

## Goa, Kochi, Chennai ideal for parking yachts

**Mumbai not fit for a yacht harbour due to choppy sea and high tide**

**Press Trust of India**

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Mumbai, which is host to the International Boat Show, could be a great place to buy a yacht but its waterfront may not be the best place to park it, feel experts.

The best yacht harbour closer home could be Goa or down south in Kochi or Chennai.

"Mumbai doesn't have good water quality, the sea is choppy and the tide strong, making it difficult to build a

marina or a yacht harbour," says Mr Shakeel Kudrolli, MD of Aquasail.

Mr Robin Walters, Chairman of Walcon Marine Ltd, which has built about 80,000 marinas worldwide, agrees.

"Dredging can prove prohibitively expensive," he says.

**PARKING PROBLEM**

With close to a hundred boats, big and small, bobbing up and down the waterfront of Gateway of India, in the

absence of marinas it will be parking lot nightmare for yacht owners.

"Owners of yachts and smaller pleasure boats can park their vessels in Goa, and plan their vacations around sailing," suggests Mr Umaji V Chowgule, MD Goa Yacht Haven Pvt Ltd, which has proposed to build a 300-boat marina in Goa with an investment of Rs 100 crore. He

awaits environmental and other clearances to start development. "One can easily

fly to Goa in the morning, sail throughout the day and reach Mumbai by the evening

**BENEFITS**

Proper marinas will help yacht owners overcome the problems of reaching their yachts moored in deep waters. It will be easy to supply fuel water and carry out cleaning and maintenance.

"Marinas in Goa, with proper infrastructure, can take the load off Mumbai's

shores," says Mr Kudrolli of Aquasail.

The company has completed due diligence for about six marina projects, with focus on Kochi, Goa and Chennai.

Another company, Ocean Blue Marinas, which has set up a modern marina for the Mumbai boat show, has reportedly over a dozen projects in Goa, Kochi, Chennai etc.

**LUXURY SYMBOL**

Despite the absence of mari-

nas to park, yachts are fast gaining popularity among high networth individuals. Boats ranging from Rs 20 lakh to over Rs 2 crore are the new symbol of luxury like foreign cars and executive jets. "Last year, the industry did a sale of about Rs 50 crore in India and we would not be surprised if it grows to Rs 150 crore this year," Mr Kudrolli said. But before you sign that cheque for that luxury yacht, spare a thought about where will you park it.