

5-Year Action Framework

SAGAR MEIN SAMMAN





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ABBREVIATIONS

DGS	Directorate General of Shipping
SMS	Sagar Mein Samman
MUI	Maritime Union of India
IMO	International Maritime Organization
WISTA	Women's International Shipping & Trading Association
WIMA	Women in Maritime Survey
INDOS	Indian National Database of Seafarers
ILO	International Labour Organization
MLC	Maritime Labour Convention
MMD	Mercantile Marine Department
MTI	Maritime Training Institute
RPSL	Recruitment and Placement Services License
ISWAN	International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network
CMMI	Company of Master Mariners of India
SCI	Shipping Corporation of India
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
SMY	Sagar Mein Yog
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
NTOU	National Taiwan Ocean University
TIPC	Taiwan International Ports Corporation
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
IoT	Internet of Things
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
MARINA	Maritime Industry Authority (Philippines)
PMMA	Philippine Merchant Marine Academy
MPA	Maritime and Port Authority
PIT	Professional Internship and Traineeship Programme



1. Executive Summary

The **Sagar Mein Samman (SMS)** initiative, conceptualized and led by the **Directorate General of Shipping (DG Shipping)**, is a flagship programme aimed at promoting **gender inclusion, equality, and welfare within the maritime sector**. The initiative is aligned with the national priorities outlined in the **Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030**, which emphasizes **human capital development, workforce expansion, and inclusive growth** as key drivers for transforming India into a leading global maritime nation.

MIV 2030 specifically highlights the need to **enhance women's participation in the maritime workforce**, recognizing that a diverse and inclusive workforce is essential for improving sectoral efficiency, innovation, and global competitiveness. Within this framework, SMS serves as a **targeted intervention mechanism** to address systemic barriers across maritime training, employment, and career progression.

The initiative is further aligned with global commitments under the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly:

- **SDG 5:** Gender Equality, which promotes equal opportunities and empowerment for women
- **SDG 8:** Decent Work and Economic Growth, which emphasizes inclusive employment and safe working conditions

These alignments position SMS within both **national policy priorities and global development frameworks**, reinforcing its strategic importance.

The rationale for the initiative stems from the persistent underrepresentation of women in seafaring roles, where participation in India remains significantly below global levels. Women currently face multiple challenges, including **cultural and societal barriers, safety concerns, limited access to training and employment opportunities, and higher attrition rates**.

To address these challenges, SMS adopts a **holistic and lifecycle-based approach**, focusing on:

- Enhancing awareness and access at the entry stage
- Ensuring equal opportunity in recruitment and career advancement
- Strengthening safety, welfare, and grievance redressal mechanisms
- Promoting capacity building, mentorship, and leadership development
- Driving cultural transformation and industry-wide sensitization

Since its inception, the initiative has achieved significant milestones, including:



- Formalization through DGS orders and policy frameworks
- Establishment of a dedicated task force and institutional mechanisms
- Strategic collaboration and funding support from stakeholders such as the Maritime Union of India (MUI)
- Enhanced engagement at national and international platforms, including alignment with IMO initiatives

The initiative has contributed to increasing awareness and has supported a growing number of women entering maritime professions, with steady year-on-year growth in women seafarers.

Strategically, SMS plays a critical role in advancing India's objective under **MIV 2030** to expand its global maritime workforce, while ensuring diversity, inclusivity, and sustainability. It represents a significant step toward building a **safe, equitable, and future-ready maritime ecosystem**, where women can participate, progress, and lead across all levels of the industry.

Aligned with Maritime India Vision 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Sagar Mein Samman represents a transformative shift towards embedding gender inclusion at the core of maritime growth, ensuring that India's maritime future is both inclusive and globally competitive.



2. Background of the Initiative

2.1 Context

The global maritime sector continues to exhibit significant gender imbalance, particularly in seafaring and technical roles. The IMO–WISTA Women in Maritime Survey (WIMA) 2024 highlights that while there has been an increase in the absolute number of women employed in the maritime sector, their proportion within the workforce remains low and, in some segments, has declined in percentage terms relative to men.

The report indicates that 176,820 women are currently employed across the global maritime workforce, accounting for just under 19% of total participation, compared to a higher proportional share of 26% reported in 2021^[1]. This trend reflects that although more women are entering the sector in absolute terms, the relative representation of women is not improving proportionately, indicating persistent structural challenges.

Further, the imbalance is more pronounced in the private maritime sector, where women account for only about 16% of the workforce^[1], compared to their higher presence in public maritime administration roles. Within this already limited participation, women are predominantly represented in onshore, administrative, and support functions, while their presence in technical, operational, and seafaring roles remains significantly low.

The WIMA survey also highlights that policy frameworks and institutional support vary across countries. While several nations have introduced gender-responsive policies—such as anti-harassment measures, flexible working arrangements, and diversity training—there remain gaps in implementation and consistency. Notably, a number of maritime administrations still lack comprehensive gender inclusion frameworks, and mechanisms for promoting early participation of women in maritime careers continue to be underdeveloped.

Overall, the global maritime ecosystem reflects a structural and systemic imbalance, where progress in gender inclusion has been uneven and limited in critical operational domains. These challenges underscore the need for targeted, policy-driven interventions to promote equity, safety, and inclusion within the maritime workforce.

2.2 Status of Women’s Participation in Maritime (India vs Global)

Globally, the participation of women in the maritime sector remains limited despite gradual progress.

- Women account for approximately 19% of the overall maritime workforce across public and private sectors^[1].
- In the private maritime sector, female participation is lower, at approximately 16%.



- The most significant disparity is observed in seafaring roles, where women constitute only about 1% of active seafarers worldwide, representing a critical gap in operational participation [1].
- Additionally, women represent only around 5% of maritime students pursuing seafaring careers, indicating a weak entry-level pipeline and long-term sustainability challenge [1].

The graph below illustrates the year-wise increase in INDOS generation for women seafarers, indicating a steady rise in participation at the entry stage-

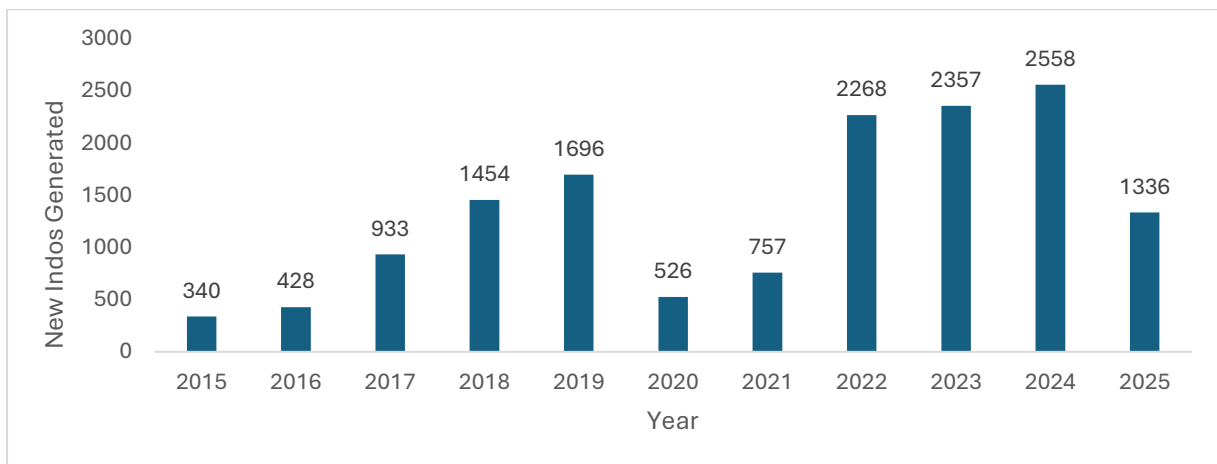


Figure 1 Year Wise INDOS Generated for Women Seafarers

The graph below illustrates the year-wise percentage increase of women seafarers, indicating a steady rise in participation at the entry stage-

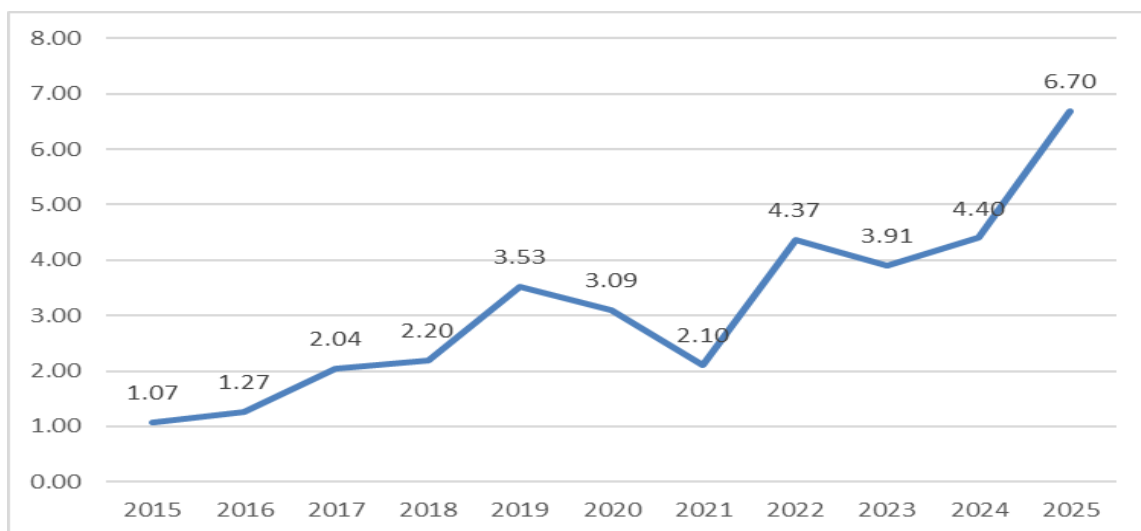


Figure 2 Year Wise percentage increase of women seafarer



In contrast, India presents an even more pronounced gender gap. Despite being one of the leading suppliers of the global maritime workforce, women account less with respect to active seafarers in India. This highlights a substantial disparity between India's maritime potential and the level of participation of women in seafaring roles.

While recent years have seen a steady increase in the number of women seafarers in India, reflecting improved awareness and policy focus, their overall share remains significantly below global levels. Furthermore, similar to global trends, Indian women in maritime are primarily concentrated in non-operational or shore-based roles, with comparatively limited representation in onboard, technical, and leadership positions.

With respect to the number of seafarers actively serving in the maritime sector, the following trend highlights the gradual increase in women's participation: -

Year	Male Seafarer Count (A)	Female Seafarer Count (B)	Women Representation (B/(A+B) *100)
2021	204188	1599	0.78
2022	246744	3327	1.33
2023	280684	4770	1.67
2024	301972	5929	1.93
2025	316396	7033	2.17

The data reflects a consistent upward trajectory in women's participation, increasing from 0.78% in 2021 to over 2.17% in 2025. While this demonstrates positive momentum, the overall proportion remains low, signalling the need for sustained and focused interventions.

2.3 Policy Drivers

(a) Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030 – Initiative 10.15

The Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030, formulated by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, serves as a comprehensive roadmap for transforming India into a leading global maritime nation. The Vision identifies more than 150 initiatives across ports, shipping, and waterways, with a strong emphasis on human capital development and workforce expansion ^[2].

One of the key priorities under MIV 2030 is to strengthen India's position as a leading supplier of skilled seafarers globally, supported by quality maritime education and capacity building.

Under this framework, Initiative 10.15 specifically focuses on:

- Enhancing participation of women in the maritime sector
- Promoting inclusive workforce development



- Strengthening education, training, and career opportunities for women seafarers
- Creating a safe, enabling, and gender-sensitive working environment

MIV 2030 recognizes that human resource development is central to maritime growth, and emphasizes the need to:

- Build a future-ready workforce
- Increase India's share of global seafarers
- Promote diversity and inclusion in maritime employment

(b) International Frameworks

1. International Maritime Organization (IMO) – Gender Equality Agenda

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has been a leading advocate for gender equality in maritime, particularly through its Women in Maritime Programme.

Key focus areas include:

- Capacity building for women professionals in maritime
- Promoting equal access to education and training
- Encouraging leadership roles for women
- Supporting regional gender networks in maritime

The IMO's efforts align with the broader objective of creating an inclusive maritime workforce, recognizing that diversity enhances innovation, productivity, and global competitiveness.

2. International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions (MLC, 2006)

The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006, often referred to as the "Seafarers' Bill of Rights," establishes minimum standards for working conditions in the maritime sector.

Key provisions relevant to gender inclusion include:

- Non-discrimination in employment and working conditions
- Ensuring safe and secure working environments onboard
- Access to healthcare, welfare, and grievance redressal mechanisms
- Protection against harassment and exploitation

The MLC framework reinforces the importance of:

- Equal treatment for all seafarers
- Providing dignity and safety at workplace



- Strengthening compliance and regulatory oversight

3. Alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Although not explicitly stated, the initiative is also aligned with:

- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

These global commitments further reinforce the need for inclusive and equitable growth in maritime employment.

2.4 Need for Intervention

The persistent gender imbalance in the maritime sector, particularly in seafaring roles, underscores the need for a targeted and structured intervention. While incremental progress has been observed, existing measures have not been sufficient to address the systemic barriers faced by women across the maritime career lifecycle.

Gaps in the Existing Ecosystem

- The maritime profession continues to be perceived as male-dominated, requiring dedicated efforts to change perceptions and build awareness.
- A focused intervention is necessary to bridge the gap between policy intent and ground-level implementation, particularly in areas of safety, access, and career opportunities.
- Increasing global demand for skilled seafarers further necessitates expanding the workforce by actively encouraging women's participation.
- Limited transition opportunities: Women cadets often face challenges in securing onboard training and employment placements, restricting entry into active service.
- Insufficient gender-sensitive infrastructure: Onboard facilities and support systems are not uniformly designed to meet gender-specific requirements.
- Weak reporting and support mechanisms: Although grievance systems exist, there is often limited awareness and trust among women seafarers in utilizing them.
- Lack of mentorship and structured guidance: Absence of formal support systems for career navigation and progression.



3. Vision, Mission & Objectives

3.1 Vision

The Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) initiative envisions a maritime industry that is inclusive, safe, and equitable for women seafarers. The initiative aims to:

- Increase women's representation in maritime careers by eliminating systemic barriers.
- Ensure workplace safety and equal opportunities through policy reforms.
- Promote career progression and mentorship to support women in leadership roles.
- Drive awareness and advocacy for gender inclusivity in the maritime sector.
- Strengthen regulatory compliance by ensuring industry-wide adherence to inclusivity standards.

By implementing these measures, SMS seeks to transform the Indian maritime sector into a gender-responsive industry, ensuring that women at sea and in allied maritime roles receive equal treatment, opportunities, and career support.

3.2 Key Objectives

The purpose of the Policy is to create an inclusive, equitable and safe Maritime Ecosystem that actively supports and promotes participation of women across all Maritime domains and to enhance Female participation in Shore-based and Seafaring Maritime roles through Policy support, Infrastructure, Training, Safety and by providing equal opportunities.

Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) is structured around a robust four-pillar model designed to systematically dismantle gender-based barriers in maritime careers.

Key Objectives of this Policy is as follows:

- **Empowerment & Leadership:** Equip women with skills and confidence to take up leadership roles.

The core of Sagar Mein Samman is about empowering women to find their rightful place in the maritime world not just as participants, but as leaders. Empowerment here means more than just access; it is about instilling confidence, creating role models, and opening leadership pathways that women have traditionally been excluded from.

Whether on deck, in ports, or in maritime policymaking, women should be seen, heard, and respected. Through SMS, efforts are being made to ensure that women are not only encouraged to join the sector but are also supported throughout their journey, with structures that help them lead with confidence and clarity.



- **Inclusivity & Equal Opportunity:** Promote unbiased recruitment and representation at all levels.

For decades, the maritime sector has been seen as a man's domain. SMS seeks to challenge and change that narrative by actively breaking the barriers both visible and invisible that have kept women at the margins.

True inclusivity means making space, rethinking systems, and addressing biases that exist in training, hiring, promotion, and everyday work culture. The goal is not to create a separate place for women but to ensure they have an equal standing where opportunities are fair, expectations are equal, and support systems are strong enough to ensure every woman feels she belongs.

- **Safety & Well-being:** Ensure a harassment-free, supportive work environment.

No professional journey can be meaningful without a sense of safety and dignity. SMS places a high priority on ensuring that women whether at sea or onshore feel protected, respected, and free from any form of harassment or discrimination.

This includes strengthening reporting systems, enforcing codes of conduct, and creating safe spaces where concerns can be voiced without fear. But more than mechanisms, it's about building a culture of mutual respect and awareness where safety is not a formality but a lived, everyday reality. Only in such an environment can women truly grow and contribute to their full potential.

- **Skill Development & Training:** Provide tailored training, certifications, and industry exposure.

Opportunity without preparation leads nowhere. SMS recognizes that if women are to enter and thrive in maritime careers, they must be equipped with the right skills, and this begins with training. Whether it's through foundational courses, technical upskilling, or leadership development, SMS is focused on ensuring that women have access to the tools they need to succeed.

This includes scholarships, mentorships, and continuous learning pathways tailored to the demands of the industry. More importantly, it is about changing the mindset that women need to "catch up." Instead, the aim is to prepare them to lead, innovate, and bring fresh perspectives to a sector that needs them



4. Scope of the Initiative

The initiative covers:

- All maritime organizations in the maritime domain, such as shipping companies, ports, and welfare bodies.
- Women seafarers, trainees, aspirants, employees in maritime institutions, and women in coastal communities.
- Stakeholders including MUI, ISWAN, Sailors' Society, CMMI, industry associations, training academies, and international partners.
- National level outreach in schools (KVs, CBSE schools), maritime colleges, ports, and shipping clusters.



5. Institutional & Resource Framework

The Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) initiative is a flagship programme of the Directorate General of Shipping (DG Shipping), aimed at promoting gender inclusion, welfare, and equal opportunities for women in the maritime sector. Its implementation is supported by a well-defined institutional and resource framework that ensures coordinated action, effective governance, and long-term impact. Maritime Training Trust provides a scholarship of ₹1 lakh to female students.

Sr. No	Year	No. of women seafarers applied for financial support	Financial support to per women student (Amt in Rs.)	Amount funded by MTT (Amt in Rs.)
1	2014-15	45	50,000	22,50,000
2	2015-16	50	50,000	25,00,000
3	2016-17	50	50,000	25,00,000
4	2017-18	51	50,000	25,50,000
5	2018-19	106	50,000	53,00,000
6	2019-20	185	1,00,000	1,85,00,000
7	2020-21	269	1,00,000	2,69,00,000
8	2021-22	367	1,00,000	3,67,00,000
9	2022-23	476	1,00,000	4,76,00,000
10	2023-24	658	1,00,000	6,58,00,000
11	2024-25	732	1,00,000	7,32,00,000
12	2025-26	850	1,00,000	8,50,00,000
		3839		36,88,00,000

At the core of this framework is DG Shipping, which acts as the nodal authority responsible for policy direction, regulatory oversight, and overall coordination of the initiative. Additionally, dedicated task forces and committees are established to monitor progress, guide interventions, and ensure alignment with policy objectives.

The programme is further strengthened through partnerships with industry stakeholders, training institutions, and other maritime organisations, enabling resource sharing and broader outreach. Notably, the initiative is funded with support from the seafarers' union,



the Maritime Union of India (MUI), reflecting a collaborative approach to enhancing seafarer welfare.

6. Task Force

The Sagar Mein Samman Task Force was constituted on 25th November 2024 by the Directorate General of Shipping. The Task Force comprised seven subcommittees — six thematic subcommittees with distinct terms of reference, goals and deliverables, and one Management & Coordination Committee that guided and monitored the project. Please refer to the [annexure 1](#) for detailed Task Force Composition.

6.1 Subcommittee Structure

Subcommittee	Mandate
Planning	Roadmap, project timeline and structure for policy components.
Training	Identification of training gaps; curriculum and mentorship recommendations.
Research & Development	Evidence base and data-driven inputs to the policy.
Governance & Compliance	Regulatory alignment and institutional accountability.
Communication & Media	Outreach narrative, media engagement and stakeholder messaging.
Outreach	On-ground programmes; first outreach in Meghalaya and Nagaland.
Management & Coordination	Overall guidance and monitoring of the Task Force.

Please refer to the [annexure 5](#) for Phase II Sub Committee.



6.2 Phase I — Closure

With the release of the Draft Policy Framework on 18th May 2025, Phase I of the Sagar Mein Samman initiative was formally concluded. The SMS Task Force was dissolved upon successful completion of its mandate. Please refer to the [annexure 1](#) for detailed Task Force Composition.

6.3 Phase II — Way Forward

- Implementation of policy provisions following legal vetting, industry feedback, stakeholder consultation and approval by MoPSW.
- Country visits to study global best practices, particularly in nations where the share of women seafarers exceeds the global average.
- Visits to IMO Headquarters for preparatory work for IMO Assembly meetings.
- Implementation and monitoring of the Women in Maritime Policy under an institutional framework (to be finalised).
- Circular No. 05 of 2026 has been published for the five-year plan and is attached as an [annexure 5](#).



7. Financial Budget

a. Funding Source & Disbursement Mechanism

- **Phase-I funding:** Fully supported by the Maritime Union of India (MUI) under MoU with DGS.
- **Phase-II funding:** To continue through MUI support with embedded staffing, operational budgets, outreach, and digital expansion.

b. Budget Utilized till Phase I

As per ledger from Jan–Dec 2025:

- **Total Phase-I expenditure:** ₹29,56,959.03
- **Approved budget for Phase-I (2025):** ₹45,70,000
- **Balance remaining:** ₹16,13,040.97

Breakdown:

Sr. No	Particulars	Estimated Cost (₹)
1	Management	6,00,000
2	Communication	11,04,444
3	Outreach	5,00,715.03
4	Governance & Compliance	4,72,000
	Total	25,77,159.03

c. Estimated Budget for Phase II

As per the *Revised SMS Estimated Budget for Phase II*:

- **Total Estimated Cost:** ₹1,00,00,100 (₹1 crore approx.)

Major heads:

Sr. No	Particulars	Estimated Cost (₹)
1	Resources	36,00,000
2	Technology & Communication	10,00,000
3	Programs & Outreach	15,00,000
4	Administrative & Others	29,91,000
5	Contingency / Miscellaneous	9,09,100
	Total	1,00,00,100



8. Key Achievements & Progress So Far

- (i) **28 Nov 2024:** *Formal launch of SMS via DGS Order No. 18 of 2024; Task Force constituted with 7 subcommittees*

The Sagar Mein Samman initiative was formally launched through DGS Order No. 18 of 2024 on November 25, 2024, by the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS). As part of this directive, a dedicated Task Force was constituted to drive the objectives of the initiative.

- (ii) **23 Jan 2025:** *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between DGS and the Maritime Union of India (MUI) under which MUI provides full funding support to the Directorate's initiative.*

A pivotal development in the initiative's advancement was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on January 23, 2025, between the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) and the Maritime Union of India (MUI). The MoU, executed at the DGS headquarters in Mumbai (Kanjurmarg), formalized a strategic partnership to collaboratively implement and support the objectives of *Sagar Mein Samman*, reinforcing stakeholder alignment and shared accountability.

Under this agreement, MUI has committed to fully fund and support the initiative, including managing logistics and expert collaboration. DG Shipping, on the other hand, will provide strategic guidance as required for successful implementation of the project. Both parties have agreed to conduct periodic reviews and updates to ensure the effectiveness of the program.

The generous support extended by the Maritime Union of India (MUI) highlights its unwavering commitment to the welfare and dignity of Indian seafarers. By taking full financial responsibility for the implementation of this important initiative, MUI has not only demonstrated leadership in addressing key issues within the maritime sector but has also played a pivotal role in promoting gender diversity at sea. Its backing of the 'Sagar Mein Samman' campaign reflects a progressive and inclusive vision one that seeks to ensure equal opportunities, safety, and respect for all seafarers, irrespective of gender. This initiative stands as a testament to MUI's continued efforts in fostering a more equitable and supportive environment across the Indian shipping industry.



(iii) 30 Jan 2025: Official logo unveiled by Hon'ble MoS (PSW) at Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), Mumbai, marking the formal national launch

On 30th January 2025, the Sagar Mein Samman initiative reached a major milestone with the unveiling of its official logo by Hon'ble Shri Shantanu Thakur, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways. The event, held at the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) headquarters in Mumbai, marked the formal national launch of SMS and signified a moment of pride and purpose for the maritime community.

The unveiling of the logo at the event marked a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to empower women in the maritime sector. More than just a ceremonial gesture, it served as a powerful symbol of the government's unwavering commitment to fostering inclusion, equity, and equal opportunity within the industry. Representing dignity, progress, and collective aspiration, the logo galvanized widespread support across the maritime community. This impactful moment not only celebrated the spirit of 'Sagar Mein Samman' but also laid a strong foundation for a future where gender inclusivity and respect are firmly embedded in the culture of seafaring.





(iv) 21 Feb 2025: IMO Secretary-General Mr. Arsenio Dominguez joined the SMS Task Force during the Green Shipping Conclave, paving the path for global recognition and significantly boosting its international visibility

At the Green Shipping Conclave held on February 21, 2025, Sagar Mein Samman received international recognition when IMO Secretary-General Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, along with Hon'ble Union Minister for Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, formally joined the SMS Task Force marking a powerful endorsement of the initiative on the global maritime stage.

Mr. Arsenio Dominguez's association with the initiative has greatly reinforced its credibility, providing an influential platform to advance conversations on gender inclusivity, women's empowerment, and the future of equitable practices in the maritime sector. His involvement is expected to accelerate policy-level support for initiatives like Sagar Mein Samman, fostering an environment where women can thrive, lead, and contribute meaningfully to the maritime industry.

Further, in a letter dated 1st March 2025, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) conveyed his gratitude to Hon'ble Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), and to the Director General of Shipping for the warm welcome extended during his visit to India. He also commended the Directorate General of Shipping for its noteworthy initiatives, particularly in promoting gender diversity and addressing seafarers' mental health and well-being efforts he described as crucial for fostering a more inclusive and resilient maritime industry.

A press release for this event has also been attached as an annexure.



(v) **18th May 2025:** *Launch of Policy Framework for Women in Maritime Sector at Hotel Taj*

On 18th May 2025, Hon'ble Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) Shri Sarbananda Sonowal officially launched the “Women in Maritime” Policy Framework a landmark moment in India’s journey toward inclusive maritime reform. This policy document, shaped through months of consultations, research, and collaboration under the *Sagar Mein Samman* initiative, laid down clear guidelines for gender inclusion across the maritime value chain.

The launch was more than a policy announcement it was a strong declaration that India is prepared to lead by example in creating equal opportunities for women in ports, shipping, training institutes, and governance. It addressed critical areas such as recruitment, safety, leadership, and welfare, aiming to embed gender equity into the core of maritime operations. The event was widely attended by industry leaders, policymakers, training institutions, and international observers, reinforcing national and global confidence in India’s commitment to systemic change. This framework now stands as a foundation for tangible action, bridging intent with implementation in the pursuit of a more balanced and empowered maritime workforce.

The Company of Master Mariners of India (CMMI) has played a crucial role in formulating the policy framework for the Sagar Mein Samman initiative. Reports prepared by various SMS subcommittees were submitted to CMMI for review, following which CMMI conducted a detailed analysis and consolidated the recommendations into a single, cohesive policy document. Their expert inputs have been instrumental in aligning the initiative’s vision with both national



maritime priorities and global best practices, thereby establishing a strong foundation for a sustainable, inclusive, and forward-looking policy framework.



9. Events, Representation & Outreach

- (i) **27th – 31st October 2025: India Maritime Week 2025** — SMS showcased through integrated ‘Seafarer’s Welfare Corner’ at Bombay Exhibition Centre, Mumbai; national stakeholder outreach.

Brief: India Maritime Week 2025, held at Bombay Exhibition Centre, Mumbai, served as a premier global platform bringing together maritime leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders. DG Shipping showcased the **Seafarer’s Welfare Corner (SMS initiative)** as part of integrated outreach, highlighting welfare schemes, safety, and support mechanisms for seafarers to a national and international audience



- (ii) **SEANEXT 2025** — SMS featured at Youth Maritime Conclave through dedicated panel discussion; strengthened youth and career engagement.

Brief: SEANEXT 2025, held in Mumbai, was a youth-focused maritime career conclave bringing together over 500 students, industry leaders, and policymakers. DG Shipping contributed through panel discussions, promoting initiatives like **Sagar Mein Samman / welfare frameworks**, strengthening youth engagement, awareness of maritime careers, and inclusive participation including women in maritime.





10. Policy Reform Areas for Enhancing Women's Participation in Seafaring

10.1 Access and Entry into Maritime Careers

A key objective of the policy framework is to strengthen the pipeline of women entering maritime education and training.

This includes:

- Promotion of awareness campaigns at schools, colleges, and training institutes to highlight maritime career opportunities for women
- Introduction of scholarships, financial incentives, and sponsorship programmes to reduce entry barriers
- Encouragement of female enrolment in Maritime Training Institutes (MTIs)
- Facilitation of a structured transition pathway from training to onboard employment

The framework recognizes that increasing participation at the entry level is critical for long-term workforce diversity and sustainability.

10.2 Fair Recruitment and Equal Opportunities

The policy emphasizes equitable and transparent recruitment practices to ensure that women have equal access to employment.

Key provisions include:

- Adoption of gender-neutral hiring policies across shipping companies and RPSL agencies
- Ensuring equal access to onboard training berths and placements
- Implementation of no-discrimination principles in recruitment, pay, and promotion
- Promotion of merit-based selection systems

This component ensures that women are provided fair and unbiased opportunities at all stages of employment.

10.3 Safety, Security and Zero Tolerance Mechanisms

Ensuring a safe and dignified working environment is a core element of the framework.

The policy mandates:



- Adoption of a Zero Tolerance policy against harassment, discrimination, and exploitation
- Establishment of confidential and accessible grievance redressal mechanisms
- Strengthening of reporting systems with protection against retaliation
- Compliance with international standards such as MLC, 2006

The framework seeks to build trust, accountability, and confidence among women seafarers.

10.4 Gender-Sensitive Infrastructure

The framework recognizes the importance of onboard and shore-based facilities in improving participation and retention.

Key measures include:

- Provision of separate accommodation, sanitation, and hygiene facilities onboard vessels
- Ensuring availability of gender-appropriate safety equipment and healthcare support
- Development of inclusive recreational and welfare infrastructure at ports and training institutes

These measures aim to create a comfortable and secure working environment.

10.5 Training, Capacity Building and Skill Development

The framework promotes continuous skill development and inclusion of women in technical and leadership domains.

This includes:

- Integration of gender sensitization modules in maritime training curricula
- Development of technical training programmes tailored for women seafarers
- Leadership and career advancement training opportunities
- Continuous professional development for enhancing technical competencies

This ensures that women are equipped with skills required for operational and leadership roles.



10.6 Mentorship, Counselling and Welfare Support

Recognizing the challenges faced during initial stages and onboard service, the framework incorporates support mechanisms for career sustainability.

Key provisions include:

- Implementation of mentorship and buddy programmes
- Access to professional counselling and mental health support
- Establishment of welfare services for seafarers and their families

These interventions aim to improve confidence, well-being, and retention.

10.7 Career Progression and Retention

The policy focuses on creating long-term career pathways for women seafarers.

Measures include:

- Ensuring equal access to promotions and leadership roles
- Introduction of policies supporting maternity, rejoining, and flexible career options
- Encouraging participation in technical and command-level positions
- Retention strategies to address attrition and career discontinuity

This component ensures that women can sustain long-term careers in maritime.

10.8 Institutional Framework and Governance

Effective implementation of the policy framework is supported through strong institutional coordination.

- DG Shipping acts as the nodal regulatory authority
- Dedicated Task Forces and Committees monitor implementation and progress
- Collaboration with:
 - Maritime industry stakeholders
 - Training institutes
 - International bodies

This ensures policy alignment, accountability, and coordinated execution.



10.9 Awareness, Advocacy and Cultural Transformation

To address deep-rooted societal barriers, the framework emphasizes behavioural and cultural change.

This includes:

- Nationwide awareness campaigns to change perceptions about women in maritime
- Promotion of success stories and role models
- Industry engagement to encourage inclusive workplace culture
- Sensitization programmes for stakeholders across the ecosystem

This component aims to create a supportive environment beyond policies and regulations.

10.10 Data, Monitoring and International Alignment

The framework incorporates data-driven governance and global alignment.

- Collection of gender-disaggregated data across training, employment, and retention
- Use of digital dashboards for monitoring performance indicators
- Alignment with international frameworks:
 - IMO Gender Inclusion initiatives
 - ILO MLC standards
 - UN SDGs

This ensures continuous evaluation and benchmarking against global best practices.



11. Challenges Identified

The analysis undertaken under the Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) initiative, based on stakeholder consultations and survey responses across maritime training institutes, seafarers, and industry stakeholders, highlights several systemic, institutional, and socio-cultural challenges affecting the participation and progression of women in the maritime sector.

(i) Entry-Level and Awareness Challenges

- Persisting societal and cultural barriers discourage women from pursuing maritime careers, particularly seafaring roles involving long durations at sea.
- Limited outreach and visibility of women role models lead to weak aspirational pathways for young women.
- Many women face family resistance, primarily due to concerns related to safety and extended absence from home

(ii) Training and Skill Development Gaps

- Although training frameworks are largely inclusive, gaps remain in:
 - Gender-sensitive content and delivery
 - Physical training parity and confidence building
- Need for enhanced specialized training in leadership, mental resilience, and workplace challenges.
- Limited access to structured mentorship and follow-up support during early career stages.

(iii) Infrastructure and Onboard Facility Constraints

- While basic facilities are available, significant gaps persist in:
 - Gender-specific amenities (sanitary provisions, healthcare, privacy)
 - Recreational and wellness facilities onboard
- Lack of uniform standards across ships and institutions, leading to inconsistent experiences.
- Issues related to privacy, accommodation, and safety infrastructure onboard vessels.

(iv) Workplace Safety and Gender Bias

- Continued presence of:



- Verbal harassment, exclusion, and gender bias
- Instances of bullying and undervaluation of contributions
- Only a small percentage of women report feeling completely safe onboard, indicating concerns around psychological safety
- Persistent male-dominated work culture in operational roles.

(v) Gaps in Grievance Redressal and Trust Systems

- Despite availability of grievance mechanisms:
 - Low reporting rates due to fear of retaliation or lack of confidence in resolution mechanisms
- Gap between awareness of policies and trust in implementation
- Need for stronger, more accessible and confidential complaint mechanisms.

(vi) Career Progression and Leadership Barriers

- Limited representation of women in:
 - Technical roles
 - Senior leadership and decision-making positions
- Challenges in:
 - Transition from training to onboard placements
 - Promotion and career advancement pathways
- Lack of visible female leadership role models impacts motivation and retention.

(vii) Retention and Work-Life Balance Issues

- High attrition due to:
 - Work-life imbalance
 - Family and caregiving responsibilities
- Insufficient:
 - Maternity support and re-entry policies
 - Flexible career pathways
- Mental health and emotional well-being support, although present, requires strengthening.

(viii) Institutional and Policy Implementation Gaps



- Variations in implementation of:
 - Gender policies across maritime organizations and MTIs
- Lack of:
 - Standardized frameworks and audits
 - Uniform compliance mechanisms
- Need for stronger integration between policy, practice, and monitoring systems.

(ix) Cultural and Perception Challenges

- Maritime continues to be viewed as a male-dominated profession, creating entry barriers.
- Prevailing stereotypes regarding women's physical capabilities and suitability for seafaring roles.
- Social stigma and perception gaps continue to influence career choices and retention.

The challenges identified clearly indicate that gender disparity in maritime is not limited to a single stage but spans the entire career lifecycle—from entry and training to employment, progression, and retention.

The findings emphasize the need for a holistic, multi-dimensional approach, combining:

- Policy reforms
- Infrastructure development
- Cultural transformation
- Institutional accountability

These insights form the foundation for targeted interventions under the Sagar Mein Samman initiative, aimed at creating a safe, inclusive, and sustainable maritime ecosystem for women.



12. International Case Studies & Best Practices

12.1 Taiwan ^[13-18]

Taiwan is a global maritime powerhouse, with highly developed container shipping, shipbuilding, port logistics, and offshore wind sector. Companies such as Evergreen Marine Corporation, Yang Ming Marine Transport, and Wan Hai Lines collectively account for over 10% of global container shipping capacity, underscoring the country's strategic role in international trade. The maritime industry contributes significantly to Taiwan's GDP, particularly through export-oriented manufacturing and offshore energy projects, including the Round 3.3 offshore-wind auctions.

Under the Ocean Affairs Council and Maritime and Port Bureau frameworks, Taiwan has integrated gender equality and ESG commitments into its maritime policies, emphasizing technical education, diversity, leadership, and innovation-driven employment.

Key Initiatives

A. Women in Maritime Education and Technical Fields

Taiwan's universities and maritime institutions—especially National Taiwan Ocean University (NTOU)—have prioritized female enrolment in marine engineering, naval architecture, logistics management, and shipping administration. These efforts are supported by targeted scholarships for women, STEM-promotion campaigns in high schools, and mandatory industry internships with major shipping lines.

Key outcomes include:

- Female participation in technical maritime programs has risen from single-digit levels to 10–15%, particularly in shore-based roles such as port operations and logistics analytics.
- Despite progress, sea-going roles remain limited due to onboard gender biases and workplace culture issues.

B. ESG and Corporate Diversity Policies

Leading Taiwanese shipping and logistics firms have embedded gender-equality targets into their ESG frameworks, aligning with IMO-recommended diversity standards. For example, the Taiwan International Ports Corporation (TIPC) emphasizes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in its sustainability reports, monitoring gender-balanced training programs and welfare indicators.

Notably, Round 3.3 offshore-wind auctions allocate 10–15% of bidder evaluation scores to ESG performance, indirectly incentivizing female recruitment in maritime



renewables. These policies improve corporate governance and transparency, attracting international investors.

C. Smart Port and Digital Maritime Opportunities

Taiwan’s smart ports, including Kaohsiung and Taichung, serve as hubs for digitalization, IoT-based logistics, and sustainability management. These initiatives create technology-oriented careers with lower physical demands, offering new entry points for women in maritime digitalization, logistics analytics, and green-port operations.

Outcomes include:

- Expansion of shore-based roles in IoT, data analytics, and environmental-management systems, improving work-life balance for maritime professionals.
- Enhanced attractiveness of the maritime sector for younger, tech-savvy talent, aligning with Maritime and Port Bureau workforce-development goals.

Best Practices and Impact

Best Practice	Impact
STEM-focused maritime education – Scholarships and targeted recruitment of women in technical programs.	Diversifies technical workforce and improves shore-based participation.
ESG-linked diversity policies – Corporate ESG frameworks tracking gender-equality metrics.	Strengthens governance, transparency, and international investment.
Smart maritime employment – Digitalization and smart-port initiatives creating flexible, high-tech roles.	Opens flexible, high-tech career paths for women.
Employee welfare systems – Enhanced onboard safety, mental-health support, and anti-discrimination policies.	Boosts retention and job satisfaction.



Key Lessons

- Technology-driven roles accelerate gender inclusion by offering less physically demanding careers and shore-based flexibility.
- ESG frameworks ensure accountability through mandatory reporting and investor-grade standards.
- Bias-training and onboard-culture reforms remain essential to address persistent male-dominated environments.



12.2 Australia ^[19-24]

Australia's maritime sector focuses on workforce retention and flexible employment structures, addressing skills shortages and demographic challenges. The Australian Maritime Workforce Development Strategy emphasizes flexible rosters, hybrid work, and return-to-work support to sustain a diverse maritime workforce.

Australia's gender-sensitive policies are supported by industry associations such as Women Offshore and Women in Maritime, which promote leadership training, peer mentoring, and safety advocacy.

Key Initiatives

A. Flexible Employment Systems

Organizations have introduced flexible rosters, hybrid working models, return-to-work programs, and career-break management systems to retain skilled maritime professionals, particularly women and caregivers.

Key outcomes include:

- Reduced attrition and improved career continuity for maritime professionals transitioning between onshore and offshore roles.

B. Women Offshore Networks

Industry associations such as Women Offshore – Australia Chapter support peer mentoring, leadership training, professional networking, and safety advocacy for women in maritime roles. These networks foster inclusive communities and career advancement opportunities.

C. Gender-Sensitive Workplace Design

Companies have improved Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for women, accommodation standards, onboard health support, and psychological-safety frameworks to create safer, more inclusive environments. For example, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has implemented gender-equity action plans targeting recruitment and retention disparities.

Key outcomes include:

- Safer, more respectful workplaces for women in maritime roles.
- Reduced gender pay gaps and improved psychological safety.

Best Practices and Impact



Best Practice	Impact
Flexible rostering – Adaptable work schedules and hybrid models.	Reduced attrition and improved retention.
Inclusive workplace design – Gender-sensitive PPE and accommodation standards.	Safer, more respectful environments for women.
Return-to-work programs – Career-break management and re-entry support.	Enhanced career continuity and retention.

Key Lessons

- Inclusion requires operational flexibility and adaptability to caregivers’ needs.
- Workplace design affects employee safety and psychological wellbeing, directly influencing retention.
- Retention is as critical as recruitment in building a sustainable maritime workforce.



12.3 Norway ^[25-30]

Norway ranks as one of the world's largest maritime nations, contributing significantly to shipping, offshore energy, shipbuilding, marine technology, and logistics. The sector supports nearly 4% of Norway's GDP and over 400,000 jobs, underscoring its strategic importance.

In 2023, the Norwegian government launched the Gender Equality Strategy for the Maritime Sector, aligning with IMO's global targets and aiming to boost women's representation to 30% by 2030. The strategy integrates regulatory mandates, education reforms, and workplace protections, achieving around 21% female participation in the maritime workforce, with 11% of seafarers being women.

Key Initiatives

A. Board Representation Policy

Norway pioneered mandatory gender quotas, requiring at least 40% women on corporate boards of public-limited companies since 2003, later extended to state-owned enterprises. This policy influenced private maritime firms under the Norwegian Shipowners' Association, which signed WISTA's "40 by 30" initiative, aiming for 40% women in management by 2030.

Key outcomes include:

- Increased female representation in maritime leadership, rising from 15% to over 30% in some shipping boards.
- Enhanced decision-making diversity and improved innovation and risk management.

B. Maritime Education Inclusion

Norwegian maritime academies and universities, in partnership with the Norwegian Maritime Authority, promote female enrolment in navigation and engineering programs through targeted scholarships, STEM outreach, and guaranteed cadetship placements.

Key outcomes include:

- Significant growth in female enrolment, with more women entering onshore roles in marine technology and offshore wind.

C. Workplace Reforms

Maritime companies have adopted robust anti-harassment policies compliant with ILO Convention 190, annual equal-pay audits, and flexible work systems, including part-time seafaring rotations and family-supportive leave policies.



Key outcomes include:

- Higher retention rates among female seafarers and reduced turnover.

Best Practices and Impact

Best Practice	Impact
Leadership diversity mandates – Mandatory board quotas.	Strengthens governance and decision-making diversity.
Female maritime scholarships – Targeted recruitment.	Builds talent pipeline and expands onshore roles.
Flexible work policies – Part-time rotations and family-supportive leave.	Improves retention and work-life balance.
Diversity reporting – Mandatory ESG-linked metrics.	Ensures accountability and attracts investment.

Key Lessons

- Regulatory reforms like quotas accelerate inclusion by enforcing measurable change.
- Leadership diversity fosters a positive organizational culture with better innovation and risk management.
- Retention hinges on supportive policies addressing work-life balance and safety, offering a blueprint for India's maritime vision.



12.4 Philippines ^[31-35]

The Philippines ranks as the world's largest supplier of seafarers, contributing over 400,000 professionals annually to the global maritime workforce. The sector supports 17 billion in economic activity and generates 5.6 billion in remittances, underscoring its critical role.

Despite its dominance, the sector remains male-dominated, with women constituting only 2–3% of seafarers. The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) has implemented the Gender Mainstreaming Program to address this gap.

Key Initiatives

A. Gender-Inclusive Maritime Education

Institutions like the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy (PMMA) and private academies have ramped up female cadet recruitment via targeted scholarships, awareness campaigns, and equal admission policies.

Key outcomes include:

- Women comprising 10–15% of cadets in technical programs.

B. Support Through International Partnerships

MARINA partners with IMO and WISTA for Women in Maritime fellowships and leadership workshops, while global shipowners like Maersk and NYK provide technical upskilling.

Key outcomes include:

- Enhanced global employability and policy alignment with IMO's 30% targets.

C. Women Seafarer Empowerment Programs

Companies like Jepsens and Columbian Ship Management run mentoring programs and anti-harassment training, while Pinoy Women Seafarers provides networking and leadership workshops.

Key outcomes include:

- Improved confidence and retention among women seafarers.

D. Workplace Safety and Welfare Reforms

Employers have strengthened grievance mechanisms and onboard accommodations, aligning with MLC 2006 and IMF-supported welfare reforms.

Key outcomes include:

- Safer workplaces and better mental-health support.



Best Practices and Impact

Best Practice	Impact
Equal maritime education access – Scholarships and outreach.	Boosts female participation in technical roles.
International partnerships – IMO and WISTA collaboration.	Enhances skills and leadership.
Women seafarer mentoring – Networks and workshops.	Improves retention and confidence.
Welfare/safety reforms – Onboard and remittance support.	Creates safer workplaces and better welfare.

Key Lessons

- Reforms in maritime education build a skilled female pipeline, crucial for India's seafarer-export model.
- International collaborations amplify funding and expertise.
- Safety and welfare reforms directly improve retention and morale



12.5 Singapore ^[36-37]

Singapore handles 37 million TEUs annually at PSA ports, ranking as a global maritime hub. The Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) drives diversity and inclusion through the Maritime Singapore Green Initiative, with female participation rising to ~15% in shore-based roles.

Key Initiatives

A. Women Maritime Scholarship Programs

MPA's Professional, Internship and Traineeship (PIT) and Maritime-One scholarships provide full sponsorships for women cadets in deck, engine, and electro-technical programs, with guaranteed sea time.

Key outcomes include:

- 20%+ female cadet intake growth and pathways to officer roles.

B. Leadership and Digital Skills Development

MPA's Digital Academy and Tuas Mega Port initiatives target women for upskilling in AI/IoT, logistics, and smart port operations.

Key outcomes include:

- Women leading digital transformation projects and 25% rise in tech-specialist hires.

C. Flexible Career Pathways

MPA's Maritime Talent Conversion Programme and Returnship Programme support seamless transitions from seafaring to shore roles, with reskilling subsidies and hybrid models.

Key outcomes include:

- 15% attrition drop and higher retention in high-value roles.

Best Practices and Impact

Best Practice	Impact
Government-industry coordination – MPA-led initiatives.	Streamlined implementation and scalability.



Best Practice	Impact
Digital skill training – AI/IoT and smart ports.	Future-ready workforce and innovation.
Career flexibility – Hybrid and returnship models.	Enhanced retention and work-life balance.

Key Lessons

- Government stewardship accelerates inclusion through funding and scholarships.
- Digital upskilling positions women in growth sectors.
- Flexible pathways combat seafaring barriers and improve retention



12.6 United Kingdom ^[38-42]

The United Kingdom advances gender inclusion across its maritime sector—spanning shipping, maritime law, insurance, ports, and engineering—through industry collaboration and voluntary commitments led by Maritime UK and Women in Maritime UK (WiMUK), established in 2018. The sector faces a gender gap with women comprising only 2–4% of seafarers, underscoring the need for targeted reforms.

Key Initiatives

Women in Maritime Taskforce

Launched in 2018 by Maritime UK, the Taskforce unites leaders from shipping (BP, Carnival), ports (Associated British Ports), and services to execute Maritime 2050 diversity pledges. It improves visibility via #WomenInMaritime campaigns and Women in Maritime Day, boosts recruitment with 10 UK roadshows (£100K funded) pairing girls aged 11–14 with mentors and drives leadership through accelerators. Anti-harassment toolkits aligned with the UK Equality Act 2010 and MLC 2006 enhance inclusion.

Impact: 12% female workforce growth since 2019, though seafarer representation remains at 4%.

Diversity Charters

The Women in Maritime Charter, with 60+ signatories (Maersk, Hapag-Lloyd, Stena Line), commits firms to 25% women hiring targets, blind CV recruitment, equal promotions with annual audits, and workforce dashboards for transparency. The Maritime and Me campaign (£40K DfT-funded with WISE/ICS) uses quizzes and case studies to attract diverse talent, supporting the Maritime 2050 Route Map.

Mentorship Programs

WiMUK Mentoring connects 1,000+ women via executive pairing, while Women in Shipping Summit and forums build C-suite pipelines. LinkedIn groups and returnship programs aid post-maternity re-entry, aligning with IMO-WISTA Survey 2024 insights.

Best Practices and Impact

Best Practice	Impact
Industry diversity charters – 60+ firms signing the charter.	Sector-wide standards and accountability. safety4sea+1
Mentorship systems – 1,000+ pairs.	Leadership pipeline and retention. maritimeuk+1



Best Practice	Impact
Inclusion benchmarking – Public dashboards.	12% workforce growth and improved monitoring. safety4sea+1

Key Lessons

- Voluntary industry taskforces achieve scale without regulation, securing DfT funding and charter signatories.
- Mentorship proves essential for executive tracks, addressing 1–4% officer gaps.
- Campaign visibility via roadshows and quizzes drives recruitment, adaptable for India’s Sagar Mein Samman



12.7 Canada ^[43-48]

Canada focuses on inclusive maritime workforce development through ESG integration and community participation. The Marine Training Program, funded under the Oceans Protection Plan (OPP), supports underrepresented groups, including Indigenous Peoples, Northerners, and women, for careers in marine industry and emergency response.

Key Initiatives

A. Inclusive Port Authority Policies

Port authorities introduced diversity hiring targets, safety audits, inclusive infrastructure, and workplace reforms to ensure equitable employment and safe working conditions.

B. Women and Indigenous Maritime Training

Programs support underrepresented groups through technical training, apprenticeships, maritime logistics education, and navigation programs. Partner institutions like Nunavut Fisheries and Marine Training Consortium (NFMTC) and Western Arctic Marine Training Consortium (WAMTC) provide fully funded training for Indigenous Peoples, women, and Northerners.

C. Safety and Welfare Reforms

Canada strengthened harassment reporting systems, mental health support, anti-bullying frameworks, and employee welfare systems to protect maritime workers.

Best Practices and Impact

Best Practice	Impact
Community inclusion – Training Indigenous and coastal communities.	Wider participation and local economic growth.
ESG-linked diversity – ESG-aligned hiring and training.	Governance improvement and Sustainable Development Goals alignment.
Safety-focused reforms – Enhanced safety and welfare.	Better workforce retention and employee confidence.



Key Lessons

- Inclusion should extend to local communities, especially Indigenous Peoples.
- Safe workplaces improve employee confidence and retention.
- Diversity enhances workforce resilience in the face of climate change and technological disruption.



13. Case Studies / Success Stories

13.1 Inspirational Women Seafarer Stories

The maritime sector has seen the emergence of several trailblazing women whose achievements have not only broken barriers but also inspired a new generation to pursue seafaring careers. These stories highlight resilience, determination, and excellence in a traditionally male-dominated field.

(i) **Ms. Kiran Dhingra IAS (Retd.): First Woman Director General of Shipping.**



Mrs. Kiran Dhingra stands as a remarkable example of leadership, resilience, and excellence in public service. Known for her sharp acumen and dynamic approach, she carved a path for herself in a domain traditionally dominated by men, inspiring generations of women to aim higher and break barriers.

Belonging to the prestigious 1975 batch of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Mrs. Dhingra's journey has been one of determination and distinction. During her tenure from 17 April 2006 to 11 September 2008, she achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first woman to head one of the highest executive offices, marking her entry into an almost entirely male bastion. This achievement was not just personal—it symbolized a broader shift toward inclusivity and equality in leadership roles.

With an illustrious career spanning over 40 years, Mrs. Dhingra has accumulated deep expertise in infrastructure development and regulatory frameworks. Her ability to navigate complex administrative systems with clarity and efficiency made her a respected figure both within government and beyond. Even after her retirement as an IAS officer, she continued to contribute meaningfully to the nation's progress.

Her leadership extended into the corporate sphere, where she held top positions on the boards of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). In 2015, she joined Goa Carbon Ltd. as an Independent Director, bringing with her a wealth of experience, governance insight, and strategic vision. Her presence strengthened organizational oversight and reinforced ethical business practices.



Mrs. Dhingra's journey reflects not only professional success but also the courage to challenge norms and redefine what is possible for women in leadership. Her story is a powerful reminder that excellence, when backed by determination and integrity, can transcend all barriers.

She continues to inspire countless individuals—especially women—to pursue their ambitions with confidence, resilience, and a commitment to making a difference.

(ii) Dr. Malini Shankar: First Woman Vice-Chancellor of Indian Maritime University.



Dr. Malini V. Shankar is a pioneer in India's maritime and administrative landscape, exemplifying excellence, intellect, and inspiring leadership. Her journey reflects not only personal accomplishment but also a powerful stride toward greater representation of women in critical national sectors.

Dr. Shankar made history by becoming the first woman Vice-Chancellor of the Indian Maritime University (IMU). This landmark achievement positioned her at the helm of a premier institution responsible for shaping the future of India's maritime workforce, a field traditionally dominated by men. Her leadership at IMU marked a transformative phase, emphasizing academic excellence, global standards, and institutional growth. An accomplished academic, Dr. Shankar holds a Ph.D. from IIT Madras, one of India's most prestigious institutions. Her intellectual rigor and commitment to policy and governance have been central to her distinguished career.

Prior to her role at IMU, she served as the Director General of Shipping, where she played a pivotal role in strengthening India's maritime policies and regulatory frameworks. Continuing her contribution to the sector, Dr. Shankar currently serves as the Chairperson of the National Shipping Board, guiding strategic decisions that impact India's maritime industry at the national level. Her deep expertise and visionary outlook have consistently influenced the development and modernization of the shipping sector. Adding to her remarkable achievements.

Dr. Shankar is also the first Indian woman to receive the prestigious global AAA Award from the Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIM), Manila. This international



recognition underscores her outstanding contribution to maritime administration and her standing as a global leader in the field.

Dr. Malini Shankar's journey is a powerful testament to perseverance, excellence, and breaking barriers. She has not only excelled in high-responsibility roles but has also paved the way for women to aspire to leadership positions in specialized and challenging domains.

Her story continues to inspire aspiring professionals—especially women—to pursue paths of impact and leadership with confidence, dedication, and a vision for change.

(iii) Ms. Anna Rajam Malhotra



Anna Rajam Malhotra carved a historic path as post-independent India's very first woman IAS officer, breaking barriers in a field traditionally dominated by men. Her remarkable journey stands as a symbol of courage, determination, and visionary leadership that inspired generations of women across the nation. Known for her administrative excellence and unwavering commitment to public service, she played a significant role in the development of India's infrastructure and maritime growth. Her valuable support, sharp administrative acumen, and dedicated leadership contributed immensely towards the progress and development of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), one of India's premier ports. In recognition of her pioneering contributions to the maritime sector and nation-building, Ms. Anna Rajam Malhotra was felicitated as a "Pioneer of the Maritime Sector." Her life and achievements continue to inspire women to lead with confidence, break limitations, and contribute meaningfully towards the nation's growth.

(iv) Ms. Victoria Alexandrina Drummond- First Lady Marine Engineer^[3]



Victoria Drummond stands as one of the earliest and most remarkable pioneers in maritime history, breaking barriers in a profession that was overwhelmingly male dominated. She was the *first woman to go to sea as a marine engineer* and later became the *first woman Member of the Institute of Marine Engineers* (now the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology), setting a historic precedent for women in technical maritime roles.

Born in 1894 in Scotland into an aristocratic family, her decision to pursue engineering and seafaring came as a surprise. Despite initial astonishment, she was supported by her family and began her journey in 1916 with a rigorous five-year engineering apprenticeship, combining practical training with evening studies in engineering. Her dedication enabled her to qualify as a marine engineer at a time when such opportunities were rarely extended to women.

In 1922, Victoria Drummond embarked on her seafaring career as a junior engineer on a voyage to Australia. Over the years, she rose steadily through the ranks to become a *Chief Engineer*, sailing worldwide and even overseeing shipbuilding projects—a role comparable to a modern-day Superintendent Engineer. However, her journey was not without obstacles. She faced institutional discrimination, as British authorities refused to grant her certification solely due to her gender. Undeterred, she obtained her certification abroad and continued her career with international shipping lines.



Her courage and professionalism were most evident during the Second World War, when her vessel came under aerial attack. In a moment of crisis, she single-handedly operated the engine room after ensuring the safety of her crew, increasing the ship's speed and enabling it to evade bombing attacks. For her extraordinary bravery and dedication, she was awarded the *Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)* and the *Lloyd's War Medal for Bravery at Sea*.

Victoria Drummond served at sea for over four decades, retiring in 1962 after a distinguished career. Her legacy continues to inspire generations of maritime professionals. Today, her contributions are commemorated through recognitions such as the *Victoria Drummond Award*, which honours women whose achievements elevate the profile of women at sea.

(v) Ms. Reshma Nilofer- First Woman River Pilot in The World ^{[4][5]}



Reshma Nilofer Visalakshi stands as a pioneering figure in the maritime sector, breaking long-standing gender barriers as *India's first and only woman marine pilot*, and one of the very few women river pilots globally. Her journey reflects determination, resilience, and excellence in one of the most technically demanding and high-risk maritime roles.

She began her career as a *trainee pilot in 2011*, entering the maritime field with little prior exposure. Through consistent effort and significant professional growth, she qualified as a *fully-fledged marine pilot in 2018*. Since then, she has successfully handled some of the largest vessels in the world, operating in the *Hooghly River at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (Kolkata)*—widely recognized as one of the most challenging pilotage environments globally due to strong tidal currents, narrow navigation channels, and shifting river conditions.



Her contributions have been widely recognized, including being honoured with one of the *highest civilian recognitions in India* “Nari Shakti Puruskar” in 2019, presented by the President of India. Beyond her operational excellence, she has emerged as a *strong advocate for gender inclusion in maritime*, actively promoting awareness and encouraging women to pursue careers in the sector.

Reshma’s journey has not been without challenges. She has openly highlighted issues such as gender stereotyping, limited career advancement opportunities, maternity discrimination, and the lack of robust mechanisms to address workplace harassment. Her experiences reflect the broader structural challenges faced by women in maritime, while also emphasizing the need for stronger institutional support systems.

Despite these obstacles, she has continued to excel, demonstrating that competence and leadership are not defined by gender. Her story serves as a powerful inspiration, reinforcing the importance of initiatives such as Sagar Mein Samman, which aim to create a safer, more inclusive, and enabling environment for women in maritime.

(vi) Capt. Radhika Menon - 2016 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea ^{[6][7]}



Captain Radhika Menon stands as one of the most distinguished figures in Indian maritime history, exemplifying exceptional courage, leadership, and professional excellence. As the *Master of the oil products tanker Sampurna Swarajya*, she demonstrated extraordinary bravery during a high-risk rescue operation in the Bay of Bengal, earning global recognition.



In June 2015, while navigating through *severe weather conditions with wave heights exceeding 25 feet and winds over 60 knots*, her vessel spotted a fishing boat (*Durgamma*) adrift near the coast of Gopalpur, Odisha. The boat had suffered engine failure, lost its anchor, and its crew had been left without food and water, surviving only on ice from the vessel's cold storage.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, Captain Menon immediately initiated a rescue operation under extremely challenging conditions. Despite strong winds, heavy rain, and dangerous swells, she led multiple attempts using a pilot ladder and safety gear. After *three difficult attempts*, all seven fishermen—exhausted and on the verge of collapse—were safely brought onboard. The rescue operation reunited them with their families, who had already presumed them lost at sea.

For her exceptional courage and leadership, Captain Radhika Menon was awarded the *International Maritime Organization (IMO) Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea (2016)*, becoming the *first woman globally to receive this prestigious honour*. The award is conferred by the United Nations specialized agency for maritime safety and recognizes individuals who risk their own lives to save others at sea.

Captain Menon's achievement is significant not only for the act of bravery itself but also for its symbolic value in advancing gender inclusion in maritime. As one of the *first women captains in the Indian Merchant Navy*, her journey represents breaking barriers in a traditionally male-dominated profession.

(vii) Ms Sonali Banerjee - First woman Marine Engineer of India ^[8]





Sonali Banerjee is widely regarded as a trailblazer in India's maritime sector, breaking entrenched stereotypes to become the *first Indian woman marine engineer* and a pioneer in a field that had long been considered exclusively male-dominated. Her journey reflects determination, courage, and an unwavering commitment to pursue her dreams against all odds.

Born in Allahabad, Sonali developed an early fascination with the sea, inspired by her uncle who served in the Merchant Navy. Listening to his stories of voyages across oceans ignited in her a deep aspiration to pursue a career at sea. Despite societal reservations and family apprehensions, she remained steadfast in her ambition to enter the maritime profession.

In 1995, she made history by successfully clearing the entrance examination for admission to the *Marine Engineering Research Institute (MERI), Kolkata*, becoming the *first woman to ever enroll in the institute*. At that time, the campus had no provisions for female students—there was no women's hostel, and the entire institute functioned as an all-male establishment. With nearly *1500 cadets and Sonali as the sole woman*, her entry posed both an institutional and social challenge. Special arrangements were made to accommodate her, reflecting the structural barriers women faced in accessing maritime education.

Throughout her academic journey, Sonali proved her capability by excelling in every semester. She completed her degree in 1999 with distinction; however, her challenges continued beyond academics. She faced significant difficulty in securing onboard training, as several shipping companies were reluctant to employ a woman trainee despite her strong academic performance.

Demonstrating perseverance, she eventually secured a position with *Mobil Shipping Company*, where she underwent rigorous pre-sea training across international routes including Sri Lanka, Australia, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, Fiji, and the Gulf region. A defining milestone in her career came in August 2001, when she boarded a vessel and took charge of the ship's engine room, officially becoming the *first Indian woman marine engineer at sea*.

(viii) Ms. Romeeta Bundela – First Lady Electro-Technical Officer of our country ^[10]



Romeeta Bundela represents a new generation of women maritime professionals who are redefining possibilities in highly technical and operational roles. She made history as the *first Indian woman Electro-Technical Officer (ETO) on a Maersk vessel*, marking a significant milestone in a domain traditionally dominated by men.

Hailing from Maharashtra, Romeeta's early fascination with maritime life drove her to pursue a career at sea, even though her initial aspiration was to join the Indian Navy. Upon discovering the *Electro-Technical Officer programme at Tolani Maritime Institute*, she became the *first female ETO cadet at the institute*, demonstrating her willingness to take on unconventional challenges.

Romeeta began her professional journey in 2017, stepping onboard her first vessel as the *only woman among a crew of approximately twenty male seafarers*. Her entry into the field was met with scepticism and bias, particularly in technical environments where physical and engineering roles were often perceived as unsuitable for women. However, through her competence, skill, and commitment, she quickly dispelled doubts and earned the trust of her peers.

Her role as an ETO involved managing complex electrical, electronic, and automation systems onboard ships, including critical equipment essential for vessel operations. Despite the physically demanding and technically intricate nature of her job, she demonstrated resilience and adaptability, continuously excelling in her responsibilities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Romeeta showcased extraordinary dedication by spending over nine months onboard vessels in challenging conditions, navigating both operational difficulties and personal sacrifices. Her perseverance and expertise led to rapid career progression, and she went on to become one of the *youngest and first female electrical superintendents* within her organization.

In 2023, she transitioned to the cruise sector, embracing new opportunities and gaining exposure to diverse operational environments and international routes. Beyond her



professional achievements, Romeeta actively inspires aspiring women seafarers, advocating for greater inclusion and encouraging them to pursue maritime careers with confidence.

(ix) Ms Suneeti Bala- First woman chief engineer onboard a marine vessel ^[11]



Suneeti Bala stands among the pioneering women in India's maritime sector, rising to the position of *Chief Engineer onboard a merchant vessel*, a rank achieved by very few women in the field. Her journey reflects determination, resilience, and the ability to overcome deeply rooted gender biases in a traditionally male-dominated profession.

Coming from a middle-class family in Uttar Pradesh, Suneeti developed an early fascination with a career at sea, inspired by her father's background in the armed forces. Despite limited awareness about maritime careers, she joined the *Marine Engineering Research Institute (MERI), Kolkata in 1998*, becoming one of the very few women to enroll in the institute at the time.

Her initial years at MERI were challenging, as female cadets were rare, and she had to navigate a largely male-dominated environment. Acceptance from peers took time, and she encountered stereotypes that questioned the suitability of women in maritime engineering roles. However, she approached these challenges with resilience, focusing on her abilities rather than societal perceptions.

Suneeti began her sea-going career as a *Junior Engineer with Chevron Shipping in 2002* and steadily progressed through the ranks, gaining expertise and experience across different vessels. Over the years, she rose to the position of *Chief Engineer with the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI)*, managing critical engineering operations onboard ships.



Her professional journey was not without its hurdles. Despite her experience, she frequently had to prove her competence repeatedly, as colleagues initially doubted her capabilities due to gender biases. However, through consistent performance and dedication, she earned respect and recognition within the maritime community.

Suneeti also addressed common misconceptions about safety for women at sea, stating that seafarers are generally professional, disciplined, and supportive, and that a woman's safety onboard depends largely on awareness, professionalism, and mutual respect among crew members.

(x) Ms. Nyari Nain- Author – “Anchor My Heart”^[9]



Nyari Nain represents a new generation of women in maritime who are not only excelling professionally but also shaping the narrative of gender inclusion through advocacy and storytelling. As a *Third Engineer*, her journey reflects both the opportunities and challenges faced by women in contemporary seafaring.

Her entry into the maritime profession was not accidental but driven by a strong desire to pursue a *technically demanding and responsible career*. After preparing for competitive examinations, she chose to enter the merchant navy and completed her *pre-sea training at IMI Noida*. She later joined a leading global ship management company, gaining experience across multiple vessel types and operational environments.

Nyari's professional journey highlights the dual realities of maritime careers for women. While she has demonstrated competence in managing complex machinery and working in high-pressure environments such as engine rooms, she has also faced deep-rooted biases and stereotypes. As she notes, being a woman often means being judged even



before demonstrating capability, requiring women to work harder to prove their competence.

Her experiences also bring attention to key structural challenges in the industry, including:

- Gender bias in operational roles, particularly in engineering departments
- Maternity-related career discontinuity and lack of re-entry mechanisms
- Inadequate handling of harassment cases and lack of transparency
- Limited opportunities for career advancement and leadership roles

What sets Nyari apart is her ability to articulate these realities through her literary work. Her debut book, *“Anchor My Heart”*, captures the life of a woman marine engineer at sea, highlighting the *professional struggles, emotional challenges, and personal resilience* required to navigate both life onboard and relationships ashore. The book has contributed to increasing awareness about the lived experiences of women seafarers and has resonated widely within and beyond the maritime community. In India, the book was released by Hon’ble Nitin Gadkari, Shipping Minister and was recently unveiled at the Sharjah International Book Fair.

In addition to her professional work, Nyari Nain actively advocates for *greater awareness, gender sensitization, and inclusivity in the maritime sector*. She emphasizes the importance of changing mindsets and building an environment where women are accepted as equal contributors, rather than exceptions. She was also featured in the Friday Magazine, Dubai and awarded the *Young Seafarer Achievement Award* by the DG Shipping and the Government of India for her book. She is also a TEDx speaker.

13.2 Impact Stories

(i) M.T. Swarna Krishna – First vessel in the world with all women officers



The *all-women officers' sailing of MT Swarna Krishna* by the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) stands as a landmark achievement in advancing gender inclusion within the maritime sector. In March 2021, as part of its Diamond Jubilee celebrations and to commemorate *International Women's Day*, SCI deployed a vessel entirely operated by women officers—marking the *first such initiative in global maritime history*.

The historic voyage was flagged off on *6th March 2021* by the Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ports, Shipping and Waterways. The initiative was widely recognized as a powerful symbol of progress in challenging the long-standing perception of seafaring as a male-dominated profession.

This deployment demonstrated that women are fully capable of handling *end-to-end ship operations*, including navigation, engineering systems, and overall vessel management. It underscored the principles of *diversity, inclusion, and gender equality* that are increasingly being embraced within the maritime industry.

The initiative also highlighted the proactive role played by SCI in promoting gender inclusivity through:

- Recruitment and training of women seafarers
- Age relaxations and fee concessions for female cadets
- Institutional efforts to create an enabling environment for women in maritime careers



Such initiatives have contributed to SCI being recognized as one of the leading organizations in employing women seafarers and promoting inclusive practices in shipping.

Beyond its operational significance, the all-women sailing represents a broader *shift in industry mindset*, reinforcing the idea that gender is no barrier to competence, leadership, and responsibility at sea. It aligns closely with global and national efforts, including IMO's focus on "*Empowering Women in the Maritime Community*", and reflects India's commitment to building a *diverse and inclusive maritime workforce*.



14. Five-Year Strategic Roadmap (2025–2030)

The DGS Circular 05 of 2026 signifies the implementation of the Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) Five-Year Action Framework (2025–2030), aimed at promoting gender equality and inclusion within the maritime sector.

The SMS Action Framework provides a phased and structured roadmap to enhance women's participation in seafaring, strengthen gender inclusivity, and institutionalize welfare and safety mechanisms across the maritime ecosystem.

The plan is designed to address critical areas including policy gaps, infrastructure development, capacity building, sensitization, leadership development, and long-term sustainability, thereby ensuring a comprehensive and transformative approach toward creating an inclusive maritime sector.

Year 1 (2025–26): Charting the Course

Focus: Foundation Building & Awareness

- Establishment of SMS brand identity and digital presence
- Conduct of gender-sensitization workshops across stakeholders
- Launch of India's first Maritime Gender Inclusion Policy
- Awareness initiatives targeting male seafarers and stakeholders
- Identification of policy and infrastructure gaps
- Outreach programmes in schools and colleges to promote maritime careers for women

Objective: Establish the foundation for gender equality and inclusion in the maritime sector.

Key Actions:

- **Launch *Sagar Mein Samman* brand identity, logo, and digital presence.**

A comprehensive digital presence will be established through a dedicated website and social media platforms to ensure continuous engagement, visibility, and outreach among stakeholders across the maritime ecosystem.

- **Conduct gender-sensitization workshops for seafarers, shipping companies, and maritime training institutes (MTIs).**

These workshops will focus on building awareness about gender equality, fostering inclusive workplace practices, addressing unconscious biases, and promoting respectful behaviour onboard ships and in maritime institutions.



- **Finalize and launch India's first *Maritime Gender Inclusion Policy*.**

This policy will provide a structured framework outlining standards, guidelines, and actionable measures to improve gender diversity, safety, and inclusivity within the maritime sector.

- **Begin awareness drives for male seafarers to encourage gender acceptance and respectful workplace behavior.**

These programs will emphasize the importance of gender acceptance, mutual respect, and professional conduct, helping to create a supportive and harassment-free workplace at sea.

- **Identify existing policy gaps and infrastructure requirements for women at sea.**

A comprehensive assessment will be undertaken to identify existing policy gaps, institutional barriers, and infrastructural challenges faced by women in maritime careers. This will include evaluating onboard facilities, safety measures, accommodation standards, and access to opportunities, with the aim of informing future reforms and investments.

- **Outreach and Awareness in Educational Institutions**

Awareness seminars and career guidance programs will be organized in schools, colleges, and universities to introduce students especially young women to the wide range of career opportunities available in the maritime sector. These sessions will aim to break stereotypes, provide information about training pathways, and inspire more women to consider careers at sea.

- **Culmination of Phase I.**

The first phase will culminate in a flagship event on 18 May 2025, marking the formal launch of the policy framework and showcasing the progress made under the Sagar Mein Samman initiative. This event will serve as a platform for stakeholder engagement, knowledge sharing, and reinforcing commitment towards gender inclusion in the maritime industry.

Outcome:

Creation of awareness, baseline assessment, and initial policy framework.

Year 2 (2026–27): Anchoring Integration

Focus: Policy Implementation & System Integration

- Implementation of National Maritime Gender Framework across:



- DG Shipping
- Maritime boards and institutions
- Issuance of:
 - Zero Tolerance Policy
 - Model Code of Conduct for Seafarers
- Initiation of infrastructure upgrades for gender-neutral facilities
- Pilot implementation in selected ports and shipping companies
- Integration of gender modules in DGS-approved training programmes

Objective: Integrate gender inclusion across maritime governance and institutions.

Key Actions:

- **Implement the *National Maritime Gender Framework* across all Directorates and maritime boards.**

The National Maritime Gender Framework will be systematically implemented across all Directorates General and Maritime boards. This will ensure that gender inclusion is not treated as a standalone initiative but becomes an integral part of governance, policymaking, and administrative processes across the maritime sector.

- **Issue Zero Tolerance Policy and Model Code of Conduct for Seafarers (gender perspective).**

A comprehensive Zero Tolerance Policy will be introduced to address discrimination, harassment, and any form of gender-based misconduct within the maritime ecosystem. Alongside this, a Model Code of Conduct for Seafarers, incorporating a strong gender perspective, will be issued. This code will set clear behavioural standards, accountability measures, and grievance redressal mechanisms to promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive working environment onboard vessels and in port facilities.

- **Infrastructure Upgradation for Gender-Inclusive Facilities**

Focused efforts will be undertaken to upgrade maritime infrastructure to ensure the availability of gender-neutral and inclusive facilities. This will include improvements in onboard accommodation, sanitation and rest areas, changing rooms, and safety provisions tailored to the needs of all genders. The aim is to remove structural barriers that hinder women's participation and ensure dignity, comfort, and safety at sea.



- **Start pilot implementation in select ports and shipping companies.**

To test and refine the implementation approach, pilot projects will be launched in selected ports and shipping companies. These pilots will serve as demonstration models for integrating gender-inclusive practices, policies, and infrastructure. Lessons learned from these pilot initiatives will be documented and used to inform broader sector-wide adoption.

- **Integrate gender modules in DGS-approved training programs.**

Gender inclusion modules will be formally incorporated into all Directorate General of Shipping (DGS)-approved training programs. These modules will focus on sensitization, workplace ethics, legal awareness, inclusivity practices, and professional conduct. This step will ensure that future seafarers and maritime professionals are equipped with the knowledge and mindset required to support a gender-inclusive maritime environment.

Outcome:

Institutionalization of gender inclusion policies and start of infrastructure transformation.

Year 3 (2027–28): Expanding Horizons

Focus: **Scale Expansion & Inclusion**

- Launch of scholarship and sponsorship programmes for women
- Collaboration with:
 - International organizations (IMO, etc.)
 - Progressive maritime nations
- Nationwide awareness campaigns and outreach initiatives
- Documentation and dissemination of best practices
- Promotion of all-women batches in Maritime Training Institutes (MTIs)

Objective: Scale awareness, partnerships, and visibility of women in maritime.

Key Actions:

- **Launch national scholarship and sponsorship programmes for women pursuing maritime education.**

More dedicated national-level scholarship and sponsorship programmes will be introduced to support women pursuing maritime education and training. These initiatives will aim to reduce financial barriers, encourage greater female



enrolment in maritime courses, and ensure equitable access to professional opportunities. Special focus will be given to supporting women from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, enabling broader participation in seafaring and allied maritime careers.

- **Collaborate with progressive maritime nations and global bodies (IMO, WISTA, etc.) for research and exchange.**

Strategic collaborations will be established with progressive maritime nations, international organizations, and industry bodies such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA), and other global stakeholders. These partnerships will facilitate research, exchange programs, and the sharing of best practices, thereby aligning India's gender inclusion efforts with international standards and fostering mutual learning.

- **Organise nationwide campaigns promoting "Women at Sea – Equal Partners in Progress."**

Large-scale, nationwide campaigns will be organized under the theme "Women at Sea – Equal Partners in Progress." These campaigns will aim to highlight the contributions of women in maritime professions, challenge existing stereotypes, and promote a culture of inclusivity. Outreach activities will include media campaigns, public events, storytelling initiatives, and stakeholder engagement across ports, institutions, and communities.

- **Document best practices and publish annual progress report on gender inclusion.**

A systematic effort will be made to document successful initiatives, case studies, and lessons learned from across the maritime sector. An annual progress report on gender inclusion will be published to track achievements, identify challenges, and provide actionable insights for continuous improvement. This report will serve as a key reference for policymakers, industry leaders, and international partners.

- **Encourage MTIs to mobilise all-women batches (e.g., 100% female rating batch at TSR).**

Maritime Training Institutes (MTIs) will be encouraged to introduce and support all-women training batches to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Initiatives such as fully female rating batches (e.g., the 100% women batch at Training Ship Rahaman) will be scaled and replicated. These efforts will help build confidence, foster peer support, and accelerate the entry of women into the maritime workforce.



Outcome:

Expansion of participation pipeline and strengthening of international collaboration.

Year 4 (2028–29): Leading the Wave

Focus: Leadership & Recognition

- Conduct of National Maritime Gender Leadership Programmes
- Organization of the National Sagar Mein Samman Conclave
- Publication of profiles of women achievers
- Recognition of:
 - Inclusive shipping companies
 - Training institutions promoting gender equality
- Development of an SMS Toolkit for stakeholders

Objective: Consolidate gains, showcase leadership, and strengthen accountability.

Key Actions:

- **Conduct National Maritime Gender Leadership Program for women officers and seafarers.**

A dedicated National Maritime Gender Leadership Programme will be launched to empower women officers, cadets, and seafarers with advanced leadership, management, and decision-making skills. This programme will focus on mentoring, capacity building, and career progression, enabling women to take on leadership roles within shipping companies, maritime administrations, and allied sectors.

- **Hold National Sagar Mein Samman Conclave to review outcomes and policy updates.**

A high-level National Sagar Mein Samman Conclave will be conducted to bring together policymakers, industry leaders, maritime professionals, and international partners. The conclave will serve as a platform to review the outcomes of the initiative, assess progress against defined targets, share experiences, and discuss necessary policy updates and future strategies.

- **Publish Profiles of Women Achievers in Maritime Sector (India Maritime Vision 2030 compendium).**

A comprehensive compendium featuring Profiles of Women Achievers in the Maritime Sector will be published as part of the India Maritime Vision 2030 framework. This publication will highlight success stories, career journeys, and



contributions of women across maritime roles, serving as both recognition and inspiration for future generations.

- **Recognize institutions and companies demonstrating exemplary gender inclusion.**

Institutions, maritime training institutes (MTIs), ports, and shipping companies that demonstrate exemplary commitment to gender inclusion will be formally recognized through awards and certifications. This recognition will encourage healthy competition, motivate stakeholders to adopt best practices, and reinforce accountability within the sector.

- **Begin formulation of SMS Toolkit for Maritime Stakeholders.**

The process for developing a comprehensive Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) Toolkit will be initiated for maritime stakeholders. This toolkit will include practical guidelines, standard operating procedures, training resources, compliance checklists, and monitoring frameworks to support institutions and organizations in effectively implementing gender-inclusive policies and practices.

Outcome:

Building leadership, visibility, and sector-wide adoption of best practices.

Year 5 (2029–30): Sailing Forward

Focus: Sustainability & Global Positioning

- Release of:
 - SMS Toolkit
 - Global Showcase Report
- Formalization of long-term international partnerships
- Integration of gender equity principles into Maritime Education & Training Regulations
- Annual observance of “Sagar Mein Samman Week”
- Alignment of initiative outcomes with Maritime India Vision targets

Objective: Institutionalize, globalize, and sustain the SMS initiative.

Key Actions:

- **Release SMS Toolkit and Global Showcase Report on India’s maritime gender inclusion journey.**



The finalized Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) Toolkit will be officially released, providing maritime stakeholders with comprehensive guidance, best practices, and implementation frameworks for sustaining gender inclusion. Alongside this, a Global Showcase Report will be published, documenting India's journey, milestones, and success stories in advancing gender equality in the maritime sector, positioning the country as a leader in inclusive maritime practices.

- **Formalize long-term partnerships with global institutions for knowledge exchange.**

Long-term institutional partnerships will be formalized with leading global maritime organizations, academic institutions, and industry bodies. These collaborations will facilitate continuous knowledge exchange, joint research initiatives, training programs, and international cooperation, ensuring that India remains aligned with evolving global standards and practices in gender inclusion.

- **Integrate gender equity principles into upcoming Maritime Education and Training Regulations.**

Gender equity and inclusion principles will be formally embedded within upcoming Maritime Education and Training (MET) Regulations. This will ensure that inclusivity becomes a mandated and standardized component of maritime education, professional certification, and training systems, thereby influencing future generations of maritime professionals.

- **Celebrate Sagar Mein Samman Week annually to sustain awareness.**

To sustain momentum and awareness, an annual Sagar Mein Samman Week will be instituted. This observance will include seminars, workshops, public campaigns, awards, and community engagement activities across ports, institutions, and maritime organizations, reinforcing commitment to gender equality and celebrating progress made each year.

- **Align with Maritime India Vision 2030 for lasting gender parity.**

The SMS initiative will be strategically aligned with the broader goals of Maritime India Vision 2030, ensuring that gender inclusion becomes a core pillar of India's long-term maritime development agenda. This alignment will help institutionalize gender parity, embed inclusivity into future policies, and secure sustained progress beyond the initial five-year roadmap.

Outcome:

Institutional sustainability and positioning of India as a global leader in gender-inclusive maritime governance.



The Five-Year Action Framework adopts a progressive and phased approach, starting from awareness and policy formulation to full-scale integration, leadership development, and global benchmarking. It ensures that gender inclusion is not treated as a standalone initiative but becomes an integral component of maritime governance, training, and workforce development



15. Way Forward

The following priority directions are recommended to continue for Sagar Mein Samman initiative:

15.1 Onboard Safety and Welfare

- Promote gender-sensitive accommodation, rest areas, and welfare facilities on Indian-flag vessels
- Strengthen onboard grievance redressal systems and safety reporting mechanisms

15.2 Mental and Physical Wellbeing

- Facilitate counselling support, health access, and periodic wellness engagement for women seafarers
- Integrate wellness and wellbeing modules into pre-sea and refresher training programmes

15.3 Gender Sensitisation Among Male Seafarers

- Conduct structured sensitisation workshops on gender inclusion and respectful workplace conduct
- Promote “Men as Allies” campaigns to encourage acceptance and collaboration onboard

15.4 Career Equality and Opportunities

- Encourage equal opportunity in assignments, promotion pathways, and leadership roles
- Support greater participation of women in technical, operational, and decision-making positions

15.5 Institutional Support

- Issue implementation guidance for gender inclusion across shipboard management, training, and inspections
- Operationalise the Permanent SMS Cell for sustained programme oversight

15.6 Awareness and Recognition

- Highlight best practices and achievements of women seafarers and inclusive maritime organisations
- Promote recognition mechanisms to encourage wider sectoral participation



16. Conclusion

The Sagar Mein Samman initiative represents a transformative effort to address longstanding gender disparities in the maritime sector. By adopting a comprehensive and structured approach, it seeks to create a maritime ecosystem that is inclusive, equitable, and supportive for women across all stages of their professional journey.

The initiative goes beyond increasing participation—it aims to ensure safety, dignity, opportunity, and leadership for women in maritime roles. Through targeted interventions spanning policy, infrastructure, training, welfare, and awareness, SMS is laying the foundation for a systemic shift in the sector.

The progress achieved so far demonstrates strong institutional commitment and stakeholder alignment. However, sustained efforts will be required to address persistent challenges related to retention, infrastructure, workplace culture, and career progression.

In alignment with Maritime India Vision 2030, SMS has the potential to position India as a global leader in gender-inclusive maritime governance, contributing to the development of a diverse and future-ready workforce.

Sagar Mein Samman is not merely an initiative—it is a transformational movement aimed at redefining the maritime sector into a space where opportunity, dignity, and leadership are equally accessible to all.



Annexure: Details of the events

1. Report on Sagar Mein Samman Event on International Day for Women in Maritime, 2025

a. Event Overview

The **IMO International Day for Women in Maritime (IIDWM)** is observed on 18 May every year.

The day celebrates women in the industry and is intended to promote the recruitment, retention and sustained employment of women in the maritime sector, raise the profile of women in maritime, strengthen IMO's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (gender equality) and support work to address the current gender imbalance in maritime.

IMO Member States, the maritime industry, and all others in the maritime are invited to promote and celebrate the International Day for Women in Maritime. In this context, the 4th Edition of the **IIDWM** was celebrated **by the General of Shipping on 18th May 2025** Hotel Taj, Santacruz, Mumbai.

b. Event Highlights

The event was historical on account of the following:

- **The event was graced by** Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Union Minister for Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways as Chief Guest of the Event
- **Special Guest on the occasion was** Ms. Manita Pradhan Mountaineer from Soreng, West Sikkim, India
- 1st Maritime Event in which all parties held a joint event bringing out solidarity and support for the common objectives. The partners were National Maritime Day Celebrations, **Maritime Union of India, Sagar Mein Samman Task Force (SMS TF), Company of Master Mariners of India (CMMI)** – Knowledge Partners and Marex Media Pvt Ltd. **who organized the event.**
- **Draft Policy Framework for Women in Maritime Sector which was prepared by the SMS TF was released by the** Hon'ble Union Minister for Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways.
- Hon'ble Union Minister for Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways felicitated Mrs HK Joshi, Chairperson of SMS TF along with Capt (Dr) Daniel Joseph and the Nodal Coordinators of the SMS TF for their contribution in drafting the 1st such policy for Women in Maritime.

c. Purpose of the Event

- The event was convened to **launch India's first-ever Policy Framework for Women Seafarers and Women Ashore.** This initiative aims to significantly



increase women's participation in the Indian maritime industry, both at sea and onshore with focus on **significantly increasing the number of women seafarers by 2030.**

d. Significance of the Initiative

This historic policy framework is a **first-of-its-kind globally**, conceptualized and driven under the **Maritime India Vision 2030**. It emphasizes inclusivity, empowerment, and structured support for women in maritime professions.

e. Highlights of the event

The program commenced with a Video presentation on the SMS initiative bringing out the genesis from Maritime India Vision 2030, outlining the concept and process followed,

Drafting of the Policy Framework which brings to conclusion Phase I of the project and dissolving of the SMS TF.

Phase II (Upcoming):

- Implementation of policy changes based on Legal Vetting, industry feedback, stakeholder consultation and approval by MoPSW.
- Country Visits for ascertaining best practices especially of nations where number of women seafarers is higher than global average.
- Visits to IMO Hqrs. for preparatory work for IMO Assembly meetings
- Implementation and Monitoring of the Women in Maritime Policy under an institutional framework (to be finalised).

The Video presentation was followed by a speech by Mrs H.K. Joshi, Chairperson SMS TF

- Emphasized the **visionary leadership** of the Hon'ble Minister.
- Described the event as a **moment of national pride**, with India possibly being the **first country** to have a dedicated maritime women's policy once the same is rolled out for implementation.
- Acknowledged the tireless efforts of the task force members.
- Appreciated volunteers who sacrificed personal time for national interest.
- Reinforced the framework's credibility as being **data-driven and consultatively developed.**
- **Speech by Special Guest Ms. Manita Pradhan Mountaineer from Soreng, West Sikkim, India**

This was followed by presentation of Committee Reports of Work Done by the SMS TF

The SMS TF was constituted on **25th November 2024** by DGS and consisted of Seven **Subcommittees:**



- 6 of these were thematic with distinct terms of reference, goals, and deliverables namely
 1. Planning
 2. Training
 3. Research and Development
 4. Governance and Compliance
 5. Communication and Media
 6. Outreach
- Seventh was Management and Coordination Committee which guided and monitored the project

All **the six subcommittees** of the SMS Task Force were working under individual Nodal Coordinators who presented their work from inception of the TF to the conclusion including introducing their respective Team members.

Outreach Subcommittee: Showcased details of the 1st outreach program in North-Eastern states (Meghalaya and Nagaland), including activities in Shillong, Dimapur, and Longpayimsen.

- f. Release of the Policy Framework

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal The Hon'ble Union Minister Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways formally **released the Policy Framework**, symbolizing the culmination of months of collaborative effort.

- g. Felicitation of Sagar Mein Samman Task Force

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal The Hon'ble Union Minister Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways **felicitating**

Mrs HK Joshi, Chairperson of Sagar Mein Samman Task Force along with Capt (Dr) Daniel Joseph and the Nodal Coordinators of Sagar Mein Samman Task Force.

- h. Speech by Chief Guest
- i. Conclusion

The release of the 1st draft Policy Framework for Women in Maritime marks a **defining moment for gender inclusion** in India's maritime sector. It reflects a strategic shift toward equitable participation and celebrates the strength, commitment, and capabilities of Indian women in maritime domains. The event reaffirmed the government's dedication to **inclusive growth, empowerment, and global leadership in gender equity** within the maritime industry.



2. Visit of IMO Secretary-General to Maritime Training Institute, Powai

PRESS-RELEASE

Historic Visit of IMO Secretary-General to Maritime Training Institute,

Powai His Excellency Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, Secretary-General,

International Maritime

Organization (IMO) visits Maritime Training Institute, Powai today

Mumbai, February 20, 2025: The Shipping Corporation of India Ltd (SCI) and SCI Land and Assets Ltd (SCILAL) hosted His Excellency Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, Secretary-General, International Maritime Organization (IMO) at the Maritime Training Institute (MTI), Powai. The event was attended by Shri Shyam Jagannathan, IAS, Director General of Shipping, Dr. Malini V Shankar, VC of Indian Maritime University (IMU), senior officials from DGS, SCI, and the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, along with key maritime stakeholders from the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, shipping companies, associations and young cadets from various training institutes.

Capt. B. K. Tyagi, CMD, SCI & SCILAL, welcomed the Chief Guest and august gathering participating in the event both physically and virtually. He emphasized the significance of the event for the maritime industry, particularly seafarers and young cadets. He recalled last year's IMO theme of World Maritime Day, "Navigating the Future: Safety First," and this year's theme of, "Our Ocean, Our Obligation, Our Opportunity" emphasizing the need of maritime safety and environmental sustainability. Capt. Tyagi also noted that the Maritime Training Institute (MTI), Powai, is evolving into a center of excellence, focusing in world class education and sustainability. MTI's solar-powered plant symbolizes commitment to sustainability. He reiterated the Government of India's goal to enhance shipbuilding and Indian-flagged tonnage, supported by recent delegations to South Korea and Japan.



Dr. Malini V Shankar, Vice Chancellor, IMU, highlighted progress of IMU in maritime education and research since its establishment in 2008. With six campuses and 17 affiliated institutions, IMU offers a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs, serving over 7,700 students. Dr. Shankar emphasized IMU's commitment to collaborating with industry and academia, aiming to be a key think tank for the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways. The university also focuses on research in maritime technology, gender diversity, and inclusivity, solidifying its role in shaping India's maritime future. In his address, the Director General of Shipping (DGS) highlighted India's position as the 3rd largest and fastest-growing economy, emphasizing the Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030 and the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 to position India as a global maritime leader. He noted the government's support for the maritime sector through the Union Budget and outlined key initiatives like IOCE SMART, IMO projects, and the Green Shipping Policy. He also reflected on Dr. C.P. Srivastava's legacy as IMO Secretary-General, MTI Powai's alumni achievements, and the need for India to become a Center of Excellence. The DGS discussed the „Sagarmala“ initiative, ship recycling sustainability, technological advancements, and crew welfare programs like “Sagar Mein Yog” and “Sagar Mein Samman,” alongside initiatives like the Maritime National Games 2025.

The highlight of the event was the address by H.E. Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, IMO Secretary-General, who spoke passionately about the IMO's role in promoting maritime safety, environmental protection, technological advancements (such as AI, AIS, Autonomous Ships), and the development of maritime infrastructure across the world. He praised India's efforts in building a resilient maritime industry and reiterated the importance of international cooperation in achieving the IMO's global goals. Reflecting on the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, he noted, "No shipping, no shopping" – a poignant reminder of the essential role seafarers play in global trade and should resound as „No Seafarer, No Shipping, No Shopping’. With a focus on the future, the IMO Secretary-General called for continued technical cooperation with developing economies and transparency in industry practices.

A lively Q&A session followed, where young cadets, future leaders of the maritime industry, engaged with the distinguished guests. The cadets expressed their enthusiasm and eagerness to contribute to the maritime sector and shared their aspirations for a sustainable and safe future for global shipping. While interacting with the young cadets, IMO Secretary-General also stressed the importance of learning from past mistakes to better prepare for future challenges, urging the maritime community to seize opportunities as they arise. Ultimately, Mr. Dominguez reinforced the critical role of people in the maritime sector, emphasizing the need to invest in seafarers, foster gender diversity, and maintain a collaborative approach to keep the global maritime industry thriving.





The ceremony concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Mr. Deependra Singh Bisen, Deputy Director-General of Shipping (DDG, DGS), who thanked the dignitaries, participants, and cadets for their contributions to making the event a grand success.

The Secretary-General, IMO toured the state-of-the-art facilities of MTI, Powai and planted a sapling as a symbolic gesture, signifying the IMO's commitment to sustainability and environmental preservation.

The event was a proud moment for all attendees, reinforcing the commitment of India's maritime institutions to international cooperation, sustainable practices, and the development of the maritime industry worldwide.



3. Order 18 of 2024



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MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

File No. 23-MISC/38/2024-CREW-DGS (C. No. 28971) Date: 25.11.2024

DGS Order 18 of 2024

Subject: Establishment of Task Force for Women in Maritime for nurturing and supporting the Directorate's initiative of "Sagar Mein Samman" - reg.

Reference is invited to the growth of women in every aspect related to maritime industry. "Sagar Mein Samman" speaks about the diversified culture of the maritime sector where women are found to be prominent and included for their nature and values. It consists of the number of women seafarers in this industry being honoured and rewarded for their hard work and perseverance, which will lead in empowering young women in the coming future in the maritime industry.


2. Recognizing the pressing need to address the issues and challenges being faced by women in maritime sector effectively the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) is pleased to constitute "**Task Force for Women in Maritime**" comprising the following members (*As enclosed in Annexure 1 list*) from the maritime industry, including representatives from reputable shipping companies, allied offices and other relevant stakeholders to work and look after the Women Seafarers cause, issues and support the Women Seafarers well-being at sea and ashore.

3. Whereas, the future of Women Seafarers and Women in Maritime depends on their ability to adapt to technological advancements, regulatory changes and global market dynamics while fostering sustainable and inclusive growth. The constituted Task Force shall serve as a consultative body dedicated to analyzing and devising comprehensive maritime strategies to combat them.

4. The **Terms of Reference (ToR)** for the constituted Maritime Task Force by the Directorate shall be following but not limited to:

i. Preparing "**Sagar Mein Samman**" - **Complete policy document**, which may include the following aspects:

- Zero tolerance policy document for women in maritime
- Diversity / Equity and inclusion framework for all concerns in maritime sector
- Model Code of conduct for seafarers
- Gender perspective strategies

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- e) Infrastructure requirement with gender perspective
 - f) Social media engagement to create pull factor for a career in maritime for women
 - g) Institutional mechanism for promotional and sustained campaign on social media
 - h) Other engagements such as programmes / drives to attract women in maritime sector
 - i) Proposals of scholarships in maritime sector
 - j) Motivate women for career in maritime with sponsorships
 - k) Strategies to mobilise MTIs for more admissions to women
 - l) Strategies and proposals for situational engagement of women such as including mentorship programs, training opportunities and networking events etc.
 - m) Standards prescribed for medical care, leave, women friendly infrastructure requirement on shore and on board
 - n) Best practices globally for promoting women to take up careers in maritime
 - o) Existing rule framework, POSH policies etc. and efforts needed to improvise the same
 - p) Regulatory framework to be provisioned for women empowerment in maritime sector
 - q) Corporate gender engagement framework structure for companies, unions and other stakeholders to promote women in maritime
 - r) Institutional account for providing congenial work environment for women in maritime
 - s) Strategies for improving alternate careers for on shore and on board for women
 - t) Standardized modules for MTIs (Post and Pre-Sea) for gender sensitization training and gradual progress to Gender parity
 - u) Proposal of initiatives such as buddy program for women at sea to be mentored and made mandatory for crewing concerns, ship operators and ship managers
 - v) Strategies to motivate and remove the stigma / myth associated with in the society with respect to women in maritime sector
 - w) Strategies and propose solutions to effectively curb male prejudice mind
 - x) Strategies for women to work efficiently with multinational male crew
 - y) Creation of course map such as creating awareness in young minds, school and colleges etc. with promotional events, collaborate with industry stakeholders, educational institutions and governmental organisations to promote policies and practices that enhance gender equality in maritime
 - z) Proposals related to work ethics, manning policies etc.
 - aa) Availability of infrastructures on board (wash room, toilets, separate change rooms etc.) with gender perspective
 - bb) Availability of infrastructures in ports with gender perspective
- ii. Identify barriers to entry, retention, and advancement for women in both seafaring and shore-based roles and propose solutions
 - iii. Raise awareness about the contributions of women in maritime through advocacy, partnerships and outreach activities
 - iv. Preparing status report of women in maritime (India & Global wise)
 - v. Year wise action plan in multiple engagement, budget, funding and collated from industry partnership and sovereign funding for promoting the cause of women in maritime
 - vi. Strategies to promote women in cruise and other maritime associated industry and requisite support thereof

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5. The constituted "Task Force for Women in Maritime" by the Directorate General of Shipping to address challenges and issues facing women in the maritime sector may further co-opt experts, specialists etc. who can guide and support them for providing direction, advice and recommendations as deemed fit.
6. The constituted "Task Force for Women in Maritime" may develop their own rules to govern and may accordingly convene meetings as required in-person or virtually with all such meetings minutes be documented and shared with all members as required.
7. Participation by the members / officials shall be purely voluntary and will not be subject to any manner of remuneration, honorarium etc. and any incidental expenditures for conduct of meetings or specific activities arrived at by due consensus in the Task Force meetings shall be subject to the stipulations as mandated on raising a charge on the public exchequer as per due process.
8. The constituted Task Force may explore potential funding sources to support its initiatives, including partnerships with industry stakeholders, grants from governmental organisations and sponsorships as required.


(Shyam Jagannathan)
Director General of Shipping

Encl: As above

- To,
1. All Task Force members
 2. Seafarer Unions - MUI / NUSI etc.
 3. Industry Associations - MASSA / FOSMA / INSA / ICCSA / IMF etc.
 4. Professional Organisations - CMMI / IMEI / WMU India Alumni Association



Annexure I

List of Volunteers / Members of Task Force for Women in Maritime with their contact details

SN	Name	Organisation	Email
1	Mrs. H. K Joshi (Chair)	Ex-CMD, SCI & WIMA	joshi.hki@gmail.com
2	Capt. Daniel J Josephi	DDG, DG Shipping	danieljolin-dgs@gov.in
3	Mrs. Anita Sinha	Asst., DG Shipping	anita.sinha71@gov.in
4	Mrs. Samrudhi More	Asst., DG Shipping	sujatam-dgs@gov.in
5	Ms. Sanjam Gupta	Maritime She:U & WISIA	sanjam@maritimesheeo.com
6	Ms. Saleha Shaikh	MUI-WW & WIMA	salcha@dynamicships.com
7	Ms. Sunseti Bala	Co-Founder, IWSF	sunseti.bala@gmail.com
8	Mrs. Aishwarya Pikanakar	VC - IMF	a.pikanakar@nauticalglobal.com
9	Adv. Sandhya Pillai	Founder, VMT Legal	sandhya24@gmail.com
10	Mrs. Arathi Narayanan	Director, ABS Marine	arathi.abs@gmail.com
11	Capt. Radhika Menon	Co-Founder IWSF	radhikamcmenon@yahoo.com
12	Dr. Deepti Mankad	Founder - Mindspeak	drdeeptimankad@mind-speak.com
13	Dr. Radhika Vakharia	Marex Media	radhikavakharia22@gmail.com
14	Ms. Delphine Estibeiro	Marex Media	delphine@marexmedia.com
15	Capt. Suneha Gadpande	HSFO Supdt. - Hafnia	sga@hafnia.com
16	Ms. Amita Ananth Kamath	Director, IWSF	amitaanankamath@yahoo.in
17	Ms. Amreen Bano	Supdt., Maersk line	banoamreen121@gmail.com
18	Ms. Ishita Chattopadhyay	CEO, Confidence Shipping	ishita@confidenceshipping.com
19	Mrs. Arul Josphin Mary	Director, PMA	rajmarlyin@gmail.com
20	Adv. Tejasweeni Bhanuse	Director, Anvay Maritime	info@abbmaritimetrust.org
21	Dr. Vrushali Rampure	HOD Academics, MIT ADT University	vrushali.rampure@mituniversity.edu.in
22	Ms. Swati Govil	Head - HR, CSSI	swati.govil@pocruises.com
23	Ms. Soumya Shambhavi	Governance, Maersk Line	s.shambhavi@maersk.com
24	Ms. Sonali Mukherjee	Associate, Anoma Legal	sonalimukherjee.1010@yahoo.in
25	Ms. Jyoti Kumari Nayak	committee member IWSF,	seabird_here@yahoo.com
26	Ms. Ambika Singh	Sr. Mgr (Marketing) - JNPA	ambikasingh@jnport.gov.in
27	Dr. Sheeja Janardhanan	Associate Professor, IMU	sheejaj@imu.ac.in
28	Ms. Aarati Menon	Team Lead (Cadets), BSM	aarati.menon@bs-shipmanagcmnt.com
29	Dr. Delna Shroff	Supdt., BSM	delna.shroff@bs-shipmanagement.com



The Directorate General of Maritime Administration



30	Ms. Nafeesa Moloobhoy	MD, A.S Moloobhoy	nafeesa@asmoloobhoy.com
31	Ms. Kuljit Anand	AVP - ULSS (JM Baxi Group)	kuljita@unitediners.com
32	Ms. Neetu Jaiswal	Founder - Nevoxel	neetuj@nevoxel.com
33	Adv. Manisha Tiwari	Faculty, IMU	manisha.legalt10@gmail.com
34	Adv. Dhanya T Mallar	Advocate, HC of Karnataka	dhanya.mallar@gmail.com
35	Ms. Monica Damania	Director, Renuka Forwarding	monica@renuka-group.com
36	Ms. Reshma Nilofer Visalakshi	Pilot, SPM Port, Kolkata	huglipilotreshma@gmail.com
37	Dr. Kusum Kanwar	Founder, KKK Learning Systems	kusum.kanwar602@gmail.com
38	Ms. Shilpa Bali Bhandurge	Marine Surveyor, IRS	shilpabhandurge@gmail.com
39	Ms. Sharvani Mishra	Director, IWSF	director@iwsf.co
40	Capt. Anuradha Jha	Supd., Maersk Lines	anuradha.jha@gmail.com
41	Capt. Aswathi Pillai	Operations Manager, Maersk	aswathi.pillai@gmail.com
42	Ms. Haritha K K	QHSE Manager, Shan shipping	marinerharitha@gmail.com
43	Ms. Nirmala S Shelke	Asst Manager - Great Eastern	nirmalashelke001@gmail.com
44	Ms. Jhilam Chatterjee	2nd Engineer (Sailing)	jhilam.chatterjee@yahoo.com
45	Ms. Shuchi Malik	2nd Engineer (Sailing)	shuchimalik@gmail.com
46	Mrs. Sonali Banerjee	Principal Surveyor, IRS	sonali4843@gmail.com
47	Ms. Sameera Sayed	Director, Clipper Oceans Ventures	sameera@covpl.com
48	Ms. Sharin Mendouca	Manager, P&O Cruises	sharin.mendouca@pocruises.com
49	Ms. Shraddha Kamble	Sales Head, Hapag-Lloyd	shraddha.kamble@hlag.com
50	Mrs. Priyanka Gupta	Director HR, AESM	guptap@angloeastern.com
51	Ms. Eka Shukla	Maersk Line	Eka.shukla@maersk.com
52	Capt. Shoukat Mukherjee	CEO, The Naval Connection	shoukat@thenavalconnection.com
53	Capt. Gajanan Karanjikar	MD, Cordelia Marine	captgajanan@gmail.com
54	Capt. Tushar Pradhan	General Secretary, MUI	gs@maritimeunionofindia.com mail@maritimeunionofindia.com
55	Capt. Ashutosh Apandkar	Principal, T.S. Rahaman, Navi Mumbai	a.apandkar@tsrahaman.org



4. Circular 05 of 2026



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MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

DGS Circular No. 05 of 2026

F.No. 23-MISC/38/2025-CREW - DGS (C.No. 28971)

Date: 09.02.2026

Subject: Implementation of Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) – Five-Year Action Plan (2025–2030) for Promotion of Gender Equality and Inclusion in the Maritime Sector. - reg.

The Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) is pleased to inform all concerned stakeholders that, in furtherance of the Government of India's commitment towards fostering a safe, inclusive, and equitable maritime sector, the *Sagar Mein Samman (SMS)* Five-Year Action Plan for the period **2025–2030** has been finalized.

2. Sagar Mein Samman is a flagship initiative aimed at empowering women seafarers and strengthening gender inclusion across maritime governance, education, training, shipboard operations, and allied institutions. The Action Plan outlines a structured, phased roadmap to address existing policy gaps, infrastructure requirements, capacity building, sensitization, leadership development, and long-term institutional sustainability across the maritime ecosystem.

3. The initiative is being implemented pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) and Maritime Union of India (MUI), under which MUI serves as the sole investor for Sagar Mein Samman. This formal partnership ensures dedicated financial commitment, institutional support, and a robust governance framework, enabling effective implementation, scalability, and sustained impact nationwide.

4. The Five-Year Action Plan shall be implemented in a phased manner as outlined below:

Year 1 (2025–26): Charting the Course:

Establishment of the SMS brand identity and digital presence; conduct of gender-sensitization workshops; launch of India's first Maritime Gender Inclusion Policy; awareness initiatives among male seafarers; identification of policy and infrastructure gaps; and organization of outreach seminars at schools and colleges to promote maritime careers for women.

Year 2 (2026–27): Anchoring Integration:

Implementation of the National Maritime Gender Framework across Directorates and maritime

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boards; issuance of a Zero Tolerance Policy and Model Code of Conduct for Seafarers; initiation of infrastructure upgradation for gender-neutral facilities; pilot implementation in select ports and shipping companies; and integration of gender modules in DGS-approved training programmes.

Year 3 (2027–28): Expanding Horizons:

Launch of national scholarship and sponsorship programmes for women; collaboration with international organizations and progressive maritime nations; nationwide awareness campaigns; documentation and publication of best practices; and encouragement of all-women batches in Maritime Training Institutes (MTIs).

Year 4 (2028–29): Leading the Wave:

Conduct of National Maritime Gender Leadership Programmes; organization of the National Sagar Mein Samman Conclave; publication of profiles of women achievers; recognition of inclusive institutions and companies; and formulation of the SMS Toolkit for maritime stakeholders.

Year 5 (2029–30): Sailing Forward:

Release of the SMS Toolkit and Global Showcase Report; formalization of long-term international partnerships; integration of gender equity principles into Maritime Education and Training Regulations; annual observance of *Sagar Mein Samman Week*; and alignment with *Maritime India Vision 2047*.

This circular is issued with the approval of the Competent Authority and shall come into force with immediate effect.

Capt Nitin Mukesh 09.02.26

Dy. Nautical Advisor cum Senior DDG (Tech)

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5. Order 06 of 2026



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DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

File No.20-19016/2/2026-TRG-DGS (C.No.40248)

Date:04.05.2026

DGS ORDER No. 06 of 2026

Addendum to Order No. 18 of 2024

Subject: Strengthening of Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) initiative – Appointment of Joint Chairpersons and Constitution of Phase II Sub-Committee and Objectives – req.

1. In continuation of **DGS Order No. 18 of 2024** dated **25.11.2024** regarding the establishment of the *Task Force for Women in Maritime* under the national initiative *Sagar Mein Samman (SMS)*, the following provisions are hereby added to further strengthen to the institutional framework and implementation under Phase II.
2. The Directorate General of Shipping hereby appointed **Dr. Kusum Kanwar** and **Ms. Ambika Singh** as **Joint Chairpersons** of the *Task Force for Women in Maritime*. The Joint Chairpersons shall jointly preside over meetings of the Task Force, provide strategic directions, and ensure effective coordination of initiatives across the maritime ecosystem.
3. To enable structured implementation and outcome-oriented delivery, the following **Sub-Committee** are constituted under the Task Force for Women in Maritime:
 - a. **Training Modules Development Committee**
 - Design and develop structured modules (Pre-sea, At-sea and Post-sea)
 - Content creation (PPTs, scripts, videos and LMS integration)
 - Standardization of syllabus on Sagar Mei Samman initiative across all the MTIs

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- Periodic update of modules based on feedback received from all the stakeholders and policy changes
- b. Capacity Building, Sensitisation & Outreach Committee**
- Conduct Training of Trainers (ToT) Programmes
 - Organize workshops across all the stakeholders
 - Implement training delivery across MTIs and other maritime institutions
 - Awareness campaigns and stakeholder engagement
 - Coordination of events (International Women or Yoga Day, seminars, symposiums and any other related to women empowerment)
 - Publicity, communication, and digital outreach
- c. Monitoring, Evaluation & Review Committee**
- Development of KPIs and evaluation metrics
 - Track implementation progress and outcomes as per defined KPIs
 - Conduct periodic reviews and impact assessments
 - Identification of gaps and recommendations for process improvements
 - Periodic submission of structured reports to DG/DDG for decision-making
- d. Institutional Framework & Governance Committee**
- Strengthen implementation and governance framework
 - Define Standard operating process (SoPs, roles and mechanisms)
 - Ensure alignment with MS Act, STCW, MLC provisions and any DGS circular order
 - Liaison with MoPSW, NUSI, MUI, and other stakeholders
 - Ensure long-term sustainability and policy integration
- 4.** The Sub-Committee shall function under the overall guidance of the Joint Chairpersons, ensuring coherence and alignment with the objectives of Sagar Mein Samman. Each Sub-Committee may frame its own procedures within the framework of Sagar Mein Samman to conduct its business and convene meetings, either physical or virtual, as deemed necessary. The minutes of such meetings, events, or workshops shall be duly recorded and submitted to the Task Force Secretariat for consolidation and onward transmission to the Directorate General of Shipping.

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5. Participation of members / officials shall be on a voluntary basis and will not entail any honorarium or remuneration. Expenditure, if any, for meetings or approved activities shall be incurred in accordance with the extant Government of India financial rules and subject to due process.
6. The Task Force may explore funding avenues for its initiatives through industry partnerships, CSR support, and grants from the government and other recognized organizations, in compliance with applicable regulations.

(Shyam Jagannathan)
Director General of Shipping

Encl.: Annexure 1 List of committee and objectives

To,

1. All Task Force members
2. Seafarer Unions -MUI / NUSI etc.
3. Industry Associations-MASSA / FOSMA / INSA / ICCSA / IMF etc.
4. Professional Organizations- CMMI / IMEI / WMU / India Alumni Association

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Annexure 1

List of committee and objectives

Sr. No	Committee Name	Functional Area	Objectives
1.	Training Modules Development	Module Design & Structuring	Develop comprehensive modules for Pre-sea, At-sea, Post-sea
		Content Development	Create high-quality PPTs, scripts, videos, LMS-integrated content
		Standardization	Ensure uniform syllabus across all MTIs
		Regulatory Alignment	Align modules with STCW, MLC, MS Act provisions
		Timely Delivery	Ensure modules are developed within timelines
		Continuous Improvement	Update modules based on feedback and policy changes
2.	Capacity Building, Sensitisation & Outreach	Training Delivery (ToT)	Conduct Training of Trainers programs effectively
		Implementation Across MTIs	Ensure training delivery across institutes
		Stakeholder Sensitisation	Build awareness among stakeholders
		Outreach & Awareness	Promote initiative through campaigns and events
		Participation & Reach	Maximize engagement and participation
		Effectiveness of Training	Improve knowledge and awareness levels
3.	Monitoring, Evaluation & Review	Implementation Monitoring	Track progress across MTIs and stakeholders
		Performance Measurement	Measure effectiveness using defined KPIs
		LMS & Data Tracking	Monitor LMS usage and engagement
		Impact Assessment	Evaluate outcomes and program effectiveness
		Gap Analysis	Identify issues and areas of improvement
		Reporting to Authority	Provide structured inputs to DG/DDG
4.	Institutional Framework & Governance	Policy & Framework Development	Establish SOPs and governance mechanisms
		Regulatory Compliance	Ensure alignment with MS Act, STCW, MLC

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Sr. No	Committee Name	Functional Area	Objectives
		Stakeholder Coordination	Strengthen inter-agency collaboration
		Decision-making Efficiency	Ensure timely approvals and execution
		Policy Integration	Integrate initiative into long-term framework
		Sustainability	Ensure continuity and institutionalization

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