



India to build its first polar research vehicle

Why in news: Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE) signed an MoU with Norwegian firm Kongsberg to co-design and build India's first-ever Polar Research Vehicle (PRV).

Prelims and Mains context:

- Project is a **commitment to scientific discovery, polar and ocean research, and global efforts on climate change**. A PRV is a ship that **serves as a platform for research in the polar regions (North and South Poles)** and can also support **ocean research**. India currently operates **three** research base stations: **Bharati and Maitri in Antarctica**, and **Himadri in the Arctic region**.
- The PRV will be equipped with **advanced scientific equipment** to study **oceans' depths and marine ecosystems**.
- The project highlights **India's shipbuilding capabilities** and supports the **'Make In India' initiative**.
- The project aligns with **PM Narendra Modi's SAGAR vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**, leveraging **India's coastline, strategic location, and maritime heritage** for **economic prosperity, regional security, and sustainable development**.

Do you know?

- The **Arctic region**, above **latitude 66° 34' N**, is shared by **eight countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the US**, forming the **Arctic Council** along with the **Arctic Ocean**.
- **Scientific research** in the Arctic is governed by instruments like the **Svalbard Treaty (1920)**, the **UN Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS)**, and **national laws** of Arctic states.
- **India signed the Svalbard Treaty in 1920**, which grants **Norway full sovereignty** over the **Svalbard archipelago**.
- India's first **Arctic expedition** occurred in **2007**, and its **permanent Arctic research station 'Himadri'** was established in **2008** at **Ny-Ålesund**.
- In **Antarctica**, India established **Dakshin Gangotri in 1983** (now buried in ice), followed by **Maitri & Bharati** stations, which are currently operational.
- The **Antarctic Treaty** (signed in **1959** by 12 countries) promotes **peaceful coexistence and scientific cooperation** on the continent.
- **India joined the Antarctic Treaty in 1983** and is a **Consultative Party**, participating in **decision-making** among the **56 member countries**, including the **original 12 signatories**.

[Current Affairs Course is now Live](#). Course will start in October 2025 1st week.

Modules will include class notes, monthly compilation, quarter compilation and annual compilation.
This will help in regular revision r/t in the fag-end of preparation.

I will provide my annual compilation, like last year, on Telegram in May 1st week.

[Last year I had promised 20 questions in Prelims from my notes & 28+ Questions could be answered from the same.](#)



30 questions is my aim for 2026 prelims. To meet that, I have analyzed why I missed 5-6 C.A. questions in 2025 and I have increased my coverage accordingly.

Maritime Development Fund

- **2025 Union Budget** announced a **₹25,000 crore Maritime Development Fund (MDF)** to catalyze India's shipbuilding and maritime sector revival.
- **Government will contribute 49%** to the MDF; the remaining mobilised from ports and the private sector.
- The MDF will enable **financing of ship acquisition**, targeting **20% global cargo share by Indian-flagged ships by 2047** and generating **₹1.5 lakh crore investment by 2030**.
- India is focusing on **shipbuilding clusters**, especially as **outward remittance on transport services** crossed **\$109 billion in 2022**.
- **Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Policy (SBFAP) 2.0** was extended offering **direct subsidies to Indian shipyards** to enhance **global competitiveness**.
- **Customs duty exemptions** and **infrastructure status** for large vessels were also announced to boost the sector.
