

Guiding Spirit to Shipping Industry

# Sagar Sandesh

Maritime Tabloid English Bi - Weekly E - Paper

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PAGE - 6

Shipping Minister claims no job loss in.....

PAGE - 9

Kamarajar Port enlisted as a designated port for import of....

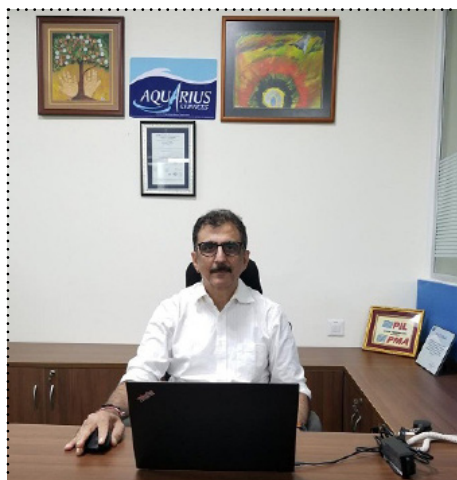
PAGE - 12

Indian navy mobilises rescue effort for Maharashtra,.....

PAGE - 15

IMO welcomes WHO vaccine roadmap....

## Interview With Capt. Sanjiv Sehgal



Capt. Sanjiv Sehgal

**I**n a career spanning 40 years, Capt. Sanjiv Sehgal has spent 27 years in assisting the maritime industry prepare and manage three major changes, namely ISM Code, ISPS Code and MLC 2006.

He is an International Labour Organization Certified Train the Trainer on Maritime Labour Convention 2006, a Lead Auditor on Quality Management Systems and a Train the Trainer for ISPS Code.

As a person who has donned various hats, that of a HSEQ Manager / DPA / CSO, HSEQ consultant, trainer and auditor, Flag State Inspector and Maritime Labour Convention Train the Trainer, Capt. Sehgal has seen all aspects of the maritime industry. He uses his experience and vast knowledge to aid the industry address regulatory compliance matters.

**He is an advisor to some of the largest shipping companies**, who regularly call upon him for guidance to manage complex situations on board ships and to train their shore and shipboard staff.

### Q1. Tell us something about your life and career?

I joined The Great Eastern Shipping Company Ltd (GESCO) in 1981 as a direct entry cadet, after graduating in Bachelor of Science from Madras University. GESCO was a fantastic employer and I remained with them for 13 years, getting my command in the process. Despite the hardships onboard, each ship proved to be a great learning experience. By the time I

became a Chief Officer, it was clear to me that my goal was not to remain a Master for rest of my life. I wanted to step ashore and work with the industry to make life at sea, a better and safer place for the seafarers. So, after I got my command in 1991, I started sending feelers to GESCO to consider me for a suitable shore based position. Since GESCO did not have any vacancies coming up in near future, I applied for and got the job at Essar-Sisco in October 1993.

Essar-Sisco was set up as a company to compete in global marketplace with large ship-managers. The release of ISM Code by IMO in Nov 1993 gave us an opportunity to make our mark in the shipping industry. I was included in the team of 4 persons that was set up to develop and implement a safety and quality management system that would comply with ISM Code and ISO 9002 standard. **That marked the beginning of my journey with ISM Code and HSEQ management system, which continues till today.**

As 1st July 1998, the date of mandatory implementation of ISM Code on bulk carriers and tankers, came closer, I was being contacted by other Indian companies seeking guidance on development of safety management system. A lot of work done by us was being used at all levels of the shipping industry to benchmark the requirements of safety management system. By then it was evident that if I wanted to fulfill my goal to improve the life and safety of seafarers, I would have to work with the shipping industry at all levels to drive future changes.

In 2001, I decided to move out of ship management and become a consultant to the shipping industry. In the past 20 years, I have had the opportunity to work with industry at all levels in implementation of ISPS Code and Maritime Labour Convention 2006. It has been a fantastic journey.

### Q2. Do you have any memorable experiences that you would like to share with the readers?

There are numerous experiences that I would like to share. Some of these I have done through my book published on

Amazon Kindle last year, titled “Surviving the Elements – a simplified approach to safety management”. However, at this time, I would like to share with you an episode that changed my life.

In 2005, during a Leadership training program in Denmark, we were given 45 minutes to create our vision, using paints on canvas, in form of a painting and then explain it to the class. Painting has been one of my hobbies from childhood and I would like to show you the painting that I made in that session.

When asked to relate the painting to my vision in life, I said, **“Just as a diamond is found deep inside the earth covered with various layers of rocks, sand and mud and it requires someone to help it shine to the world, every person has the potential to excel in life. My vision is to**

**be that person who helps others realize their potential, remove the barriers that hide it and thereby enable them shine in their life.”**

At the end of the training, the faculty, which was a set of highly accomplished Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), called me aside and asked me to describe my current work profile. They recommended that I should consider becoming a trainer and mentor, since from my vision and interaction they had with me during the training course, it was clear to them that this was a field where I would be truly happy and successful.

Turn to page -2 >>



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## Interview With Capt. Sanjiv Sehgal.... From Page : 1

This was a huge turning point in my life. I started to work on my training skills from thereon. The participants come from all levels of the industry, and I am welcomed in numerous organizations, as if I am part of their team. **Many of the people who have attended trainings conducted by me, often tell me how it changed their outlook and helped them succeed. Their appreciation of my work is the greatest reward.** I truly feel that I have achieved my goal in life. The painting hangs in my office even today and continues to inspire me.

### Q3. What are your views on maritime education and training?

The maritime industry has changed tremendously in past 2 decades and continues to evolve with each passing year. While maritime education and training is trying to keep pace with the developments, the gap seems to be growing each year. STCW alone is not able to create the competence required, so each segment within the industry has developed its own training requirements.

The 2020 Training Practices Report issued by World Maritime University indicates that training budgets of the Companies have increased, and the trend is likely to continue in future, which is a good sign. However, the issue is not so much to do

with the money spent by the industry. It is to do with the value created by such expenses. The report also shows that 78% of seafarers are employed in an organization that does not assess the impact of training on their work performance. A key reason for this is to treat the participation in training as one more paper required to either gain employment on a ship type or to meet a client's requirement, rather than to acquire a new skill that can be applied.

In my opinion, the biggest challenge is to address the way industry conducts training and assessment of seafarers. It needs a radical change in the approach itself. Training is an investment that takes time to bear fruit and any initiative taken today, would show results only 8-10 years from now. We need greater commitment at all levels, more so at the seafarer levels. They must use every training opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills. The industry should place greater value on role of trainers so that more and more seafarers can choose training role as a first option rather than the last option, when deciding to shift to a career ashore.

### Q4. How has the COVID19 pandemic affected the training of seafarers?

The pandemic has shifted a lot of training online and the trend is likely to continue. This

has created fresh challenges for both the trainers and trainees, as I have learnt in the past 15 months.

We have had to rework existing training programs so that they can effectively engage participants online and ensure that learning objectives can be achieved. This is no small task, since it involves major revision to the training material and the way it is used. **Online training also requires good internet connectivity, a reliable course delivery platform and proficiency in utilizing the application.**

As I mentioned earlier, the seafarers need to show greater commitment towards acquisition of knowledge and skills. Seafarers need to invest in better internet connectivity, ensure that they are attentive during the training and participate in discussions and exercises to extract maximum benefit. This is essential since the online environment has its limitations on the monitoring of seafarers by the trainer. While online class size can be reduced to improve the ability of trainer to monitor and involve participants, it means that we must do more training sessions to cover the same number of participants in a year.

### Q5. It is almost 8 years since MLC 2006 came into force. What in your opinion, the benefits received by the seafarers from this convention?

Let us not forget that ILO has been trying since 1920 to make the life of a seafarer better.

MLC 2006 is just a compilation 45 conventions and 23 maritime labour instruments adopted by ILO since 1920, updated to make them applicable in current times. As an industry we are slow to adopt change, something that I have experienced during the implementation of ISM Code, ISPS Code and MLC 2006. Hence, to measure any change in the industry, it is better to examine the conditions 20-30 years apart.

If I compare the conditions on ship in present times to when I was sailing in 1980's, there is tremendous improvement. The seafarers today have much better living environment onboard. However, those that have joined the industry in past 10-15, cannot make out these improvements. People find it hard to believe that I slept on one side of a table tennis table as a cadet for almost 50% of the 15 months that I spent on a ship, had water rationing and no sanitary water on most ships. Did I enjoy doing that? No. It was just that crew accommodation, food and catering were not a priority for the shore management. If the air-conditioning stopped working or the freshwater generator broke down, it was considered a minor problem that the crew onboard should be able to handle. Spares or shore assistance for repairs would be provided only if budgets permitted. That is not the case today. Courtesy MLC 2006, these are defects that can make Port State Control detain a ship.

I often say that seafarers are a hidden workforce and not many people are aware of what seafarers do to ensure countries have access to their daily necessities. As an industry too, stakeholders

are too busy managing their own affairs on a day to day basis to have cohesive approach towards ensuring that issues affecting seafarers are addressed promptly. MLC 2006 has given seafarers a certain rights, protection and visibility. It has aligned the international community towards implementation of these measures and if seafarers exercise their rights, things can only get better from hereon.

### Q6. What is your advice to seafarers?

The shipping industry has come a long way in the past 40 years and will continue to change with times. There are several practices in the industry that have outlived their utility. It is said that people who do the work are the ones that know the problems and the likely solutions. The seafarers need to identify these practices and drive the change to make the industry a better place to live and work in.

Seafarers should also use every opportunity to develop their own personal and professional skills, as well as that of their colleagues onboard ship. As an industry we rely heavily on shipboard training to develop the competence of the seafarers. Most of this is "on-the-job" training and easily achieved with the right attitude. Being a coach and mentor is far more effective than being the boss.

I can be reached through my "LinkedIn" account (Sanjiv Sehgal - President, Aquarius Services). I keep posting my experiences and thoughts on LinkedIn, in the hope that these can inspire others to achieve success in their own life.



**Mumbai Office**  
217, Secands Road, Unique Industrial Estate, off Veer Savarkar Marg,  
Bombay Dyeing Compound, Prabhadevi, Mumbai - 400025  
Ph: 022 - 24211583 / 24210193. Fax: 022 - 2421 2149

**Chennai Office**  
No.6, Nungambakkam First Lane (Opp. Regional Office, Indian Oil  
Corporation), Nungambakkam High Road, Chennai - 600 034  
Ph: 044-42664408

**Admin. Office**  
21 "LAKSHMI", Sathya Sai Nagar, Madurai-625 003. Ph : 0452 437 8300 / +91 72000 84864

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## JMB with extended helping hands: Oxygen Cylinders

The profuse shortage of oxygen across the country due to the pandemic has created gaps in the country's health infrastructure. With the increased number of cases the requirement of oxygen is on rise and the vacuum of its availability is high. The second wave has furthermore increased the vacuum of oxygen availability at the hospitals despite various attempts been made for its access.

The exponential surge of coronavirus infection over the past few weeks has swamped the health care system that witnessed patients facing many challenges in getting oxygen at the right

time thus resulting in lots of deaths at various situations. The dire shortage has turned out to be a major challenge faced by hospitals in many states across the country. Several healthcare centres in Indian cities and towns have run short of the gas leaving the people helpless.

Recently JM Baxi Group supplied Oxygen Cylinders to the states of Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. At the time of extreme crises faced again across the country JM Baxi has once again extended its hands to help the needy in the imports of oxygen cylinders through Visakha container Terminal.

The imports were done through

a) WAN HAI lines that brought 14x20' of oxygen laden cylinders & 25x20' of empty cylinders

b) ONE line that brought 7x20' of oxygen laden cylinders

from Qingdao on the MDM service "m.v. TRF Kaya" and both of the shipments arrived Visakhapatnam Port on 09 th July.

Turn to page -3 >>