Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue 2026

Ministerial Engagement* | *Voices from the Sea: Sailing India's Maritime Journey

Message from Additional Director General of Maritime Administration

17:50 - 18:50 | Arabian Sea Hall, Parallel Session

Good Afternoon,

My young friends, future seafarers and maritime leaders,

It is a pleasure to interact with all of you at *Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue 2026*.

India's maritime future will be shaped not only by ports, ships and infrastructure, but by people. By cadets who choose a life at sea, who embrace challenges, and who carry India's reputation across the world's oceans.

Today, under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, India is pursuing an ambitious maritime agenda through Maritime India Vision 2030 and the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047. At the heart of these visions lies a simple objective: to make India a global maritime leader and the preferred source of skilled maritime talent.

India is already one of the world's leading suppliers of seafarers, contributing nearly 12% of the global seafaring workforce. Through Mission 20%, we are working towards increasing India's share to 20% by 2030, creating greater opportunities for Indian cadets and maritime professionals across the globe.

However, growth must be accompanied by quality, safety and inclusion.

The Directorate General of Maritime Administration is undertaking reforms in maritime education, examinations, certification and digital service delivery to ensure that Indian seafarers remain globally competitive and future-ready. We are leveraging technology to make systems more transparent, efficient and accessible for students and seafarers alike.

Equally important is our commitment to the safety, security and welfare of seafarers.

The Government of India firmly believes that every seafarer deserves a safe workplace, fair treatment and timely support. This commitment extends beyond regulation and oversight. It is reflected in our continuous engagement with seafarers, shipping companies, training institutes and international partners.

During global crises and regional conflicts, India has consistently demonstrated its commitment to protecting its seafarers. Whether through diplomatic interventions,

coordinated assistance or repatriation efforts, the welfare and safe return of Indian seafarers remain a national priority.

Recognizing the importance of seafarers to global trade and supply chains, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji has also highlighted the issue of seafarer safety and welfare on international platforms, including at BRICS, reinforcing India's commitment to protecting those who keep global commerce moving.

Seafarers are at the centre of our maritime vision. Alongside efforts to increase employment and improve training, India is strengthening mechanisms for seafarer welfare, safety and protection. Through initiatives such as e-Navik, the 24×7 Grievance Redressal Mechanism, and continuous engagement with industry and stakeholders, we are working to ensure that every Indian seafarer receives timely support, fair treatment and a safe working environment. During times of crisis, India has consistently prioritized the welfare and repatriation of its seafarers, reflecting our belief that the safety and dignity of seafarers is not merely an administrative responsibility but a national commitment.

To ensure that help is always available, DGMA operates a 24×7 Grievance Redressal and Support Mechanism, providing continuous assistance to seafarers and their families. The Grievance Redressal includes a **Seafarer Welfare Counselling Helpline** to provide confidential emotional, psychological and crisis support to seafarers and their families. Our objective is simple: no Indian seafarer should ever feel alone when facing a challenge.

Our commitment to seafarers is also reflected through **e-Navik**, DGMA's integrated digital platform designed to bring maritime services closer to seafarers. Through e-Navik, we are simplifying access to services, enhancing transparency, and strengthening our engagement with seafarers through technology.

At the same time, we are working to build a stronger and more inclusive maritime community through initiatives such as Sagar Mein Samman and Sagar Mein Yog.

Sagar Mein Samman seeks to recognize excellence, leadership and contributions across the maritime sector while promoting greater participation and inclusion.

Sagar Mein Yog focuses on physical fitness, mental well-being and emotional resilience, recognizing that a successful maritime career requires not only professional competence but also personal wellness.

As future seafarers, remember that technical knowledge alone is not enough. The industry requires professionalism, adaptability, teamwork, integrity and a commitment to lifelong learning. The maritime sector is changing rapidly through digitalization, automation, green shipping and emerging technologies, and those who continue to learn will lead the future.

Each one of you has the opportunity to contribute to India's maritime growth story. You are not simply preparing for a career. You are preparing to become ambassadors of India, representatives of our maritime excellence, and leaders of tomorrow's maritime world.

I encourage you to dream big, work hard, stay disciplined and uphold the highest standards of professionalism.

The future of India's maritime sector is bright, and I am confident that it is in capable hands.

My best wishes to all of you for a successful and rewarding maritime career.

Thank you. Jai Hind.

Suggested Questions for Interaction with Maritime Cadets

1. What inspired you to choose a maritime career, and what excites you most about life at sea?
2. As future seafarers, what are your biggest aspirations for your maritime career over the next 10–15 years?
3. What are the biggest challenges or concerns that cadets face today while preparing for a career at sea?
4. In a rapidly changing industry, what new skills do you believe future seafarers will need beyond technical competency?
5. What does a safe, inclusive and supportive shipboard environment mean to you, and how can the industry strengthen it?
6. Are young seafarers sufficiently aware of the support systems available to them, such as welfare services, grievance redressal mechanisms and mental well-being support?
7. How do you think technology, digitalization, automation and AI will change the role of the seafarer in the coming decade?
8. What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt during your training as a cadet?
9. What is the one thing you are most proud of about being part of India's maritime community