued article in this issue. We also thank all other writers for their invaluable contributions with articles in this edition.

The recently concluded IMW - India Maritime Week (IMW) 2025, held from October 27—31 in Mumbai, concluded on a high note, locking in investment pledges of ₹12 lakh crore and signing over 600 MOUs, according to government sources. The event brought together leaders, policymakers, and companies from more than 85 countries, underlining India's ambition to deepen its maritime strength and global leadership. Key themes including green shipping, digital corridors, and shipbuilding shaped substantial deals, such as DP World's \$5 billion commitment, and major MOUs in green hydrogen and port modernization.

We urge our members for their greater participation in AMTOI activities which will help your association represent issues of concern to our members and the trade and contribute to the success of our industry and India. We also urge members to come forward and share responsibilities in our association.

Jai Hind and Happy Reading.



Special Feature

Rajesh Menon

Maritime Expert DPIIT Ministry of Commerce
Government of India

The Role Of Sme Maritime Enterprises In Shaping India's Logistics Self-Reliance

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in strengthening India's maritime logistics sector and boosting its competitiveness. According to the Annual Report of the Ministry of MSME, these enterprises contribute around 30% to the national GDP and account for nearly 45% of India's total exports, highlighting their central role in trade and industrial development. In the maritime domain, MSMEs serve as vital enablers, supporting a wide range of activities, including shipbuilding and ship repair services, port operations, logistics, warehousing, and coastal transportation.

These enterprises form the backbone of localized maritime supply chains, ensuring that ports and shipping operations have access to reliable, cost-effective, and timely supplies. MSMEs also drive technology innovation, primarily through start-ups developing digital logistics platforms, tracking systems, IoT-based monitoring solutions, and green shipping technologies. By offering these niche services, MSMEs improve the operational efficiency of ports, terminals,


and shipping companies, while also supporting India's broader logistics network, which connects maritime transport with rail, road, and inland waterways.

The Government of India's policy initiatives, such as the National Logistics Policy (NLP 2022), PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, Sagarmala, and Bharatmala projects, supported by increased budgetary allocations to the transport sector over the last two years, have led to the construction of port connectivity projects through road and rail linkages and the development of a multimodal transportation system like Multimodal Logistic Parks. Developments in port infrastructure, such as capacity expansion, automation, and safety improvements, have created opportunities for MSMEs to participate in maritime logistics development.

One of the most significant impacts of this is MSMEs indigenizing the maritime manufacturing ecosystem. In line with the national vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, many MSMEs are now producing critical marine components that were previously

imported, such as marine engines, propulsion systems, navigation aids, control systems, safety and firefighting equipment, and specialized port machinery. This localization has not only reduced foreign exchange outflow but also created jobs and strengthened India's resilience against global supply chain disruptions.

Through their adaptability, innovation, and extensive network of support services, MSMEs are emerging as key strategic partners in realizing India's vision of logistics self-reliance and transforming the country into a global maritime hub. However, their full potential has yet to be tapped, and doing so could help India achieve logistics self-reliance and a stronger blue economy. To do this, MSMEs must expand through innovation and integration across vital maritime segments. This can be supported by encouraging MSMEs to invest in research and technological innovation. This is especially important as global shipping shifts towards greener practices. It is worth noting that marine emissions account for around 3% of greenhouse gas emissions. The International Maritime



Organization (IMO) has adopted a “Net-Zero Framework” for the shipping industry, aiming for net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. As a member of the IMO, India is subject to these regulations and actively involved in shaping them, focusing on developing dual-use ships, fuel-efficient technologies, green shipping corridors, hydrogen hubs, green tugs, and more. MSMEs have a significant opportunity and role in this transition through innovation and manufacturing support. With the rise of Green Shipping clusters, new shipyards, and related infrastructure, MSMEs should prepare to contribute effectively by investing in innovation, skill development, and technology.

The second aspect is the changing geopolitical landscape of global shipping, which involves recurring trade disruptions, where MSMEs can become a crucial part of the logistics sector. Today, the international shipping industry operates in an increasingly unstable geopolitical environment, characterized by trade disruptions, regional conflicts, shifting alliances, and evolving supply chain dependencies. Incidents such as the Russia—Ukraine war, tensions in the Red Sea and the South China Sea, and periodic disruptions at major maritime chokepoints like the Suez and Panama Canals have significantly affected global trade routes, freight costs, and the reliability of cargo movement. These ongoing disruptions have exposed the fragility of global logistics systems that heavily depend on centralized, transnational supply chains. In this changing landscape, India's MSMEs have the potential to serve as a stabilizing backbone for the

logistics sector by developing resilient, localized, and diversified supply chain networks. To do this, MSMEs should identify areas of dependency within our maritime supply chains. For example, in container needs, we mostly rely on Chinese imports because they are cheaper than manufacturing containers in India. Currently, we produce hardly 30,000-40,000 TEUs of domestically made containers, mainly due to the high cost of local corten steel used for this purpose. Similarly, once MSMEs pinpoint a problem through studying these dependencies, they can discover many opportunities to either manufacture or provide services.

Thirdly, as India positions itself as an alternative manufacturing and logistics hub amid the global realignment of supply chains, MSMEs can become key enablers by focusing on self-reliant manufacturing, in line with the Make in India program. In ship repair, freight forwarding, last-mile transport, components and spare parts manufacturing, and coastal cargo services, MSMEs can step in to strengthen the domestic maritime supply chain, reduce reliance on external supply chains, and enhance trade resilience.

The fourth aspect is technology percolation, especially in areas such as AI-based vessel monitoring systems, IoT-based vessel management systems, predictive maintenance tools, automation solutions for port operations, and documentation. Today, as ports are planned to be made more efficient by improving key performance indicators such as ship turnaround time and berth utilization, data-driven innovation

offers an opportunity for MSMEs to make significant contributions.

Finally, to encourage shipbuilding in India and increase the number of Indian-flagged ships through policy and incentive support, MSMEs should be prepared to take a significant share of this sector. They can provide essential technical and material support to shipyards, ports, and vessel operators. MSMEs can get involved in producing marine components such as engines, propellers, control systems, electrical fittings, and safety equipment, which are crucial for both new shipbuilding and maintenance activities. Large shipyards will look for capabilities in hull repairs, coating, retrofitting, and vessel refurbishment, among other areas.

In addition to the overall policy shift, the recent reduction in GST rates is expected to benefit MSMEs in the Logistics and maritime sectors. Rate revisions in 2025 saw the GST on commercial goods vehicles (trucks and delivery vans) drop from 28% to 18%, and on packaging materials like paper and cartons fall to 5%. These reductions lower the initial investment for MSME fleet owners and reduce ongoing transportation and packaging expenses. For other segments, it is expected that an overall demand boost will be the main benefit.

Despite the above, small-scale industry still faces challenges such as limited access to affordable finance, skill shortages, and technology gaps. Even with government initiatives to increase credit availability, many small enterprises continue to struggle with high interest rates,

strict bank requirements, and complex procedures, resulting in a significant credit gap. The need for skilled labor and technology procurement to improve productivity and competence remains a hurdle. Additionally, despite growth in GDP and exports, the contribution of MSMEs has stayed stagnant for years, with their share in GDP fluctuating between 29% and

31%, and their share in exports varying between 40% and 45%, with minor yearly changes. However, the positive aspect is that as India continues to grow, MSMEs must scale through innovation, digital adoption, and technology upgrades to break through this plateau. Achieving this requires targeted incentives and alternative financing models, including external support.

Furthermore, MSMEs should invest more in training and labor costs and work to close the gender gap to attract top talent. Despite these challenges, the opportunities remain substantial. With their strong entrepreneurial spirit, MSMEs play a vital role in shaping India's logistics and self-reliance.

(Rajesh Menon, a maritime expert currently with the Government of India, and the views expressed here are purely personal. He can be contacted in rajeshmenon69@gmail.com)



Dy PM of Italy, Commerce Minister of India Mr Piyush Goyal and President AMTOI Mr Shantanu Bhadkamkar Date - 11th December 2025



125 Years Of Jeena - Connecting India To The World

Sam Katgara

Partner, Jeena & Co

From humble beginnings in the 1900s to where we are today, Jeena has spent 125 years connecting India to the world. An institution deeply rooted in trust, service excellence, and an unwavering sense of purpose laid the foundation for what has now become one of India's legacies in the logistics industry.

It all started with my great-grandfather, Pallonji Katgara who founded Jeena with a vision to bridge the gap between India and the world. Post-Independence, as India found its rightful place in the world, Jeena became a bridge between old ways of trading and the ambitions of a young nation. Our reputation was not just built by clever branding but by generations of people who showed up, often in rain and dust, determined to keep supply chains moving. Over the years, we have grown from a small trade business into a global logistics conglomerate, embracing innovation while keeping our core Indian values close to our hearts. This legacy reflects the contributions of the countless individuals associated with us over the years, and not solely the company's success.

Stories that shaped Jeena's legacy

I have been told since my childhood that delivering tea chests from the Sindh coast to a trader in erstwhile

Madras was my great-grandfather's first assignment; a voyage that took over a month by sailing vessel. He slept on burlap piles, bargained over tariffs by candlelight, and figured out how to untangle the complex web of customs taxes colonial India depended on. In 2025, that perseverance and readiness to pick things up quickly will still characterize our culture.

Jeena's trajectory has taken shape alongside India's evolution, right from colonial ports to the independent doors of Atmanirbhar Bharat. It not only survived many a tempest but also flourished by reinventing itself and still standing true to its values. Some of the first cargo-tracking systems in India were installed by our third-generation leaders in the 1990s when the Internet started to make its way into Mumbai's offices. In the 2010s, Jeena outperformed regional competitors by delivering consignments overnight because of the investment made in computerization and then AI-enabled route optimization.

Jeena's growth and milestones

Logistics is more than a business to us; it is our story of resilience and purpose. A story that began with steamships and trading posts in 1900 and has now blossomed into an institution driven by technology, people, and vision playing a pivotal role in connecting Indian markets.

Jeena's rise as a logistics player rests on our multimodal strengths, from air to sea freight, door-to-door, temperature-sensitive cargo, and handling of specialised projects. We provide multimodal solutions spanning across varied sectors like Pharmaceutical, Defence & Aerospace, Automotive, Engineering, and Projects.

One of the remarkable and relevant examples is from the COVID-19 era, when Jeena was authorized to deliver ICMR supplies like PPE and testing kits, ventilators, and medical equipment across the country. During the worldwide lockdown, our people worked tirelessly day and night to help us navigate the crisis.

Today, we are more than customs clearance or freight forwarders to our customers, we are partners who provide simple yet innovative solutions to sometimes complex challenges. Our transformation into a digitally driven organization is not a shift away from our roots, but a continuation of them. Our collective foresight has kept us one of the leading brands in the industry.

From OCR-enabled customs documentation to AI-assisted classification, from Salesforce-powered customer visibility to ESG dashboards that track carbon footprints, and many more such strategic initiatives make Jeena as

much a technology company as it is a logistics firm! We have not embraced technology but every tool, each ERP upgrade, automation of a project has been guided by one question: Does this make life easier for our people and provide real value to our customers? Our transformation has always been aligned with the country's vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat, and we are consciously contributing towards making India a global manufacturing and export hub.

Our focus on customers, partners and technology has won us many awards and accolades along the way — in recent years, we have been named The Global Hues' Most Trusted Logistics Companies in India and the Northern India Air Cargo Conclave's Logistics Company of the Year (2024). But more meaningful than awards, is the trust our associated partners place in us to deliver everything from life-saving medications and power-generating turbines to a young entrepreneur's first box of artisanal jams. Most of our partnerships with overseas agents has spanned over 15 years, some even up to 40 years.

The strong pillars of Jeena's legacy

The heart of Jeena's legacy is not statistics or milestones; it is our people! As our Partner, Cyrus so beautifully put it, "At Jeena, we believe in Heart count, and not Head count"

As part of the fourth generation, I often find myself straddling two worlds. One of tradition and patience, while the other is full of risk taking and agility. What stands out is how each generation of Jeena's leadership saw the business as an organic legacy that lives and breathes, one worth keeping but also one worth reinventing for the years ahead. The ability to adapt

to change, stands as the strongest testament to what an organisation is all about.

Today, with a 1,200-strong workforce, 11% of whom have been with us for over 15 years, each one carrying a piece of Jeena's spirit. Their dedication, resilience, and belief in Jeena's name have made this journey extraordinary.

What makes Jeena special is not just its longevity or scale, it is the spirit with which we operate. There has to be a larger purpose why 1200 people wake up and come work at Jeena every day. Logistics can often feel like a cold business of numbers and schedules. But at Jeena, we have always infused it with warmth. I often describe it as "finding the soul in supply chains."

As we mark our 125th year, the firm stands at the intersection of legacy and futuristic ambition. Its strategic feet are firmly planted in India, and its eyes look to global corridors. With a well-knit network of 27 offices domestically and partnerships across six continents and 60+ countries, Jeena continues to scale trust and technology simultaneously.

The future: Jeena moves with Atmanirbhar Bharat

As India sets the roadmap to become a \$5 trillion economy, logistics will be one of the key players in meeting the country's economic aspirations - the National Logistics Policy, PM GatiShakti plan and multimodal corridors are all setting the stage for it.

This is a fantastic opportunity for us as we set ourselves for sustainable, tech-driven ecosystem. We are all ready to shape the future as we know it — from our legacy and our understanding of the global ecosystem. We have been investing in tech-driven solutions to

streamline our processes and are conscious of our carbon footprint too — we are measuring it so we can manage it for the future of our community. We have made strategic entries in future-facing industries such as aviation, renewables, over-dimensional cargo, defence and aerospace, retail logistics, and pharmaceuticals to be in a place of readiness for tomorrow.

Jeena is a collective legacy of all who have contributed to this sustained success. Jeena's story is the story of Indian logistics itself: from colonial docks to global trade corridors, from handwritten ledgers to AI dashboards. A story of multimodal genius that not only moves cargo, but moves it in turn with the times, one step ahead, anchored in trust.

As I write this, I reckon that 125 years is not the end of a chapter but the turning of a page. The future of Jeena is being written every day, in the choices we make, the technology we embrace and the people we nurture. It is more about preparation for what we must become in the next 125 years and beyond - not just connectors of ports and airports but of aspirations, industries, and generations.

With our long-standing relationships, future perspective and cultural permanence, there's a form of stability that transitional startups can never have. And as global supply chains look for trusted partners, legacy firms offer not only operational capacity and but credibility which is built over generations.

My heart swells with gratitude for the journey so far and determination for the journey ahead. May we continue to serve with the same passion that first set sail in 1900.



CKB Group: Over a Century of Leadership and Innovation in Logistics

CKB Group

Legacy of Trust, Driven by Vision

“Service before self-interest and excellence in every delivery.”

Established in 1917 by Shri Chinubhai Kalidass, Chinubhai Kalidass & Bros. began as a modest logistics company in Bombay with an ambitious vision to connect Indian trade with the global economy through reliability, integrity, and innovation.

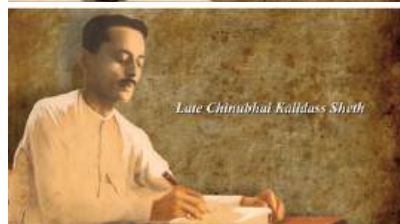
What began as a local enterprise over a century ago has today evolved into the CKB Group, a globally trusted logistics network offering end-to-end supply chain solutions across continents. The founder's values of trust, professionalism, and customer-first service continue to guide every decision the Group makes.

At a time when logistics was defined by manual processes and fragmented services, brothers **Shri Chinubhai Kalidass & Shri Surendrabhai Kalidass** introduced a new standard of operational discipline and service commitment. His philosophy that logistics must enable commerce and empower communities shaped the company's enduring culture.

Through the decades, these principles were passed on to subsequent generations, ensuring

that the organization remained resilient amid changing market dynamics. Today, every CKB employee embodies this legacy combining the founder's ethics with modern efficiency.

Building an Integrated Logistics Ecosystem



The CKB Group's growth over the past century reflects its ability to foresee industry shifts and invest in the right capabilities at the right time.

Founded in 1917 as a Customs Brokerage and Trade Facilitation company, CKB Group has spread its wings over the last ten decades, as an end-to-end logistics company providing: Surface Transportation and Trucking,

Freight Forwarding, ISO Tanks, Warehousing, 3PL/4PL and more. Today, CKB Group has offices pan India, and international offices in USA, Kenya and Mauritius, and globally aligned network and agents/partners across 900 cities / 127 countries



Unmatched Operational Scale

With over a century of experience, CKB Group's operational excellence speaks volumes.

It handles 125,000+ TEUs annually, comprising LCL Cargo, Air Freight, Liquid Bulk Trucking, moving 500,000+ Tonnes annually.

Trusted by Industry Leaders



Clients such from across industry verticals like Chemicals. Textiles, Engineering goods, Auto Parts, Steel, Green Energy and various other sectors testify to CKB's reliability and excellence. Their testimonials highlight the Group's **responsiveness, professionalism, and reliability** often citing CKB's ability to deliver under challenging timelines and complex trade environments.

Recognized for Excellence

Over the past **15 years**, the Group has been honoured with **more than 100 industry awards**, including accolades from The Government of India, The Economic Times, India Maritime Awards, MALA Awards, Gujarat Star Awards, Gujarat Junction Awards and CONCOR.

Its certifications - **ISO 9001:2015, AEO, C-TPAT**, and **IATA** further validate CKB's unwavering commitment to **quality, safety, and compliance**.

Technology-Led Progress

The Group continues to innovate with:

- Online Tracking & Documentation
- Digital Shipment Visibility Dashboards
- Automated DSR (Daily

- Shipment Reports)
- Real-Time Status Updates for Customers
- API Connectivity with Client Systems

This integration of technology enhances transparency and strengthens CKB's promise of dependable, customer-centric logistics.

The leadership baton at CKB Group has seamlessly transitioned to a new generation that brings global exposure, strategic thinking, and digital acumen.

While the core values of trust, ethics, and service excellence remain unchanged, today's leadership is reimagining CKB's future through:

- Digital Transformation Initiatives to enhance supply chain visibility.
- Strategic Partnerships with international logistics and technology firms.
- Investments in Sustainability and green logistics solutions.
- Skill Development Programs to empower the next generation of logistics professionals.

“Legacy is not about preserving the past it's about preparing for the future.”

This philosophy drives the Group's continued evolution, ensuring that CKB remains both legacy-driven and innovation-led an organization deeply rooted in tradition yet agile enough to lead in a digital world.

Our Vision

“To be one of the market leaders across the nation focused on customer happiness, redefining logistics solutions through our dedicated and motivated team. We are committed to being responsible citizens, building trust.”

The Roadmap to Sustainable Success

CKB's institutionalisation journey is built on four foundational pillars:



1. Process Excellence & Standardisation

Through robust systems and international certifications, CKB ensures seamless operations across all offices and divisions.

2. Governance & Compliance

Adherence to global trade regulations and best practices strengthens the Group's credibility and resilience.

3. Sustainability & Social Responsibility

CKB Group is deeply committed to giving back. Its CSR initiatives include:

- **Project Nanhi Kali** - Empowering the girl child through education
- **Grow Trees** - Supporting afforestation and environmental sustainability
- **Ahmedabad Cancer Foundation** - Supporting needy patients undergoing

Cancer treatment

- **Cuddles Foundation** - Supporting children fight cancer with holistic nutrition
- **Shree Raj Medical & Healthcare Centre**- Set up of Specialty Clinics and Outpatient Department in a Rural Hospital.

These programs reflect the Group's belief that true success is measured by its contribution to society.

4. People, Culture & Capability Building

Employees are seen as partners in progress. Through training, mentorship, and recognition programs, CKB cultivates a culture of growth and inclusivity that translates into superior customer service.

The logistics sector in 2025 is at the heart of India's economic transformation. With increasing globalization, digitalization, and sustainability mandates, the industry is witnessing a paradigm shift.

Emerging Opportunities

- Expansion of **Multimodal Logistics Parks and dedicated Freight Corridors**
- Integration of **Technology and Data Analytics** for predictive logistics
- Rising demand for **Green Supply Chain Solutions**
- Growth in **Cross-border E-Commerce and International Trade**
- **Built-To-Suit Warehousing Solutions**

CKB Group is strategically positioned to capitalize on these opportunities through its global presence, diverse service portfolio, and legacy of reliability.

The Advantage of Family-Led Enterprises

Globally, around 70% of Logistics Firms are family-owned and family-led businesses. Family-led organisations, like CKB Group, bring continuity, accountability, and deep-rooted relationships to the logistics business. Their



agile decision-making, long-term perspective, and personal commitment to clients differentiate them in an industry increasingly defined by technology and scale. **"While technology drives logistics forward, human values keep it grounded."** CKB exemplifies this balance, combining digital innovation with the warmth of personalized service.

Moving Possibilities Forward

From a modest beginning in 1917 to becoming a global logistics powerhouse, **CKB Group** has embodied the evolution of Indian

enterprise resilient, adaptable, and visionary.

With over a century of experience, a trusted client base, and a strong international presence, the Group continues to live by its commitment to **"offering a world of logistics solutions."**

As CKB looks ahead to 2025 and beyond, its mission is clear: to continue shaping the future of logistics through **innovation, responsibility, and unwavering service excellence** ensuring that every shipment delivered carries with it a century's worth of trust.

Quick Facts

- **Founded:** 1917
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, India with multiple offices Pan India
- **Global Presence:** Own international offices in USA, Kenya, and Mauritius with a strong network of globally aligned partner agents
- **Core Services:** Complete Logistics services solutions like Freight Forwarding, Customs Brokerage, Transportation & Trucking, Warehousing, 3PL/4PL, ISO Tank Management, Chemicals & Hazardous Cargo, Project Cargo, Breakbulk and Bulk Cargo and it has also launched its Build-To-Suit Warehousing and Distribution Operations
- **Certifications:** ISO 9001:2015, IATA, AEO, C-TPAT
- **CSR Initiatives:** Project Nanhi Kali, Grow Trees, Ahmedabad Cancer Foundation, Cuddles Foundation, Special Clinics and Outpatient Department at Shree Raj Medical and Healthcare Centre



Living Legacy — Mapping the Future Journey Atmanirbhar Bharat and Multimodal Logistics

Mr. Bal Malkit Singh

Executive Chairman, Maharashtra State Punjabi Sahitya Academy, Government of Maharashtra Advisor & Former President, All India Motor Transport Congress

India stands today at a defining crossroads—balancing the wisdom of its legacy with the vision of a self-reliant, globally competitive future. As the nation moves steadily toward Viksit Bharat @ 2047, the logistics sector serves as both the lifeline of India's economic growth and a symbol of its transformation into an Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).

A Legacy of Strength and Resilience

The Indian logistics and transport industry has been the silent force behind the country's economic progress. From the days of manual freight movement to today's AI-enabled multimodal networks, our journey has been one of endurance, innovation, and adaptation.

As someone who has spent decades in the sector, I have witnessed how road, rail, sea, and air transport have evolved through the dedication of millions of logistics professionals—drivers, operators, freight forwarders, and infrastructure planners—who form the backbone of this dynamic ecosystem.

This is India's living legacy: a network built on human effort, discipline, and a spirit of service to the nation.

Mapping the Future: The Vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat

The clarion call for Atmanirbhar Bharat has given a new direction to India's logistics transformation. It is not just about producing domestically but about creating globally competitive systems efficient, sustainable, and resilient. The logistics sector is at the forefront of this mission.

Key national initiatives such as **PM GatiShakti, the National Logistics Policy, Sagarmala, and Bharatmala** have laid a visionary roadmap to integrate all modes of transport into a seamless multimodal network. These reforms are not only improving speed and efficiency but also reshaping India into a strategic logistics hub for global trade.

Multimodal Logistics: The Engine of Self-Reliance

Multimodal logistics lies at the heart of Atmanirbhar Bharat. The future of logistics is not defined by one mode of transport; it is the synchronized movement across modes that will determine competitiveness.

- **Road transport** remains the most vital connector, ensuring last-mile reach and flexibility.
- **Rail corridors** such as the Dedicated Freight Corridors are revolutionizing long-haul efficiency.

- **Ports and coastal shipping** are being modernized under Sagarmala, promoting cost-effective and eco-friendly movement.
- **Air cargo and inland waterways** are emerging as high-potential avenues for niche, time-sensitive goods.

The integration of these modes supported by digital platforms like ULIP (Unified Logistics Interface Platform)—will redefine efficiency, transparency, and traceability across India's supply chains.

Sustainability and Technology: The Twin Pillars of Growth

India's logistics vision must embrace sustainability and digital transformation. The future belongs to logistics systems powered by:

- **Green transport solutions** such as LNG, CNG, and electric vehicles.
- **Digital twins, IoT, and AI-driven route optimization** for better decision-making.
- **Blockchain-enabled transparency** for global trade compliance.
- **Renewable-powered warehouses** that support environmental goals.

By 2047, India's logistics landscape must not only support economic growth but also reflect our commitment to a greener planet and responsible development.

Institutional Strength and Public-Private Collaboration

No transformation is sustainable without institutional strength and collaboration. The partnership between the government, logistics operators, and industry associations like AMTOI and AIMTC must continue to evolve.

The private sector's agility, combined with government backed reforms and digital infrastructure, can create a world-class logistics ecosystem efficient, equitable, and future-ready. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) should expand into multimodal logistics parks, driver welfare programs, and green transport initiatives.

Empowering the Next Generation

India's logistics transformation is also a human story. As automation and technology reshape the sector, the next generation of logistics leaders must be equipped with digital literacy, management expertise, and a strong ethical foundation. Skilling initiatives, training institutes, and professional academies should nurture a new wave of innovators who can carry forward this living legacy with pride and purpose.

Conclusion: Building a Self-Reliant and Connected Bharat

As we map the future journey, the legacy of Indian logistics stands as a testament to resilience,

innovation, and national service. The path to Atmanirbhar Bharat will not be built overnight it will be carried forward by every entrepreneur, driver, policymaker, and logistician who contributes to India's seamless movement of goods and ideas.

With continued reforms, digital empowerment, and a shared vision of collaboration, India is poised to emerge as a global logistics powerhouse efficient, sustainable, and truly self-reliant.

The living legacy continues, as we march forward together toward Viksit Bharat @ 2047 a confident, connected, and Atmanirbhar nation.

Feature 4



The Living Legacy

Dushyant Mulani

Director, Khimji Poonja Group

Compliments to AMTOI, President Shri Shantanu Bhadkamkar, and the entire team for this meaningful initiative of industry outreach and knowledge-sharing.

Khimji Poonja Group of Companies was founded in 1922 during the peak of the textile mill revolution in Mumbai. My great-grandfather and his uncle migrated to the city seeking better prospects in a rapidly growing economy. During the First World War, my great-grandfather, **Shri Khimji Poonja**, worked with a cotton trading firm. When the owner relocated to Germany, he took over responsibilities and mastered the nuances of

cotton trading and supply. At the time, cotton—often called “white gold”—was in tremendous demand, driving Mumbai's industrial growth. This experience later led to diversification into oilseeds, bullock cart operations and commission trading.

The company's journey spans several defining historical milestones India's freedom struggle, the Second World War,

the 1944 Bombay Docks explosion, and finally Independence in 1947. In 1946, with post-war liberalisation, imports of controlled commodities surged under British regulatory frameworks. The Collector of Customs issued a large number of Custom Broker licences in Mumbai, categorised as Mukadams, small clearing agents and others. Our forefathers became Bank Mukadams, handling clearing, warehousing, and management

of bank-financed cargo. Even in those times, logistics, warehousing, distribution and transport were established as major business drivers.

Following Independence, the trade landscape evolved further due to post-1962 restrictions and forex shortages. The organisation diversified into chemicals and pharmaceuticals, which became major revenue contributors. Transportation and allied services also emerged as strong verticals. **Well before CSR became a statutory requirement, the company upheld values of sustainability, social equity and inclusive wealth distribution. Job creation, empowerment of employees and vendors, and education-focused initiatives were prioritised.**

The organisation has always believed in doing business with dignity, selecting clients who value professionalism, and consistently setting benchmarks. Early focus on corporate clientele, compliance-

driven trade practices, and quality documentation continues to reflect in today's operations. Project handling, time-bound service delivery, and reverse logistics became core strengths. Transparency, trust, ethics and long-term financial planning enabled resilience as a family-managed business.

In today's high-compliance EXIM logistics environment, there is an urgent need for well-trained manpower conversant with statutory regulations, FTP, customs procedures, and non-tariff requirements such as BIS and LMPC. As a company with a strong pan-India presence and global partnerships, we must evolve with strong IT and ERP frameworks and develop teams capable of complex problem-solving. Future leadership must uphold humility, hard work and command respect through compliance, discipline and service excellence.

The organisation's growth will hinge on building passionate

teams, fostering trust-based relationships with clients, vendors and employees, and ensuring internal clarity among promoters on remuneration and financial conduct. AI-enabled decision-making, timely audits, continuous skill development, and knowledge-sharing with stakeholders on sectoral updates will be vital.

We are entering an era of immense opportunity for Indian trade and EXIM logistics service providers. With the emphasis on Aatma Nirbhar Bharat and a strengthened logistics ecosystem, the future is promising. India is expected to resolve tariff-related issues with the US soon, bringing forward a more competitive global environment, reducing logistics costs and enhancing export competitiveness.

The legacy we carry forward rests on the timeless principles of Trust, Transparency and Togetherness the foundation of our past and the beacon for our future.

Feature 5

Redefining Connectivity: AI-Driven Multimodal Logistics for an Ātmanirbhar Bharat

Mr. Ashok Gupta

Chairman and Managing Director

A Feature on the Legacy and Evolution of IRC

Introduction: A Story Rooted in Grit and Guided by Vision

Every great company begins with a story. Some start with capital, some with technology, and some with inherited advantage. IRC began with none of these. Its

foundation was laid on something far more enduring *ichchā shakti* (willpower), hard work, and an unshakeable belief that sincerity always finds its way.

In August 1963, when Late **Mr. R. L. Gupta** stepped off the train in

Calcutta (now Kolkata), he was not carrying an empire in his pocket only courage, ambition, and the hope of building something meaningful beyond the familiar timber business of Hissar, Haryana. That moment, almost casually

taken, would shape six decades of Indian logistics.

Today, IRC Group stands as one of India's most respected, technology-enabled, multimodal logistics institutions with global presence. But its story like every good Haryanavi tale begins with a gamble, a blessing, and a bit of jugaad.

The Calcutta Leap How IRC Was Born

Before the first truck moved, before the first consignment was booked, one of the most visionary decisions made in 1963 was the creation of the **IRC logo** the now-iconic **Kangaroo with a baby in its pouch**.

It was an unusual choice for India in the 1960s. But to Late Shri R. L. Gupta, the Kangaroo symbolised exactly what he wanted IRC to stand for:

- **Speed** - swift, dependable, no-nonsense movement
- **Care** - the baby Kangaroo protected in the pouch
- **Safety** - assurance that cargo would reach unharmed

And then came the full name: **INDIAN ROADWAYS CORPORATION**. At that time, all three words Indian, Roadways, Corporation could legally be used by a private company. Today, none of these words are permitted in private company names, making IRC one of the few legacy brands in Indian logistics with a name that can never be replicated.

This combination a bold name and a thoughtful logo gave IRC instant recall value across highways, transport hubs and corporate offices. Many old-timers still recall with nostalgia:

"Jab Highway par Kangaroo dikhe, to samajh jao maal safe haiga."

Now, continuing the story... How IRC Was Born** The early 1960s were a time of ambition. India was young, industries were expanding, and the transport sector was still finding its feet. Leaving the comfort of the family timber trade in Hissar,



Late Mr. R. L. Gupta

Mr. R. L. Gupta partnered with his cousins to start a humble transport firm in Calcutta. They named it **IRC** a simple name destined to carry thousands of shipments and millions of stories.

The turning point came with a single consignment.

A clearing agent, **Lee & Muirhead**, entrusted IRC with a shipment from Calcutta to Bombay. As the tale goes, Mr. Gupta personally supervised the loading, sealing, and dispatch. He followed up relentlessly, slept little, and ensured that the truck reached **Bombay before time**.

When Lee & Muirhead saw the reliability, they made a referral that changed everything:

"Try IRC for Dunlop India they are dependable chhorā-log."

That one sentence opened the door to **Dunlop India**, which soon became IRC's anchor client. With Dunlop came trust, scale, and reputation. And with reputation came others: **ITC, ICI, Raptakos Brett, Parke Davis, Reckitt Coleman**, and more.

By the late 1970s and mid-1980s, IRC had expanded to nearly **170**

branches, multiple warehouses, and a reputation as one of India's **top five transport companies**.

As people said in those days:

"Hawa hove ya aandhi, IRC ki gaadi chalti hi rahegi."

Growing With India Expansion, Trust & Turning Points

IRC's journey reflects India's own industrial growth. From the bustling godowns of Burrabazar to modern logistic hubs across the country, IRC scaled not just in fleet and branches, but in capability, reliability, and trust.

By the 1990s, IRC saw the future before most transporters did: logistics needed to evolve into **integrated supply chain management**. Warehousing, distribution, and value-added services were becoming essential.

Milestones During This Era

- **1996:** Launch of the 3PL and warehousing vertical.
- **2012:** CHA license acquired venturing deeper into import-export assistance.
- **2016:** Achieved the prestigious **AEO Certification**, strengthening compliance and global credibility.
- **2022:** Initiated DEF tanker operations and pioneered the **Bangladesh IBP route**, enhancing cross-border trade.
- **2024–25:** Crossed **₹200 Crore turnover**, marking a new era of scale.

Throughout these decades, IRC never forgot its roots the values taught by its founder: hard work, humility, and honesty. As Mr. R.L. Gupta often said in pure Haryanavi:

"Kaam dhang se karo, to grahak khud bhaag ke aayega."

(If you do your job well, customers will chase you.)

The Modern IRC — Three

Companies, One Vision

Today, IRC Group operates through three specialised entities, each serving a distinct yet interconnected role:

1. IRC Supply Chain Solutions Ltd

- Global freight forwarding
- Customs clearance
- International presence: Japan, UK, USA, Singapore
- Technology-led operations with TEILS software for total visibility

2. IRC India Ltd

- Domestic logistics and transportation
- Vendor-managed processes
- Reverse logistics
- Data-driven operations with high service reliability

3. IRC Warehousing & 3PL Solutions Ltd

- Modern warehousing infrastructure
- Large 1,65,000 SFT Gujarat facility
- Automation-ready hubs across key industrial zones
- Last-mile distribution and inventory management

The Group serves marquee clients including Maruti Suzuki, Honda, Hero MotoCorp, Tata, Suzuki Motor Gujarat, and multiple global OEMs. It has earned its place as one of the most coveted logistics service providers for automotive imports and exports.

Stories That Built the Company

1. The Dunlop File

In the early expansion phase, Dunlop once challenged IRC with an urgent, impossible-seeming consignment. When the team delivered it flawlessly, a Dunlop manager famously remarked:

“IRC does not transport goods — they deliver peace of mind.”

This line became an internal motto for years.

2. The Lockdown Miracle (2020)

During the COVID-19 lockdown, when cities were silent and roads deserted, IRC successfully handled 100 import containers, ensuring clients faced zero disruption. Drivers, supervisors, and managers worked with unity and discipline — a proud moment in IRC’s modern history.

3. The Warehouse That Became a Benchmark

The Gujarat warehouse wasn’t just another facility it set a new standard for automation, scalability, and real-time tracking. Many OEMs today benchmark their own warehousing setups against IRC’s.

As the staff often say with pride:

“IRC ka kaam dekh ke koi bhi kahe: yeh company theek-thaak nahin, bilkul lajawab hai.”

Culture, People & Values — The Invisible Engine

A logistics business is only as strong as its people. Over the decades, IRC built a culture of:

- Trust and dependability
- Ethical business conduct
- Long-term client relationships
- Respect for drivers and ground teams
- Commitment to transparent operations

Many senior professionals have worked with IRC for decades, helping steer the company through changing market demands while ensuring stability.

IRC’s Haryanavi heritage runs deep in its values — straightforwardness, warmth, and resilience.

As Mr. R.L. Gupta often quipped:

“Seedhi baat, no bakwaas yahi hai IRC ki khaas baat!”

The Road Ahead — Technology,

Sustainability & Global Ambition

With global markets reshaping logistics, IRC is investing heavily in:

- Advanced planning and visibility tools (TEILS)
- Automation-ready warehouses
- Sustainable logistics practices
- International expansion
- Strengthened multimodal capabilities
- Cross-border trade solutions across South Asia

IRC’s next era will blend heritage with innovation. The ethos remains unchanged: reliability, commitment, and service with integrity.

As IRC moves forward, it carries the legacy of its founder — a legacy built on courage, hard work, and the belief that every consignment is a promise.

From One Truck to a Global Footprint

From a small partnership in Calcutta to a global logistics group, IRC’s journey is proof that vision and perseverance can move mountains and thousands of shipments.

Today, IRC stands tall as a trusted logistics partner to India’s leading industries, but its heart remains the same: the spirit of a young man from Hissar who dared to build something lasting.

In the words of the founder, a line that still echoes across the company:

“Imandari se kaam karoge to safar lamba zaroor hoga, lekin safal hoga.”

(If you work with honesty, the journey may be long, but it will always be successful.)

IRC Group Moving Businesses Forward, Delivering Commitments with Integrity.



Living Legacy — Mapping the Future Journey TKPL: 130 Years of Vision, Leadership & Nation Building in Indian Logistics

Rajen Bhatia

Director, Tulsidas Khimji Pvt. Ltd

Founding Years: A Vision Rooted in Integrity (1895)



The origins of Tulsidas Khimji Pvt. Ltd. (TKPL) can be traced back to 1895, when Shri Tulsidas Khimji, a young entrepreneur in his early twenties, established a small firm in his own name. With no capital other than his reputation for honesty, he set up a single table in a reputed bank and began working as a controller of cotton on behalf of the institution.

His diligence and integrity quickly earned him the trust of British banking officials. This trust led to a turning point: he was entrusted with the clearance and transportation of gold, bullion, and silver, assignments of immense responsibility in those times. His reliability, discretion, and ethical conduct made him the bank's confidential adviser, influencing trade and cargo decisions long before India developed formal logistics structures.

As India's commercial activity expanded, the firm diversified into customs clearance, sea transport, warehousing, cotton supervision, and insurance. These early expansions laid the foundation of an organisation that would go on to serve India's trade for more than a century.



Shaping India's Early Trade Institutions

Beyond business, Shri Tulsidas played a key role in representing trade concerns. He frequently appeared before port authorities, steamship companies, and customs officials, advocating for fair processes and standardisation. His principled leadership led to his election as the Founder President of the Clearing Agents Association, Bombay, serving from 1938 to 1948. This body eventually evolved into today's Brihanmumbai Customs Brokers Association (BCBA).

The Second Generation: Shri

Karsandas Tulsidas — A Pillar of Indian Logistics

The company's legacy expanded dramatically under Shri Karsandas Tulsidas, son



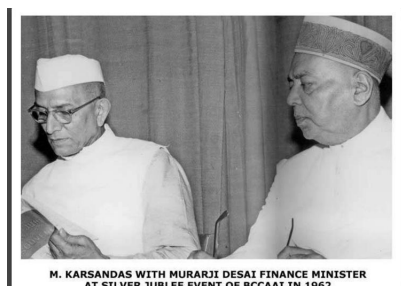
of the founder. Regarded as one of the **most respected figures in India's customs and trade ecosystem**, his influence extended far beyond TKPL.

Known for his humility, wisdom, and strong interpersonal skills, he served in several prestigious positions:

- **President**, Clearing Agents Association (1948—1963 & 1965—1966)
- **Founder President**, Federation of Custom House Agents' Association in India (1962 -63)
- Permanent **"President of Honour"** of the Federation (1965)

- Member, **Central Customs & Excise Advisory Council**
- Member, **Bombay Port Advisory Committee**
- **Railway Sub-Committee Member, Bombay Chamber of Commerce (20+ years)**
- **Export—Import Sub-Committee Member, Indian Merchants' Chamber**

Shri. Karsandas Tulsidas with **Shri. Murarji Desai, then Finance Minister — later Prime**



Minister of India. This is at the **Silver Jubilee Event of BCCAI in 1962.**

In 1965, the Federation passed a historic resolution honouring him:

“In view of the **selfless** and **distinguished services** rendered by Shri Karsandas Tulsidas Khimji to the clearing trade for about thirty years and to the Federation as its **first president**, he is hereby made the permanent ‘President of Honour’.”

This rare recognition reflected his deep contribution to shaping India’s evolving logistics framework.

Pioneering Air Cargo: From Wheels to Wings

TKPL’s influence extended beyond sea and land logistics. In the early decades, the company handled high-value shipments, including gold, silver, and currency notes, across global routes via ships, rail, and road.

In the 1930s, TK acted as agents for **Imperial Airways (now British Airways)** and **KLM**, managing bullion shipments from Bombay and Karachi. This positioned the company as one of India’s pioneers in air cargo, at a time when airfreight was still in its infancy.

Following World War II, when IATA began formalising the air cargo industry in India, TK was among the first to be appointed as IATA Approved Cargo Agents in 1949. This historic appointment marked TK’s transition: “From Wheels to Wings.”

Tulsidas Khimji Pvt. Ltd., official agents for EMERY WORLDWIDE.

From Family Venture to Corporate Institution:

As the company grew, sons and grandsons joined the enterprise, transforming it from a proprietorship into a partnership and eventually into a private limited company, Tulsidas Khimji Pvt. Ltd. (TKPL).

The 3rd generation continued the ethos of public service.

Shri Moolsinh, son of Shri Karsandas, played a significant role in the air cargo sector



and served as Hon. Secretary General of ACAAI (Air Cargo Agents Association of India). His involvement further strengthened TKPL’s reputation as a company that not only served its clients but actively contributed to the development of the Indian cargo ecosystem.

Shri Shantu Bhatia, BA from Bombay University and BS with Business Administration from



UCLA (California), son of Shr Karsandas continued following the principles of the founder and concentrated on enlarging the business. Both of them sincerely dedicated their efforts for their professional bodies like ACAAI, BCBA & FFFAI to develop fellowship with service to the community.

Shri Shantu Bhatia, BA from Bombay University and BS with



Business Administration from UCLA (California), son of Shr Karsandas continued following the principles of the founder and concentrated on enlarging the business. Both of them

sincerely dedicated their efforts for their professional bodies like ACAAI, BCBA & FFFAI to develop fellowship with service to the community.

The 4th Generation, Mr. Hemant Bhatia, Son of Moolsinh



Karsandas played an active role in developing national and international network, besides his focus on Air Cargo. He also served as Chairman of ACAAI Western Region from 2002 to 2004, thereafter Hon. Secretary General from Sep 2007.

A Living Legacy: Contributions to Indian Trade

Now we have the 4th generation, Mr. Rajen S Bhatia taking the Company forward. Mr. Rajen Bhatia is currently the Chairman of ACAAI, W.R. and also Managing Committee member. The 5th generation, Mr. Devansh Bhatia, having completed studies



in logistics from the UK, has also worked in London, in a freight forwarding firm. Now is developing new ideas which have synergy with his predecessors ideologies.

TKPL's legacy is distinguished not only by its longevity but by its role in building India's logistics institutions. Across generations, its leaders have:

- spearheaded customs reforms,
- participated in policymaking committees,
- supported standardisation of clearing and forwarding practices,
- contributed to port and airport improvements,
- strengthened relations between trade and government authorities, and
- helped shape the early identity of logistics in India.

TKPL is among the few organisations whose history runs parallel to the evolution of India's trade ecosystem :

from pre-independence manual processes to today's digital multimodal systems.

Modern TKPL: An Integrated Multimodal Logistics Platform:

Today, TKPL operates across 20+ locations in India, covering major ports, airports, and industrial clusters. It offers end-to-end multimodal logistics solutions across:

- Air Freight & Sea Freight
- Licensed Customs Broking
- Project & ODC Cargo
- Exhibition Cargo
- Pharmaceuticals | Perishables
- Hazardous & DG Cargo
- Domestic Transportation
- Warehousing & Distribution
- Global Freight Partnerships

Full Air Charter for pharmaceutical products.



TKPL collaborates closely with independent freight forwarders worldwide, enabling seamless international connectivity rooted in reliability, agility, and transparency.



Throughout its growth, TKPL has remained committed to the values that formed its foundation: diligence, honesty, integrity, and sincerity of purpose.

Alignment with India's Logistics Vision: Atmanirbhar Bharat

India's logistics transformation is accelerating under the influence of landmark national initiatives, including:



- PM GatiShakti
- National Logistics Policy (NLP)
- Dedicated Freight Corridors
- Sagarmala & Bharatmala
- ULIP (Unified Logistics Interface Platform)

These programs are creating a digitally integrated, multimodal, and cost-efficient logistics ecosystem.

Companies with deep institutional knowledge and historical experience, like TKPL, are uniquely placed to support this growth. TKPL's commitment to digitalisation, transparency, compliance, and efficiency directly mirrors India's aspirations for Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Its multimodal capabilities align with the national goal of reducing logistics cost, improving connectivity, and enhancing India's global competitiveness.

Future-Ready Institutionalisation & Sustainable Vision:



Growth For TKPL, institutionalisation means designing systems, governance frameworks, and cultural practices that ensure continuity beyond generations.



The company's future roadmap focuses on:

- Digital transformation: enhanced ERP/TMS systems, API-enabled operations, and intelligent workflows
- Sustainability: exploring cleaner mobility solutions and energy-efficient warehousing
- Sectoral diversification: expansion into renewable energy logistics, engineering cargo, and specialised high-value verticals
- Network strengthening: deeper partnerships with global forwarders and emerging logistics corridors
- People development: structured training, leadership development, and capability building

This strategy positions TKPL to remain relevant and resilient for decades to come, as a professionally governed, value-driven institution.

Why Logistics in 2025: A Sector



of Unprecedented Opportunity

The year 2025 marks a pivotal phase for Indian logistics. With multimodal connectivity being strengthened, policy frameworks

becoming more supportive, and technology bridging long-standing gaps, the sector is witnessing transformative opportunities.

As supply chains demand greater speed, transparency, and sustainability, organisations like TKPL, with a blend of experience, trusted relationships, and modernisation, play a critical role.

The Indian logistics industry is moving towards:

- integrated multimodal operations,
- cost competitiveness,
- enhanced visibility and



- documentation,
- improved port and airport efficiencies,
- and sustainable long-term supply chain structures.

Family-led organisations with generational continuity, strong value systems, and deep industry roots continue to provide stability and vision during this period of transition.

Conclusion: A Legacy Carried Forward, A Future Built with Purpose

The 130-year journey of TKPL is more than a company history, it is a testament to India's trade evolution.

From a single table in 1895 to a PAN-India multimodal logistics enterprise, TKPL has shaped and

witnessed every major chapter of the country's logistics landscape. Its legacy is built on the contributions of leaders who helped create institutions, influence policy, professionalise customs processes, and promote India's standing in global trade.

Current directors: Mr. Rajen Bhatia & Ms. Vandana R Bhatia

Chief Growth Officer : Mr.Devansh R Bhatia

As TKPL continues its journey, it remains guided by its enduring



principles while embracing the possibilities of a rapidly transforming logistics sector.

A legacy becomes timeless not by surviving the past, but by

continuing to shape the future.

TKPL stands today as a living embodiment of that philosophy, honouring its origins while advancing India's logistics landscape with renewed purpose and commitment.

Feature 7

Living Legacy - Mapping the Future Journey The PDP Group®: Five Decades of Building India's Multimodal Backbone

Group Companies:

M/s PDP International Pvt Ltd

M/s P. D. Prasad & Sons Pvt Ltd

M/s Allied ICD Services Ltd

Founder's Vision and the Early Journey

The story of The PDP Group® is rooted in the vision of our founder, Late Shri Durga Prasad Pandey, a man whose foresight and integrity laid the foundation for one of Eastern India's most respected logistics organizations.

In the mid-1960s, when logistics in India was still synonymous with basic transport operations, he foresaw the transformative potential of organized logistics services that could bridge inland industrial centres with gateway ports.

Starting with a small customs broking operation in Kolkata, Shri Durga Prasad Pandey built a business anchored in trust, service commitment,

and customer-centricity. His belief was simple yet powerful "Infrastructure and logistics are not just about movement of cargo, but about building national capacity."

This guiding philosophy became the cornerstone of The PDP



Founder of 'The PDP Group®, Shri Durga Prasad Pandey addressing PDPians during a company event in 1997

Group's growth and continues to inspire every initiative we undertake today.

Milestones That Defined the Journey

Over the last five decades, The PDP Group® has evolved from a modest customs broker into a **multimodal logistics conglomerate**, offering integrated solutions across ports, rail, road, ICDs, and warehousing under the leadership of **Mr. Pramod Kumar Srivastava**.

- **1970—1990s:** Establishment and recognition of The PDP Group's customs broking company, M/s P. D. Prasad & Sons Pvt Ltd with steady expansion across Kolkata Port, Haldia Port, as well as Land Customs Stations of Bangladesh.

- **1990s:** Entry into containerized freight forwarding and port-based operations with incorporation of M/s PDP International Pvt Ltd; obtaining MTO Accreditation by DG Shipping in 1997 and IATA accreditation in 1998
- **2006:** Commissioning of **ICD Durgapur (Code: INDUR6)** under M/s Allied ICD Services Ltd., marking a landmark achievement as the **first Inland Container Depot in West Bengal**, bringing customs, warehousing, and multimodal infrastructure closer to the heart of India's industrial belt.
- **2010s:** Expansion of the group's warehousing and cargo handling facilities at Kolkata Port area with launch of '**PDP Shrinkhala**' cargo handling site
- **2020s:** Launch of warehousing networks in Haldia and Tripura, as well as full-fledged logistics setups in Visakhapatnam and Mundra.

Each milestone has been a reflection of our founder's ethos **resilience, reliability, and reinvention.**

Growth Story and Institutional Strength

The PDP Group's strength lies in its ability to continuously adapt to the needs of the trade while staying rooted in ethical business practices. Our companies PDP International Pvt. Ltd., P. D. Prasad & Sons Pvt. Ltd., and Allied ICD Services Ltd. — have together created a seamless ecosystem connecting Kolkata, Haldia, Durgapur, and the hinterland industrial zones of eastern India.

Today, **ICD Durgapur** handles nearly **18,000 TEUs annually**, serving major exporters and

importers such as Graphite India, PCBL Chemicals, and Shakambhari Group. The facility provides bonded and non-bonded warehousing, rail-linked container operations, and modern cargo-handling



infrastructure.

Our integrated approach has not only optimized logistics costs for industries but also supports the government's Make-in-India and Ease of Doing Business missions.

The Group's collaboration with **Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (SMPK), Eastern Railway, ADDA, DGFT, and CBIC** reflects a shared vision to make logistics smarter, greener, and more inclusive.

Atmanirbhar Bharat and Multimodal Logistics

The call for Atmanirbhar Bharat has redefined India's logistics narrative from dependency to self-reliance, from fragmented systems to integrated multimodal infrastructure.

At The PDP Group®, we believe true self-reliance in logistics means building indigenous capacity, fostering regional hubs, and creating platforms that connect inland India to global markets efficiently.

Our initiatives at Durgapur, including proposals for an **18-acre Multimodal Logistics Park (MMLP)** and a **private rail siding under the PM GatiShakti Terminal Policy**, are designed to transform the region into a cost-effective gateway for export-import trade.

Next-Generation Leadership

The next phase of our journey is being driven by **Mr. Avishkar Srivastava**, our **Chief Innovation Officer**, who represents the Group's new generation of leadership.

Under his guidance, we are adopting digital transformation, sustainability practices, and human-capital development as core pillars of growth. His recognition as winner of 2022 FIATA Young Logistics Professional for Asia Pacific region reflects not only his individual achievement but also our institutional commitment to nurturing young talent in logistics.

This intergenerational transition is central to our legacy continuity with innovation, tradition with technology.

Future Vision and Sustainable Growth

Looking ahead, The PDP Group® envisions a carbon-efficient, technology-driven logistics network that integrates ICD Durgapur, Kolkata Port, Haldia, and Vizag into a seamless multimodal corridor.

Our roadmap for 2030 includes:

- Commissioning a **dedicated rail terminal** under PM GatiShakti.
- Expanding Warehousing Projects with green building certification.

- Implementing **EV-based cargo movement** within the ICD and CFS ecosystem.
- Building **driver rest areas and training academies** to address the industry's most vital human resource challenges.

By combining legacy values with forward-looking reforms, we aim to create a logistics model that is both profitable and purposeful.

Why Logistics in 2025 and Beyond

India's logistics landscape in 2025 is at a turning point powered by digitalization, policy reform, and manufacturing growth. However, the real transformation will come from institutional endurance companies that have built trust over decades and continue to evolve responsibly.

Family-led enterprises like The PDP

Group® have a crucial role here. They bring not only operational



expertise but also a generational sense of stewardship ensuring that logistics remains not just a business, but a nation-building mission.

As we look ahead to the next fifty years, our promise remains unchanged:

To build logistics infrastructure that connects India's potential to the world sustainably, efficiently, and proudly.

Conclusion: A Living Legacy

From Late Shri Durga Prasad Pandey's humble beginnings to today's multimodal network spanning rail, road, and port operations The PDP Group's journey mirrors India's own evolution as a logistics power.

Our legacy lives not only in infrastructure but in the thousands of people who make the system move drivers, handlers, officers, and innovators who together make "Atmanirbhar Bharat" a living reality.

For us, the future of logistics is not a destination it is a continuation of a legacy, mapped with integrity, innovation, and inclusion.

Feature 8



EXG: Now Eight Decades Young Shaping Projects with Expertise, Innovation, and Trust.

Nailesh Gandhi

Director, EXG

Express Global Logistics Private Limited (EXG) has grown from a seed that was the vision of an intrepid entrepreneur Mr. R. C. Gandhi. He saw emerging opportunities, in the growing industrialization of a buoyant post-independence India. Mr. R. C. Gandhi set up Express

Transport Pvt. Ltd. in 1946, which was renamed Express Global Logistics Pvt Ltd in 2012 and is testament to a family business that has grown successfully and professionally. The baton was passed to Mr. V. R. Gandhi in 1960, who made EXG a name to be reckoned with across

the country particularly for excellence in customs clearance and freight forwarding.

For 80 years now, EXG has been a cornerstone of excellence in the logistics sector, carving a reputation for reliability, from its humble beginnings as a regional logistics operator, EXG has grown

into a trusted partner for complex and large-scale projects, offering a spectrum of services ranging from project handling and freight forwarding to integrated supply chain solutions. The company's enduring success is rooted in its commitment to operational excellence, strategic foresight, and the ability to adapt to evolving industry demands.

At the forefront of EXG's operations is **Nailesh Gandhi**, Chairman and Managing Director, who has been with the company since 1991. With over three decades of experience, Nailesh has transformed EXG into a full-service integrated project logistics powerhouse, guiding the company's expansion into asset-based project forwarding and project transportation, warehousing, introduced multiply niche products and solutions, straddling backward and forward integration, and third-party logistics (3PL), establishing a strong presence across India and expanding into international markets. Guided by his leadership, EXG has successfully executed some of the country's most complex logistics assignments, earning the trust of clients across diverse industries and consistently delivering projects on time, safely, and efficiently.

Supporting him is Keyur Gandhi, Director since 2000, who manages the Exports and Freight Forwarding divisions while driving the company's technology and digital initiatives. Keyur has been pivotal in modernizing EXG's operations, integrating automation and digital tools to enhance process efficiency, reduce errors, and improve overall client experience.

His commitment to leveraging technology allows EXG to remain agile and responsive, even in an industry as complex and dynamic as logistics.

The fourth generation has also been inducted to the organization now, with Aarush Gandhi who started with a focus on the support services (HR, Finance and IT) and is now building a new business vertical (3PL).

EXG's expertise lies particularly in handling super-heavy and oversized cargo, tasks that require not just



resources but meticulous planning and technical know-how. The company, supported by competent professional CEO-Projects Rahul Agarwal, has successfully executed numerous landmark projects, including module handling for L&T, transportation of Tunnel Boring Machines (TBM), and relocation of large-scale industrial plants. These projects demonstrate EXG's ability to manage every aspect of complex logistics, from engineering studies and route surveys to lifting, loading, transportation, and on-site placement. By combining specialized equipment with highly skilled engineering teams, EXG delivers solutions that are both safe and cost-effective, meeting client expectations on a global scale.

Beyond these marquee projects, EXG has built a portfolio of services that seamlessly

integrate multiple aspects of the supply chain. Its project logistics capabilities extend from initial conceptual planning and engineering consultancy to transportation, installation, and commissioning, ensuring smooth execution for every project. The company's offerings also include contract logistics, marine engineering, material handling, and 4PL solutions, making EXG a one-stop provider for complex industrial and infrastructure projects. This integrated approach allows the company to minimize delays, reduce costs, and maintain quality standards across every assignment.

For a family-owned and -run organization, the key is to ensure seamless transition from one generation to the next, managing change effectively across decades and retaining a caring yet competitive culture.

In recent years, especially considering we are a people-driven business, we have been cognizant of the need to adapt to the demands of a rapidly changing external environment, learn to cope with the legitimate demands of Gen-Z, and changing established practices to ensure we keep current with business needs and directions.

A concerted focus on a fair and transparent performance management system is an important step in this direction however, we acknowledge we are still at a nascent stage on implementing several of the initiatives we have begun.

Behram Sabawala, EXG's CHRO and CSO, is a critical strategic partner, who also plays the role of mentor and guide, and is responsible for overseeing all



aspects of people management and aligning workforce strategy with the organization's overarching business objectives. Key responsibilities include Strategic Workforce Planning, Talent Management, Cultivating Culture and Engagement, Compensation and Benefits, Compliance and Risk Management. More importantly, he plays a large role in Change



Management. With EXG's huge focus towards Gen-Z being added to the team, this process of change management is the key to our future success.

The company also places a strong emphasis on talent development and team building. By combining the experience of seasoned professionals with the energy and perspective of emerging leaders, EXG ensures that every project is executed with

precision, technical excellence, and operational discipline. Specialized teams are aligned with distinct project verticals, such as heavy industries, oil and gas, infrastructure, and energy, enabling EXG to deliver customized solutions that address the unique challenges

heavy modules over challenging terrains, coordinating multi-modal logistics for industrial plants, or managing time-sensitive shipments. EXG combines technical expertise with operational agility. The result is a logistics process that is not only reliable but also scalable,

EQUIPMENT ACQUIRED



of each sector. This approach has allowed the company to consistently meet project deadlines, uphold rigorous safety standards, and deliver measurable value to clients.

EXG's commitment to innovation and efficiency is evident in its approach to project planning and execution. Every assignment is treated as a bespoke challenge, requiring careful assessment of risks, specialized equipment deployment, and strategic coordination across multiple teams. Whether transporting

adaptable, and responsive to the evolving demands of the industry.

As India's industrial and infrastructure sectors continue to grow, the demand for organized, reliable, and technologically advanced logistics services is increasing exponentially. EXG is well-positioned to meet these demands, thanks to its forward-looking approach that blends traditional operational excellence with modern digital solutions. The company has built strong relationships with clients across sectors such as oil and gas, energy, manufacturing, and infrastructure, enabling it to anticipate challenges and provide proactive solutions. With Nailesh and Keyur leading operations, EXG can navigate complex logistics landscapes while maintaining a focus on client satisfaction, safety, and efficiency.

In addition to its operational

FACTORY TO FOUNDATION



achievements, EXG has played a significant role in shaping the logistics industry in India. Through participation in industry bodies, partnerships with international logistics firms, and continuous investment in employee development, the company has contributed to raising standards, improving processes, and advancing best practices across the sector.

This year, EXG celebrates **80 years of legacy**, a milestone recognized in Hindu tradition as **Sathabhishekam**. This milestone marks decades of sustained growth, resilience, and service, underscoring the company's long-standing commitment to

excellence and innovation while honouring the values that have shaped its journey. It serves as



a reminder of the company's ability to adapt, evolve, and lead in an industry that is increasingly complex and competitive.

With a strong leadership team, specialized capabilities, and a focus on technological advancement and operational excellence, EXG is poised to continue delivering complex project solutions across India and beyond. Its dedication to precision, innovation, and client satisfaction ensures that the company will remain a trusted partner in logistics for decades to come, setting benchmarks for quality, reliability, and professionalism.

Feature 9



Kal, Aaj aur Kal: Generational Collaboration for Future Leadership in India's Logistics Legacy

Mr. Devendra Shah

Director, Liladhar Pasoo Group

Team Liladhar Pasoo Insights from Over a Century of Supply Chain Experience

Across the world, logistics has historically been shaped by family-run enterprises built on trust, personal relationships, and deep-rooted values. India is no different. For decades, the sector was strengthened by entrepreneurial families who understood local markets, nurtured long-term customer ties, and delivered reliability through personal commitment. These foundational traits shaped the early identity of Indian

logistics.

However, the landscape around us is undergoing a dramatic shift. Rapid digitisation, national infrastructure upgrades, new compliance frameworks, and evolving trade corridors are pushing even long-established logistics companies to modernise. The Indian logistics ecosystem now functions through a hybrid model that blends legacy values and intuition with professional structures, technology-led

processes, and global standards. This blending of old and new is not accidental. It is intentional leadership building. It is about enabling the next generation while preserving the wisdom of those who built the foundation.

Forces Shaping Today's Logistics Leadership

India's logistics industry is at an inflection point. Several powerful forces are simultaneously reshaping how leadership is

cultivated and how organisations must operate.

1. Global Integration and Governance Change

India's growing integration with global supply chains demands new levels of governance and accountability. Initiatives like China plus one, the emergence of new economic corridors, and rising partnership interest from global markets have elevated expectations around compliance, transparency, and performance. Domestically, reforms around multimodal connectivity, logistics cost reduction, and unified planning are driving companies to adopt global best practices and professional management. This shift is steadily encouraging logistics organisations to adopt more structured and professional operating models.

2. The Rise of Next Generation Leadership

A major force of change comes from within. India's next generation leaders. Many have studied or trained abroad and gained exposure to organised systems, governance frameworks, analytics-based planning, and global logistics norms. They return with an inherent understanding of structured processes, digital capabilities, and performance-focused thinking.

Their leadership style complements that of the previous generation. Instead of inheriting businesses

by default, successors are spending years in ground-level operations in warehouses, transport yards, documentation cells and customer service zones to build a true 360 degree view. Succession today is guided by mentorship, capability assessments, cross-functional rotations, and institutional processes rather than entitlement.

3. Rapidly Changing Consumer Behaviour

The modern Indian consumer expects speed, transparency, and convenience, whether they are a small retailer or a global importer. E-commerce, on-demand delivery models, and rising expectations for real-time visibility have accelerated the need for agility. Companies are increasingly automating warehouses, using data-driven fleet routing, and adopting responsive supply chain models to match this shift.

Consumer behaviour is setting the rhythm for the industry's evolution and forcing logistics leaders to rethink scalability and speed.

4. Digital Transformation as a Business Imperative

Technology is no longer an add-on. It is the backbone of logistics strategy. Artificial intelligence, IoT-enabled tracking, digital twins, robotics, and cloud-based visibility platforms are fundamentally redefining operations. AI-driven demand forecasting reduces idle time. Real-time dashboards eliminate blind spots. Blockchain ensures transparency. Cloud systems

unify multimodal networks.

These capabilities give younger leaders the agility to navigate volatility, diversify service offerings, and create resilient operational frameworks. Technology is driving not just efficiency but competitiveness.

5. Workforce Diversity and Inclusion

Another significant shift is the transformation of the logistics workforce. National skilling initiatives such as Skill India, PMKVY, and LEAPS 2025 are pulling young professionals into roles traditionally dominated by family lineage.

Importantly, women are entering the workforce in increasing numbers across warehousing, compliance cells, planning divisions, and customer success teams. Diversity is strengthening organisations with broader perspectives, modern work culture, and a renewed sense of ambition.

Together, these forces are transforming family-led businesses into structured organisations with evolved governance, stronger delegation, and wider inclusion. The traditional family system is naturally diluting, not losing its essence, but broadening its boundaries.

Policy Powerhouses: PM GatiShakti and Atmanirbhar Bharat

Two major national initiatives in the past decade have significantly influenced logistics leadership in India.

PM GatiShakti

PM GatiShakti introduced a unified approach to infrastructure planning through multimodal connectivity, digital geospatial integration, and coordinated execution across ministries. Highways, freight corridors, port upgrades, and regional airports are being developed in synchronization. This results in reduced transit bottlenecks and improved predictability.

India's improved Logistics Performance Index ranking is a testament to these changes. PM GatiShakti has helped logistics companies reduce non-productive time, fuel dependency, and coordination gaps. This enables them to compete more effectively in global markets. By harmonising infrastructure development, PM GatiShakti strengthens the foundation for a more self-reliant India.

Atmanirbhar Bharat

Atmanirbhar Bharat places strong emphasis on building domestic manufacturing capacity, resilient supply chains, and dependable logistics systems. The initiative highlights that the cost of vulnerability is far greater than the cost of preparedness.

Through enhanced inland waterways, rail networks, coastal shipping routes, and domestic warehousing capacity, the policy improves reliability and creates growth opportunities for logistics firms. While Indian companies continue to operate globally, the emphasis on self-reliance encourages investment in domestic capability and skilled labour.

Together these initiatives send

a clear message. Scale, speed, technology, and operational control are essential for India's global competitiveness.

Driving Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

In the modern era, leadership is not measured only by tonnage, fleet size, or transit time. Sustainability and social responsibility are now essential indicators of future readiness.

Green Logistics

Companies are introducing electric fleets, solar-powered warehouses, advanced route optimisation systems, and eco-friendly packaging. Shifting freight movement from road to rail, waterways, and coastal shipping significantly reduces emissions. Clean and efficient operations are now seen as vital for long-term competitiveness.

Business With a Heart

Family-run logistics businesses have historically believed in community responsibility. Today, that belief is evolving into structured sustainability programs focused on environmental restoration, education initiatives, and skill-building for local communities. Many leaders emphasise that profitability must go hand in hand with purpose.

Inclusive Workforce Futures

Empowering women, enabling youth participation, and building culturally inclusive workplaces strengthens logistics organisations. Diversity is a strategic advantage, not a box-ticking exercise. It enhances decision-making, organisational culture, and long-term resilience.

Guiding the Future: Four Pillars of Logistics Leadership

As India advances toward becoming a global logistics powerhouse, companies must build around four essential pillars, whether they are family-led or professionally managed.

1. Legacy and Innovation

Heritage provides wisdom, relationships, and trust. Innovation brings speed, modernisation, and new models. The companies that thrive consciously combine both.

2. Digital and Data-Led Capabilities

AI, real-time visibility tools, advanced planning systems, and integrated platforms determine scalability. Technology forms the new foundation of operational excellence.

3. People and Governance

Empowered teams, clear delegation, diverse talent, and structured governance ensure continuity and long-term sustainability. Skill development and cross-functional exposure prepare future leaders to navigate complexity.

4. Sustainability and Responsibility

Green operations and community contribution strengthen reputation and resilience. Every new asset, process, or expansion must be evaluated through both financial and environmental lenses.

These pillars reinforce one another. Strong governance ensures effective technology adoption. Inclusive teams drive innovation. Sustainability enhances competitiveness.

Legacy values strengthen organisational culture.

Conclusion: Building a Living Legacy

India's logistics sector stands at the intersection of Kal, Aaj, and Kal. Yesterday's wisdom, today's transformation, and tomorrow's vision are all converging.

The sector is no longer just about

moving goods. It is about moving ideas, industries, opportunities, and national aspirations. When experience meets youthful energy, when governance meets innovation, and when purpose meets performance, transformation becomes natural.

The future will belong to logistics organisations that embody inclusivity, delegation,

technological fluency, sustainability, and adaptability to consumer behaviour.

This is the new definition of leadership. A model built through collaboration across generations. A model where inherited values fuel modern strategy. A model that carries India's logistics legacy forward for decades to come.

Feature 10



Customs Provisional Assessments, 2025: A Time Bound Regime Bringing Predictability for Trade

Dr. Joshua Ebenezer

Principal Consultant,
NuCov Facili-Trade

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has rolled out the Customs (Finalisation of Provisional Assessment) Regulations, 2025, effectively reshaping what was once a largely open-ended provisional assessment process under Section 18 of the Customs Act, 1962, into a meticulously structured and time-bound system. This new framework, introduced through Notification No. 55/2025-Customs (N.T.) on September 12, 2025, builds directly on the amendments incorporated in the Finance Act, 2025, which received assent on March 29, 2025, and stipulates that all provisional assessments must reach finalization within a strict two-year window, with the possibility of a one-year extension granted by the Commissioner

under justified circumstances. At its core, the regulations establish clear-cut timelines, such as requiring the proper officer to notify any missing documents within 15 days, allowing importers or exporters a base period of two months, extendable up to a total of 14 months, for submission, mandating enquiry completions within 14 months, and setting a three-month finalization period post-document receipt or enquiry conclusion, all while incorporating provisions for written explanations in cases of exceptions. Beyond timelines, the regime provides explicit guidance on handling voluntary payments, interest obligations as per Section 18(3), refund mechanisms, bond closures, and recoveries under Section 142, ultimately fostering a more

balanced environment that prioritizes both trade facilitation and revenue integrity. For businesses engaged in imports and exports, this translates into accelerated resolutions, minimized capital lockups, and a significant reduction in potential disputes, fully aligning with India's broader Ease of Doing Business initiatives. Legacy assessments pending as of March 29, 2025, benefit from a reset clock starting from that date, ensuring equitable application across the board.

The Policy Turn-Why Now?

Provisional assessments have traditionally served as a vital mechanism in customs procedures, enabling clearances to proceed even when complete details, such as chemical test results, valuations, or ongoing


enquiries are not immediately available, thereby preventing unnecessary delays in trade flows. However, this flexibility has often come at the cost of prolonged uncertainties, revenue vulnerabilities, and operational challenges for stakeholders, prompting the CBIC to introduce these comprehensive regulations as a targeted response. The impetus for this change stems from multiple converging factors, beginning with the statutory reinforcements embedded in the Finance Act, 2025, which amended Section 18 of the Customs Act, 1962, to enforce mandatory timelines for finalization, capping the process at two years with a potential one-year extension by the Commissioner for documented reasons. These regulations effectively operationalize that legal mandate by delineating precise workflows, including who initiates notifications, the deadlines for responses, and fallback procedures when timelines are not met, such as proceeding based on existing records if documents are not submitted within the allowed periods. Furthermore, this move directly tackles longstanding issues of chronic pendency and procedural unpredictability that have been highlighted in various audits and policy analyses over the years, including reports from the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) that pointed out deficiencies like inadequate tracking systems in platforms such as ICEGATE for monitoring assessment reasons and completion dates. In line with the government's Ease of Doing Business agenda, recent CBIC directives have stressed the importance of time-bound

resolutions to enhance trade efficiency, a sentiment echoed in business media portrayals of the regulations as a proactive step toward greater certainty in customs operations. To contextualize the scale of the problem, overall customs arrears across categories escalated to ₹51,784 crore by March 2022, marking a 22% year-on-year increase and underscoring the urgent need for streamlined closure mechanisms. India's impressive leap in trade facilitation scores, from 78.49% in 2019 to 93.55% in 2023, has been attributed to such reforms, and these regulations fit seamlessly into that trajectory by promoting transparency and accountability. Additionally, the framework strengthens revenue protection through codified rules on interest accrual for duty differentials, refund processing to avoid unjust enrichment disputes, and swift recovery options, all while clarifying pathways that reduce litigation risks and ensure fiscal safeguards remain robust.

The New Mechanics

Under the 2025 Regulations, which apply universally to both ongoing and future provisional assessments and treat each bill of entry or shipping bill as an independent case, the entire process has been reengineered for efficiency and clarity. When a provisional assessment arises due to missing documents or information, such as test reports, the proper officer is obligated to issue a written notification detailing the specifics within 15 days, granting the importer or exporter an initial two-month window to respond, which can be extended by another two months if justified reasons are

recorded, and further prolonged by a superior officer but never exceeding 14 months from the provisional assessment date; should submissions fail to materialize within this timeframe, the officer must advance based solely on available records, with the importer or exporter required to confirm in writing once all requested items have been provided. In scenarios where the provisional status stems from the need for further enquiry, customs officials are directed to conclude investigations within 14 months and forward a detailed written report to the proper officer, during which additional documents may be requisitioned adhering to the same submission timelines. For assessments that were pending as of March 29, 2025, the timelines commence afresh from that pivotal date, offering a fair reset for legacy matters. Importers and exporters retain the option to make voluntary electronic payments on a self-ascertained basis during the pendency period, with these amounts adjusted against the final duty and subject to interest calculations under Section 18(3). The core finalization phase empowers the proper officer to conclude the assessment within three months following document receipt, submission deadline expiry, or enquiry completion, with extensions of two months possible through superior approval, all capped at an absolute two-year limit from the provisional date—or from March 29, 2025, for pre-existing cases, unless specific exceptions apply, such as requests for information from foreign authorities, ongoing appeals, Board-issued directives, or matters before the Settlement Commission, in which instances



the officer must provide written explanations to the concerned party, and the clock restarts only upon resolution of the impeding factor. The manner of finalization adheres strictly to Section 18, requiring a speaking order that upholds principles of natural justice if the final assessment diverges from the provisional one, or simply confirming acceptance on record and notifying the date in writing if it aligns; any deficiencies prompt the return of the bill for payment, inclusive of interest. Closure procedures post-finalization involve canceling or recrediting bonds and returning securities if no dues remain, while outstanding amounts lingering beyond 90 days trigger adjustments from securities or recoveries under Section 142, with refunds processed in accordance with Sections 18(4) and (5). The Commissioner holds authority to extend the two-year cap by an additional year for compelling, recorded reasons, and penalties up to those specified in Section 158(2) (ii) apply for any contraventions by importers, exporters, or brokers, without limiting other legal actions.

Trade Benefits (Importers/Exporters)

For importers and exporters, the 2025 regime introduces a level of predictability that was previously elusive, fundamentally alleviating the uncertainties associated with provisional assessments and enhancing overall business operations. By establishing definitive timelines and a hard two-year outer limit, with legacy cases benefiting from a March 29, 2025, starting point, businesses can now plan more

effectively, avoiding the indefinite holds that once disrupted supply chains and financial forecasting. This structured approach also facilitates better cash-flow management, as bonds and securities are released more promptly upon finalization when no dues are outstanding, and voluntary payments made during pendency are seamlessly adjusted, helping to curb accruing interest liabilities under clear guidelines. Moreover, the emphasis on written reasons for any exceptions or delays minimizes arbitrary extensions, fostering transparency that in turn reduces the likelihood of disputes and subsequent litigation. The safeguards for natural justice, such as mandatory speaking orders in cases of variance, further empower trade participants by ensuring fair hearings and unambiguous resolutions, while the streamlined refund processes help prevent mechanical applications of unjust enrichment principles, allowing for fact-based claims that preserve legitimate entitlements. In essence, these changes align closely with Ease of Doing Business objectives, enabling faster clearances that support just-in-time inventory models, lower holding costs, and a more competitive edge in global trade.

Litigation Guardrails-What the Courts Have Said

Judicial precedents have long shaped the interpretation of provisional assessments, particularly around interest liabilities, refund entitlements, and procedural discipline, providing valuable insights that complement the new regulations and guide compliance strategies. On interest under Section

18(3), cases like *Zile Singh v. Commissioner of Customs* illustrate that demands prior to the July 13, 2006, amendment are frequently invalidated due to show-cause notice deficiencies or natural justice violations, whereas post-amendment liabilities are assessed based on payment timelines and final outcomes, allowing arguments for waiver if differentials were settled pre-finalization with no remaining gap. Similarly, *Gwalior Alcobrew Pvt. Ltd. v. Commissioner of Customs* affirms that interest can apply to post-2006 differentials in a fact-dependent manner, and *Cisco Systems India Pvt. Ltd. v. Commissioner of Customs* (2024) highlights successful challenges when demands are poorly framed in notices, reinforcing the potential to contest interest if no amounts were outstanding at finalization. Regarding unjust enrichment in refunds, the Supreme Court's ruling in *Hindustan Zinc Ltd. v. Commissioner of Customs* (2023) cautions against rote application in provisional contexts, insisting on thorough, evidence-based evaluations rather than automatic diversions to the Consumer Welfare Fund, a stance supported by CESTAT decisions in 2021 that permitted refunds on revenue deposits without invoking the doctrine erroneously. Furthermore, *Vedanta Ltd. v. Commissioner of Customs* (CESTAT Kolkata, 2025) demonstrates judicial impatience with administrative delays, awarding 12% interest for a 15-year refund holdup and underscoring the broader intolerance for protracted pendencies that the 2025 regulations aim to eradicate. Audits from the CAG (2016

and 2025) and related policy discussions advocate for purposive interpretations that prioritize timely finalizations, aligning with efforts to curtail arrears and bolster trade facilitation.

Compliance Checklist for Trade

To navigate the 2025 regime effectively, importers and exporters should adopt a proactive stance starting from the provisional stage by immediately identifying and mapping any missing evidence, such as laboratory tests, Special Valuation Branch reports, certificates of origin, or valuation documentation. It is essential to monitor for the proper officer's 15-day notification and ensure submissions occur within the initial two-month window, requesting extensions with well-documented reasons if necessary while being mindful of the absolute 14-month ceiling to avoid forfeiting the opportunity for input. In enquiry-driven cases, businesses are advised to seek periodic status updates around the 12- to 13-month mark to confirm adherence to the 14-month handover requirement, thereby preventing unnecessary extensions. Considering voluntary partial payments can be a strategic move to limit potential

interest accumulation, with meticulous records maintained to facilitate smooth set-offs or refunds during finalization. Upon reaching the final stage, stakeholders must carefully review any speaking order for variances to verify compliance with natural justice principles and promptly initiate processes for bond or security releases, or pursue refunds within statutory frameworks to capitalize on the regime's efficiencies.

Open Issues to Watch

As the regulations take effect, several aspects warrant close observation to gauge their practical implementation and potential refinements. One key concern is the frequency and rigor with which exception provisions, such as those for foreign information requests, appellate stays, Board directives, or Settlement Commission proceedings, might be invoked, necessitating that officers provide precise, documented justifications to prevent overuse and maintain the intended time-bound spirit. Additionally, the readiness of digital platforms like ICEGATE and ICEDASH for incorporating automated alerts on critical thresholds, such as the 14-month enquiry limit or two-year finalization cap, will be crucial for enabling seamless

compliance, particularly for Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) managing high-volume operations. Another area of interest lies in how these timelines interact with parallel processes, including Special Valuation Branch (SVB) enquiries or laboratory testing queues, where departments may need to synchronize service level agreements to avert compelled exceptions that could undermine the framework's efficacy. Trade associations (#FFFAI, #BCBA, #FIEO, #CII) and stakeholders should actively monitor early rollouts to identify any initial hurdles, ensuring feedback loops contribute to ongoing improvements in this transformative customs landscape.

This regulation represents a significant advancement in modernizing India's customs administration, promoting efficiency while safeguarding interests on all sides. For the complete official text, refer to Gazette Notification No. 55/2025-Customs (N.T.). Businesses are encouraged to seek expert advice for tailored applications.

Do share your feedback :

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Redefining Connectivity: AI-Driven Multimodal Logistics for a Ātmanirbhar Bharat

Dr. Pramod Sant

Chairman - Logistics and Transportation committee - IMC (Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and Director General - FFFAI

One of the biggest digital challenges in multimodal transport is the lack of system integration among various stakeholders. Ports, terminals, airports, shipping lines, airlines, railways, and logistics service providers each operate their own standalone IT systems often using different formats and access protocols. As a result, the same shipment data is entered repeatedly at multiple stages, increasing errors, delays, and administrative costs. This fragmentation also breaks the chain of visibility, making it difficult to track cargo end-to-end or share real-time updates. This results in the promise of seamless multimodal logistics remains only partially achieved.

Yet, progress is visible. India's logistics transformation under Ātmanirbhar Bharat is no longer limited to building roads, railways, ports, and terminals it now includes developing a strong digital backbone. Platforms such as ULIP (Unified Logistics Interface Platform) and PCS and ACS (Port/Air Cargo Community System) are already connecting multiple government and private databases, reducing duplication and improving cargo visibility. For example, JNPA's integration of PCS with ICEGATE has cut document exchange time and

improved transparency for exporters. Similarly, CONCOR's e-tracking and RFID systems are helping shippers monitor container movement in real time.

The next step is to go beyond digitalisation and embed Artificial Intelligence (AI) and predictive automation to make India's logistics network more integrated, intelligent, and efficient setting new benchmarks in visibility, speed, and reliability.

Why AI and Digitalisation Are Central to Multimodal Growth ?

AI is emerging as the invisible fifth mode of transport connecting, predicting, and optimising every leg of cargo movement.

Some practical uses already visible in India are:

- Predictive and Delay Alerts**
 AI tools can read real-time vessel, rail, and truck movement data to predict the Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) for each leg. These models analyse port congestion, weather, and route conditions and give advance alerts about possible delays. Exporters can use this information to plan warehouse slots and customer deliveries better, avoiding demurrage and detention.

2. Route and Mode Optimisation

Instead of fixed routes, AI systems can suggest the most efficient mode mix road plus rail, or rail plus sea based on cost, transit time, and even carbon emissions. For example, a tyre exporter from Madurai to Dallas shifted from full-road movement to a rail-sea-rail combination based on AI recommendations, saving both cost and time.

3. Cargo Health and Visibility

IoT sensors fixed on containers measure temperature, vibration, humidity, and shock. AI analyses this data and immediately flags anomalies. A Chennai-Colombo shipment once showed excessive vibration; the carrier adjusted the lashings mid-route, preventing cargo damage. Such systems build trust and transparency between exporters and service providers.

4. Document Checking and Customs Automation

AI tools can automatically read invoices, packing lists, and shipping bills, cross-verify HS codes, and identify errors before filing with customs. Some Indian logistics operators already link their systems with ULIP for faster data exchange.

This automation cuts manual errors and reduces clearance time by several hours or even days.

5. Carrier Performance Analytics

By analysing transit time, reliability, and claims data, AI can rank transport partners and routes. This helps exporters negotiate better rates and choose the most dependable options. In many cases, switching to a better-performing carrier has improved on-time delivery by more than 10%.

6. AI for Road Safety and Accident Prevention

Accident prevention systems using AI cameras and telematics in trucks to monitor driver behaviour, speed, and braking patterns helping reduce on-road incidents. AI supported maintenance alerts are making road safer.

7. Sustainability and Green Logistics

AI helps calculate emissions per shipment and recommend greener routes. Some operators are already linking their emissions data with ESG reporting systems. A few multimodal operators have begun testing AI-led carbon calculators that suggest rail or coastal shipping where feasible.

Together, these applications create a data-intelligent logistics ecosystem that improves safety, reduces cost, supports exporters' competitiveness, and advances India's transition toward a sustainable and digitally integrated multimodal network.

Current Challenges in Digital Multimodal Growth

Despite visible progress, several challenges still hold back full digital integration of multimodal logistics. Many of these relate to system coordination, data flow, and institutional practices.

1. Fragmented Digital Systems

Different ministries and departments manage separate systems: ports under the Shipping Ministry, railways under another, and customs under CBIC. These systems use different data formats and security logins. As a result, even though data exists, it is not easily shareable. Till today all ministries are not sharing their full data on ULIP. A truck operator, rail terminal, and customs broker often re-enter the same information multiple times.

2. Lack of a Common Platform

India does not yet have a single digital portal where all stakeholders—shipping lines, ICDs, railways, freight forwarders, and customs—can exchange information. Some private platforms fill part of this gap, but integration with government systems remains limited.

3. Limited Awareness and Digital Skills

Many small and medium logistics companies, especially those working as MTOs or CFS operators, lack trained staff to handle digital tools, data analytics, or AI dashboards. Without skill development, they cannot fully benefit from the new systems.

4. Data Privacy and Governance

As data sharing increases, concerns over ownership, access, and misuse of data are also growing. A clear

policy framework is needed to ensure that AI systems use logistics data responsibly while protecting business confidentiality.

5. Interoperability Issues

Not all ports or terminals have adopted EDI or API-based data exchange. Differences in software and hardware standards lead to visibility breaks, especially when goods move from public to private terminals or across borders. These gaps slow down the development of digital freight corridors.

The Way Forward: Building a Smart Multimodal Network

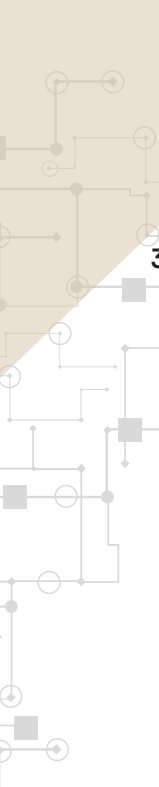
To achieve the goal of *Ātmanirbhar* Logistics, India must now focus on a few practical steps to overcome these challenges.

1. Build a Unified National Logistics Data Layer

All major digital systems—ULIP, PCS, ACS, ICEGATE, DGFT and private freight portals—should connect through a Logistics Data Exchange (LDX). This would allow authorised users to see end-to-end cargo movement, submit documents once, and access predictive analytics. Such integration will improve coordination between transport modes and reduce turnaround time.

2. Promote Digital Freight Corridors

Under *Gati Shakti*, India can create technology-enabled corridors that combine infrastructure with real-time data flow. Each corridor would connect ports, railheads, and logistics parks with sensors, GPS, and AI-based tracking. Predictive alerts about delays, congestion, or equipment



failure would make cargo planning far more reliable.

3. Set Up AI-Enabled Control Towers

Regional and national logistics control towers can link ERP, TMS, and IoT data to monitor cargo in real time. These towers would help identify route bottlenecks, predict customs clearance time, and even suggest alternate options. Many global shipping lines already use such systems — India should encourage similar adoption among domestic operators and MTOs.

4. Support MSME Logistics Players

Small freight forwarders and MTOs form the backbone of India's trade logistics. Training programs by AMTOI, FFFAI, can help them understand and use digital tools, e-documentation, and AI dashboards. Incentives or tax benefits can encourage them

to invest in technology and join the formal digital network.

5. Standardise Data and Access Protocols

Government and industry bodies should agree on a common set of logistics data standards for EDI, API, and digital signatures. This would make it easier for different systems to talk to each other and ensure smooth handover between rail, road, sea, and air.

Conclusion

Multimodal transport is the backbone of a competitive export economy. India has already built strong physical assets; now it must match them with equally strong digital systems. Artificial Intelligence, automation, and single-window digital platforms are not distant technologies they are practical tools available today.

When used well, they can reduce

paperwork, speed up decision-making, and provide transparency to every participant in the logistics chain. The Ātmanirbhar Bharat vision for logistics will be achieved not by replacing humans with machines, but by giving our logisticians, freight forwarders, and customs brokers the digital tools and data intelligence to perform better.

India's next-generation multimodal network will therefore be both physical and digital a system where ports, railways, roads, and airports connect seamlessly through data, and where every exporter has access to a truly integrated logistics platform.

That is when we can say India has achieved true logistics self-reliance an Ātmanirbhar Bharat that moves with intelligence and speed.



Special Feature

Arun Kumar

Immediate Past President - AMTOI

AMTOI Day 2025 — Defending Our Waters, Protecting Our Future

A Glorious Celebration of Patriotism, Partnership, and Pride

The AMTOI Day 2025 celebration will go down as one of the most memorable and defining moments in AMTOI's history, a perfect confluence of purpose, pride, and patriotism. The event was not merely a commemoration of our Association's growth, but a heartfelt salute to the Indian Navy, the unsung sentinels of our seas who defend the nation's maritime frontiers and safeguard the very waters that enable our trade to thrive.

A Theme that Stirred the Soul

The chosen theme, "Defending Our Waters, Protecting Our Future", encapsulated the essence of India's maritime spirit and AMTOI's deep-rooted connection with the sea. As an association representing the nation's multimodal transport and logistics community, AMTOI has always recognised the importance of secure, efficient, and sovereign waters. The theme was thus a tribute to those who stand as the first line of defence, ensuring that commerce flows smoothly and the tricolour flies high across every ocean route.

A Venue Befitting the Occasion

The magnificent Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai served as a fitting stage for this grand occasion. Its modern architecture, world-class facilities, and ambience of elegance reflected the stature and aspirations of our industry. As attendees entered the grand foyer, greeted by a captivating display of naval insignia, ship silhouettes, and the tricolour beautifully woven into the décor, a wave of patriotism and emotion swept through the hall.

The tone was set the moment the Indian Navy officers arrived to grace the occasion. As the audience rose in unison for the national anthem, there was a palpable sense of reverence and unity. The evening was no longer just a formal gathering; it had transformed into a celebration of national pride and shared purpose.

Honouring the Guardians of the Sea

At one of the most moving moments of the celebration, the audience was treated to a stirring audio-visual presentation by the Indian Navy that truly captured the spirit of the evening. As the

lights dimmed and the first frame appeared on the giant LED screen, the hall fell into a reverent silence. The visuals were breathtaking, fighter aircrafts roaring off the decks of majestic aircraft carriers, warships cutting through turbulent seas with guns blazing, and men and women in immaculate white uniforms standing tall and resolute, embodying courage, precision, and duty. The cinematic grandeur of the visuals was matched by the stirring orchestral score that accompanied them, building a crescendo of pride and admiration. And when the message from the Chief of Naval Staff appeared on screen, his words echoing strength, commitment, and national pride, it was an electrifying moment. Goosebumps ran through every single soul present, as the audience rose in spontaneous applause, not merely out of respect, but from a deep emotional connection to the valour, discipline, and spirit of the Indian Navy. In that moment, the entire hall became one in sentiment, united in gratitude, pride, and a profound sense of being part of a greater national purpose.

The evening's highlight was undoubtedly the felicitation of the officers and personnel of the Indian Navy, whose presence elevated the event into one of solemn honour and admiration. The ceremony was both emotional and inspiring, as each officer was introduced to thunderous applause from the gathered fraternity. Their humility, composure, and grace reminded us that true heroism lies not in display but in quiet service to the nation.

It was a special privilege for AMTOI to host and felicitate these heroes, whose tireless vigilance ensures that India's maritime trade remains secure. Their commitment to duty, even under the harshest conditions, is a reminder to all of us in the logistics industry that perseverance and dedication are the foundations of progress.

A Special Salute to the Spouses

Equally heart-warming was the presence of the spouses of the naval officers, whose poise and grace added a special charm to the evening. Their presence reminded everyone that behind every uniformed hero stands a family that shares in the pride and sacrifice. These spouses, who hold fort while their loved ones guard the seas, embody strength, patience, and quiet dignity.

Their warm smiles and gracious participation lent the evening a personal touch that transcended protocol, transforming the event into a genuine celebration of family, fraternity, and national spirit. As we felicitated the officers, our collective gratitude extended equally to these remarkable women and men who support the heroes of the Indian Navy with unwavering faith and courage.

Music, Dance, and Celebration

The entertainment segment of the

evening was a vibrant celebration of music, rhythm, and camaraderie, perfectly complementing the spirit of the occasion. The atmosphere came alive with live singing performances that blended soulful melodies with energetic Bollywood numbers, keeping every guest completely enthralled. The talented vocalists and musicians created a seamless mix of patriotic fervour and contemporary entertainment, setting the stage aglow with infectious enthusiasm.

As the evening progressed, the beats of the DJ took over, transforming the elegant ballroom into a lively dance floor. The rhythm of high-energy Bollywood music filled the air, and soon the audience, including several dignitaries and naval officers, joined in the celebration. Couples swayed and danced together, their joy and laughter adding warmth and sparkle to the event. The sight of guests from the logistics fraternity dancing alongside our naval heroes and their spouses was truly heartwarming, a reflection of unity, friendship, and shared celebration beyond all formal boundaries.

The combination of live music, DJ rhythms, and spontaneous participation created an atmosphere of pure joy and togetherness, marking a perfect conclusion to a day that began with reverence and ended in revelry. It was a reminder that while the spirit of AMTOI is rooted in professionalism and purpose, it also celebrates life, connection, and the human bond that makes every success meaningful.

A Feast to Remember

No celebration is complete without good food, and AMTOI Day 2025 ensured that the culinary experience matched the

grandeur of the evening. Guests were treated to an elaborate spread of Indian and international cuisine, thoughtfully curated to reflect India's global trade ties. From coastal seafood delicacies to continental gourmet platters, every dish was a celebration of taste and diversity.

The elegant live counters, the aromatic coffee bar, and the carefully selected beverages ensured that conversation and camaraderie flowed freely. The choice of spirits served was so exquisite that it would have made even a teetotaler feel high-spirited, adding an extra sparkle to the evening's mood. The ambience was one of warmth and joy, industry colleagues, government officials, and Navy guests mingling with ease, sharing laughter and stories over fine food and finer company. It was, in every sense, a feast that nourished not just the palate, but the spirit of togetherness that defines AMTOI.

The Power of Partnership

Behind this seamless orchestration was the relentless effort of the AMTOI Secretariat and the Organising Committee, who worked with clockwork precision for weeks to deliver an event of this magnitude. Every element, from décor to audio-visuals, from protocol management to stage choreography, was executed with professionalism and passion.

A heartfelt word of thanks is also due to our sponsors and partners, whose generosity and faith made this grand celebration possible. Their support was not merely financial; it was a reaffirmation of trust in AMTOI's vision of unity, leadership, and national contribution. Their logos on the backdrop stood not as advertisements, but as badges

of solidarity with the cause we celebrated.

A Personal Reflection

As I look back, AMTOI Day 2025 will always remain one of the most cherished chapters of my presidency. It was an evening where our professional pride met our national pride, where logistics met legacy. Standing on that stage, seeing hundreds of industry colleagues rise in ovation to honour the Indian Navy, I felt a deep sense of gratitude and fulfilment.

In dedicating AMTOI Day to our naval heroes, we reaffirmed the belief that trade and security

are two sides of the same coin. The Navy ensures that our ships sail safely; our industry ensures that India's commerce moves confidently across the world. Together, we represent the strength, resilience, and vision of a maritime nation on the rise.

In Gratitude and Pride

My heartfelt gratitude, to the Indian Navy — for your service, courage, and inspiration; to the spouses and families — for your unwavering support; to our sponsors and partners — for your generosity and faith & to the AMTOI team — for your dedication and brilliance. You made AMTOI Day 2025 not just a

celebration, but a statement, that when industry and nation unite in spirit and purpose, the result is something truly magnificent.

When I write this piece as Immediate Past President, I do so with immense pride and humility. The success of AMTOI Day 2025 will always remind me that leadership is not about holding a position, it is about creating moments that inspire, unite, and endure. Indeed, on that unforgettable evening, we did more than celebrate our Association, we celebrated Bharat.



Photo Gallery



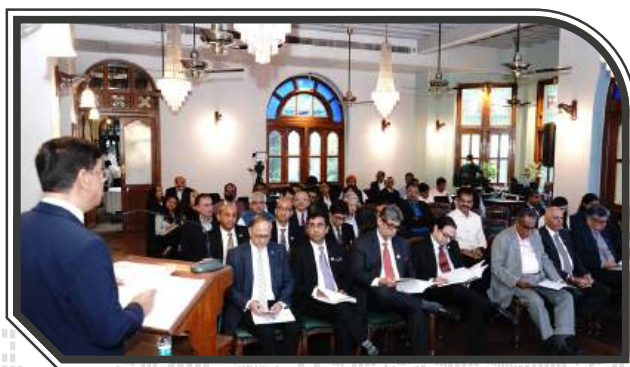
AMTOI 12th Managing Committee Meeting of AMTOI for the term 2024-25 was held on 3rd September 2025, from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM, in a hybrid mode at the Tolly Club, Kolkata.



PM GatiShakti celebrated the 3 years of the National Logistics Policy on 17th September 2025 at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi. The event was attended by Mr. Devpal Menon.



The Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan celebrated 10 years of Make in India discussion on 'Next-Gen GST Reform 2.0, held on 20th September 2025 at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi. The event was attended by Mr. Arun Kumar



AMTOI conducted its 26th Annual General Meeting (AGM), on 22nd September 2025, at Bombay Yacht Club, Colaba, Mumbai. The event was followed by cocktails and dinner hosted by AMTOI for its members.

Photo Gallery



The India Cargo Convention (ICCON) 2025, which was attended by Mr. Arun Kumar on 23rd September 2025 at The Westin Powai, Mumbai.



AMTOI conducted a Diwali Meet & Greet for all AMTOI Members at the AMTOI Office on 17th October 2025.



Mr. V. Chandra Kumar attended the Ribbon Cutting & Inauguration Ceremony for the 4th edition of the Intralogistics & Warehousing Expo on behalf of AMTOI, held on 7th November 2025 at the Karnataka Trade Promotion Organisation (KTPO), Bengaluru



The Multilogistix Expo 2025 was attended by Vice President Mr. Devpal Menon and Dr. Sharmila Amin on 12th and 13th November 2025 at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, Delhi.

Photo Gallery



Mr. Haresh Lalwani visited the JNPA office on 17th November 2025 to meet the newly appointed Chairman of JNPA, Shri Gaurav Dayal



Invitation received from Bhandarkar Publications for the 12th Edition of the International Samudra Manthan Awards 2024, held on 18th and 19th November at the Jio World Convention Centre, BKC, Mumbai, which was attended by Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar, Mr. Haresh Lalwani, and Dr. Sharmila Amin

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| • GRT Global Logistics Pvt Ltd | • Awatac Container Line Pvt Ltd |
| • Links Cargo Agencies Pvt Ltd | • DSV Air & Sea Pvt Ltd |
| • PDP International Pvt Ltd | • Insynergy Supply Chain Solutions Pvt Ltd |
| • Master Logitech Pvt Ltd | • Radar Ventures Pvt Ltd |
| • Sanco Trans Ltd | • Freight Lines (India) Pvt Ltd |
| • Orchid Shipping Pvt Ltd | • Jaguar Shipping And Logistics Pvt Ltd |
| • E-Ship Global Logistics India Private Limited | |

Officer Bearers 2025-26



Shantanu Bhadkamkar
President



Devpall Menon
Vice President



Haresh Lalwani
Honorary Secretary



Vasant Pathak
Honorary Treasurer

Managing Committee List

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar | President | 16. Mr. Anand Sheth | Advisor |
| 2. Mr. Devpal Menon | Vice President | 17. Mr. Shashi Tanna | Advisor |
| 3. Mr. Haresh Lalwani | Hon Secretary | 18. Mr. Sailesh Bhatia | Advisor |
| 4. Mr. Vasant Pathak | Hon Treasurer | 19. Mr. Prashant Popat | Convenor WRC |
| 5. Mr. Arun Kumar | Immediate Past President | 20. Mr. Ramesh Varadarajan | Convenor NRC |
| 6. Mr. Xerrxes Master | Executive Committee Member | 21. Mr. Supratim Majumdar | Co-Convenor NRC |
| 7. Mrs. Priya Anil Thomas | Executive Committee Member | 22. Mr. Vivek Choudhary | Convenor ERC |
| 8. Mr. George Abrao | Special Invitee | 23. Mr. Avishkar Srivastava | Co-Convenor ERC |
| 9. Mr. Shankar Shinde | Special Invitee | 24. Mr. Naveen Prakash | Convenor SRC |
| 10. Mrs. Anjali Bhide | Special Invitee | 25. Mr. V John Christopher | Co-Convenor SRC |
| 11. Mr. Ravindra Gandhi | Special Invitee | 26. Mr. Biju Sivakumar | Convenor NVOCC Council |
| 12. Mr. R.K. Rubin | Special Advisor | 27. Mr. Sriram Swaminathan | Co-Convenor NVOCC Council |
| 13. Mr. Nailesh Gandhi | Advisor | 28. Mr. Ramakrishna | Convenor Taxation |
| 14. Mr. Vivek Kele | Advisor | 29. Mr. Clarence Xavier | Information Security - Convenor |
| 15. Mr. Tushar Jani | Advisor | 30. Dr. Sharmila Amin | Women Wing Convenor |

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Recognition in the Industry as a certified AMTOI member, AMTOI is known for commitment to the cause of promoting Multimodal Transport

- AMTOI membership certificate can be prominently displayed in the office and AMTOI logo can be used on your stationary, website and other collaterals
- Participation in various Training sessions and seminars organized by AMTOI (Dangerous goods handling and transportation being one of them)
- AMTOI Dialogues - A monthly virtual

event where an eminent personality is invited for a short interview followed by Q&A session

- Weekly updates on Shipping Industry through AMTOI Weekly bulletin.
- Participation in Annual AMTOI event and get to meet who's who in the industry which is an excellent platform for networking.
- Assistance in registration/renewal of MTO License.
- GRF (Grievance Redressal Forum), a platform to air your grievances with various private and Govt authorities and

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- Differences / problems between members are amicably resolved by the intervention of Managing Committee Members hence the need to approach the regulators is reduced
- Have a say in drafting and amendment of various Maritime related laws
- Become a part of the only trade body which caters to the benefits of the MTO's
- Promote / growth of Indian flag ships and container owners

AMTOI SUB - COMMITTEE LIST FOR THE TERM 2024 – 25

	Sub — Committee	Convenor / Co—Convenor	Coordinator
1.	Taxation (Direct & Indirect) (TAX)	Mr. Ramakrishna - Convenor Mr. Arun Kumar - Co-Convenor Mrs. Priya Anil Thomas Mr. Dushyant Mulani	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar
2.	Training Programs (TRN)	Mrs. Priya Anil Thomas - Convenor Dr. Sharmila Amin - Co-Convenor	Mr. Vasant Pathak
3.	New MTO License Application / Renewal (MTO)	Mr. R. K. Rubin - Convenor Mr. Xerrxes Master - Co-Convenor	Mr. George Abrao
4.	Events Committee (EVN)	Mr. Ravindra Gandhi - Convenor Mr. Vasant Pathak - Co-Convenor	Mr. Xerrxes Master
5.	Publication (Weekly, Newsletter / Quarterly AMTOI News) (PUB)	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar - Editor Mrs. Priya Anil Thomas - Co - Editor	Mr. Anand Seth
6.	International Relations (INT)	Mr. Ravindra Gandhi - Convenor Mr. Vasant Pathak - Co-Convenor	Mr. Haresh Lalwani
7.	Northern Regional Chapter (NRC)	Mr. Ramesh Varadarajan - Convenor Mr. Supratim Majumdar - Co-Convenor	Ms. Priya Anil Thomas
8.	Western Regional Chapter (WRC)	Mr. Prashant Popat - Convenor Dr. Sharmila Amin - Co-Convenor	Mr. Xerrxes Master
9.	Eastern Regional Chapter (ERC)	Mr. Vivek Choudhary - Convenor Mr. Avishkar Srivastava - Co-Convenor	Mr. Brij Lakhotia
10.	Southern Regional Chapter (SRC)	Mr. Naveen Prakash — Convenor Mr. V John Christopher — Co-Convenor	Mr. Devpal Menon
11.	NVOCC Council (NVO)	Mr. Biju Sivakumar - Convenor Mr. Sriram Swaminathan - Co Conveno	Mr. George Abrao
12.	Liquid Logistics Council (LLC)	Mr. Haresh Lalwani - Convenor Mr. R. K. Rubin - Co - Convenor	Mr. Anand Sheth
13.	AMTOI Women's Wing (WOW)	Dr. Sharmila Amin — Convenor	Mr. Xerrxes Master
14.	SRO Committee (Self-Regulatory Organization) (SRO)	Mr. Anand Sheth - Convenor Mr. Sailesh Bhatia - Co- Convenor Mr. Arun Kumar - Co- Convenor Mr. Devpal Menon - Committee Member Mr. Haresh Lalwani - Committee Member	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar
15.	Information Technology Security and Social Media Cell (ITM)	Mr. Clarence Xavier - Convenor Mr. Arun Kumar - Co-Convenor Mr. Keyur Gandhi Mr. Prashant Popat	Mr. Haresh Lalwani
16.	Grievance Redressal Forum (GRF)	Mr. Sailesh Bhatia - Convenor Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar - Co Convenor	Mr. Anand Sheth
17.	Family Business Council	Mr. Xerrxes Master - Convenor Mr. Prashant Popat - Co- Convenor	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar
18.	Strategic Stakeholders Board	Mr. Ravindra Gandhi — Convenor Mr. Shankar Shinde - Co- Convenor	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar
19.	Advocacy & Policy Committee	Mr. Arun Kumar — Convenor Mr. Dushyant Mulani - Co-Convenor	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar



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