

From the Editor's Desk



"Theory is splendid, until put into practice with the right attitude, with a pursuit to excellence, or else it is valueless"....
Capt. Arun Chandran

"Instead of just believing in luck and doing nothing, I strongly believe that we plan and put our sincere efforts, which brings better luck and successes.... Capt. Arun Chandran

"REVOLUTIONIZING THE PATH TO RIGHTEOUSNESS"

We see and hear during these annals of human history, an awakening amongst all of humanity, politically activated, politically conscious and politically interactive... The resulting global political activism is generating a surge in the quest for personal dignity, cultural respect and economic opportunity, in a world painfully scarred by memories of centuries-long alien colonial or imperial domination... We notice and feel a worldwide yearning for human dignity, being the central challenge inherent in the phenomenon of global political awakening... That awakening

is socially massive and politically radicalizing... The nearly universal access to radio, television and increasingly the Internet is creating a community of shared perceptions and envy that can be galvanized and channeled by demagogic political or religious passions. These energies transcend sovereign borders and pose a challenge both to existing states as well as to the existing global hierarchy, on top of which America still perches...

The youth of the Third World are particularly restless and resentful. The demographic revolution they embody is thus a political time-bomb, as well... Their potential revolutionary spearhead, is likely to emerge from among the scores of millions of students concentrated in the often intellectually dubious "tertiary level" educational institutions of developing countries. Depending on the definition of the tertiary educational level, they are currently worldwide between 80 and 130 million "college" students. Typically originating from the socially insecure lower middle class and inflamed by a sense of social outrage, these millions of students are revolutionaries-in-waiting, already semi-mobilized in large congregations, connected by the Internet and pre-positioned for a replay on a larger scale of what transpired years earlier in Mexico City or in Tiananmen Square. Their physical energy and emotional frustration is just waiting to be triggered by a cause, or a faith, or hatred...

Strengthening to new foundations, requires a thorough status of the existing actual situation for marching towards quality, understanding the economy of a new civilisation. The challenge of thinking about as to how a new civilisation would be, can be very attractive because one could get carried away with ones imagination with the practical needs in thoughts and in theory design. Maybe we would have to think of the organisation of a new civilisation as a joint construction: the product of the interrelation of numerous different imaginations, many points of view, as well as many aspirations. If this were the case we could discern a certain common direction, a certain sensitivity common to that to which the human being aspires, and based on this; trace in broad strokes a path which could then with time become a more adequate shape, changed and enriched. When we speak of economy it is not difficult to identify common denominators that the majority of us want: better wealth distribution, fairness, harmony with the environment, a good quality of life for all, relations of solidarity, good working conditions, and many others. There may be minor differences, but the majority of us would agree on certain fundamental objectives. There is so much coincidence that we feel superfluous even when it comes to topics such as political proposals, because they all say the same. We could say that differences begin with the question of "how". How to organise the economy in a society to obtain that fruit which so many of us aspire to. And while we could say that future aspirations are fundamental to our acting in the present leading us to build paths towards them; we can also the system yet; helps highlight the say that if the question of "how" is left unanswered, often the aspirations end up as compensatory daydreams which do not mobilize transforming actions. Today most of the world works under the rules of globalised capitalism, and this is set up around darwinian social behaviour, individualism and an eagerness for consumerism. Although there are many people who are starting to have a different type of sensitivity, the mechanism continues to work, and continues to feed the materialist culture. However, this new sensitivity, which is gradually appearing in many people, though not enough to change contradictions and it is there that room is made for a ray of hope. the valuing of reciprocity as a mode of relations between people, and therefore also of economic relationships, could be encouraged as a certain attitude to life, and this would bring a transforming dynamic to relationships. Unlike simple humanitarian solidarity which not only tends to naturalize the system of relationships between the "helpers" and the "helped" but also it is unlikely to establish itself in most people outside of formal rhetoric.

A critical and self-critical attitude towards irrational consumerism should incorporate itself in this new society as a code of social worth. In the decadent culture of materialism, having and exhibiting objects are synonymous with "being a winner"; in a new culture it could start to be synonymous with "being an idiot". selfishness, lack of social responsibility and animosity against taking part in all things collective, an indifference to the pain of others, and many other tendencies, which today are common currency, allow individualists to justify themselves and pass unnoticed; in future this will be recognised as more and more obviously appalling behaviour. starting with this first principal, that of a new culture of values, which corresponds to the new sensitivity which is being born, it will be possible to raise the pillars of a new economy. one of those pillars is the generation of channels of direct democracy in various spaces for peoples participation. Otherwise, how could the people who want to transform the economic system operate under the rules which regulate them? People should be able to participate in the decision making which administers public budgets, and they should be able to take part in the decision making involved in the creation of laws which modify the rules of the game of the economy with the aim of a fairer distribution of wealth. Workers also need to have the power to make decisions about the management and administration of companies. A society with a culture of political involvement, and with a project to transform the future cannot fall on the dead tracks of formal democracies, often associated with concentrated economic power, but needs viable channels of decision making.

Another of the pillars of a new economy, and which has to do with a change of paradigms, is the application of the principle of "equal opportunities for all". The state should guarantee that everyone will have equal opportunities for their economic development. Then it will be left to each person to decide how to use these opportunities, but they should be available for everyone. Starting by guaranteeing public and free education at all levels for everyone, continuing with financial help, and dismantling the pockets of power which condition economic relations. of course, over the pillars of a new economy there should be a whole raft of legislation and new procedures for a mixed human scale economy. Themes such as workers participating in the shared ownership of companies, interest free state banking, tax reforms, shared budgets, and others, will need a detailed technical analysis to work out the viability of its implementation. But this analysis will be difficult for technocrats academically formed with a vision in which money and the economy have been the central value.

It will be necessary, a foundation of an economic science at the service of the human being, to modify the current conception of the economy as "an exact science, with some social interferences", and to move onto the conception of the economy as a social science, which uses technical instruments. It would no longer be necessary to look for the balance of the market at the cost of social sacrifice but to achieve a social balance based on the principle of equal opportunities and adapting the techniques to such a principle. And it will no longer be possible to gauge growth and development with money as the unit of measure, but to weigh up the indices of human development, putting the economy at the service of such-indicators.

Finally, we need to say that as global problems need global solutions, and it will not necessarily be the powers which generate them which will take care of solving them, it will be fundamental to be able to count on a level of world resolution for such problems. The extreme poverty of many countries, global warming, the collapse of energy and food supply, and other world scale scourges, cannot be solved country by country, but rather as a whole. The nations which maintain and respect their cultural diversity and independence, should work as a great universal human nation, to coordinate " my concern for shipping and the seafarers of the world at large"

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Maritime organizations outraged by murder of hostage by pirates:

Outraged by the recent incident in which Somali pirates reportedly shot and killed a member of the crew of the Beluga Nomination (see earlier report), the Round Table of international shipping associations and the ITF today issued the following statement:

BIMCO, the International Chamber of Shipping, INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO and the International Transport Workers' Federation are outraged that Somali pirates have executed, apparently in cold blood, a seafarer on the merchant ship Beluga Nomination which had been attacked and hijacked by armed pirates on 22 January in the Indian Ocean, 390 nautical miles north of the Seychelles. Three seafarers were reportedly taken aside for 'punishment' after an attempt by the Seychelles coastguard to free the hostage crew resulted in the death of a pirate. We express our deepest sympathy to the seafarers involved and to their anxious families.

The international shipping industry is truly disturbed at reports that pirates have been torturing seafarers physically and mentally, often in the most barbaric ways, including hanging them over the ship's side by ropes around their ankles with their heads under water and even subjecting them to the horrendous practice of keelhauling.

We wholeheartedly condemn these violent acts and once again strongly urge governments to empower their naval forces to take fast and robust action against pirates, and the vessels under their control, before passing ships are boarded and hijacked.

This latest particularly atrocious action appears to represent a fundamental shift in the behaviour of Somali pirates. The cold-blooded murder of an innocent seafarer means that ship owners and their crews will be re-evaluating their current determination to ensure that this vital trade route remains open - over 40% of the world's seaborne oil passes through the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. The shipping industry will be looking at all possible options, including alternative routes, which could have a dramatic effect on transport costs and delivery times - piracy is already estimated to cost the global economy between \$7-12 billion per year.

Somali pirates kidnap record numbers in 2010:

KUALA LUMPUR: Somali pirates kidnapped a record number of seafarers in 2010, in cases that left eight sailors dead, a maritime watchdog said Tuesday. Pirates in the lawless region hijacked 53 ships and captured 1,181 seafarers last year, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) said in a report. "More people were taken hostage at sea in 2010 than in any year on record," it said.

The number of pirate attacks against ships has risen every year for the past four years, the IMB said. There were 445 attacks reported in 2010, up 10 percent from 2009. Some 188 crew members were taken hostage in 2006, 1,050 in 2009 and 1,181 in 2010. "These figures for the number of hostages and vessels taken are the highest we have ever seen," said Pottengal Mukundan, director of the IMB's piracy reporting centre, which has monitored the problem worldwide since 1991. The continued increase in these numbers is alarming," he added.

Hijackings off the coast of Somalia accounted for 92 percent

of all ship seizures last year, with 49 vessels captured and 1,016 crew members taken hostage, the IMB report said.

Somali pirates were still holding 28 vessels and 638 hostages for ransom as of last December, it said. Mukundan said that on the seas off Somalia, heavily armed pirates are overpowering ocean-going fishing or merchant vessels to use as bases for further attacks. "They capture the crew and force them to sail to within attacking distance of other unsuspecting vessels," he said.

NITC: Aims to Grow Fleet to 18mdwt by 2013:

The National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) based in Tehran continues to invest significantly in its fleet of ships, aiming to grow its fleet to 74 ships and more than 18mdwt by 2013, said Captain R. Ghareh, Area Manager based in the company's Dubai, UAE office, during a recent interview. This level is a sharp increase from its current fleet, which includes 43 ships (including 28 VLCCs) total 10.6mdwt.

Making up the bulk of the new fleet is an existing order for 22 new VLCCs costing a cumulative \$3.3b.

The continued push to invest is encouraging given the still shaky status of the global economic recovery, not to mention the United Nations sanctions surrounding Iran's lack of compliance with its previous resolutions on ensuring the peaceful nature of its nuclear program.

Captain Ghareh was careful to point out the NITC - which is not on the U.N. "blacklist" of companies regarding the sanctions - is set on surviving the economic storm, not the sanctions.

Today NITC is comprised of 3014 staff worldwide, including 1853 fleet personnel and 576 cadets. Its ships trade primarily in Europe (51%); Asia (26%); and Africa (15%).

Of the company's 28 VLCCs, NITC has tenders out for drydocking bids on five ships in 2011 for their 5-year docking.

Piracy Prevention is Priority One: While the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) is a proponent of weapons on commercial ships as a means to thwart piracy, it respects and stays in compliance with international and port-state mandates that reject lethal force in the hands of mariners, and pushes the use of non-lethal methods to stop potential attacks.

NITC currently has a fleet of 43 ships (including 28 VLCCs) totalling 10.6mdwt, but aims to grow its fleet to 74 ships and 18mdwt by 2013.

According to A.R. Darashti, Technical Manager for the Tehran-based company, working out of NITC's Dubai, UAE office, the company employs a number of technical solutions to keep its current fleet of 43 tankers and mariners out of harm's way, including:

- Wire Fencing
- Night Vision Cameras
- A Swedish-make water machine designed to keep the sides of the vessel wet and slippery
- Maintaining higher speeds through known piracy zones.

To date, 16 NITC ships have been the target of piracy aggression, resulting only in minor damages to ships.