

From the Editor's Desk



Merchant Mariners ashore, need to develop a thought process to interact and enrich their knowledge, utilizing commonly available PC's (computers) at every different level. One needs to tap their inner potential and inter-act, from their long rich sea experience, in building-up/enhance quality-benchmark. Merchant Mariner's experiences are hardly-utilised, the need to arrive at a common platform, for free flow of thoughts of vital information, to speed up forward thinking innovative process and the transformation of advancement in training skills. Knowledge through strong links of thought exchanges and protracted discussions be encouraged, between the enlightened floating staff and the shore-staff to bring about a guiding vision to active floating staff, of varied level of responsibility and accountability.

Floating Staff need to perform group discussions onboard for congenial living and working atmosphere, maintain a high morale, primarily understand their separation from near and dear ones, limitations and constraints out at sea, challenges ahead to face eventualities (natural sea borne and shipboard). Officers need to go beyond their job description, giving no room for blame excuses but for contributing their best foreseeing crisis/risk. Senior officer's control over shipboard machineries, machinery spares, consumables and ensuring quick turnover of "safely delivering the goods", is though their primary responsibility. All events onboard need to be documented for the new comers onboard to familiarize quickly and perform their best. Every individual onboard is to think about, as to how to improve his/her work in quality considering the precious time, giving their best in job performance and cost effectiveness. Practice, the best tools of management to suit the situation, for improved services of productivity onboard. In a shipboard set-up, where there is a process of accountability, idea generation for innovation is more common. Organizations that have broken the barriers of departmental silos can test their ideas on each other, not to focus on finding fault with others, need to encourage constructive criticisms and implement innovative ideas better and faster. Encourage opportunities to open up "thought process". Prove the best; keep physically and mentally fit, at all times, to meet the hard work out at sea with man-power constraints and quality material constraints. "Our vision is to develop an efficient and cost-effective infrastructure, to facilitate growing world trade".

The need for a proper regulatory mechanism to instill fairness in Shipping. System is not sensitive to the plight of seafaring victims; do we need standards of nursery/primary/secondary teachers, to head the faculty of maritime colleges/academies? Universities must be places based on the authority of ideas, rather than the idea of authority. 'Institutions must focus on value based education' such of those old timers, so called Master Mariners (Merchant Marine ship's captain, from seamanship with poor academic background generally matriculates includes non-matriculates as well, by mere virtue of a C O C through set-paper exams., issued for operation and maintenance of vessels (ships), with no further qualifying examination. Those with such poor academic qualification, be only considered at demonstrators level, and not to unimaginable level of "Dean of faculty in Maritime Institutions", which is owing to some ill- conceived mariners in the Office of the Directorate General of Shipping, with limited sea service and qualification, discourages mariners towards higher education, while over one hundred and twenty (120) distance learning universities exist in India.. Why this 'mind-set of the establishment'? This is a matter of serious concern, which any enlightened society would agree, besides UGC and AICTE. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) need to fairly assess teachers, students, infrastructure and academic environment in all maritime colleges, academies and institutions.

One needs to command respect from one's own deeds. Its high time, the nation recognises seamen's, hard work out at sea, of risks and sacrifices, earning foreign-exchange to the country, instead of they continue to be neglected of their basic rights and privileges enjoyed by the shore staff, towards health care and social inequalities, since the seamen are handicapped to unite and voice their legitimate dues. One need to "Think like a man of action and act like a man of thought" - Henri Bergson.

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make the Indian maritime sector very "uncompetitive in comparison to international players". Given the rise of terrorism globally, the report calls for the implementation of global maritime

security initiatives to ensure continued integration of the Indian ports with the world shipping and port trade.

The report stresses that hinterland connectivity remains a major bottleneck in the seamless movement and growth

of multi-modal transportation in the country. This considerably adds to the transportation costs. The report recommends that early completion of various projects in the rail and road sector is crucial to meet the heavy traffic projections for future.

W o r l d I n f o D e s k

World Maritime Day 2007: The theme for World Maritime Day 2007 is "IMO's response to current environmental challenges". The theme was chosen to give IMO the opportunity to focus on its environmental work (both of the past and present) and thus intensify its efforts to add our contribution to that of the international community

to protect and preserve the environment before it is too late. World Maritime Day will be celebrated on Thursday, 27 September 2007.

Total in the dock over Erika oil spill:

PARIS -- The first trial in France over a major environmental disaster opens on Monday to decide whether oil giant Total and other parties bear responsibility for the massive oil spill from the Erika shipwreck in 1999. A 25-year-old rusting tanker, Erika was carrying 30,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil when it sank off France's Brittany coast on December 12, 1999, polluting vast stretches of the Atlantic coastline and killing thousands of seabirds. Fifteen parties including Total, the tanker owners, a charter company, a vessel classification firm and maritime authorities are in the dock on various charges of endangering lives, causing pollution or failing to respond to a disaster. Total executive Bernard Thouillin and two of the company's affiliates-Total Transport Corporation and Total Petroleum Services-are to answer accusations that they chartered a tanker of dubious seaworthiness in order to meet a tight deadline for delivery of the cargo to Italy. If convicted of causing maritime pollution, Total could be fined up to one million euros (1.3 million dollars) while a conviction on the charge of complicity to endanger lives carries a maximum one-year prison term and a 15,000-euro fine. The French state is seeking 153 million euros in damages to cover the cost of the cleanup and recovery of the wreckage while many of the 70 plaintiffs in the case are demanding hefty compensation. A Total

spokesman however voiced confidence that the oil firm would be cleared and emphasized that 11 other parties are to come under scrutiny during the trial. "We consider the allegations to be groundless," said Total spokesman Charles Edouard Ansray. "We are awaiting the outcome of the trial that is to assign responsibility." The Italian owner of the Erika, Giuseppe Savarese, and his manager Antonio Pollara are to answer charges of negligence and jeopardizing the lives of the 26 Indian crew members of the Erika that broke in two in heavy seas and later sank. The Indian captain of the vessel, Karun Mathur, has also been charged but it is not certain that he will appear before the Paris criminal court. The Italian maritime certification company RINA, a member of its board Gianpiero Ponasso, and the co-owners of the Selmont vessel charter company, Mauro Clemente and Alessandro Ducci are also cited. Finally, four men responsible for maritime safety and rescue -- Eric Geay, Michel de Monval, Jean-Loup Velot and Jean-Luc Lejeune -- are charged with failing to respond to a disaster. It has taken seven years for magistrate Dominique de Talance to investigate the Erika disaster in which 20,000 tonnes of fuel leaked into the ocean, dealing a severe blow to local tourist and fishing industries. The total cost of the damage has been estimated at over one billion euros. Prosecutors intend to argue that the debt-ridden owners of the Erika ignored security problems of the ageing tanker to continue making money off it. Total chartered the tanker, the only one available at the port in Dunkirk at that time, in order to meet its contractual obligation to deliver 19,000 tonnes to the Italian company Enel by December 31, according to the prosecutors. The trial in a Paris criminal court is expected to last four months and rate among the costliest in France, notably due to the hiring of 14 interpreters for the Indian, Italian, Greek and British witnesses. The Maltese-registered Erika left Dunkirk on December 8, 1999, bound for Leghorn,

Italy but ran into bad weather in the Bay of Biscay three days later, hitting waves of up to 14 meters. As the weather worsened, heavy fuel began to leak from the tanker and the captain sent out a Mayday message the following day, reporting that the ship was sinking. The ship broke in two parts on December 12 and the crew was airlifted to safety. Waves of heavy fuel oil began washing ashore on Christmas Eve, triggering a major cleanup operation that would last months. The disaster prompted the European Union to adopt new maritime shipping regulations including banning older tankers and creating a more stringent inspection regime.

International Conference on Alternative Dispute Resolution:

The Chief Justice of India, Justice K.G. Balakrishnan today inaugurated the International Conference on 'Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)' organized by the International Centre for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ICADR). The conference was attended by the Chairman, ICADR, Union Minister for Law & Justice, Dr. H.R. Bhardwaj, U.K.'s first woman "Lord of Appeal in Ordinary" Baroness Brenda Hale of Richmond and her husband Dr. Julian Farrand, Planning Commission Deputy Chairman, Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, MoS for Law & Justice, Shri K. Venkatapathy, the Judges of the Supreme Court, Justice Ashok Bhan, Justice Arijit Pasayat and Justice K. K. Venugopal, Attorney General of India Shri Milion K. Banerjee,

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