Welcome Address by Chairperson, National Shipping Board (NSB)

Hon'ble Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Ji; distinguished senior government officials; eminent members of the Board; maritime industry leaders; and our young cadets.

A very warm and cordial good morning to all of you.

On behalf of the National Shipping Board, it is my privilege to welcome our Chief Guest, Hon'ble Union Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Ji, and all distinguished dignitaries.

Today's program is anchored around **three pivotal deliverables** that mark a leap forward for the NSB and India's maritime ecosystem:

- **First, the submission of the NSB Annual Report 2025–26**, capturing our key institutional interventions, industry reviews, and advisory milestones over the past year.
- **Second, the presentation of policy advice by our specialized sub-committees**, offering actionable frameworks across critical growth engines:
    - *Fleet, Industry & Logistics:* Augmenting Indian-flagged tonnage, scaling domestic shipbuilding, repairs, and green recycling; establishing global maritime hubs; implementing the Maritime Single Window; driving taxation reforms; and reducing national logistics costs.
    - *Connectivity, Heritage & Tourism:* Expanding coastal shipping and inland waterways, while boosting cruise

tourism, houseboat circuits, and celebrating our rich maritime heritage.

- *Future & Green Technologies:* Accelerating the transition to alternate clean fuels and integrating emerging digital technologies.

- **Third, the official launch of the revamped NSB Website and Digital Portal**, built to serve as a transparent, interactive interface between policymakers, industry, and the public.

This entire effort draws inspiration from the vision of our **Hon'ble Prime Minister**, who has placed the Blue Economy at the centre of *Viksit Bharat* under the *Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047*. Under the decisive leadership of **Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Ji**, that vision has translated into high-impact infrastructure, port modernization, and green shipping reforms on the ground.

Crucially, the portal and our policy recommendations place a dedicated focus on **Gen-Z**—our young boys and girls training as cadets and ratings. By strengthening modern skilling, expanding onboard training berths, ensuring seafarer welfare, and promoting gender diversity, we are empowering our youth to lead the global merchant fleet.

Thank you, Hon'ble Minister, for your steadfast guidance.

Once again, a heartfelt welcome to everyone. *Jai Hind. Jai Bharat.*