

Bootcamp on “MAR-a-thon – India’s Maritime Hackathon” organised by Maritime India Foundation (MIF) under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), and NTCPWC, IIT Madras

“Creating a Culture Where India Leads — From Technology Adopters to Technology Pioneers in the Maritime Sector” - Shri Sunil Paliwal, IAS, Chairperson, Chennai Port Authority and KPL

Venue: IIT Madras, Chennai | 16–17 October 2025

The **Maritime India Foundation (MIF)** erstwhile National Maritime Complex (NMC), under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), in collaboration with the National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways & Coasts (NTCPWC), IIT Madras, will organise a two day Bootcamp on “MAR-a-THON – India’s Maritime Hackathon” at IIT Madras on 16 – 17 October 2025.

The Bootcamp MAR-a-THON, held under the Sagarmala Startup Innovation Initiative (S2I2), follows the **inaugural workshop held on 25 August 2025 at IIT Madras**. During the launch phase, 51 problem statements were floated across priority areas in the maritime sector, and startups were invited to submit solutions between **25 August and 06 October 2025**. The response was overwhelming, with **over 300 applications received for the 51 unique problem statements**. The MAR-a-THON aims to identify, mentor, and scale startup-driven innovations addressing challenges in India’s maritime and port ecosystem, aligned with the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision (MAKV) 2047 and the vision of Viksit Bharat.

The Bootcamp provides a platform for startups to showcase their solutions before academic and industry experts, organizations under MoPSW, etc.

Inaugural Session – 16 October 2025

The inaugural session of the **MAR-a-THON Bootcamp** was held at the **Research Park Auditorium, IIT Madras**, bringing together senior officials from the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)**, Heads/ Senior Officers of Departments of the Organisations under MoPSW, academic experts from IIT Madras, IIT Bombay, IIT Kharagpur, IMU, and representatives from the maritime industry.

Prof. K. Murali, IIT Madras, welcomed the dignitaries and participants, setting an inspiring tone for the two-day Bootcamp aimed at fostering maritime innovation and collaboration among academia, industry, and startups.

Delivering the **keynote address** (through audio visual means) on *S2I2 and the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision (MAKV) 2047*, **Shri R. Lakshmanan, IAS, Joint Secretary (Ports, PPP, CS, Sagarmala-I, & IT), MoPSW**, highlighted that the Ministry’s innovation framework rests on four key pillars — **Research, Innovation, Start-up, and Entrepreneurship (RISE)**. He underscored that S2I2 provides the ecosystem to transform laboratory-level concepts into industry-ready solutions. *“Through initiatives like MAR-a-THON, we are converting challenges into opportunities and building a*

vibrant maritime innovation pipeline,” he said, encouraging greater startup participation across the sector.

Shri S. Viswanathan, IAS, Deputy Chairperson, Chennai Port Authority, and Managing Director, Maritime India Foundation, spoke about the *MAR-a-THON event* and the unique nature of innovation in the maritime domain. He noted that startups in this sector often face challenges such as higher Capital, longer gestation periods and extended feedback loops, making institutional support critical. “MAR-a-THON is a journey where ideas are discovered, refined, and transformed into innovations that will shape the future of India’s maritime sector. Every idea seeded today brings us closer to **2047 – an Atmanirbhar Bharat, Made in India, Made for the World,**” he remarked.

Dr. V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, highlighted India’s rise as a **startup and product nation**, sharing that IIT Madras filed **386 patents last year** and aims for **500 this year**, having already crossed the “*Startup Shatam*” milestone with over 100 incubated startups. He expressed confidence that *MAR-a-THON and S2I2* would further strengthen India’s innovation ecosystem.

Mrs. J. P. Irene Cynthia, IAS, Managing Director, Kamarajar Port Limited, stressed that innovation must not only introduce new technologies but also **simplify and align existing systems**. She remarked, “Solutions should not replace systems, but simplify them,” urging startups to pursue practical and scalable innovation.

Shri Sunil Paliwal, IAS, Chairperson, Chennai Port Authority and KPL, stated that India is increasingly embracing innovation and creativity, and platforms like *MAR-a-THON* will be key enablers in that journey. He emphasized that the **maritime sector, being asset-heavy and capital-intensive,** must actively leverage technology to enhance its global competitiveness.

Concluding the session, **Prof. M. R. Behera, IIT Bombay,** reiterated that *MAR-a-THON* shall be a collaborative platform that connects maritime sector, academia, and startups to transfer maritime innovation across the nation.

Bootcamp Activities – 16 – 17 October 2025

Over the two days, startups will present their solutions before panels of experts and the solutions will be assessed for problem–solution fit, technology readiness, and implementation feasibility, etc. Selected startups will not only get funding and mentorship assistance, but also will get an opportunity to showcase their solution during the **India Maritime Week (IMW) 2025** in the Startup exhibition zone.



