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NHAVA***

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# I. D. G. S. CIRCULAR / ORDER



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई  
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

F.No.25-19/7/2024-NT-DGS(comp. no.30839)

Date: 03.02.2025

## Merchant Shipping Notice 01 of 2025

(This Notice supersedes the MS Notice No. 20 of 2014 dated 03.11.2014)

### Subject: Age Restriction for Engagement of Seafarers for service on ships.

1. This notice is issued in light of recent incident which resulted in loss of three lives following sinking of an Indian Flagged vessel off Indian coast. The ship had an arrangement wherein only the life rafts to be used for abandoning ship.
2. The incident has raised concerns regarding the suitability of seafarers above a certain age to serve on vessels that do not have lifeboats as lifesaving appliances.
3. It was observed that the Master of the said vessel, who was 74 years old, exhibited reluctance to communicate with the owners in a timely manner, delayed sending a distress message, and ultimately abandoned the vessel.
4. The Master of the vessel could not disembark from ship on to the life raft swiftly in an emergency due to his level of physical fitness. Also, the reluctance of the Master to give abandon ship order resulted in delay by crew to leave ship and loss of three precious lives.
5. Furthermore, the vessel in question was required to be equipped with life-rafts only as per Rules, which require inflation and boarding by jumping into the water, rather than lifeboats that can be boarded directly from the ship. Boarding a life-raft is a difficult task especially in rough weather.
6. The interview with crew revealed that the delay in abandon ship order by the Master might be due to his age and the resultant reluctance to board the life-raft by jumping into water and then boarding the life raft.
7. Given these facts and the increased risk posed by the absence of lifeboats, it is hereby recommended that seafarer above 65 years of age may not be employed to serve on Cargo/Passenger vessels registered under MS Act or certified as RSV/ICV where lifeboats are not mandated as part of life-saving appliances under the applicable rules.

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8. In exceptional circumstances, the company intending to engage seafarers beyond the age of 65 years may seek permission from the nearest MMD with pre joining medical certificate and test reports. The MMD shall decide on the merits of the application on the same day. The minimum physical abilities set out in STCW Table B/1-9 should be considered, bearing in mind the different duties of seafarers. The validity of medical certificate of seafarers beyond 65 years should be limited to the intended contract period only. The seafarer shall undergo medical examination prior to engagement on another ship.
9. This measure is intended to enhance safety standards and ensure that crew members are physically capable of responding swiftly and effectively in emergency situations.
10. Further, all seafarers beyond the age of 70 to undergo stringent pre joining medicals and thereafter the company to seek permission from nearest MMD to engage such seafarers on any vessel. The MMD shall decide on the merits of the application on the same day. The minimum physical abilities set out in STCW Table B/1-9 should be considered, bearing in mind the different duties of seafarers. The MMDs shall forward the report containing the details of such applications received, permission granted/rejected with reasons at monthly intervals to the Directorate for review.
11. The DGS approved medical practitioners shall conduct the pre-joining medical examination of seafarers above 65 years of age thoroughly in accordance with the applicable standards and forward the medical certificate along with test reports to the nearest MMD for verification and record. Any lapse or violation in conduct of medical examination of seafarers more than 65 years of age shall be viewed seriously and DGS approval of such doctors shall be withdrawn permanently.
12. Ship owners, operators and RPSL agencies are advised to take necessary actions to comply with this order with immediate effect.
13. This is issued with the approval of the Competent Authority.



(Capt. Harinder Singh)  
Nautical Surveyor and Dy. Director General of Shipping(Tech)



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DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

**F.No.20-16/2/2024-TRG-DGS (Comp.No.31917)**

**Date:05.02.2025**

**Training Circular No.03 of 2025**

**Subject: Basic awareness course for seafarers about seafarer awareness, FAQ, seafarer grievances, seafarer rights and safe & secure seafaring etc.-reg**

1. Whereas, the Directorate has issued Training Circular No. 26 of 2020 dated 01.07.2020 on Guidelines for Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (PSSR)
2. Whereas, the Government of India has promulgated Merchant Shipping (Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers) Rules, 2005 vide notification No. G.S.R.182 (E) dated 18.3.2005, which was further amended by notification No.G.S.R. 580 dated 14<sup>th</sup> September 2005. These rules provide a mechanism of protection for Indian Seafarers working on Indian and Foreign Flag Vessels and the necessary safeguards for their repatriation in the event of their being stranded, or during such other exigencies, when the ship owner fails to discharge the duty of repatriating the seafarers to the home port of the seaman. The said rules also provide a mechanism for necessary registration of the manning agents (agents for Indian and Foreign Flag Vessels).
3. Whereas, the Directorate General of Shipping has been inundated with complaints from seafarers and their families about fraudulent activities by agents posing as authorized agents of DG Shipping approved Recruitment and Placement Services (RPS) agencies. These unscrupulous agents are deceiving candidates by taking money for training courses with promises of securing placements onboard. This unethical behaviour not only damages the reputation of legitimate RPS agencies but also puts aspiring seafarers at risk of financial exploitation.
4. Whereas, it is imperative for the Directorate to take swift action to address these grievances and hold these fraudulent agents accountable for their actions and further, seafarers and their families are to be made aware of the warning signs of fraudulent activities and be encouraged to report any suspicious behaviour to the authorities. It is required that these dishonest practices are curbed to protect the interests and well- being of seafarers and

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ensure a fair and transparent recruitment process exists in the maritime industry.

5. It is essential to provide proper guidance and support to the budding seafarers who are considering a career in the maritime industry. This includes educating them not to pay money for seeking jobs and avoid approaching any agents or manpower consultant companies seeking job placements. Also, educate them about their rights, responsibilities and the resources available to them if they encounter any suspicious activities or unethical behavior by agents.

6. Further, the seafaring profession comes with its own set of challenges, such as the risk of abandonment, handling mental health & well-being issues, desertion by ship's crew, man over board cases, missing seafarers from vessel, onboard deaths, arrest of vessel or vessels crew etc., and seafarers are required to be aware of their rights and actions they need to take to safeguard themselves their fellow seafarers and the vessel.

7. In light of the above, the Directorate hereby mandates mandatory one-time basic familiarization course for all seafarers educating them to avoid agents for job placements on vessels, their rights, responsibilities and the resources available to them if they encounter any suspicious activities or unethical behaviour by agents, their rights and actions they need to take to safeguard themselves their fellow seafarers and the vessel for maritime risks such as vessel abandonment's, handling mental health & well-being issues, desertion by vessels crew, man over board cases, missing seafarers from vessel, onboard deaths, arrest of vessel or vessels crew etc.

8. All DG Shipping approved Maritime Training Institutes (MTIs) conducting PSSR under basic 5 STCW courses and RUTC courses for Engineers & Nautical officers are hereby directed to conduct the said basic familiarization course for all seafarers about seafarer awareness, contact points, FAQ, seafarer grievances, seafarer rights and safe & secure seafaring etc. by preparing necessary lesson plans as per the enclosed course outline.

9. The course would educate aspiring seafarers about safe seafaring practices, secure career planning, and their rights at sea, FAQs and awareness videos to enhance their understanding and help them make informed decisions about pursuing a career in the merchant navy and empower aspiring seafarers to recognize red flags when dealing with unauthorized colleges and fraudulent agents, reducing the risk of falling victim to scams.

10. Further, this initiative aligns with the goal of raising awareness and providing guidance to seafarers, warning signs of abandonment, being alert on vessels, reaching officials promptly to resolve grievances and thereby contributing to be a more informed and prepared workforce in the maritime sector.

11. The said course module of “basic awareness course for seafarers” and shall be conducted by MTI for following seafarers;

11.1 Course content shall be included along with PSSR course for all freshers (candidates / potential seafarers) doing 5 basic STCW courses.

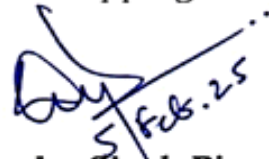
11.2. Course content shall be included for all Nautical and Engineering officers doing their RUTC course for revalidating their CoCs.

12. RPS agencies shall ensure that all freshers / first time seafarers or cadets or trainee seafarers being placed onboard have mandatorily completed the said course and same to be verified by RPS agencies for the respective seafarers training records and records to be maintained. The same shall be verified during the annual audits / surprise inspections or CIP audits by the inspecting authorities.

13. In view of the inclusion of this 02 hours of Basic Awareness course in the existing PSSR come, the course will be for 26 hours (4 days), which will be in partial modification of the course outline given in DGS Circular No. 26 of 2020 dated 01.07.2020.

14. The compliance of this circular by RPS agencies and conduct of the course by MTI will be verified by authorities during audits / inspections.

15. This issues with the approval of the Director General of Shipping.



(Deependra Singh Bisen)  
Dy. Director General of Shipping (Training)

**To:**

1. All Maritime Training Institutes
2. All Principal Officers, MMD
3. NT, Engineering Wing
4. IT & E-gov. Branch.



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DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

**F.No.20-16/2/2024-TRG-DGS (Comp.No.31917)**

**Date:05.02.2025**

**Training Circular No. 05 of 2025**

**Sub.: Guidelines for Changes in Name, Structure, and Composition of Maritime Training Institutes (MTIs) and the Management of Trusts and Section 8 Companies.**

1. Whereas, the Directorate General of Shipping has observed instances where Trusts or Sec. 8 Companies managing MTIs seek approvals and subsequently modify their organizational structure or names. While such changes has to comply with governing statutory frameworks (e.g., the Maharashtra Public Trust Act, 1950, Regional Trust Act, or the Companies Act, 2013), they may impact the governance, objectives, and integrity of these institutions. These circular aims to address such concerns, mitigate potential misuse, and maintain transparency.

2. Whereas, the In-principal approval for an MTI is fundamentally based on the original structure and objectives of the Trust or Section 8 Company which is in compliance with the ***DGS Order 05 of 2016 dated 01.11.2016, DGS Order 07 of 2016 dated 17.11.2016 and Training Circular 17 of 2018 dated 18.05.2018***. It is essential to ensure that the objectives stated in the Trust deed and the Memorandum of Association (MOA) & Articles of Association (AOA) remain consistent with those presented at the time of obtaining approval.

3. Whereas, the Changes in management, including alterations to the Board of Directors or Trustees, fall under administrative procedures governed by relevant statutory requirements designated authorities. Such changes must be duly notified to the Directorate for review, particularly to

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ensure that these modifications to the MOA, AOA and objectives of the Trust deed which will impact the aim and objective of MTI. If any modifications occur, the Directorate may reconsider the MTI's approval status.

4. Whereas, to address these concerns, the Directorate, in consultation with the STCW Compliance Board of the DGS, has reviewed these gaps and decided to issue this circular, establishing a structured mechanism to manage changes in the name of the MTI, Trust, or the Trustees and Directors of Section 8 Companies.

5. The following guidelines are to be strictly adhered by all MTIs and their management, with timely updates provided to the Directorate.

**5.1. Requirements for Changing the Name of Maritime Training Institute (MTI)**

**5.1.1. Affidavit for Change of Name of MTI:**

5.1.1.1. The MTI must submit an affidavit to the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) detailing the current name and the proposed name change.

This submission should include:

5.1.1.1.1. A copy of minutes of the Initial Board Meeting Documenting discussions and approval of the proposed name change.

5.1.1.1.2. A Copy of the Resolution Passed by the governing body authorizing the name change.

5.1.1.1.3. Justification for the Name Change, a rationale explaining the necessity or benefits of changing the name.

5.1.1.1.4. Information on updates required for official records, including any impacts on accreditation or recognition.

**5.1.2. Publication of Notification:**

5.1.2.1. The MTI is required to publish a notice regarding the proposed name change in both local and national newspapers, ensuring it appears in both regional and English language publications within **2 weeks** from the date of submitting an affidavit requesting proposed name change.

5.1.2.2. If there are any objects raised by the stakeholders same should be answered and recorded.

### **5.1.3. Gazette Notification**

5.1.3.1. Following publication in newspapers, the MTI must formally register the name change in the official gazette of the State by submitting a deed changing name form to the gazette office along with necessary documents, including copies of newspaper publications.

### **5.1.4. Approval from DGS:**

5.1.4.1. After completing above steps, submit the affidavit with all supporting documents mentioned above along with amendments to Bylaws or Trust Deed Provide revised bylaws or trust deed reflecting the new name of Trustee & Director (if applicable) to DGS for review.

5.1.4.2. Following the compliance check by DGS with regulations and guidelines and upon ensuring compliance with all aforementioned steps, DGS will issue a formal approval letter recognizing the change of name under DGS records of approved MTIs.

### **5.1.5. Institutional Record Updates**

5.1.5.1. After receiving DGS approval, the MTI must verify and update all institutional records, which include:

5.1.5.1.1. Registration Documents: Update with relevant authorities to reflect the new name.

5.1.5.1.2. Bank Accounts: Ensure that financial institutions are notified and records are updated.

### **5.1.6. Compliance with Educational Authorities**

5.1.6.1. The MTI must notify relevant educational authorities, such as universities or boards, about the name change to ensure that all records are updated accordingly. This step is crucial for maintaining accreditation and recognition of courses offered by the institute.

**6.** It is noted that, the above mentioned requirements for change of the name of MTI must be completed within **30 (thirty) days** from the date of submitting an affidavit letter requesting change of name of the MTI to the DG Shipping.

## **7. Requirements for the Change in the Name of Trust/ Trustee**

7.1. The formal letter submitted to the Directorate must be accompanied by the following documents to ensure compliance with DGS guidelines within **two (2) weeks** of any change in management or trust name:

**7.1.1.** Notifications submit to the DGS.

7.1.1.1. The formal notification should be submitted to the Directorate  
Complying following documents:

7.1.1.1.1. A copy of Board Resolution of trustees.

7.1.1.1.2. A copy of any amendments to the trust deed reflecting the new name or objectives of the Trust.

7.1.1.1.3. A Copy of Application along with Documentation Submitted to the Charity Commissioner for the proposed changes.

7.1.1.1.4. A copy of the public notification regarding the name change of Trustee / Director.

7.1.1.1.5. A copy of Approval Letter from Charity Commissioner confirming the change of Name.

7.1.1.1.6. A copy of Updated Trust Records for Verification reflecting the new changes.

## **8. Requirements for Change of Directors in Section 8 Companies**

8.1. The MTI management must submit the following documents to the DG Shipping within two weeks of any change in management or directors, to ensure compliance with the DGS guidelines:

**8.1.1. Notification to the DGS**

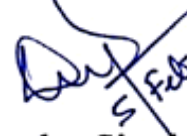
8.1.1.1. Notifications shall be submitted with the following documents;

8.1.1.1.1. A copy of all the supporting documents along with a copy of the application submitted to the Registrar of Companies (ROC) for the change or new appointment of Directors. (which includes new DIN No, Consent letters (Form DIR-2), Declaration of disqualification etc.) if applicable.

8.1.1.1.2. A copy of any amendments made to the Memorandum of Association (MOA) or Articles of Association (AOA).

9. This structured approach will facilitate transparency, compliance, and efficiency in managing changes within the MTI established through Trust or Company and it is essential that all the records are updated on the DGS MTI Trust Portal.

10. This directive is issued with the approval of the Director General of Shipping.



5 Feb. 25

**(Deependra Singh Bisen)**

**Dy. Director General of Shipping (Training)**

**To:**

1. All Maritime Training Institutes
2. All Principal Officers, MMD
3. NT, Engineering Wing
4. IT & E-gov. Branch.

## II. IMO NEWS

### International Women's Day : IMO spotlights gender data gap

IMO marked International Women's Day, observed on 8 March each year, with a call for action to close the gender data gap in maritime and secure a more inclusive future for women in the sector.

During a special event held at IMO Headquarters in London (7 March) IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez emphasized the role of institutions and allies in tackling gender data bias, including through effective policies and practices. Mr. Dominguez said: "There is a lot more that institutions can do in bringing down the barriers and continue to highlight our role in gender equality. This is not a process that should be led by women without men participation.

"We are here to support women's rights within organizations and in the global shipping sector - to be mentors, to give women a voice, to support and advocate for women's leadership."

Writer, broadcaster and feminist activist Caroline Criado Perez, author of *Invisible Women*, delivered an inspiring keynote, tracing her journey from scepticism to activism.

Sharing examples from her research, she explained how deeply embedded gender bias is in data: "The male body is often positioned as the 'default,' while the female body is seen as needing explanation, as atypical. This bias is deeply embedded across history, from language to medical research to protective equipment design."

She advocated for systemic change to address women's needs. Collating disaggregated data in all sectors can provide a baseline to support decision-making and further action.

Ms Criado Perez stated: "You can have all the data in the world, but if you are not considering it from a sex and gender perspective, you are going to miss really important insights."

The event aligned with the UN's International Women's Day actions which this year focused on the theme, "For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment."

### Commitment to Gender Equality

IMO remains dedicated to advancing gender equality and diversity within the maritime sector. The upcoming results of the 2024 Women in Maritime survey in May 2025 will provide valuable insights into fostering inclusivity. Additionally, the long-standing IMO's gender programme, established in 1988, continues to drive progress and support women in achieving representation aligned with modern expectations.

Gender equality and diversity are key priorities in the Secretary-General's agenda, who maintains his commitment to only participating in panels with gender-balanced representation and has urged continued efforts to create an equitable and inclusive maritime industry.

IMO's dedication to gender equality and diversity is reflected in initiatives like the International Day for Women in Maritime, celebrated annually on 18 May. This day highlights the vital contributions of women in the industry, while promoting their recruitment, retention and sustained employment in maritime.

IMO is committed to creating a maritime industry and workplace where Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are not just goals but a reality. Through a variety of programs and initiatives, the Organization strives to cultivate an environment that values diverse perspectives, ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of background.



### III. ILO NEWS

#### Breaking barriers on the evolving role of women at sea

Thirty years ago, when I began my career in the maritime industry, women at sea were a rarity. The challenges were formidable—lack of representation, limited career pathways, and entrenched perceptions about a woman’s place in the industry. Today, while significant progress has been made, the journey is far from over.

The past decade has seen undeniable shifts in how the industry embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion. The number of female seafarers has increased, maritime education institutions have seen more women enrolling, and shipping companies are taking deliberate steps to support gender diversity. However, the reality remains that women still constitute only about 2% of the global seafaring workforce, highlighting the need for further action. Despite advancements, female seafarers continue to face barriers that hinder their professional growth and retention at sea. Career progression remains a significant challenge, as women still struggle to advance into senior seafaring roles. Traditional biases and outdated perceptions persist, making it difficult for female officers to reach captain or chief engineer ranks. Additionally, many women report challenges in integrating into male-dominated environments, underscoring the importance of ensuring safe and respectful workplaces. Strong policies and on-board training to prevent harassment and discrimination are crucial to fostering inclusivity...Industry-wide initiatives such as the Diversity@Sea Initiative promote gender-balanced crews, supported by shipping companies and organizations working towards a more inclusive on-board culture. The Diversity@Sea Pilot Project, launched by the Global Maritime Forum, includes commitments from multiple shipping companies to improve working conditions for female seafarers by ensuring proper facilities, inclusive personal protective equipment, and better gender representation on crews. The European Commission’s Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 aims to remove structural barriers that hinder women’s progression in the maritime and transport sectors. The International Women Seafarers Foundation (IWSF) advocates for policies ensuring a fair working environment for women seafarers, including robust anti-harassment measures and gender-inclusive hiring guidelines. OSM Thome, for example, is committed to supporting and empowering female seafarers through its Women’s Desk, which provides dedicated support and counselling to ensure their well-being and address challenges at sea. Currently, 5% of OSM Thome’s workforce across all ranks and vessel segments are women, a figure above the industry average. However, the company is taking significant measures to dramatically increase female representation in its maritime workforce.

WISTA (Women’s International Shipping & Trading Association) International plays a critical role in promoting gender diversity through initiatives such as the Diversity and Inclusion Pledge, the Leadership Accelerator Program with the IMO, and the Women in Maritime Survey. It also leads the SHE of Change campaign, collaborating with industry stakeholders to drive systemic change...The maritime industry has come a long way, but the journey toward full gender inclusivity is still ongoing...As an industry, we must challenge outdated perceptions, create sustainable career pathways, and ensure that the next generation of women at sea experiences a truly level playing field.

Change does not happen overnight, nor does it happen in isolation...Let’s continue to break barriers, challenge norms, and create opportunities so that women at sea are no longer the exception but an integral and celebrated part of our industry’s future. The time for change is now, and the responsibility lies with all of us.



## IV. SHIPPING NEWS

### **Rescue ship saves 32 People stranded for days on oil platform without Food or Water**

A humanitarian rescue ship has saved 32 migrants, including women, men and children who were stranded for four days on an oil platform off Tunisia's coast without food or water.

The group was attempting to cross the Mediterranean but ended up on the gas platform after their rubber dinghy capsized. One migrant had already died before help arrived.

The non-governmental organisation (NGO) Sea-Watch carried out the rescue mission on Tuesday using its fast-response ship, Aurora. However, the final destination of the vessel is still unclear as no country has yet allowed it to dock in a safe port.

According to Mediterranea, a migrant rescue charity, the group was shipwrecked without any supplies and had been left exposed to harsh weather conditions.

Per reports, the dinghy went adrift while attempting to flee Libya, forcing them to climb onto the Miskar gas platform in the Mediterranean. A Sea-Watch reconnaissance aircraft, Seabird, first spotted the empty rubber dinghy near the platform on March 1, 2025. The stranded migrants later managed to contact Alarm Phone, an emergency hotline for people in distress at sea.

They pleaded for help, saying they had been without food for days and were in a critical condition. They also confirmed the death of one person from their group.

A video, filmed by one of the stranded individuals, was shared by humanitarian organisations on social media. In the footage, a young man, speaking in Tigrinya—a language spoken in Ethiopia and Eritrea—described the desperate situation.

He said that after five days at sea, the survivors were now starving and freezing on the platform, warning that if help did not arrive soon, they would die.

Despite the imminent danger, no European country intervened to assist, even though the migrants were stranded in international waters on the border of the Tunisian and Maltese search and rescue (SAR) zones. Sea-Watch stated that it had alerted the authorities but no action was taken before their ship Aurora arrived for the rescue. The NGO confirmed that all 32 migrants were now safely aboard Aurora, and are receiving necessary medical attention and care from the crew.

However, Sea-Watch is concerned over the fact that no country had yet provided a safe port for the rescued individuals.

Human right organisations have criticised European governments for their handling of migration crises. Despite the urgent situation, no EU country came forward to provide assistance.

Recent agreements between European nations, Tunisia, and Libya allow authorities in North Africa to intercept and return migrants who attempt to cross the Mediterranean.

The Central Mediterranean remains one of the deadliest migration routes. According to United Nations data, more than 210,000 people attempted the crossing in 2023.

Out of these, over 60,000 were intercepted and sent back to African shores, while nearly 2,000 lost their lives at sea.

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### **Houthis guaranteed safe passage to Russian and Chinese ships, says OFAC**

The US Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) announced targeted sanctions against Houthi leadership on March 5, following the re-designation of the group as a foreign terrorist organisation on March 4.

In a press release explaining the reasoning behind targeting seven high-ranking Houthis individuals, OFAC revealed a long list of connections between the Yemeni organisation and Russia, and that the group had avoided targeting Russian and Chinese vessels in its campaign of deadly attacks on merchant vessels off Yemen's coast, including ships transiting the southern Red Sea and Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

OFAC said of Houthi Supreme Political Council (SPC) member Mohamed Ali Al-Houthi: "Amid the Houthis' ongoing maritime attack campaign, Mohamed Ali has communicated with officials from Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) to ensure that Houthi militants do not strike Russian or PRC vessels transiting the Red Sea. Speaking on behalf of the Houthis, Mohamed Ali has outlined the Houthis' commitment to guarantee safe passage for Russian vessels.

Houthi attacks have led to the re-routing of global supply chains as ship owners and operators took the longer route around the Cape of Good Hope to avoid the Houthi threat in the Red Sea. Four seafarers have been killed and two seriously injured in the 113 attacks from November 2023 to the end of January 2025. The last reported drone/missile activity by the Houthis was on January 19, 2025, according to the Joint Maritime Information Centre's latest weekly update to March 2.

The Houthis claim to have targeted vessels with links to Israel, the US and the UK, justifying the attacks as support for Palestinians in Gaza and retaliation for airstrikes on Houthi assets in Yemen. Houthi attacks on shipping have significantly reduced in frequency in recent months and the Houthis have stated their intention to cease targeting both Israel and international shipping during the Israel-Palestine ceasefire and peace process.

OFAC alleges other members of Houthi leadership have worked with Russian officials to secure weaponry from Russia, finance weapons procurement, and hide Houthi purchases of military-grade equipment. Further allegations include a Houthi human smuggling operation to recruit Yemeni civilians to fight for Russia in Ukraine as a means of revenue generation for the Yemeni group.

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### **Reaction to the release of the crew of the galaxy leader**

Politicians and industry leaders welcomed the release of the 25 crew held hostage by the Houthi for 14 months, but also stressed no seafarers should ever face such a threat.

After 429 days in captivity 25 seafarers held on-board the NYK chartered car carrier *Galaxy Leader* were released by the Houthi on Wednesday.

The Houthis in Yemen hijacked the cargo vessel *Galaxy Leader* near Hodeidah in November 2023 while sailing to India.

Reactions to the crew's release from leaders and industry groups portrayed both relief that the seafarers were finally free to go home and be reunited with their families and frustration that such an incident could happen in the first place.

Some 17 of the hostages held on-board the *Galaxy Leader* were Filipino nationals and the news of their release was greeted with joy by Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

"It is with utmost joy that, after more than a year of captivity in Yemen, I announce the safe release of all seventeen Filipino seafarers, together with the rest of the crewmembers of *M/V Galaxy Leader*," President Marcos said in a statement.

"Our Filipino seafarers are now in the care of our Philippine Embassy in Muscat, Oman and will be reunited with their loved ones in the Philippines very soon," he added.

President Marcos thanked His Majesty Haitham bin Tarik, Sultan of Oman, and his government for their successful mediation, which led in the eventual release, and safe passage of the Filipino seafarers through Oman.

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### **Greek ferry captain & first officer jailed for pushing passenger to death**

A court in Piraeus, Greece, has sentenced the captain and first officer of the Blue Horizon ferry to prison over the tragic drowning of a passenger in September 2023.

The first officer, who pushed the passenger off the ferry's ramp, received 12.5 years of manslaughter, while the captain was sentenced to over seven years for allowing the vessel to depart after the fatal incident. The court rejected their request for a suspension of their sentences, ordering them to serve their prison terms immediately.

The case sparked widespread outrage after video footage of the 36-year-old Antonis Kargiotis being pushed into the sea was surfaced online, as he tried to board the ferry, which was departing for Heraklion, Crete. The Blue Horizon's stern ramp was still down, against maritime safety rules, when Kargiotis ran up to board.

A crew member confronted him, and as the ferry started moving, he was pushed off the ramp into the harbour waters. He was caught in the ferry's wake and drowned while crew members and passengers looked on. Despite the serious incident, the ferry continued its journey and did not return to port for nearly 40 minutes, only doing so after receiving orders from authorities. The shocking footage led to widespread condemnation across Greece.

Charges were brought against four crew members: the captain, first officer, second officer, and boatswain. Prosecutors argued that the first officer deliberately pushed Kargiotis and that the crew failed to assist him in any way.

Family members of the victim pointed out that, instead of pushing him off, the crew could have detained him and handed him over to authorities. The captain was found guilty of allowing the ferry to leave after the fatal incident and trying to cover up the crime. He was sentenced to seven years and five months in prison.



The first officer was convicted of manslaughter and received 12.5 years. The sentences were reduced due to their previously clean records, but the court refused to suspend them.

The second officer and boatswain were accused of being complicit in the crime. However, the court acquitted them after reviewing video evidence that showed one standing near the entrance of the garage and the other stepping forward during the altercation.

The defense team argued that the first officer did not intend to harm Kargiotis and was only preventing an unauthorised boarding.

They also pointed out lapses in port security and the Coast Guard's role. The court rejected these claims, maintaining that both convicted officers had responsibility for the death.

This incident led to serious political consequences. Greece's shipping minister, Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, resigned following the public outcry. Spyridon Paschalis, the CEO of Attica Group, which operates the Blue Horizon, also stepped down from his position.

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### **Houthis Vow to Resume Attacks on Israeli Ships**

Yemen's Houthis said on Tuesday they would resume attacks on Israeli ships passing through the Red and Arabian seas, the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Gulf of Aden, ending a period of relative calm starting in January with the Gaza ceasefire.

The Houthis had launched more than 100 attacks targeting shipping from November 2023, saying they were in solidarity with Palestinians over Israel's war with Hamas in Gaza.

During that period, the group sank two vessels, seized another and killed at least four seafarers in an offensive that disrupted global shipping, forcing firms to re-route to longer and more expensive journeys around southern Africa.

The leader of Yemen's Houthis had warned on Friday that the group would resume its naval operations against Israel if Israel did not lift a blockage of aid into Gaza within four days.

On March 2, Israel blocked the entry of aid trucks into Gaza as a standoff over the truce escalated, with Hamas calling on Egyptian and Qatari mediators to intervene.

"This ban will remain in effect until the crossings to the Gaza Strip are reopened and humanitarian aid, including food and medical supplies, is allowed to enter," the group said in an emailed statement on Wednesday, adding that the ban would take place with immediate effect.

The U.S. State Department said earlier this month it was implementing the designation of the movement as a "foreign terrorist organization" after President Donald Trump's call for the move.

In January, Trump re-designated the Houthi movement as a foreign terrorist organization, aiming to impose harsher economic penalties in response to its attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea and against U.S. warships defending the critical maritime area.

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## V. CATERING & HOSPITALITY

### **Mental health crisis: Are you missing these anxiety-fighting vegetables?**

Discover how spinach, kale, and beetroots support mental health by reducing anxiety, boosting mood, and enhancing brain function.

As globalization drives technological advancements, human habits and preferences are evolving at an unprecedented pace. Environmental factors increasingly shape lifestyle choices, particularly dietary habits, which play a crucial role in emotional and psychological well-being. While external stressors such as work pressure, excessive social media usage and sedentary lifestyles are widely acknowledged as contributors to mental health issues, the profound impact of diet on mental well-being often remains overlooked.

The Economic Survey 2024-25 has highlighted that overexposure to social media, lack of physical activity, limited time spent with family and excessive working hours (exceeding 55-60 hours per week) have significantly deteriorated the mental well-being of Indians. As one of the youngest populations globally, India's workforce faces mounting pressures and heightened expectations, pushing professionals towards potential burnout if timely interventions are not implemented. The growing discourse among corporate entities highlights the need to adopt a work-life balance to ensure employees can sustain both professional productivity and personal fulfillment.

Despite these discussions, the impact of dietary habits on cognitive function, emotional resilience and overall mental health often goes unnoticed. Research indicates a strong correlation between nutrition and psychological well-being, with certain dietary choices leading to stress, anxiety and depression. The excessive consumption of ultra-processed foods, refined sugars and nutrient-deficient meals has been linked to cognitive decline and emotional instability.

Processed foods, laden with additives and preservatives, can disrupt gut health—now recognized as a key determinant of mental well-being. An imbalance in macronutrient intake, particularly insufficient protein and healthy fat consumption, may contribute to mood fluctuations and heightened stress levels. Additionally, factors such as dehydration, erratic meal patterns and excessive caffeine or alcohol intake can further aggravate mental distress.

The National Library of Medicine has identified a link between dietary habits and the prevalence of depression. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses establish connections between dietary patterns, food quality, macronutrients, micronutrients, and mental health conditions. Studies further suggest that poor dietary habits contribute to the rising incidence of mental health disorders among children and adolescents worldwide.

Hence, a well-balanced and nutrient-rich diet can enhance brain function, stabilize mood and mitigate the risk of mental health disorders. The inclusion of fruits such as berries, bananas and citrus fruits in daily meals is highly beneficial for mental well-being. Similarly, vegetables like spinach, kale and broccoli provide essential nutrients, including folate and magnesium, which play a vital role in reducing anxiety and depression, while beetroots aid in enhancing cerebral blood flow. Hence, healthcare professionals emphasize on the consumption of whole grains, legumes, nuts, seeds and polyunsaturated fats – like those found in olive oil to lower rates of depression and improve cognitive function.

Striking a balance in lifestyle habits is integral to maintaining mental well-being. Reducing screen time, engaging in regular exercise and prioritizing sleep hygiene are fundamental steps towards maintaining emotional equilibrium. Establishing a structured daily routine that incorporates social interactions, hobbies and relaxation techniques can further support mental health.

Moreover, seeking professional guidance through therapy and counseling should not be stigmatized, as these interventions offer effective coping strategies for individuals facing persistent psychological distress. Ultimately, nourishing the mind begins with nourishing the body and a commitment to mindful eating and holistic self-care can serve as a powerful remedy to the escalating mental health challenges of modern life.

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## VI. HEALTH ZONE

### **Bulk Carrier saves 34 Indonesians from burning vessel in Indian ocean**

A Bulgarian bulk carrier, Eleen Armonia, successfully rescued 34 Indonesian fishermen from a burning fishing vessel in the Indian Ocean, about 500 nautical miles southeast of Sri Lanka.

The vessel, operated by Eleen Marine, was sailing from Singapore to the Cape of Good Hope when the crew spotted smoke rising in the distance.

The crew of Eleen Armonia noticed the fire early in the morning and identified the distressed vessel as Hasil Abadi 28, a 224-gross ton fishing boat.

The burning vessel had no AIS (Automatic Identification System) signal and was not visible on radar, making the rescue effort more challenging.

Other passing vessels saw the fire but did not stop to assist.

Despite the risks involved in approaching an unidentified burning ship, the captain of Eleen Armonia, Todor Todorov, decided to divert and carry out a rescue.

A thorough risk assessment was conducted before the crew carefully maneuvered the bulker to get close enough for firefighting and evacuation. As the Eleen Armonia approached, the fishermen were seen huddled at the bow of the vessel, waving for help while flames consumed the stern.

The crew used fire hoses to bring the fire under control, a process that took nearly five hours. Once the flames were subdued, all 34 fishermen were safely transferred onto the bulk carrier.

The fishermen, who had no life jackets, were provided with food, water, and medical aid after boarding Eleen Armonia. Fortunately, none of them suffered serious injuries.

After the rescue, Eleen Marine contacted the owner of Hasil Abadi 28 and learned that three other fishing vessels from the same company were operating nearby.

The rescued crew members were later transferred to one of these sister ships so they could return home to Indonesia.

The rescue took place in one of the busiest maritime routes, where commercial vessels frequently transit between Asia, Africa, and Europe. This region has faced growing threats in recent years, including pirate attacks and disruptions caused by Houthi forces in the Gulf of Aden.

Eleen Marine praised the actions of the ship's international crew from Bulgaria, Indonesia and Ukraine. The company stated, "This incident serves as a powerful reminder of the unbreakable bond among seafarers worldwide, where the duty to assist those in peril transcends national and commercial interests."

The cause of the fire is still unknown. The damage was severe and the vessel is expected to sink. Meanwhile, Eleen Armonia has resumed its journey after successfully carrying out its duty to save lives at sea.

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### **Fire breaks out as Oil Tanker and Cargo Vessel Ship in North Sea**

An oil tanker and a cargo ship collided off the northeastern coast of England on Monday causing a huge fire, with authorities mounting an emergency response involving aircraft and lifeboats.

Shipping industry sources told Reuters the two vessels involved were the chemical tanker Stena Immaculate and container ship Solong.

Television images from the BBC showed at least one vessel ablaze with clouds of black smoke billowing into the air.

The coastguard agency said a helicopter, fixed-wing aircraft, lifeboats and nearby vessels with fire-fighting capability were called to the incident.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), a lifeboat service working on the emergency response, said: "There were reports that a number of people had abandoned the vessels following a collision and there were fires on both ships."

The area where the collision took place is a busy stretch of waterway with traffic running from the ports along Britain's northeast coast to the Netherlands and Germany, shipping industry sources said.

Maritime analytics website Marine Traffic showed a number of vessels including container ships and oil tankers in the area of the North Sea where the collision occurred.

The United Nations shipping agency, the International Maritime Organization, said it was aware of the situation and is checking further.

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## VII. NEW PUBLICATION

### 1. ***'Maritime Security: A Comprehensive Guide for Shipowners, Seafarers and Administrations – Second Edition'***

Maritime Security: A Comprehensive Guide for Shipowners, Seafarers and Administrations, Second Edition tackles evolving threats like political instability, piracy, terrorism and cyber attacks. It provides a detailed overview on complying with SOLAS and International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code requirements, offering guidance on managing and mitigating security threats.

Key features include a model ship security plan, a sample two-year security drill schedule, templates for communication with seafarers' designated contacts and resources for threat and risk assessments. With practical information on operating in high-risk areas, managing cyber risks and handling stowaways, this guide is invaluable for masters, security officers, port personnel and anyone interested in global trade security.

### 2. ***'Guide to Port Entry 2025 – 30th Edition'***

This edition delivers comprehensive data, featuring:

- Details on around 65 new ports, expanding the coverage to encompass emerging maritime destinations
- dedicated Shore Power Provision details covering ports, terminals and berths, empowering customers with crucial information to make sustainable choices and reduce their carbon footprint while docked
- over 1,000 new terminals, providing enhanced insights into the diverse facilities available at various ports.
- information on nearly 6,000 additional berth locations, facilitating precise planning.

### 3. ***'Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse On Board Ship – Guidelines for Owners and Masters on Preparation, Prevention, Protection and Response, 2025–2026 Ed.'***

### 4. ***'COLREGs Macneil's Seamanship Examiner Pocket Book – Third Edition, Volumes I–IV'***

This user-friendly guide contains over 500 questions and answers and is supported with colour images and diagrams, ideal for those currently studying at a nautical college.

These four volumes of Q&As for OOW, Chief Mate and Master levels are suitable for both self-assessment and group study.

### 5. ***'Orals Prep Series 4 – Emergency Preparedness: Life-saving Appliances'***

Proficiency in the safe use of life-saving appliances is essential for deck and technical officers on merchant navy ships and superyachts.

The questions and answers in this book by Gerard Pollock will help you master the requirements for the safe carriage, stowage, deployment and inspection of SOLAS life-saving appliances on international ships.

## VIII. NEW ARRIVAL

SOLAS Consolidated edition 2024 by IMO

### ***QUOTES ....***

There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live.

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No one can ever teach us anything, in school or in life, that we are not ready to learn.

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Any suggestions for improvement in quality of this Bulletin will be highly appreciated.

Editor

Mr. Ram Chandra Pollai, Librarian