

Report on the Symposium

Leadership and Management in Blue Economy

Organized by: Centre for Maritime Economy, Gujarat Maritime University

Date: 9 July 2026

Venue: GNLU Auditorium, Gandhinagar

Introduction

The **Centre for Maritime Economy (CME), Gujarat Maritime University (GMU)** successfully organized a one-day symposium titled "**Leadership and Management in Blue Economy**" on **9 July 2026** at the **GMU campus, Gandhinagar**. The symposium was conceived with the objective of fostering dialogue between academia, industry, policymakers, and students on the emerging opportunities and challenges shaping the future of the global maritime sector. The event reflected Gujarat Maritime University's commitment to developing competent maritime professionals capable of contributing to India's vision of becoming a leading maritime nation under initiatives such as **Maritime India Vision 2030, Sagarmala**, and the broader **Blue Economy** framework.

The symposium brought together distinguished maritime experts, academicians, industry leaders, and students to deliberate on critical aspects of maritime leadership, operational excellence, sustainable development, risk management, ship recycling, and strategic decision-making. Through keynote addresses, technical presentations, panel discussions, and student-led presentations, the programme created a platform for exchanging knowledge, practical experiences, and policy perspectives that are essential for navigating the rapidly evolving maritime landscape. The discussions emphasized the growing importance of innovation, resilience, sustainability, and informed leadership in ensuring the long-term growth of the maritime economy.

Prof. Tanuja Kaushik, Dean (Academic Affairs), Gujarat Maritime University, highlighted the University's commitment to bridging academic learning with practical industry exposure. She emphasized that the Blue Economy extends beyond maritime trade and shipping, encompassing sustainable resource utilization, technological advancement, environmental stewardship, and responsible governance. She encouraged students to actively engage with industry experts and develop the leadership qualities required to address future maritime challenges.

The symposium featured keynote presentations by eminent maritime professionals, including **Capt. Sarabjit Singh Butalia**, who delivered an insightful session on "*Blue Economy: Operations for Future Maritime Leaders*", highlighting the influence of geopolitics, global trade, maritime logistics, supply chains, and technological transformation on contemporary shipping operations. His presentation underscored the importance of strategic thinking and adaptability for future maritime leaders operating in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

The second technical session was delivered by **Dr. Anand Hiremath**, who addressed the theme *"Managing Risk & Profitability in Ship Recycling."* Drawing from extensive professional experience, he discussed sustainable ship recycling practices, environmental governance, quality management, international conventions, and the evolving regulatory framework governing the global ship recycling industry. His presentation highlighted the significance of balancing commercial viability with environmental responsibility and worker safety within one of the most critical sectors of the Blue Economy.

The symposium further provided an academic platform for MBA Maritime Management students from the **2025–27** and **2026–28** batches to present their views on Blue Economy. These presentations encouraged critical thinking, and collaborative learning, while enabling students to demonstrate their understanding of developments within the maritime sector.

Following the lunch session, **Shri Sushil Mulchandani**, an eminent maritime professional and strategic advisor, delivered an engaging lecture on **"Strategic Decision Making in Contemporary Times in Maritime Sector."** The session focused on leadership under uncertainty, strategic planning, organizational resilience, and the evolving dynamics of maritime business management. His practical insights offered valuable guidance on decision-making in an increasingly volatile global maritime environment.

The programme concluded with an expert panel discussion moderated by **Dr. Dharmesh Raval**, allowing participants to interact directly with industry leaders and academicians. The discussions addressed current challenges facing the maritime sector, including sustainability, digital transformation, supply chain resilience, geopolitical risks, workforce development, and future opportunities within the Blue Economy. The symposium concluded with the **Vote of Thanks** delivered by Dr. Dharmesh Raval, followed by a networking session over High Tea, enabling participants to continue professional discussions and strengthen academic-industry collaboration.

Overall, the symposium successfully fulfilled its purpose of promoting interdisciplinary dialogue and experiential learning while equipping future maritime professionals with practical knowledge and strategic perspectives necessary for navigating the future of the maritime economy. The event reinforced Gujarat Maritime University's vision of creating industry-ready professionals capable of contributing meaningfully to India's maritime growth and the sustainable development of the global Blue Economy.

The event was coordinated by Mr. Rahul Akolkar with support from Mr. Harish Kumar. Mr. Akolkar also contributed as Master of Ceremony with his comments and insightful interaction with participants.