

FSUI conducted Seminar on Maritime Challenges at Mumbai

Forward Union of India (FSUI) organized the Seminar at Hotel Orchid, Mumbai recently to address the **Challenges In the Maritime Industry** wrt:

- A. Criminalization of Seafarers.
- B. Skill Development,
- C. Relaxation In Cabotage.
- D. Women in Marime-Stumbling block in Inclusivity in Maritime.

FSUI Trust, ITF, WTWF, Industry stalwarts, and guests joined the Seminar in large numbers. **Shri Shyam Jagannathan (IAS) DG of Shipping**, and **Rear Ad. Ravi Nadkarni (retd)** could not grace the event due to a last-minute change/s in their busy schedule.



Lighting of Lamp- Ms HK Joshi, Ms Miko, Mr Narendra Rao & Capt Nazir

The event began with **MC Mr. Sanjeev Mehra**, inviting **Mrs. HK Joshi** former **CMD SCI**, and other dignitaries to light ceremonial lamps and recite of invocation Ganesh Shloka.



Mr Sanjeev Mehra- MC

Thereafter followed by a panel discussion headed by **Dr (Mr) Sanjay Bhavnani** on the **Criminalization of Seafarers**. The discussion covered the latest issue of MV Dali in Baltimore USA, and other pirated ships and ships affected in the Red Sea.



Dr Sanjay Bhavnani, Capt Shравan Kumar, Capt Girish and Capt Nazir

It was generally agreed that while this topic has been discussed threadbare many times on many platforms, few effective steps have been taken to reduce the agony of seafarers affected. Basic legal rights of representation have not come forth. It was agreed that India should ask for enhancing IMO Resolution on Criminalisation; A1056 / 2011 on the eve of MLC implementation & Demand the release of the Indian crew.

Rear Adm Ravi Nadkarni through his recent write up has mentioned that Piracy started in Arabian Sea areas about 2006-07 and peaked in 2010. It is steadily declining except for a few High-Risk Areas, except there is some recent resurgence due to conflict sites in the Red Sea and the Middle East. Indian Navy has increased its intervention e.g. rescue of the crew of MV Ruan last Dec and the capture of pirates that were brought to India by IAF. Of concern lately is attack by drones. The US has initiated prosperity and freedom with the cooperation of the Navy. Indian Navy is separately assisting with this initiative in the area.

UN and IMO are issuing advisories to help shipping, trade by cease-fire between Israel and Hamas is essential.

Indian Navy is using high-tech instruments, drone spotters, etc. and shipping is being guided by traffic service remotely.

Indian Navy has established a data center for collecting and publishing incident data and learnings.

Speakers Mrs. HK Joshi & Mr. Hajra put forward their strong views on how the stakeholders along with UNIONS have to come together to propose a path to try and reduce the issues of criminalization of seafarers also how one SOP is required to be made for all Indian Ports too to reduce the criminalization of Seafarers and all ports to follow the advised process. This will also help foreign flag vessels to call and reduce the hassles.



Ms Deepshika Mehra, Ms Sanjam, Ms Miko Brown, Ms Aishwarya, Ms Manisha Tiwari & Ms Capt Ayesha Vaz

The next session moved to **Women In Maritime**. The speakers discussed their inception years experiences, entry into the maritime, pits and falls, and way forward including changes.

Ms. Miko Brown from ITF emphasized how the organization supports women in maritime, the open discussion came up with strong independent women are created when we have an atmosphere that allows growth, the emphasis solution was given by speaker **Ms. Aishwarya Pilankar** stating that four Pillars for creating these atmospheres for increasing the inclusivity and to reduce these stumbling blocks are Support from Administration, Family & fraternity, Media and education by introducing of maritime at primary school level, the idea of nautical mile compared to mile, km.

Desirable upgradation in IMO instruments and MS Act was proposed by speaker **Advocate Ms. Manisha Tiwari**.

Mrs. HK Joshi & Mr. Hajra also emphasized increasing Women's participation. It's noted that Women seafarers are only 2% of the work workforce of India in the Maritime sector. The Government of India is using all resources to encourage women's participation to become 20% by 2030 in the maritime sector. More women trainees are being attracted and for that nautical maritime reference should start their special mention on how Women Inclusion is extremely important and will influence the overall growth of the Indian Shipping Industry,

Skill development Session distinguished between skills, training, competence & education.

They are mutually exclusive events but complement each other. Speakers emphasized the need for basic minimum education especially in language and communication skills at entry level. Helping ratings to upgrade and some discussion towards it in enabling provisions in new STCW.

In the context of autonomous shipping, new skills would be required including the use of alternative fuels.

One has to include these new competencies while deleting some outdated ones.

The last session was on **“Cabotage Relaxation”**.

House was divided on measures to combat this topic.

It is agreed that relaxation may go ahead with affirmative action on the part of the Government of India to help grow Indian flag shipping companies, including but not limited to the removal of the ban on old ships.

As per the written submission by **Mr. Anil Devli CEO -INSA**, The Indian shipping industry is burdened by higher operational costs due to domestic taxes and financing limitations, despite employing Indian crew and contributing to the national economy, Indian ships are not given preference when it comes to carrying Indian cargo. All we get is a RoFR which requires Indian ships to match the lowest quote of a foreign ship. This is of little use since taxes and duties make us non-competitive. It is INSA’s view that India should follow the example of other developed countries and implement policies that reserve a portion of Indian cargo for Indian ships, like requiring a license for foreign vessels in case an Indian ship is not available and mandating a minimum percentage of cargo being carried by Indian ships.

Concluding remarks were made by **Mr. Manoj Yadav-Gen Secretary FSUI, & Mr. Narendra Rao, VP FSUI** thanking the audience for insightful discussion on most current issues covered in the seminar and for the lively afternoon participation on 7th June 2024.



Mr Sanjeev, Mr Narendra, Capt Subhedar, Capt Dubey, Mr Birwadkar & Mr Manoj Yadav