



Sri Lanka's Maritime Strength: Our Strategic Location, Our People and Our Future

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As the Ceylon Association of Shipping Agents (CASA) celebrates sixty years of dedicated service to Sri Lanka's maritime industry, it is an opportune moment to reflect not only on the remarkable journey of the past but also on the opportunities that will shape the future of our maritime nation.

Sri Lanka's strategic location at the crossroads of the world's busiest East-West shipping routes remains one of our greatest national advantages. It has enabled our ports to become important regional hubs,

attracted global shipping services and positioned the country as a trusted partner in international trade. Over the past six decades, CASA and its members have played a significant role in promoting these strengths and enhancing Sri Lanka's reputation within the international maritime community.

Yet geography alone does not create a successful maritime nation. Equally important is another invaluable national asset - our people.

For generations, Sri Lankan seafarers have served with distinction on container vessels, bulk carriers, tankers, gas carriers, cruise ships and specialised vessels across the world. They command ships, manage sophisticated engine rooms and contribute daily to the safe and efficient movement of global trade. Although their contribution often goes unnoticed, they form part of the

workforce responsible for transporting more than 80 per cent of world trade by volume.

Sri Lankan seafarers have earned an international reputation for professionalism, technical competence, discipline, adaptability, integrity and strong English communication skills. These qualities enable them to integrate seamlessly into multinational crews and earn the confidence of many of the world's leading shipowners and ship managers. Today, Sri Lanka is recognised not only for its ports and maritime services but also for the quality of the maritime professionals it supplies to the global shipping industry.

Investing in Maritime Education

This reputation has been built through decades of investment in maritime education and professional development. Sri Lanka today possesses

internationally recognised maritime training institutions equipped with modern bridge and engine-room simulators, GMDSS facilities, liquid cargo simulators, dynamic positioning systems and other specialised training equipment that complies with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW).

Equally important has been the close collaboration between maritime training institutions, shipping companies, crewing agencies, regulators and other industry stakeholders. This partnership ensures that classroom learning is complemented by practical onboard experience, producing officers capable of meeting the expectations of international employers.

Developing Tomorrow's Maritime Leaders

No maritime nation can sustain its success without investing in its future.

Every Master and Chief Engineer began as a cadet. The quality of tomorrow's maritime leadership depends on the opportunities provided to today's trainees. Structured cadet development programmes enable young seafarers to acquire not only technical competence but also professionalism, leadership, discipline and an understanding of a company's operational culture and safety philosophy.

Companies that invest in cadet development strengthen the future leadership of their fleets while improving long-term retention and operational continuity. As global demand for competent officers continues to increase, expanding opportunities for Sri Lankan cadets should remain a shared priority for industry, training institutions and government alike.

Navigating the Digital Revolution

Shipping is undergoing one of the most significant transformations in its history.

Digitalisation is reshaping every aspect of ship operations, from integrated bridge systems and electronic navigation to



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predictive maintenance, voyage optimisation and real-time fleet management. Artificial Intelligence promises even greater advances through improved maintenance planning, fuel optimisation, safety monitoring and operational decision-making.

These technologies present tremendous opportunities but also place increasing demands on today's seafarers. Officers must now operate highly automated systems, manage digital information, understand cyber security risks and adapt continuously to rapidly evolving technologies.

Technology, however, should remain an enabler of human performance rather than a replacement for professional judgement. Regardless of how sophisticated ships become, their safe operation will continue to depend upon competent officers capable of exercising sound judgement, leadership and decision-making when it matters most.

The industry must therefore adopt technology in a balanced and sustainable manner. Future seafarers will require greater digital literacy, but it is equally important to recognise that they should

not be expected to become software engineers or artificial intelligence specialists. Instead, they should be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to operate increasingly advanced systems safely and confidently.

A Vision for the Future

As CASA celebrates this important milestone, it is also an appropriate time to look ahead.

The maritime industry is entering an era of unprecedented transformation driven by digitalisation, automation, artificial intelligence, decarbonisation, alternative fuels and changing global trade patterns. Sri Lanka has every opportunity not merely to adapt to these changes but to strengthen its position as a recognised centre of maritime excellence.

Achieving this vision will require continued investment in maritime education, modern training facilities, structured cadet programmes, technological innovation and close collaboration between industry, academia and government. Above all, it will require continued investment in our people, who remain the foundation of Sri Lanka's maritime competitiveness.

Over the past sixty years, CASA has made an invaluable contribution to the development of Sri Lanka's maritime industry. The next decade presents an opportunity to build upon that legacy by positioning Sri Lanka as a maritime nation recognised not only for its strategic location and world-class ports, but also for the excellence of its maritime professionals, training institutions and commitment to innovation.

If we continue to invest in education, embrace technology responsibly and work together towards common national goals, there is every reason to believe that Sri Lanka will strengthen its position as one of Asia's leading maritime nations and play an even greater role in shaping the future of global shipping.



Congratulations TO CASA

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60TH ANNIVERSARY
1965 - 2026

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SRI LANKA'S MARITIME STRENGTH: OUR STRATEGIC LOCATION, OUR PEOPLE AND OUR FUTURE





OUR STRATEGIC LOCATION



OUR PEOPLE



OUR STRENGTH



OUR FUTURE

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CASA Marks Diamond Jubilee with 60th Annual General Meeting

The Ceylon Association of Shipping Agents (CASA), the premier representative body of Sri Lanka's shipping agency sector, will celebrate a significant milestone when it holds its 60th Annual General Meeting (AGM) today , at the Grand Marquee of the Taj Samudra, Colombo.

Coinciding with the Association's Diamond Jubilee, the AGM will commemorate six decades of dedicated service to the country's maritime industry while reaffirming CASA's continued commitment to strengthening Sri Lanka's position as a leading maritime, logistics and transshipment hub in the Indian Ocean.

The meeting will bring together member companies and key stakeholders representing the maritime, logistics and port sectors. During the AGM, members will review the Association's performance over the past year, adopt the Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements, and elect the Office Bearers and Executive Committee for the 2026/27 term.

Founded in 1966, CASA has evolved into the apex body representing shipping agents in Sri Lanka. Its membership comprises many of the country's leading shipping agencies, representing the majority of international shipping lines that call at Sri Lankan ports. Over the past sixty years, the Association has played a vital role in supporting the country's international trade by representing the interests of the shipping agency profession and promoting the development of a modern, efficient and globally competitive maritime sector.

CASA member companies provide a comprehensive

range of maritime services, including liner agency, vessel agency, husbandry services, crew management and other specialised shipping solutions. These services play a critical role in facilitating global trade, ensuring smooth vessel operations and supporting the continued growth of the Port of Colombo as one of the region's leading maritime gateways.

Beyond representing its members, CASA actively collaborates with Government ministries, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority, Sri Lanka Customs and other public and private sector institutions to improve the efficiency of the country's maritime ecosystem. Through its various sub-committees, the Association contributes to policy formulation, trade facilitation initiatives, regulatory reforms, digitalisation programmes and operational best practices aimed at enhancing Sri Lanka's competitiveness in the global shipping industry.

As the maritime sector undergoes rapid transformation, CASA continues to advocate for innovation, digital technologies, sustainable shipping practices and closer collaboration among industry stakeholders. The Association remains committed to supporting national initiatives that improve logistics connectivity, facilitate international trade and create an enabling environment for future investment in Sri Lanka's maritime sector.

The Diamond Jubilee AGM not only marks an important statutory event in CASA's calendar but also celebrates the remarkable contributions of its past Presidents, Executive Committees, member companies and industry partners whose leadership has helped shape Sri Lanka's shipping industry over the past six decades.

Looking ahead, CASA reaffirms its commitment to serving as the unified voice of Sri Lanka's shipping agency profession and working in partnership with both the public and private sectors to build a resilient, innovative and internationally competitive maritime and logistics industry for generations to come.