

# WORLD MARITIME DAY 2001

IMO: GLOBALIZATION AND THE ROLE OF THE SEAFARER

MINISTRY  
OF  
SHIPPING



DEPARTMENT  
OF  
SHIPPING

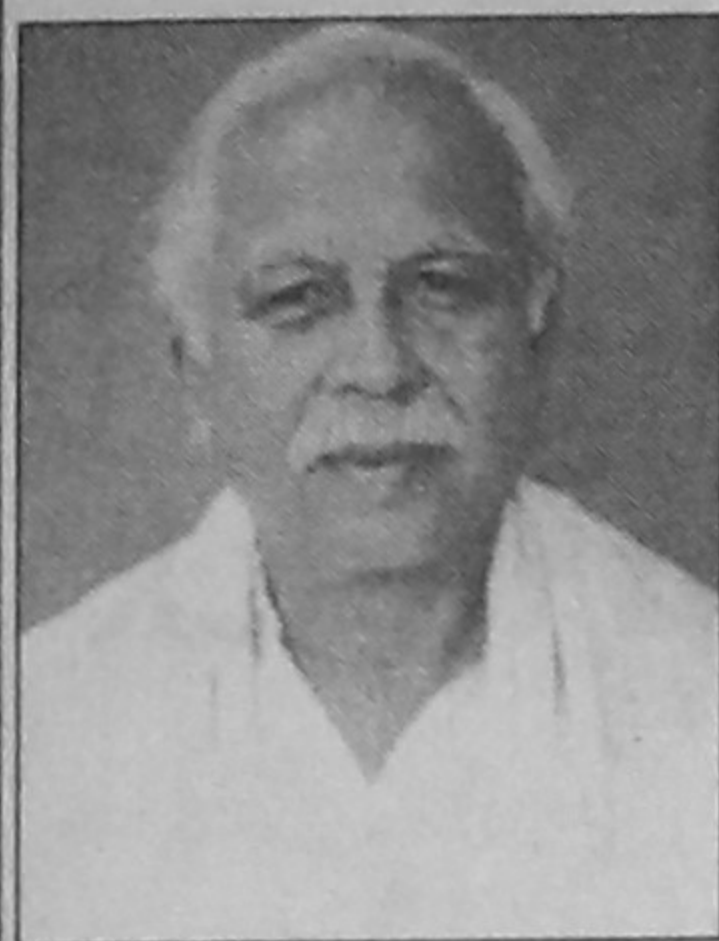


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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

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## MESSAGE



On the occasion of the World Maritime Day 2001, I would like to congratulate all the seafarer of the world and the International Maritime

Organization for their significant role in the progress of international shipping and the changing socio-economic scenario prevailing around the globe to day.

Seafarers are like the major building blocks for the globalisation process currently sweeping the globe. I feel proud of our seafarers who are part of the world seafaring community and being involved in international shipping.

In this new era of

globalisation the seafarers' role will be more significant than before. I hope our seafarers like in the past will continue to serve and further enhance their role in the international shipping both to serve the international community and the nation, to fulfill our peoples aspiration.

Our seafarer should take a leading role to face the new challenges of globalisation on our ensuing voyage towards prosperity.

On the occasion of this important day I would like to express our solidarity with other maritime nations of the world and the International Maritime Organization to achieve the challenging objectives of safer shipping and cleaner oceans. I wish the day every success.

**Col (Retd.) M. Akbar Hossain**  
Minister for Shipping  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

## MESSAGE



Once again, on the occasion of the World Maritime Day 2001, I would like to renew our assurance of highest cooperation with the International Mari-

time Organization in persuasion of its objective- the safer shipping and cleaner oceans.

The government of Bangladesh is committed to take this maritime nation towards a brighter future. Shipping Administration will do everything necessary to materialise the commitments of the government. Our seafarers have already achieved the international recognition of their quality and skill which is a giant leap for

our shipping sector.

It is now the time that we should utilize effectively this feat to go along with the pace of globalisation changing the face of the globe. How prudently we face the challenges of globalisation and how gainfully we harness the opportunities arising out of it shall be the determinants of our future success.

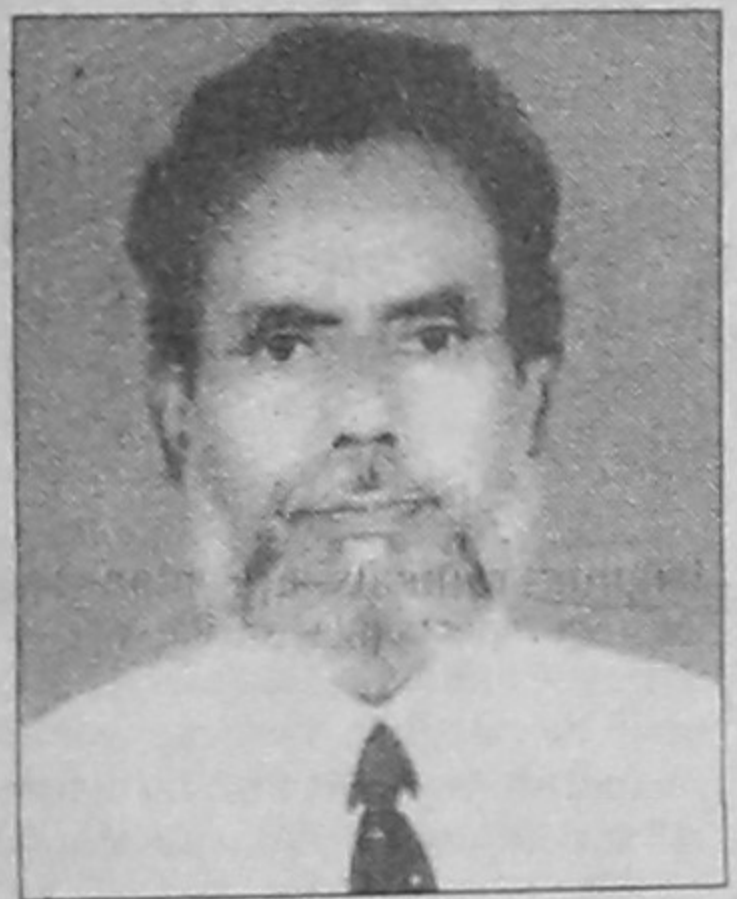
On this special day I would like to convey a message, to each and every seafarer of this land that

without prosperity and development of our maritime sector we can not expect any significant improvement in the quality of our life. Let us commit ourselves to the accomplishment of the great tasks ahead of us.

I wish the day every success.

**Faisal Ahmed Choudhury**  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Shipping  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

## The key role of seafarers in globalisation process



**Abdul Malek**  
Director General  
Department of Shipping

TRANSPORTATION of merchandise and travel of passengers by watercrafts is as old as the history of human transportation by itself. In fact, waterborne crafts had developed earlier and more rapidly than the land vehicles as a cheap and easy means of transportation. In spite of remarkable development of road, rail and civil aviation system in the recent decades carriage of commodities by waterborne crafts is still the cheapest. In the international

arena transportation of merchandise by ships through high seas and the oceans remains dominant. More than 95% of the global export and import goods are transported by sea-going ships.

The men behind sailing of ships on the high seas and taking them from port to port primarily play three-dimensional role in the international transportation systems in our times. Their work helps move the raw materials for industrialised countries and finished goods to consumers in a cost effective way. While moving these goods the seafarers have to ensure safety of life & property on board and that the marine environment is not harmed by shipping activities.

Following the Industrial Revolution there have been noticeable changes in the process of international trade and commercial relationship. World nations started becoming more and

more interdependent. Flow of resources from the countries of higher growth to those of lower growth have become more important than ever before. The rapid growth of population without corresponding increase or flow of resources created disparity and thus divided the globe into two distinct camps namely the developed and the least developed countries. Recent World Bank report has revealed that 83% of the global income goes to the top 20% fortunate class, leaving 17% for the rest of the humanity. This state of global wealth distribution has resulted in a severe gap between the rich and the poor nations. In order to minimise this gap there have been several concepts of which the widely discussed one of today is the "globalisation process" step by step.

Globalisation in a broader sense refers to social, cultural, political and economic issues. It implies linking the

institutions concerning the respective issues in order to dispel the inequalities and bring about homogeneity and harmony that enable the whole mankind, irrespective of nationality, to live in peace and prosperity. Of all these issues the economic factor is widely recognised to play the pivotal role. In fact, the term globalisation presently refers to this issue to which the attention of all concerned is focussed.

In order to make the concept of globalisation a reality there must be certain effective mechanisms. One of these is the people to people contact and efforts of the working class. A seafaring person going from port to port and country to country comes across people of various culture & social habits and countries of various economic levels. Since the dawn of civilization and culture courageous efforts of the seafarers had helped discover islands in the remote areas of oceans and

brought distant lands closer to share each other resources. In the present times the seafarer may contribute to global cultural and social homogeneity. As regards his contribution for dispelling the present economic inequality, he can run his ship in a most economic way and transport the merchandise efficiently to its destination in the world of our times.

Although apparently globalisation has its good merits, unfortunately it has become a debatable issue. The proponents of it advocate that globalisation by its free market mechanism will allow unrestricted flow of capital and consumer goods across national boundaries. This will be an opportunity for the poor countries to build industries in their own areas and secure employment for the labour force. Goods produced in these countries will have free access to the markets of developed countries result-

ing in the improvement of the balance of payment. Increased employment of working force and trade will help poverty alleviation of the least developed countries.

The opponents of globalisation argue that the process will increase dependence of poor nations on the technologically advanced and industrialised countries causing further widening of the existing gap between the rich and the poor. A cross-section of the people of the proponent countries also maintain different views about the concept of globalisation. This has been manifested by a series of their strong agitations during international conferences of the pro-globalisation economic forums starting from the summit of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) held in Seattle, USA in 1999.

Arguments of the opponents and events protesting efforts of the proponents

clearly indicate that the success of the economic globalisation is still uncertain. This uncertainty, however, must not desist the seafarers from the endeavours they have been pursuing since the inception of International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to achieve the noble objective of "Safer Shipping and Cleaner Oceans." In order to materialise this objective in the field of global shipping IMO has up-till now adopted 50 conventions and protocols.

The men who are responsible for sailing ships across the seas and the oceans safely and efficiently have to possess appropriate knowledge and competence of high level. The convention that provides regulations for this purpose is Standard of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for the Seafarers. This convention was adopted by IMO in 1978. Its subsequent amendment in 1995 embodies provisions

enabling IMO to evaluate the capability and standard of training & examination system of the member countries. It is heartening to mention that the standard maintained by Bangladesh has been adjudged to be of the international level. Bangladesh is proud to be included in the list termed IMO White List. This recognition leaves no doubts about the competence of Bangladeshi seafarers to sail ships across oceans and call foreign ports without any problem.

Whatever may be the end result of the current debate on economic globalisation, it is the prime duty of every seafarer, irrespective of his nationality, to sail and manage his ship efficiently which shall serve the economic objective of his country and at the same time help globalising IMO objectives of "Safer Shipping and Cleaner Oceans" for the benefit of mankind.

## Linkage between seafarers and globalisation



**Capt. A.K.M. Ahsanul Azim**  
Chief Nautical Surveyor  
Department of Shipping

**Introduction :** World Maritime day is observed every year throughout the maritime world in order to re-capitulate and analyse the past activities concerning maritime trade, safety of life

and property at sea as well as protection of the marine environment. This offers an excellent opportunity to avert mistakes and find out ways & means to improve efficiency. Also we can compare ourselves with the remaining maritime world and chalk out elaborate programmes to keep step with advent of latest technology. The theme of the day this year is 'IMO Globalization and the Role of the Seafarer'.

**Globalisation and the Seafarers :** As a consequence of phenomenal advances in science and technology, we appear to live in a borderless digital world. The nature and scope of trade, business and commerce have undergone fundamental changes. The World actually seems to be

getting smaller. Innovation in information technology is so sweeping that no nations can live in isolation. Internet, E-mail, E-commerce etc. have brought the world to our doorsteps.

The seafarers have been engaged in international trade since time immemorial. People as well as goods travelled from one place to another across the oceans and accelerated the process of globalisation. Central to this phase of globalisation has been the information and communication technology to which the seafarers played one of the most remarkable roles.

**Immense opportunities offered by globalisation :** The information and communication technology

boom now enable us to do what was only dreamt of earlier. Mankind now has the opportunity to change the face of the planet at a remarkable rate. The past eras of globalisation were important but limited to scope and time. Today we have new enthusiasm among our entrepreneurs and private sector representatives. We clearly have means and the ability to make difference on this globe.

**What Bangladesh can reap out of globalisation :** What are countries like Bangladesh looking for in the process of globalisation? The fundamental issue for us is to eliminate poverty. The main aims and objectives of our struggles for freedom and

independence were to create exploitation-free societies and to achieve economic emancipation of the common mass. Though the war has ended in many parts of the world, the fight against poverty, hunger, deprivation, malnutrition, disease and squalor still continues. In some countries, this struggle has only become more acute, as the gap between the haves and have-nots have only increased. In some cases, we now face new challenges, such as with HIV or AIDS, that were unknown till recently. In this era of globalisation the plight and sufferings of developing countries are increasing as they face increasing marginalisation in the world economy.

**Trade and globalisation :** Are we entering an age of globalisation where economics may no longer reign supreme? The answer to this question will gradually unravel before our eyes. Yet, there are clear signs that we must not ignore. Trade is generally considered an essential building block of globalisation. Protesters at Seattle were able to halt this very important aspect of globalisation. Now, many questions whether there is political will in the developed, industrialised world to make the significant concessions that can move this process forward. In the field of international financial flows, governments have belatedly realised that they

still have considerable powers. The manner in which Malaysia was able to recover from the East Asian financial crisis has a great deal to do with the policies they adopted, in defiance of the prevalent prescriptions. In some parts of the world, advocacy of free market principles do not include a surrender of some basic concepts of a "welfare state". In international negotiations, whether in the field of environment, genetically modified foods or in cultural affairs, science and economics now take a back seat to politics.

**Conclusion :** Bangladeshi seafarers have a long heritage of providing one of the best standard of services to

global trade from time immemorial. With the implementation of IMO convention STCW 95 this role has become even more vital. Since younger people of the developed world are finding the seafaring profession less and less lucrative in comparison to other trade, it has provided excellent opportunities for Bangladeshi seafarers to prove their worth. With concerted effort we have to take full advantage of the situation, remove all types of bottlenecks and strive hard to make wider employment opportunities for our seafaring community on Bangladeshi as well as foreign flag ships. Time is running out fast.