

## National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC)

### National Maritime Heritage Complex

The Government of India decided to build this heritage complex at Lothal with a view to preserve and showcase India's rich maritime heritage and history.

- The proposed complex is at Lothal, which is one of the most important sites of the [Indus Valley Civilization](#). Lothal was a port-city during the time of the Harappan Civilization.
- The project envisages the development of a National Maritime Museum, Maritime Research Institute, Maritime Heritage based Theme Park, Nature Conservation Park, Lighthouse Museum, resorts, hotels, etc.
- The NMHC will consolidate ancient artefacts from ancient to modern times related to the maritime history of India and make them available for the public to view and learn. Artefacts from the ASI sites of Lothal and [Dholavira](#) would be displayed at the museum complex.
- The purpose of the museum complex is *edutainment* (education + entertainment).
- To be developed on approximately 400 acres of land, the project will showcase the history, glory, and achievements of India's maritime heritage from ancient times to the present day.
- The proposed museum will specialise in the display of objects relating to ships and travel on water and highlight the ancient ship building and navigational technologies towards which India has contributed well.
- The world-class facility is intended to attract domestic and international tourists. It is expected to become a sought-after tourist destination.
- The site is in the vicinity of the [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) site of Lothal, about 80km from Ahmedabad.
- This recreation of the ancient city of Lothal would be done in a phased manner.
- The contents and subjects covered by the complex will include the following themes given in the table:

Myth of sea and ocean	People, land and the sea
Sea and maritime during the Harappan times	Maritime tradition: Vedic to pre-Mauryan period
Maritime contact and trade during ancient India and the emergence of mercantile society	Ancient ports of the West, South and East coast
Maritime history of the Indian ocean	The traditional navigation techniques
Landing of Vasco da Gama/Arrival of the Europeans	The impact of maritime of Indian society
The shipbuilders of India	Indian maritime post-independence

## National Maritime Heritage Complex Funding

The NMHC would be funded by the Ministry of Shipping and the Ministry of Culture through the National Culture Fund (NCF) by way of grant.

- The Ministry of Culture would facilitate fundraising through the NCF.
- The NCF can receive funds from grants, donations, foreign contributions, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds.

## Lothal Dockyard



Image source: <https://www.incredibleindia.org/>

Lothal, one of the most important sites of the Indus Valley civilisation dates back to 2400 BCE.

- Archaeological excavations have revealed that it houses the oldest manmade dockyard in the world, dating back at least 5000 years. The dockyard connected the city of Lothal to an ancient course of the Sabarmati river on the trade route between Indus Valley cities in Sindh and the peninsula of Saurashtra.
- Currency, Lothal is located near the Saragwala village, Dholka Taluka, Ahmedabad District, Gujarat.
- The ruins of Lothal were discovered in 1954.
- The excavation reveal a neatly planned township; the original town was divided into several block of one or two metre-high platforms made of sun-dried bricks.
- Lothal was a thriving trade centre in the ancient times with its gems, beads and ornaments reaching as far as West Asia and Africa.
- According to the ASI, it is the only port-town of the Indus Valley Civilization.
- Lothal was a metropolis, with two primary zones – upper and lower.
- There is evidence of a bead-making factory.
- The area was flood-prone and it is believed that by the Late Harappan Period, ships had stopped coming to the dock and people dispersed to nearby regions.
- Lothal is on the tentative list of UNESCO world heritage sites.

***Who discovered Lothal city?***

The Lothal city was discovered by archaeologist S.R. Rao and his team.

***What does Lothal mean?***

The word Lothal in Gujarati means 'mound of the dead' like the site Mohenjo Daro.

