

From the Editor's Desk

"MARINE WAVES" URGES FRESH THINKING IN ENSURING G O O D G O V E R N A N C E .



To excel in any profession, the need for commitment and dedication should come from within, not comparing those who keep counting money and eye on the clock. The need to focus on upgrading quality- standards, from time to time, enabling timely corrective action, keeping workplace safety culture with discipline, valuing "TIME" which is most precious. The lethargic, finds only easy ways of making fast money at others cost, other ways known as criminals. They find their easy jobs more stressful. Sincere, honest and hardworking-people enjoy their work and produce more and excellent results, find their jobs less stressful, since they make their work enjoyable. A pleasant and happy mind-set will reflect on how one serves better. Self criticism and constructive criticism by peers can spur the urge to do better, which is ideal, though seldom realized or practiced.

I would rather call upon all the mariners to share their rich experience out at sea, into successful case study, for development. Mariners opting to teaching jobs ashore, need to be computer-proficient, irrespective of whether they be old timers or not, the need to keep abreast, moving with the times of new technology, knowing more from the internet world, inter-act by exchanging their thoughts. The three components which are Computers, Connectivity and Commitment. Followed by Content learning and communication. Have a lien towards academics, quest for learning. Theory and Practice should go hand in hand, with a pragmatic approach of a holistic view. Real education, can only give you the power to change. "The illiterate of the 21 century will not to be those who can not read and write but those who can not learn, unlearn & relearn"- Alvin Toffler. Knowledge is infinite and hence studying needs to be a continuous process to keep abreast with their related relevant subjects, an urge to know more and more for enhancing and imparting knowledge. At sixty, I am a student of Madras University; enjoy being a student. Mind is a think-tank. We need to use it more and more to make it more "Effective and Productive". Idleness of brain will bring in evil thoughts, known as devil's workshop. Age is not the only factor of retirement criteria but for our mental make-up and physical strength to withstand varied situations.

"Professional Ethics and Human Values" authored by Prof.D.R.Kiran, published by Tata McGraw Hill, covers in depth aptly the various ingredients of professional ethics and human values which are essential. We see comprehensive integration of integrity, honour, dignity, safety, health to brighten human life by values like love, purity, compassion, truthfulness, tolerance, spirit of service, coherence, unity of purpose etc. Congratulations to Anna University for having included these vital aspects as core subject in the pre-final year, for all branches of B.E. and B.Tech. courses. India is totally committed being the world's one of the largest democratic countries. We believe in the concept of "Unity in Diversity". Hence, to preserve our democratic right and freedom, it is the bounden duty of each and every citizen of this country to nurture discipline for sustenance and for the well-being of all of us. Discipline is the key ingredient of democracy. Unless, discipline is well understood and followed meticulously, the style of management will not be effective.

Discipline is nothing but a chain of four links. First and foremost is ethics dealing with moral duties and obligations, concerned with truth and justice, expectations of society, competition, public-relations, social responsibilities etc. All key aspects of these four vital links are blended together by suitable integration to sustain discipline in human life and in an environment for ultimate betterment of humanity: Code of ethics/conduct/ character/Oneness or Integrity.

Dr. Chandran Peechulli, Ph.D; FIE(India)

Fellow - Institution of Engineers (India) , Executive Member - Indian Institute of Standards Engineer, T N Chapter.

Fellow- Indian Institution of Plant Engineers and Ex.Vice Chairman TN Chapter,

Cee Cee Industrial & Marine Management Consultant.

ASEAN and additional maritime security:

We read a lot about maritime security these days - the vulnerability of ships and ports to terrorist attack, the possibility of a weapon of mass destruction being transported by sea container, and so on. But we rarely read about the role of seafarers in ensuring security and the price they pay for additional security. These are the people who in the words of Psalm 106 'go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters.' Despite the impressive array of new security regulations both national and international, it is ultimately they who ensure that ships are safe and securely operated.

The lot of international seafarers is not a happy one these days. They have always worked long hours, in all weathers, and sometimes with poor living conditions. Now following the tighter security measures introduced after 11 September, they face additional strictures and hardship. They are often denied shore leave, and entry to a country to join or leave a ship. They can face criminal charges for pollution and ship safety offences, and suffer a lack of fair treatment in the event of a maritime accident or abandonment by a ship owner. It is not surprising that in many countries around the world, it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract young people into the seafaring profession.

This manning shortage, as ship owners scrape around to find properly trained and experienced crews, could in the long run pose a greater threat to the safety and security of shipping than any threat from terrorism. Paradoxically the shortage is occurring at a time when there are increased concerns about the human factor as a cause of maritime accidents and of the need for increased standards of competence among seafarers.

The ship owners' search for lower costs has driven down the size of ships' crews. As a consequence, crew fatigue has become a worrying factor

in maintaining adequate standards of safety and security in the shipping industry. A recent report by the Norwegian classification society, Det Norske Veritas, found that growing incompetence among crews, possibly brought on by new and under experienced recruits, poor retention and overwork, could be the reason for an increase in the frequency of serious maritime accidents in the last few years.

Seafarers are now not allowed ashore in US ports to make phone calls. Due to the costs of satellite communications, the crews of most merchant ships do not have access to email while their ships are at sea. For communications with family and friends, they still rely mainly on "snail mail" letters and public telephones when in port. Additionally, they may not be permitted ashore for medical treatment. And experienced seafarers are being refused US visas for no apparent reason, except perhaps due to their Islamic names. This effectively puts an end to their seafaring career. Incidents have also occurred in US ports where crewmembers have been arrested and placed in custody for going on to the wharf to collect provisions or to check the ship's draft marks prior to sailing.

Mistreatment of seafarers: As a result of stricter security measures in ports around the world, these recent developments have of late given rise to major concerns about the mistreatment of seafarers. Although most ship owners act responsibly, the failure of many flag states and the international regulatory system to adequately implement and enforce international labor standards has exposed many seafarers to exploitation and abuse.

The report on ship safety by the International Commission on Shipping (ICONS) in 2000 was entitled *Ships, Slaves and Competition*. 'Ships' referred to the operations of international shipping, some 85 to 90 percent of which is

quality shipping in full conformance with international safety requirements. 'Slaves' referred to the tens of thousands of seafarers from developing countries who are exploited, abused and ill-treated in the pursuit of lower freight rates. 'Competition' referred to the unequal struggle between quality ships that comply with international standards and the sub-standard ships that do not. This report was a damning indictment of some parts of the international shipping industry, particularly the fishing and cruise sectors. Especially disturbing is the fact that the beneficiaries of seafarer suffering include some of the wealthiest individuals and corporations on earth.

A follow-up report by ICONS in 2005



found that while some progress had been made with new regulations on labour standards, the impact of new security regulations following 11 September had reduced the status of seafarers even further. A particularly worrying trend was the misuse of the International Ship and Port Facility

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seafarersman@indiatimes.com

seafarersman@hotmail.com

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