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CMEC

Centre for Maritime Economy
and Connectivity

समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था व संयोजन केंद्र

MARITIME BRIEFING

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From the Editorial Desk

The Centre for Maritime Economy & Connectivity (CMEC), established by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPS&W) at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, is pleased to present the April 2026 issue of the *Maritime Briefing*. This edition covers key developments across Maritime Technology, Maritime Economy, Maritime Sustainability, International Collaboration, and Blue Economy initiatives during the period March - April 2026.

This issue captures a dynamic phase in India's maritime sector marked by strong port performance, expanding fleet capacity, rising marine exports, and major investments in shipbuilding, ship repair, and logistics infrastructure. It highlights India's growing focus on maritime self-reliance, green shipping, digital transformation, and emerging technologies such as AI-enabled navigation and cyber-secure maritime systems. The edition also showcases progress in sustainable maritime practices, international collaborations, inland and multimodal connectivity, and Blue Economy initiatives that continue to strengthen India's position as a globally competitive maritime nation

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MARITIME TECHNOLOGY

Indigenous ASW Shallow Water Craft “Malwan” Strengthens Coastal Defence



Built with indigenous excellence at Cochin Shipyard Limited, Kochi, the second Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) has been delivered, marking another important milestone in India's coastal defence modernisation. Named after the historic coastal town of Malwan, the 80-metre, 1,100-tonne vessel is

fitted with advanced sonar systems, lightweight torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets and modern combat management systems. High-maneuvrability and waterjet propulsion enable rapid response in shallow, littoral environments where traditional ASW platforms are less effective. The ship is designed for anti-submarine patrols, mine detection and escort duties, providing enhanced underwater domain awareness along India's coastline. Its delivery reinforces Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence shipbuilding, strengthens the Navy's indigenous orderbook, and showcases the capabilities of Indian yards in delivering complex, high-technology platforms aligned with evolving maritime security requirements...[read more](#)

Cyber-secure Batteries: Corvus Energy's Dolphin NxtGen Wins DNV Approval

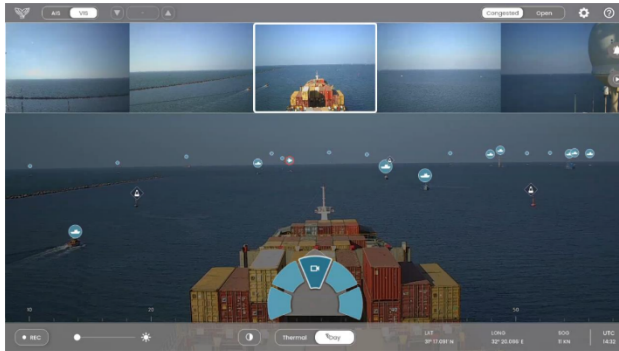


Corvus Energy has achieved DNV Cybersecurity Type Approval for its Dolphin NxtGen Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), including the Gen 4 BMS Pack Controller, making the solution one of the first maritime battery systems with independently verified cyber-resilience. As vessels become more connected and digitally

controlled, cyber-secure energy storage is critical to safeguard propulsion, essential services and safety systems. The approval confirms that Dolphin NxtGen meets rigorous requirements on software integrity, patch management, access control and data handling. It also supports shipowners seeking to deploy hybrid or fully electric propulsion with confidence that critical power systems are protected against cyber threats. For India and other emerging maritime hubs, such developments highlight the need to integrate cybersecurity considerations into green technology adoption, onboard systems design and lifecycle maintenance planning from the outset...[read more](#)



AI-enabled Navigation on Trial: Lloyd's Register and Orca AI



Lloyd's Register (LR) has partnered with Orca AI to conduct a live vessel trial assessing the performance of AI-based navigation and situational awareness systems. Using computer vision and machine-learning algorithms, the technology continuously scans the surrounding environment, detects targets and

provides COLREGs-aligned recommendations to bridge teams in congested waterways and low-visibility conditions. The trial focused on how AI can enhance, rather than replace, human judgement by filtering noise, generating early warnings and reducing workload during complex maneuvers. Initial insights suggest that decision-support systems of this type can meaningfully improve safety margins and incident prevention when integrated with standard bridge procedures and crew training. The project contributes to evolving regulatory and industry discussions on the safe deployment of AI at sea, including data governance, liability and certification frameworks...[read more](#)

OCEANS-X: Singapore's Data Exchange Platform for Maritime



At Singapore Maritime Week, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) launched OCEANS-X, a data and API exchange platform designed to enable direct, system-to-system data sharing between maritime companies, government agencies and partner ports. Unlike traditional, portal-based solutions,

OCEANS-X allows authorised participants to plug in via standardised APIs, enabling real-time exchange of information on vessel schedules, port calls, cargo status and regulatory clearances. The platform aims to reduce manual data entry, eliminate duplication, and improve visibility across complex supply chains. For shipping lines, ports and logistics providers, this can translate into better planning accuracy, reduced turnaround time and lower administrative costs. OCEANS-X also provides a template for data collaboration models that could be adapted in other regions, including India, as digital public infrastructure for trade and logistics evolves...[read more](#)



MARITIME ECONOMY

Major Ports Cross 915 MT, Deliver 7.06% Growth



India's Major Ports recorded a robust performance in FY 2025 - 26, handling 915.17 million tonnes of cargo against a target of 904 million tonnes, translating into a healthy 7.06 percent year-on-year growth. The increase reflects strong throughput across containers, POL, coal, fertilisers

and agri-bulk, supported by improved terminal productivity, better vessel planning and enhanced hinterland connectivity. Investments in mechanisation, deeper drafts and digital tools have helped reduce vessel turnaround time and improve yard utilisation. The achievement also demonstrates the sector's resilience amid evolving geopolitical and market conditions, including disruptions in traditional shipping routes. As India's manufacturing base expands and new FTAs take effect, Major Ports are consolidating their role as critical nodes in global value chains, supporting Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 and the ambition to position India as a leading maritime trading nation...[read more](#)

Women Lead the Way: All-Women Command on M.V. Sindhu



On 21 April 2026, India achieved a significant milestone in maritime inclusion when M.V. Sindhu sailed under the Indian flag with both command and pilotage entrusted to women officers. Capt. Meera Uppadhaya commanded the vessel, while Ms. Reshma Nilofer Visalakshi served as pilot as the ship departed

Khidderpore Docks en route to Port Blair. This first-of-its-kind voyage showcases the growing participation of women in high-responsibility seafaring roles, supported by targeted training, scholarships and inclusive HR policies. The achievement reflects ongoing efforts by MoPSW, the Directorate General of Shipping and industry stakeholders to create a more diverse and representative maritime workforce. It also offers a powerful role model for aspiring women seafarers and professionals, underscoring that leadership opportunities at sea are increasingly determined by competence and commitment rather than gender...[read more](#)



Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool: Shielding Indian Shipping from Volatility



In a landmark decision, the Union Cabinet has approved the ₹12,980 crore sovereign-backed Bharat Maritime Insurance (BMI) Pool to provide stable, locally anchored coverage for India's shipping interests. The pool is designed to offer hull,

cargo, P&I and war-risk protection, particularly for operations in high-risk or conflict-affected regions. By reducing dependence on foreign insurers and reinsurers, BMI aims to moderate cost volatility, ensure continuity of cover and support Indian-flagged tonnage on strategic routes. The initiative complements broader efforts to grow Indian-controlled fleet capacity, promote reflagging and develop GIFT City as a maritime finance and insurance hub. Over time, BMI is expected to become a foundational risk-management pillar for India's maritime ecosystem, contributing to self-reliance and operational resilience...[read more](#)

India's Fleet Capacity Crosses 14.2 Million GT



India's shipping sector has reached a new benchmark with total national fleet capacity crossing 14.2 million Gross Tonnage (GT) in FY 2025–26, supported by the addition of 92 vessels during the year. The growth spans tankers, bulk carriers, container vessels, offshore support vessels and coastal ships, reflecting diversified

demand and improved financing options. A larger Indian-flagged fleet enhances the country's ability to carry its own trade, support energy security and provide more berths for Indian seafarers. It also aligns with policy measures encouraging reflagging, tax-efficient ownership structures and the use of GIFT City for ship leasing. Over time, an expanded fleet under Indian control is expected to moderate exposure to external freight market volatility and support India's aspiration to be a leading maritime power...[read more](#)



SCILAL–Synergy Marine Partnership to Upskill Future Seafarers



Shipping Corporation of India Land & Assets Ltd. (SCILAL) has signed an MoU with Synergy Marine Pte. Ltd. to launch a Diploma in Nautical Studies programme at the Maritime Training Institute, Powai. Building on discussions during India Maritime Week 2025, the programme will blend classroom teaching, simulator training and exposure to best practices from Synergy's globally managed fleet.

Curriculum components will cover navigation, ship handling, maritime safety, regulatory compliance and emerging areas such as digitalisation and decarbonisation procedures. The collaboration aims to produce job-ready cadets equipped for modern shipboard roles and leadership responsibilities. For India's maritime cluster, such partnerships between domestic institutions and international operators help bridge skill gaps, promote continuous upskilling and sustain the country's reputation as a reliable source of high-quality seafarers...[read more](#)

New Mangalore Port Berth 9 Redevelopment to Boost Energy Flows



Approval has been granted for the redevelopment of Berth No. 9 at New Mangalore Port on a PPP (DBFOT) basis, transforming it into a modern liquid bulk handling facility. With an estimated investment of ₹438.29 crore, the project will expand handling capacity to 10.90 MTPA and deepen the draft to 14 metres, with

future readiness up to 19.8 metres. The upgraded berth will be capable of accommodating large vessels up to 2,00,000 DWT, including Very Large Gas Carriers (VLGCs), strengthening India's energy import infrastructure. By leveraging private-sector efficiency and technology, the project is expected to improve safety, reduce turnaround time and enhance revenue streams. It will also reinforce New Mangalore Port's role as a key



gateway for crude oil, POL products and LPG serving Karnataka and parts of Kerala...[read more](#)

India-Vietnam and Thailand Direct Connectivity



Gateway
Terminals India
(GTI) at Nhava
Sheva, JNPT has
welcomed the first
vessel of a newly
launched direct
service connecting
India with

Vietnam and Thailand, enhancing regional connectivity in the Bay of Bengal and wider Indo-Pacific. The dedicated loop provides shorter transit times, reduced reliance on third-country transshipment hubs and more reliable schedules for exporters and importers in all three countries. For Indian shippers, the service opens new opportunities in electronics, textiles, agro-products and manufacturing value chains linked to Southeast Asia. It also supports the Government's Act East Policy by strengthening maritime trade corridors and creating new opportunities for logistics and warehousing investments. For carriers, the route offers more efficient vessel deployment and equipment balance across the region...[read more](#)

Century Ports Starts PPP Container Operations at SMP Kolkata



Century Ports Limited (CPL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Century Plyboards (India) Limited, has commenced container operations at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata (SMPK), marking the operationalisation of the port's first PPP project in the historic Khidderpore Dock System. Under the concession, CPL will invest in



modern handling equipment, yard development and value-added services to upgrade the terminal's efficiency and competitiveness. The project is expected to improve service levels for exporters and importers in eastern and north-eastern India, while enhancing the port's ability to handle higher volumes and diversified cargo. The partnership signals growing private-sector interest in riverine and brownfield port assets, supporting SMPK's broader rejuvenation strategy...[read more](#)

UPSIDA–JNPA MoU to Develop Lalitpur Pharma Park Export Hub



UPSIDA and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop the Lalitpur Pharma Park as a global export hub with integrated logistics connectivity. The

partnership is aimed at linking northern India's pharmaceutical manufacturing clusters to international markets through JNPA's container terminals. Planned interventions include dedicated ICD connectivity, cold chain infrastructure, streamlined documentation and specialised handling protocols tailored to pharma cargo. By creating an end-to-end ecosystem from factory to ship, the initiative seeks to improve reliability, reduce shipment times and lower logistics costs for exporters. It also exemplifies how port authorities can play a proactive role in industrial planning and regional development...[read more](#)

Cabinet approves Ship Repair Facility at Vadinar, Gujarat



The Union Cabinet has approved the development of a state-of-the-art Ship Repair Facility at Vadinar, Gujarat, with a combined investment of ₹1,570 crore by Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) and Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL). The brownfield project will include a 650-metre jetty, two large floating dry docks, workshops, and associated marine infrastructure aimed at strengthening

India's ship repair ecosystem. Strategically located near major ports such as Mundra and Kandla, the facility will be capable of repairing vessels up to 300 metres in length,



addressing a key gap in India's domestic ship repair capacity. The project is expected to reduce dependence on foreign shipyards, improve vessel turnaround time on the western coast, and enhance the competitiveness of Indian ports. It is also projected to generate around 290 direct and 1,100 indirect jobs while supporting MSMEs and maritime ancillary industries under Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047....[read more](#)

MARITIME SUSTAINABILITY

Deendayal Port Authority Conducts India's First Methanol Bunkering Trial



Deendayal Port Authority, Kandla, has carried out India's first-ever methanol bunkering operation using a shore-to-ship configuration, marking a milestone in the country's maritime decarbonisation journey. Existing infrastructure at the port has been evaluated

for methanol handling and rated at Level-6 on the IAPH PRL-Methanol Bunkering Scale by DNV Maritime Advisory Services, indicating advanced readiness. The trial validated safety procedures, handling protocols and multi-agency coordination required for alternative fuel bunkering. Looking ahead, DPA plans to ramp up towards supplying around 500 KTPA of e-Methanol by 2028–29 and explore ship-to-ship bunkering options. These efforts position Kandla as a frontrunner for green fuel infrastructure in the region and support India's broader ambition to align with IMO decarbonisation targets...[read more](#)

VOCPA Scales Renewable Energy and Cuts Emissions



V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority (VOCPA) is advancing its energy transition agenda, increasing renewable power usage from 12.22 million units to 15.54 million units in FY 2025–26, a rise of about 21.13%. This shift has enabled an additional reduction of roughly 2,720



tonnes of CO₂ emissions, reflecting meaningful progress in decarbonising port operations. Renewable energy is increasingly powering terminal equipment, lighting and common services, demonstrating that clean power can deliver both environmental and cost benefits. VOCPA's approach, combining clear targets, phased investments and policy support, offers a template for other ports seeking to embed sustainability into core operations. The initiative also strengthens the port's attractiveness for cargo owners and shipping lines pursuing low-carbon supply chains...[read more](#)

Port of Ulsan Completes World-first Ammonia Port-to-Ship Bunkering



Port of Ulsan has achieved a significant milestone by completing the world's first port-to-ship bunkering operation supplying clean ammonia to a commercial vessel. Conducted at Pier 2 of Ulsan Main Port, the operation delivered approximately 600 metric

tonnes of ammonia to a 45,000-cubic-metre dual-fuel gas carrier built by HD Hyundai Heavy Industries. The trial, led by LOTTE Fine Chemical as demonstration operator, tested safety procedures, transfer systems and emergency protocols associated with handling ammonia as a marine fuel. The successful operation provides invaluable data for regulators, classification societies and industry stakeholders as they shape future standards and infrastructure investments. It also underscores ammonia's potential as a scalable zero-carbon fuel option for deep-sea shipping...[read more](#)

Cyclus Marine–Lloyd's Register MoU to Advance Responsible Ship Recycling



Cyclus Marine, a newly established lifecycle services company within Wilhelmsen Ship Management, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Lloyd's Register to strengthen and scale responsible ship recycling globally. The collaboration focuses on



helping shipowners plan end-of-life strategies in line with the Hong Kong Convention and the EU Ship Recycling Regulation, ensuring safe working conditions and environmental protection at recycling facilities. Activities will include advisory services, audits, training and development of best-practice frameworks that integrate recycling considerations into vessel design and lifecycle management. By promoting higher standards and transparency, the partnership supports a more circular maritime economy and reduces environmental harm associated with substandard dismantling practices...[read more](#)

Swan Defence wins Landmark Ammonia Dual-fuel Bulk Carrier Order



Swan Defence and Heavy Industries Limited (SDHI) has secured India's first-ever order for ammonia dual-fuel bulk carriers, a landmark contract with Energy One Limited for four 92,500 DWT vessels. The ships will be equipped with propulsion systems capable of operating on ammonia, placing the project at the cutting edge of green ship technology. The contract is valued between

₹1,501 crore and ₹3,000 crore, with the deal being among the largest commercial shipbuilding orders in India by both scale and sophistication. It is expected to catalyse local supply chains for alternative fuel equipment, including fuel systems, storage tanks and safety systems. The project significantly enhances India's credentials as a builder of advanced low-carbon vessels...[read more](#)

RINA-Hanwha MoU on Battery-hybrid Propulsion



RINA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Hanwha Group and its key affiliates, Hanwha Power Corp., Hanwha Aerospace and Hanwha Engine, to promote advanced battery-hybrid propulsion systems, particularly for Ro-Ro ferries. The collaboration will focus on optimising hybrid powertrains, integrating batteries with conventional engines, and assessing lifecycle performance,



safety and regulatory compliance. Hybrid solutions offer operators fuel savings, lower emissions in sensitive coastal and urban areas, and quieter operations while maintaining range and flexibility. The MoU reflects growing industry recognition that hybrid architectures can serve as a pragmatic bridge between conventional propulsion and fully zero-emission vessels, supporting progressive decarbonisation...[read more](#)

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

India–Republic of Korea Deepen “VOYAGES” Maritime Partnership



During the State Visit of H.E. Lee Jae Myung, President of the Republic of Korea, India and Korea reinforced their maritime partnership under the shared “VOYAGES” vision. Leaders highlighted expanded cooperation in shipbuilding, port development and maritime logistics, with three sectoral MoUs signed. Priority areas include joint shipbuilding projects, technology transfer, green shipping initiatives and infrastructural collaboration across

shipyards and ports. The partnership builds on Korea’s expertise as a global shipbuilding leader and India’s ambitions to scale domestic yard capacity and maritime infrastructure. It also aligns with broader Indo-Pacific frameworks and resilient supply chain initiatives, offering scope for joint innovation and investment...[read more](#)

India Pavilion at Singapore Maritime Week



The India Pavilion at Singapore Maritime Week 2026 was inaugurated by Senior Minister of State Shri Murali Pillai SC and Shri Vijay Kumar, IAS, Secretary, MoPSW, signalling India’s growing engagement in global maritime discourse. The pavilion showcased investment opportunities in ports, shipbuilding, inland waterways, logistics and cruise tourism, while highlighting digitalisation and green shipping initiatives. Participation at



SMW underlined India's commitment to contributing to international debates on decarbonisation, supply chain resilience and maritime innovation, while attracting partners for upcoming projects under Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047...[read more](#)

MoPSW–KOICA Plan of Implementation on Shipbuilding Skills



In a major step towards strengthening India's shipbuilding ecosystem, MoPSW has signed a Plan of Implementation with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) focusing on shipbuilding skill development under Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047. The collaboration aims to establish a Shipbuilding

Workforce Development & Technology Cooperation Centre, drawing on Korean expertise in large-scale ship construction, modularisation and advanced production methods. Training programmes will cover workforce planning, technical skills, quality control, project management and digital tools, with a focus on raising productivity and reliability across Indian yards. The initiative is expected to support both defence and commercial shipbuilding, improve global competitiveness and foster long-term partnerships between Indian and Korean institutions...[read more](#)

IMO Legal Committee Approves Ship Registration Due Diligence Guidelines



The Legal Committee of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has approved new non-binding guidelines aimed at improving transparency and due diligence in ship registration and preventing fraudulent



registrations and misuse of flags. The guidelines address a long-standing regulatory gap by providing practical measures for flag States to verify applicants, maintain accurate ownership records and oversee registry operations. They are expected to help reduce opportunities for illicit activities such as sanctions evasion, illegal fishing and substandard operations conducted under flags of convenience. While voluntary, the guidelines provide a benchmark for States seeking to modernise or establish registries aligned with international good practice and could inform future binding instruments...[read more](#)

DCIL-Colombo Dockyard PLC Alliance for Ship Repair and Building



Dredging Corporation of India Limited (DCIL) and Colombo Dockyard PLC have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on ship repair, dry-docking services and potential shipbuilding projects, strengthening maritime

cooperation between India and Sri Lanka. The alliance will leverage Colombo Dockyard's established facilities and technical expertise alongside DCIL's fleet and project requirements. Joint efforts will focus on optimising maintenance schedules, reducing downtime and exploring newbuild opportunities tailored to regional dredging, support and auxiliary vessels. For both partners, the arrangement offers economies of scale, better capacity utilisation and improved competitiveness in regional markets. Strategically, it deepens bilateral maritime ties and opens avenues for technology and skills exchange...[read more](#)

HD Hyundai Considers US\$4 Billion Shipyard in Tamil Nadu



South Korea's HD Hyundai Heavy Industries has signed an MoU to explore establishing a US\$4 billion greenfield shipyard in Tamil Nadu, potentially marking the first major foreign shipbuilder-owned yard in India. The proposed facility would tap India's cost advantages, skilled labour pool and growing maritime demand, while bringing Korean design, production and

project-management expertise. If realised, the yard could produce large commercial vessels and possibly offshore structures, generating significant direct and indirect



employment. The project would deepen industrial linkages between India and Korea and complement ongoing defence and commercial shipbuilding collaborations. For India, such an investment would be a major boost to aspirations of becoming a global shipbuilding hub...[read more](#)

India Showcases Cruise Tourism Potential at Seatrade Cruise Global 2026



India marked a strong presence at Seatrade Cruise Global 2026 in Miami, showcasing its emerging potential as a cruise tourism destination. The India Pavilion highlighted coastal circuits, island experiences and heritage ports, along with upgraded cruise terminals in Mumbai, Goa and other gateways. Discussions with cruise lines and tour operators focused on itinerary development, home-porting opportunities and

enhanced shore-side experiences. Government and industry representatives outlined policy measures to streamline clearances, improve last-mile connectivity and upgrade passenger facilities. By positioning itself more prominently in global cruise networks, India aims to unlock new opportunities for coastal states, MSMEs and local communities in tourism and allied services, thereby deepening the socio-economic dimensions of its Blue Economy...[read more](#)

BLUE ECONOMY INITIATIVES

Marine Exports Scale New Highs, Supporting Coastal Livelihoods



India's marine products sector has delivered record performance in FY 2025–26, with exports reaching ₹72,325.82 crore (US\$8.28 billion) and volumes touching 1.93 million tonnes, the highest ever in both value and quantity. Despite geopolitical tensions and logistics disruptions, sustained demand for Indian shrimp, finfish and value-added products in key markets has underpinned this growth.



Robust cold chain infrastructure, certification systems and traceability standards have helped maintain buyer confidence and market access. Beyond foreign exchange earnings, the sector supports millions of livelihoods in coastal communities, from small-scale fishers and farmers to processors and service providers. The performance underscores the centrality of marine products to India's Blue Economy agenda, where sustainable resource management, value addition and community welfare are closely linked...[read more](#)

University of Delhi and CMEC at RIS - MoU to strengthen Maritime Education and Skilled Workforce



The Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity (CMEC) at RIS, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Delhi in the presence of Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, marking a significant step towards strengthening academic collaboration and advancing research in India's maritime sector.

The collaboration aims to strengthen maritime education, research, and skill development, aligning with India's long-term vision of becoming a global maritime leader. The initiative focuses on building a robust talent pipeline through academic frameworks, joint research, and training programmes. Emphasising the sector's role in driving economic growth and trade competitiveness, the Minister noted that India's seafaring workforce now accounts for about 12% of the global total, with a target of 20% by 2030. The MoU is expected to enhance capacity building and support the development of a sustainable and globally competitive Blue Economy....[read more](#)
