

## INSV Kaundinya

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### Why in News?

*The Indian Navy's INSV Kaundinya has gone aboard on a journey from Porbandar in Gujarat to Muscat in Oman to test India's ancient seafaring traditions.*

- **Origin** - INSV Kaundinya is a **stitched sail ship** built using techniques believed to have been used in India during the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE.
- **Launched in** - February 2025 and formally inducted into the Navy in May at Karwar, Karnataka.
- **Project Timeline** - The project began in July 2023 through a **joint agreement** between the Ministry of Culture, the Indian Navy, and Hodi Innovations, with funding from the Ministry of Culture.
- **Dimensions** -
  - Length: 19.6 m
  - Width: 6.5 m
  - Draft: 3.33 m.
- It is powered completely by sails and carries a crew of about 15 sailors.
- **Design & Testing** - The design is based mainly on ships shown in the **Ajanta cave paintings**, along with descriptions from ancient texts and foreign travellers' accounts.
- It is recreated by the Navy, tested at IIT Madras for safety.
- **Construction Team** - A team of traditional **craftsmen from Kerala**, led by master shipwright Babu Sankaran, stitched the ship by hand.
- **Construction Technique** - The ship follows the **Tankai method**, a traditional Indian shipbuilding technique that ***avoids metal entirely***.
- **Materials used include** -
  - Wooden planks.
  - Coir rope made from coconut fibre.
  - Natural resins and oils for waterproofing.
- **Role** - Although it belongs to the Indian Navy, INSV Kaundinya is **not a combat vessel** - it serves as a cultural and experimental craft reviving ancient maritime traditions.
- **Symbols on INSV Kaundinya** - It carries several cultural symbols linked to India's maritime past:
  - **Gandabherunda**, the two-headed eagle of the Kadamba dynasty
  - **Sun motifs** on the sails

- **Simha Yali**, a mythical lion figure on the bow
- A Harappan-style **stone anchor** on the deck.



- **Name & Legacy** - Named after Kaundinya, a 1st-century Indian mariner who sailed to the Mekong Delta, married Queen Soma, and helped establish the Kingdom of Funan in present-day Cambodia.
- **Significance** - INSV Kaundinya voyage retraces the India-Oman sea trade corridor, revives spice/textile exchanges, showcases ancient maritime highways.

## Reference

[NDTV | INSV Kaundinya](#)