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Friday, April 22, 2022 Voyage 11 Wave 30

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PAGE - 3

Vietnam important pillar of India's Act East.....



PAGE - 5

China submits its own shipping GHG.....



PAGE - 9

Major Ports sports **Tournament** begins.....



PAGE - 12

India resumes exports to Russia....



How MASSA Credo "Industry First" & "Seafarer Centricity" underscored performance of MASSA

Maritime Academy, CHENNAL

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wo full Financial the current 21-22, will go down in history as the Covid years - when all around - the performances challenged. Yet, for MASSA Maritime Academy, Chennai (MMA-C) – these two FY performances have been by far the best.

Let us not forget, that MMA-C operates in the very niche area of only competency courses & related simulator courses, that directly and closely affects the supply of competent manpower, and where the balance between resources and returns is very fine.

Black swan events like this also bring in opportunity to reimagine and rewire thought, strategy

action. MMA-C was challenged to take a steep learning curve, and deliver training mandate seamlessly from face-toface to online learning.

And ultimately, what made the difference was - MASSA credo of "Industry First."

Seafarer centricity – with a superordinate national purpose - remained the guiding principles.

Foremost, the attention went to the students who were already enrolled in class - they could not be left in a lurch, and it was important that we remain connected with them.So whatever platforms were freely available then, we kept them engaged. This also kept the Faculty busyand not think too much about the uncertainties.

We embarked on a steep learning curve, and improvised and continued our classes - so-muchsothat when in end May 2020 DG opened online classes, we were the first to submit all proper records of last 2 months online classes - and assessments - and ask for post-facto approval.



Faculty Mr T Mohan being recognized for successfully delivering ME Engines Course with access to Simulators from Cloud.

We saw another big advantage - we could source very good faculty from anywhere - we were suddenly not limited to Chennai. We got experts from Singapore, Pune, Mumbai and other places, and that was extremely value-adding. The good word went around - and our classes were full up to capacity quickly.

Look at the very common feature "Breakout rooms" - what a powerful method of learning – we can create heterogeneous groups – the

groups work on case studies – learning from each others experiences. Where do we have such facility in brick and mortar classrooms?

Notwithstanding, - We had to improvise a digital recovery and with safe, contact-less engagement, striking an emotional connect - with our own teams - and the seafaring student community - on an ongoing basis. This we realise - actually built a social capital - goodwill - and balanced it with a culture of excellence.

Simulator Courses

Furthermore, looking at Simulator Courses- It was sometime in late November 2020 that Simulator courses were allowed in physical mode with 1/3rd capacity.

We strategized that we already had online faculty from outside of Chennai for Competency courses - and the local Chennai based faculty was then free to take these Simulator courses - double shifts - and on holidays - to cope with the demand and backlog that that was created.

Turn to page -2 >>

2 Sagar Sandesh Friday , April 22, 2022

How MASSA Credo "Industry First".... FROM PAGE: 1

Here again, because of 1/3rd capacity – many other institutes either refused to run because of low margins – while some skyrocketed the fees. We however, took a very compassionate position – all what we could do - for the seafarers—as the whole country was responding to his needs – making things simpler for him – he was after-all a declared key-worker.

Value-added Courses

Another area – we actually saw a great opportunity was - of no limitations of brick and mortar classrooms – we could have as manyclassrooms on-line as we wanted, if we had the faculty and the students.

So, we simultaneously, focused on <u>Value-added</u> <u>courses</u> – beyond the DG approved limited courses.

As an example, ARI helped us develop the online ME Engines Course making the ME Engines simulator available from Cloud. We ran it past some C/E and Superintendents – and the result was commendable. We have not looked back since. Ouite suddenly the requirement to travel, hotel stay, - all vanished. From the comfort of home – anywhere in the world – participants could log in and take the course – at Indian fees. It continues to be a huge success.

We expanded our portfolio of Value-added courses – matter of fact – very recently - we have delivered a course on-line for the top management of a European based Tanker company –on Human Factors integration into Management Systems- the focus coming in from SIRE

2.0 and TMSA - and it has been a greatly appreciated.

So the reach was now global.

MMA Chennai carries out DNV Certificated Courses of Internal Auditor of Management Systems, DPA, CSO, Incident Investigation, Risk Assessment, etc which also found resurgence with the global reach and kept us very busy.

Listening and responding to needs led to creativity and innovation with Courses like General Data Protection Regulation, Discipline, Grievance and Employee Counselling, ISO 51000, Soft Skills for induction into Merchant Marine being delivered.

And all of it – translated to revenues. MASSA actually gave Performance bonus – while there were terrible stories of non-payment from many academies.

Branding and Channel Positioning

Thus navigating through volatility and uncertainty of the times we realized that centrality and distinctiveness in branding need not be contradictory goals; we chose to pursue both—and benefited substantially.

As an example, MASSA recognised the predicament of Pre-Sea Covid batches capability for induction into the profession was severely affected - caused by transformation from regimented on-campus training to behind computer screens in comfort of home. MMA-Chennai was tasked with - offering gratis - to 150 IMU students- a 2 days 'Soft Skills' program to enable smooth induction the demanding seafaring career.

Furthermore, we co- sustained branded with Institute of country.

Marine Engineers and brought the ME Engines Familiarization Course for Junior Engineers at a very affordable cost.

Community oriented approach with ever-readiness to contribute to institutions like Indian Maritime University, MMD & DGS, industry associations and industry led webinars, all go to enhance superior brand imaging.

IN SUMMATION

the In summary Academy's agility, MASSA's compassionate action and adaptive capabilities during these backed trying times, by a sympathetic - and understanding - and an encouraging **MASSA** Board, demonstrated its enduring strength - towards a larger promise to create sustained value for the



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