HROpSys 2026 - EVENT REPORT

Intelligent & Sustainable Transformation — Beyond AI & Automation

1. Overview

HROpSys 2026 was organised by Chetana's R. K. Institute of Management & Research and Chetana's Institute of Management & Research as a forum for students of Human Resources, Operations & Supply Chain Management and Systems & Business Analytics. Held under the theme "Intelligent & Sustainable Transformation — Beyond AI & Automation," the event explored how organisations can use AI, automation, analytics and digital technologies while preserving the human, ethical and sustainable dimensions of business.

The theme was examined through three lenses. The intelligent dimension focused on AI-enabled decision-making, intelligent processes, predictive analytics and digital platforms. The sustainable dimension looked at green technologies, the circular economy, sustainable business models and the embedding of ESG goals. The transformation dimension covered responsible digital transformation practices. Through experiential and competitive events, students were challenged to move beyond theory: to diagnose business problems, prioritise competing challenges, evaluate alternatives, articulate perspectives and make responsible managerial decisions.

HROpSys 2026 was conducted in two parts: a junior event on **8 October 2026** and the main event on **10 October 2026** (10.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.).

2. Event at a Glance

Date	Event	Description
8 Oct 2026	Junior Event: FlashKart – The Boardroom Challenge	Board simulation case on prioritisation, systems thinking and board-level decision-making
10 Oct 2026	Keynote Address	"Intelligent & Sustainable Transformation: Reimagining the Future of Business"
10 Oct 2026	Panel Discussion	"Beyond AI & Automation: Integrating People, Processes and Technology for Sustainable Transformation"
10 Oct 2026	Case Analysis	TechNova – SkillBridge Merger: post-acquisition workforce and network rationalisation
10 Oct 2026	The AI Parliament	Four-party, multi-perspective discussion on three motions on AI

3. Junior Event - 8 October 2026

FlashKart: The Boardroom Challenge

The junior event was a board simulation built around FlashKart, a fast-growing Indian quick-commerce company serving Mumbai, Pune and Thane through a network of dark stores. Participants acted as the company's Board on a Monday morning, three weeks before the festive season, with demand expected to rise sharply. Messages from store managers, people managers, customer support, operations, finance and technology had arrived, each describing a different version of the situation, and no stakeholder had the complete picture.

Teams were given a handout listing fifteen issues. These ranged from experienced employees leaving, rising absenteeism and new joiners making more picking errors, to slower picking, inventory mismatches between the app and the shelf, riders waiting at stores, app slowdowns, an unready forecasting tool, inconsistent data across teams, unusual activity on a vendor payment system and a proposal to shorten the delivery promise. The constraint was deliberate: the Board could sponsor only three major interventions before the festive period, and it had ten minutes to decide where leadership attention should go.

The information was intentionally incomplete. Teams had to separate visible symptoms from underlying causes, distinguish issues already hurting customers from those that would only surface if demand rose, state their assumptions, identify what they did not know, and defend why some issues deserved Board attention while others could be handled, investigated, planned or monitored by management teams. They also had to weigh trade-offs, since adding people improves capacity but raises cost, faster picking may increase errors, and delaying a technology change protects stability but postpones improvement.

The challenge tested prioritisation, systems thinking and the ability to defend a decision under pressure.

4. Main Event - 10 October 2026

4.1 Inauguration and Keynote Address

The main event opened with a keynote on "Intelligent & Sustainable Transformation: Reimagining the Future of Business," which set the context for the day. The address examined how organisations can move beyond technology-led transformation towards transformation that is intelligent, sustainable and responsible. It looked at how emerging technologies can improve agility, decision-making, productivity and innovation while still addressing ethics, sustainability, employee well-being, responsible AI and environmental impact, and it highlighted the changing roles of HR, Operations and Systems & Business Analytics in building organisations that are both technology-enabled and human-centred. Students were encouraged to see transformation not merely as technology adoption but as a chance to rethink business models, redesign work and processes, strengthen responsible decision-making and create long-term stakeholder value.

4.2 Panel Discussion

The panel, titled "Beyond AI & Automation: Integrating People, Processes and Technology for Sustainable Transformation," brought together industry speakers representing the three functions. They shared how businesses are transforming through a humane approach, optimising processes and integrating systems, and, importantly, how functional silos can be broken down to manage sustainable transformation and resistance to change.

4.3 Case Analysis: TechNova – SkillBridge Merger

The case analysis asked teams to look at a post-acquisition integration from HR, Operations and Systems & IT perspectives. In July 2026, SkillBridge International, a computer education provider with 400 franchise centres, acquired TechNova, a network operator with 1,600 centres, creating a 2,000-centre national network. The integration surfaced three interlocking problems that had to be resolved within a nine-month window:

- **Network rationalisation:** 294 Class A and 107 Class B centres sit in direct geographic overlap, while Class C centres serve markets neither company could otherwise reach.
- **Workforce rightsizing:** a combined direct workforce of 1,500 drawn from two different cost and quality tiers, plus roughly 2,800 franchise-employed staff whose roles depend on which centres survive.

- **Systems and revenue-model harmonisation:** reconciling two revenue-share structures, centre classification logics and HR and financial systems, including the role AI-enabled tools could play in data migration and validation.

The case required participants to sequence HR, Operations and Systems decisions together, since each is an input to the other two, and to state clearly the assumptions behind their recommendations.

4.4 The AI Parliament

The AI Parliament gave students a structured platform to examine the opportunities, concerns and wider implications of AI and automation. Unlike a conventional debate, it was organised around four parties, each representing a perspective: People (jobs, dignity, wellbeing, trust and human interests), Automation (efficiency, productivity, scalability and innovation), Sustainability (long-term business, environmental and social consequences) and Governance (accountability, transparency, ethics, responsibility and legal soundness).

Each motion began with an introduction and one-minute opening statements from the four parties, followed by an open-floor discussion in which participants could build on, challenge or clarify points while staying faithful to their assigned perspective. Each discussion ended with a Yes-or-No vote by the House, and the Speaker announced the verdict before moving to the next motion. Three motions were discussed:

Motion	This House believes…	Votes	Yes	No	Result
1	companies should replace entry-level roles with AI wherever AI can perform the role effectively	267	86	181	Not passed
2	data centers used for AI does more harm than good for sustainability goals	268	214	54	Passed
3	companies should adopt AI-led performance appraisal systems	248	92	156	Not passed

5. Learning Outcomes

Across both days, HROpSys 2026 worked towards its stated outcomes:

- Applying interdisciplinary management knowledge and contemporary technologies to diagnose and address complex organisational challenges arising from intelligent and sustainable transformation.
- Critically analysing information, evaluating alternatives and making evidence-based decisions that balance business performance, technology, people, ethics and sustainability.
- Building collaborative and responsible leadership by bringing HR, Operations & Supply Chain Management and Systems & Business Analytics students together to design responsible solutions for technology-enabled, sustainable organisations.