

## From the Editor's Desk



*International Shipping, undergoes a surge of scientific and management stream of progressive developments, during this golden age of "Right to information", transpiring wake up calls calling for commitment, accountable responsibility of the authorities, to ensure transparency in shipping business environment, characterized by increased focus on safety, environmental issues and social responsibility. We need to solemnly pledge, to take care of the voiceless section of seamen living with unfairness sustaining injustices. "Seamen-whether officers or ratings" their real welfare, need to be looked into, instill their legitimate rights, while they are increasingly leading stressful lives, out at sea and on their return at home. They need spiritual release and relaxation" Primarily, help them to make their work and living conditions onboard conducive. Let's be united to help them, to ensure their real welfare, their future of hopes and aspirations, dreams and destiny, for all their sacrifices and risks in their professional life, to care for their family and as well earn foreign*

*exchange to their country. It is not a hunt for treasure, or for a cozy life but for a career and livelihood, but with maximum risks and sacrifices, unlike other professionals, it's not everybody's bread. Risk is an inherent part of any activity and while risk can never be totally eliminated, could be well controlled by administration of management. Improving safety, does not occur by chance, but the result of planned actions and qualified decisions through the process cycle of any activity.*

*In traditional shipping, the emphasis is on conventional thinking (vertical thinking) which is though effective but incomplete in its true sense. Selective thinking type, supplemented with qualities of creative or lateral thinking, helps to restructure insight, which can be learnt, by the application of knowledge earned. One can acquire better skill, by virtue of one's own initiative and drive, keeping abreast on the subject, with continuous quest for related field knowledge and its application, enhancing job interest (specializing) with sincerity and hard work. "Theory and Practice" needs to go hand in hand for growth, which is inseparable. As much as, vertical thinking immensely being useful, one has to enhance with creativity, to widen and sharpen one's perception. Lateral thinking is not a substitute for vertical thinking. They are complementary to each other. Vertical thinking though conventional and selective, lateral thinking is the need for onward progressive development. In pursuit of administrative excellence of global standards, by our national shipping administration.*

*We see, Seamen's set out, on yet another search, yet another journey and yet another sea line, along a network where all routes are cluttered and where the wait for the future turns out to be just that a wait, long, restless and for most futile, losing good part of their life, out at sea away from their near and dear ones. It is unfortunate, as a marine society and as a maritime nation; we in India tend to shy away from answering their time to time genuine welfare needs. Lack of genuine, provoking national debate, emerging from national to international issues, on international shipping, be it the Indo-US, Indo-EU, SAARC, etc. to relevant topics: Re-Modern Day Pirates, terrorism, directions of the economy or any other – keep us going round and round in small circles; same questions confronting us and we keep improvising limited solutions within the small limited same circles; it is merely the manifestation of the condition of the national mind, induced by economy of knowledge. We expect the active and inactive seafarers, to actively participate interacting, exchanging their thoughts with an open mind, bringing the seafarers forum more livelier, encourage enrolling all seafarers into the fold of Seafarers Clubs located in the port regions, for more social meets, resulting in productive interactions, as a more vibrant move and an open page to inter-act during this electronic computer age, towards a comprehensive outlook.*

*The national maritime administrators need to feel the pulse of stake holders associated directly and indirectly, extend support and cooperation preserving the fruitful outcome on relevant subjective debates as national asset, primarily protecting Indian seamen who are out at sea, bringing in valued foreign-exchange to their country. "Wide Publicity attracting Public Awareness" is the key to successful implementation of welfare schemes with transparency, implement without bias or prejudice, irrespective of caste or creed, religion or race. One needs to assert themselves of their Rights, such as Employment Guarantee Scheme, Right to Information Act. etc.*

*The need to encourage constructive criticisms, in all spheres of life, with commonality of thoughts, creative partnership of sensibility, would be the seeds of progressive development, if taken in the right spirit and perspective, with basic civic sense of live and let live. Progresses do not just come by its own, it's a culmination of sincere efforts and hard work to succeed, innovative and creative ideas with an open mind, with certain amount of discipline, dutifulness, dedication etc., considering "work is worship". Hence, some one needs to initiate and contribute their mite, for others to join (extend cooperation) and pave the way to progress. In regard to competencies of the certified competent person by authorities, needs to be addressed now and then to meet the times, to realign the framework of the disturbed mindset, owing to various reasons, or else the safety of others onboard could be jeopardized. Professionals do get outdated (obsolete), in their respective field of discipline, if they do not keep abreast to the times of development. Hence, not all COC holders whether Master Mariners or Chief Engineer, are all alike. A multi-skill within management needs updates to keep abreast. "It takes pain to gain" One needs to upgrade themselves professionally, for assignments in Maritime Institutions of higher learning. Shortcuts to achieve are not the end of it, for continuance of recognition, by Marine Society.*

*The hard-earned leave period of a seafarer, after a hard life out at sea considering their separation from near and dear ones, is more a precious time/moments, while he or she counts down their leave period ashore, particularly those in the prime of their youth. It's high time; the nation recognises seafarer's contribution, in earning foreign exchange to the country, on their working in hazardous zones, unlike others availing the common community benefits and privileges enjoyed ashore. They (seamen) are deprived of their citizen's right of voting while out at sea, for which their welfare need not be neglected. The Office of the Directorate General Shipping, should arrange to assure sailors ashore, a time frame for the various documentation process services rendered by the Mercantile Marine Department, similar to the time frame arrived and displayed in public sector banks, for banking services. Seafarers have all along exhibited, to be more disciplined with utmost patience and hence do not grumble for not finding agencies to ease-up their work ashore, unlike found in many motor vehicle licensing offices, registration offices etc. within the cities, moreover while many of the seafarers residing in far of places, from MMD offices.*

*"There are presently huge gaps between the actual conditions out at sea, as against the discussions and decisions made by policy making bodies, re-competencies of the certified competent, Gandhian approaches to what seen, heard or said and what actually goes on, out at sea. Incidents/ Accidents going unreported. The actual seafaring conditions vary, which mostly depend upon the crowd (floating staff members onboard), more particularly the senior officers, constituting two senior heads of the navigation and engineering branch, who are contracted to deviate from the standard norms of accepted good practices. Hence, practitioners' viewpoint, missing from legislative process.*

*Chief Engineers (Marine), don't have nor need a separate association, unlike the Master Mariners, for their identity, the engineering feat is far more wide and universal. "Chief Engineer" is an entity in the organizational set-up of hierarchy, referred ashore as Marine / Mechanical / Shipyard Engineer, Engineer Surveyor, Consulting Engineer etc. The technical and/or Management acumen, speaks off the individual's experience, his knowledge, contribution in technical and/or management society. It would have been more appropriate to re-name the "Master Mariners Association" as "Navigating -Marine Officers Association" in line with the Marine Engineers Institution / Association (I. Mar. E.). An association representing members' interests, forming a bonafide specialized trade association, fully representing the needs of national and global shipping management sector.*

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## Demand for new criteria on lifeboats:

A CALL for a radical overhaul of design criteria and operational practices for ships' lifeboats, which continue to kill and injure seafarers involved in drills, has come from the Nautical Institute.

## Singapore corruption bureau sets up Consort Bunkers investigation:

CORRUPTION allegations could be rearing their ugly head again in the Singapore bunker industry with Consort Bunkers under investigation by the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, writes Marcus Hand in Singapore.



## Singapore to meet energy needs with LNG imports:

Singapore has decided to go ahead with liquefied natural gas imports to meet future energy demand and ease its dependence on piped supplies from Indonesia and Malaysia, the trade minister said.

## MISC hits 3-mth high on firmer tanker rates:

The share price of MISC Bhd and its covered warrants hit a three-month high on Aug 9 on firmer tanker rates outlook given the growing shortage of double-hull tankers and the on-going crisis in the Middle East. MISC and its foreign tranche rose 25 sen each to RM8.65 and RM8.70 with a volume of 345,600 and 1.52 million shares respectively. Its covered warrant jumped 6.53% or 26 sen to RM4.24. Industry players said MISC, the world's second largest owner-operator of Aframax tankers (about 80,000 deadweight tonnes each) would gain with the recovery in the tanker sector.

Analysts said MISC's price earnings multiple of about 10 times based on the current price is still attractive. "The stock was oversold recently (when it hit a low of RM7.20 on June 21). It should be trading between RM11 and RM12," an analyst said. Industry players said the

Middle East crisis and shortage of double-hull tankers has pushed up charter rates and prices in recent weeks.

"The charter rates and prices of tankers will continue to firm as shipping lines phase out their single-hull tankers by the end of this year under the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) timetable," said Barwil Unitor Ships Service managing director Winston Loo said. According to the July tanker market highlights by Marsoft, which provides market analysis, investment and risk management, and finance services to the maritime industry, both product tanker and the crude tanker market have staged a strong recovery in July after declining in the second quarter. The upturn that started in May and June carried into July, with very large crude carriers (VLCCs - about 300,000 deadweight tonnes) on the Arabian Gulf/East route soaring to more than US\$90,000 (RM329,702) per day in the second half of July.

Earnings also improved for smaller crude carriers in July, though less dramatically, as Suezmax (125,000 dwt to 180,000 deadweight tonnes) rates increased to US\$50,000 from US\$43,000 per day, and Aframax rates rose to US\$32,000 per from US\$26,000 per day. The Suezmax sport rate for Africa/US route was going at US\$52,000 in the first quarter while the Aframax at US\$40,000 per day.

## Govt permits fuel price adjustments:

Oil prices are likely to go up every month from September, if global crude stays high. In a written reply in Parliament, Petroleum Minister Murlu Deora said: "The government has permitted autonomous adjustments in fuel prices by PSU oil marketing companies every month". Though the decision to allow oil marketing companies to revise prices every month was taken at the Cabinet meeting two months back, the government was tightlipped about it especially after the strong political opposition to the last fuel price hike. It was also decided that this move will come into effect only when average monthly price of the Indian basket of crude oil goes above the \$70 a barrel mark.

Last month, the Indian basket of crude averaged around \$71 per barrel. This month, the average so far has been \$73

per barrel. Oil marketing companies like BPCL and IOC, which were sinking into the red because of artificially low prices will be happy. But so far they have not got any word from the government, which is why they have not hiked prices yet. They will now wait to see how long this freedom lasts.



## Iran heavy crude excess sold to domestic market and Asia:

IRAN has shifted its stored heavy crude from two Middle East Gulf fields by supplying its own refineries and selling it into Asian markets, writes Martin Wingrove.

## Fire crews struggle to control reefership blaze at Lloyd Werft:

FIRE fighters were still struggling to bring the fire on the reefership Cala Palma under control last night at Lloyd Werft shipyard in Bremerhaven.

## India bids for Nigerian oil refinery:

India's continuing efforts to secure energy supplies have taken a significant step forward with state refiner Indian Oil Corp preparing a \$2bn investment in a bid to set up a 6m tonnes per annum refinery in Nigeria's Edo state.

## French body raps ship scrap 'arrogance'

FRANCE'S premier maritime body, the Institut Français de la Mer, has warned France and its European partners against treating existing shipbreakers in developing countries with "arrogance and egotism" in trying to build a ship demolition industry of their own.

## Cochin Port achieves 41% growth in cargo throughput:

Eyetransport. Cochin Port Trust registered a 41% growth in cargo traffic during the first four months of the current financial year, compared to the prior year period.