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**SHIPPING INDISPENSABLE TO THE WORLD**

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India's long coastal region of 7500 km and its ability to develop ports will improve its economy, long term, through regional and extra-regional trade. Already boasting 12 significant ports and a further 187 national and interregional ports, the potential for future growth and development is vast. Located at this crossroad of different regions gives India an opportunity to make the growth in the maritime sector a strategic part of its political, security and economic goals.

Shipping industry and economic development are closely linked. The growth of the shipping industry is therefore of great significance not only to the major shipping countries but to all nations. Shipping services are important for international trade, because over 90% of all global trade measured in weight and volume, is routed by water.

That is true that shipping is a highly capital required industry, with a lot of jeopardy involved to considerable variations in demand and instability in freight rates.

India has significant economic potential through its maritime sector. Its strategically important sea waters give a unique position in world geo-politics.

The continental waters as emerging routes of trade provide strong economic basis to some of the countries located on important sea trade routes. India due to its location is in a position to serve two most important regions of the world, South Asia the world biggest consumer market and Central Asia famous for its riches.

So, as your core maritime industry grows, so do the supporting industries of containers manufacture, agency services, bunkering, supply of crew, the list goes on, and of course, ship broking.

Like any supply and demand model, these service industries can only grow with the supply of a capable, talented and trained workforce.

The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers is the leading internationally recognised professional body in the maritime arena and it represents shipbrokers, ship managers, agents and maritime

professionals throughout the world. With 25 branches in key shipping areas, and 4,000 individuals, the Institute's membership represents a commitment to maintaining the highest professional standards across the shipping industry.

As a major provider of education and training, the Institute sets and examines the syllabus for membership, providing the shipping industry with highly qualified professionals.

And across this maritime world, members of the Institute are part of an internationally recognised network of shipping professionals who not only work towards high professional ethical standards of trust, but who also have proven knowledge, competence and understanding of the broad spectrum of shipping business.

In such a global business, shipping often means moving from country to country, however, as a member of the Institute, boundaries melt and become invisible. No matter which branch a member belongs to, they are encouraged to participate in the activities of the whole branch network worldwide. Branch events, courses, seminars and training sessions are open to all members across the world. Spreading 'good practice' throughout the network, and therefore the industry, is a key Institute objective, and something we have been very good at for a very long period of time.

Here, in India, our two branches supports students and members throughout the country, in all sectors of shipping. With exams being held in over 100 locations globally, there are six examination centres in India alone, making it the second highest number of centres in any country after the UK.

Today, in such an education forum, where the decision makers of the India maritime sector are gathered, seems apt to give a special message to our students and our members. To commit yourself to learning new skills and being brave enough to take exams to prove that you have learned these, is highly commendable. The credibility of any training institution, from schools all the way up to universities, rests not just with the standard of education provided, but with the students who progress through their doors and the ethics they display. We are very proud of them.

Shipping is the global industry that makes world trade happen. This industry is vital to the world, to this region, and to your country's future. I wish all of you good luck and the best of opportunities in the future, and offer you the support and guidance of the Institute.

Here at the AMET conference, I find myself surrounded by other likeminded committed educationalists – who see the future of India's maritime sector firmly in the hands of the next generation of maritime professionals.

AMET University itself is no stranger to ICS - In fact AMET was part of the growth of ICS for almost 10 years - having been the distance education partner of our Institute as we began our journey towards a local branch. Our members and fellows of the East India branch have committed time and energy to supporting the ambitions of AMET, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank those members and fellows. Our Institute is now committed to ensuring that we support AMET in their ambitions, and their students in the future careers.

For the Institute to be part of India as it grows into a leading shipping hub for your continent is exciting for us, and gives the global Institute a deep sense of pride. So, ladies and gentlemen, I finish by thanking you for your kind attention. Very best wishes, from the International network of the Institute for a successful conference.