

Minutes of the 21st Hybrid meeting of National Shipping Board held on 2nd December 2021 at 1430 hrs at Indian Maritime University, Chennai.

The 21st Hybrid Meeting of the National Shipping Board (NSB) was held under Dr. Malini Shankar, Chairperson, National Shipping Board on 2nd December, 2021 at 1430 hours. The list of participants/attendees is as follows:-

Attendees:

1. Dr. Malini Shankar, Chairperson NSB
2. Dr. Ajay Sahai - FIEO
3. Shri Abdulgani Serang – NUSI
4. Shri Amar Singh Thakur – MUI
5. Shri Shantanu Bhadkamkar
6. Shri Ishwar Achanta
7. Shri Rahul B. Modi – CCTA
8. Shri Aditya Suklikar – ICCSA
9. Shri A. Balasubramanian
10. Shri P. Rajesh, DIG, Coast Guard
11. Capt. Piyush Sinha
12. Capt. Sarvpreet Singh, Director Naval Operations, Indian Navy
13. Capt. Sanjay Prashar, IMF
14. Capt. Sankar Kr. Das, Secretary – NSB

1.1 Granting leave of absence: -

The following members were granted leave of absence.

- 1) Shri K. S. Bariar, Addl. DG Shipping
- 2) Shri Anil Devli – INSA

At the outset the Chairperson welcomed all the members to the 21st meeting of NSB and thereafter instructed the Secretary to continue with the listed Agenda.

2.0 Following agenda points were discussed at the meeting:-

Sr.No.	Agenda item	Suggested by
1.	Confirmation of previous meeting (20 th) Minutes.	Chairperson
2.	Stateless & Abandoned ships	Mr. Ishwar Achanta
3.	Wreck removal	Mr. Ishwar Achanta
4.	Establishing a Cadet Training Ship in India	Chairperson
5.	Set up a centre of Excellence focused on Mental Health.	Chairperson
6.	Climate Change – Issues and Challenges for the Indian Shipping sector	NUSI
7.	Logistics Bill	AMECIE.
8.	Any other points with the permission of the Chair	

2.1 Confirmation of previous NSB meeting (20th) held on 12th October, 2021

The minutes of the 20th NSB meeting held on **12th October, 2021** was circulated to all members. There being no comments from the members, the Chairperson-NSB, with the concurrence of members, confirmed that the minutes were approved.

2.2 Stateless & Abandoned ships

Stating that India is a signatory to UNCLOS 1982, Mr. Achanta mentioned that the rules dealing with stateless ships are not very well formulated by the Maritime Administration. This also gets compounded when the stateless ship becomes derelict. India has agreed to honor these legislations, predominantly, when a vessel flies without nationality or under two or more flags or not granted the right to fly.

Further Mr. Achanta cited that in the early 2020, Vessel Stella Abgaana, a large ore carrier (VLOC) ran aground off the coast of Brazil and also became stateless. The Brazilian authority took her out in deep waters and scuttled her. Likewise, in India when such vessel has no place to berth or cannot be put safely anywhere, it becomes an issue of maritime security. Hence similar laws should be established in India. He also explained that abandoned ships are those ships that become unseaworthy or abandoned by seafarers/crew due to nonpayment of outstanding remuneration or due to engine failure or vessels involved in narcotic trafficking.

Capt. Piyush Sinha shared his experience. He mentioned that if a vessel fails to coordinate with the Indian Coast Guard in time, then the vessel is viewed suspiciously. As this becomes a maritime security issue, the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard are alert at all times. Hence suggested that the laws have to be tightened so that in future any movement of any craft whether it is state, stateless or declaring stateless or is genuinely stateless needs to be chastised according to the laws.

Capt. Sanjay Parshar pointed out that in the past 6 years, there were 5 stateless ships, 2 of which were grounded in Mumbai coast (Juhu) and finally pulled out by DG Shipping. If the reports of these vessels are available then there must be some corrective measures mentioned therein, which can assist the authorities to move ahead to the next level while taking future actions on any stateless vessels. He further brought to the notice that in Mangalore & Gujarat Ports, Mercator ships were abandoned and action had been taken by the Port Authorities. Hence it is assumed that the Indian Ports Act may have some powers (probably Section 10 of the IPA - Removal of obstructions within limits of port) which are used seldom by the Port Chairman. There are some powers also within the ambit of DGS. He also mentioned that the Indian Navy, Gujarat Maritime Board and DG Shipping got involved with the abandoned Mercator ships in Gujarat port with the exception of the owners. Further, he added that there are three types of abandoned ships - 1) Ships abandoned by Indian flags; 2) Foreign Flag Stateless ships with crew beyond 25 nautical miles which are not allowed to enter. These ships are there in every country maximum in UAE. At present there are no such ships in that zone, probably Dubai has enacted a new law or regulation; 3) Stateless and Abandoned ships with Flag State. [A flag state refuses to assist these vessels after the P&I club insurance stands lapse]