

THE VOYAGE



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MARITIME

MAINTAINING THE VITAL FLOW DURING COVID-19



INDUSTRY MAGAZINE
OF THE YEAR 2019
BY NIPR



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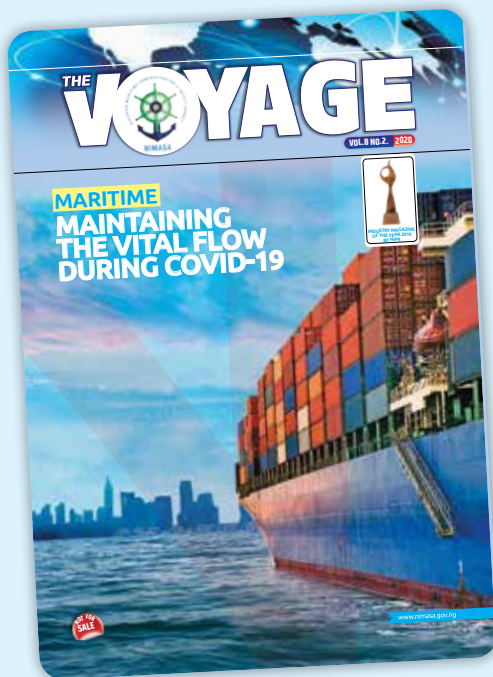
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Dr. Bashir Jamoh,
DG/CEO NIMASA

Above The Storm

A

foremost regulatory maritime organ, like the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), is not expected to go under in crisis times and stormy moments, such as the COVID-19 pandemic is posing worldwide.

Like Caesar's wife, we must be above board, above the tempest, as it were. Being on top of the waves enables us to lead seafarers away from the fury of the waters into a safe harbour. So, even if COVID-19 has caused some trauma on land, sea and air, NIMASA has succeeded in rolling out guidelines that have ensured that there is no lockdown of the seaways, especially at a period when we are selling the Blue Economy idea as the strategic alternative to

our oil-driven economy.

Thus, while government shut down several sectors of formal and informal businesses in order to contain the spread of the deadly virus, we at NIMASA took a cue from President Muhammadu Buhari's position that "no economy can survive total lockdown". We promptly designated seafarers and dockworkers as essential workers who should be exempted from the travel restrictions necessitated by the pandemic.

But as we issued these guidelines, NIMASA has ensured complete compliance with the protocols of local and international agencies, such as our own Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), World Health Organisation (WHO), and International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Through these moves, NIMASA has supported the Nigerian economy by ensuring that COVID-19 does not lead to a shutdown and further dwindling of national income and resources. Our stand has effectively placed us in the forefront of the war against coronavirus.

All hands must be on deck to subdue the scourge, seen by observers as the biggest battle humanity has faced since the end of the Second World War.

If we can't afford to close the economy, as Mr. President rightly said, we must devise creative measures to stay afloat while holding COVID-19 at bay. It's what we are doing at NIMASA: getting the oceans to continue to release their wealth for the use of the nation and her people while disallowing COVID-19 from blocking the seaways.

Truly, we are sailing above the storms!

Bashir Jamoh

WORDS ON MARBLE

We cannot afford to break the maritime chain, especially, during this pandemic, for it is the most effective way of getting essential supplies to a world in dire need of succour and sustenance.

– DR. BASHIR JAMOH



Philip Kyanet

Moving With The Tide

I

t is common sense in marine travel that you don't go against the tide when the sea is angry. As Brutus puts it in William Shakespeare's historical tragedy, Julius Caesar, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at

the flood, leads on to fortune; omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat; and we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures."

Nigeria has also been brought to "such a full sea" as a result of the challenges a ravaging virus has unleashed on mankind and its economies.

In the current edition of **THE VOYAGE**, we offer you a special package of what NIMASA has done so far to keep the ocean economy going, despite the rage of COVID-19. When others went into "quarantine" in the face of the billows thrown up by the disease, NIMASA has been at work sailing with the tide to ensure the economy does not suffer.

Just turn over the pages and delight yourself with how we initiated regulations to ensure the movement of vital supplies, despite the confinement caused by COVID-19. Our policies minimised the damage to

the shipping industry. In other words, the maritime industry has been running, the storm of the virus notwithstanding.

The edition that has come your way also features news on a meeting between NIMASA Director-General, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, and members of the media, including President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, Mr. Mustapha Isa. It is a compelling read that tells us how the Agency values issues of maritime security. It also reveals the ties between NIMASA and the Fourth Estate of the Realm.

Readers will not miss the report on the first prosecution of suspects under the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences Act, West and Central Africa's first standalone antipiracy law. And the news that speaks of NIMASA directing all duly registered stevedoring companies to commence operations, so they can contribute their quota to the economy of Nigeria.

In addition, for your pleasure, we have our regulars: personality interviews, health tips, social takes, and photo gallery among other delights.

Enjoy the Voyage!

Kyanet PC

OUR VISION

To be the leading maritime administration in Africa, advancing Nigeria's global maritime goals.

OUR MISSION

To achieve and sustain safe, secure, shipping, cleaner ocean and enhance maritime capacity in line with global best practices towards Nigeria's economic development.

MARITIME

MAINTAINING THE VITAL FLOW DURING COVID-19

Despite being seriously hit by the coronavirus pandemic, the maritime sector has been a great support to the economy. **Daniel Kajo** writes

S

ince the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in December last year, the world has not been the same. The virus, which has killed hundreds of thousands of people worldwide, has had a grievous effect on economies, lives, and livelihoods. What with the global lockdowns, the economic toll on humanity is alarming.

Shipping, the major wheel that turns the

global economy, has taken some of the biggest hits from the pandemic. Shipping connects raw materials with processing factories and producers with consumers in a cost efficient manner. While other sectors were on lockdown, the maritime sector remained open to give lifeblood to the economy. Seaports remained



open and the ships kept sailing to allow movement of essential supplies, especially food, medicines, and medical equipment.

Before COVID-19, the major challenge faced by the regulators and operators of the shipping industry, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Review of Maritime Activities 2019, was “intensified trade tensions combined with the challenges and additional costs of complying with the new 2020 regulation of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) on sulphur fuel limits,” which were projected to impact market fundamentals in the following years. But COVID-19 provided regulators and operators much more to worry about in 2020.

The pandemic has thrown up issues of availability and infection status of crew members, availability

of cargo, given the near nil production rate in many factories, and even political considerations with respect to welcoming vessels considered to have originated from countries with high prevalence of the disease. In spite of these, regulators could not stop vessels from taking to the waters, even when airplanes had long been grounded in a bid to curtail the spread of the virus. Given the strategic importance of the vessels to global trade, doing otherwise would have meant halting the wheels of commerce.

IMO and UNCTAD released a joint statement in support of the continuous movement of vessels and non-closure of ports in order to facilitate trade. The statement, which was jointly signed by the IMO Secretary-General, Kitack Lim, and





Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Mukhisa Kituyi, said, "We encourage governments and relevant national and local authorities to designate seafarers, marine personnel, fishing vessel personnel, off shore energy sector personnel and service providers personnel at the ports as 'key workers' providing essential services, regardless of their nationality when in their jurisdiction, and to exempt them from travel restrictions. Such designation will ensure that the trade of essential goods, including medical supplies and food, is not hampered by the pandemic and the associated containment measures."

In Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari ordered the closure of the country's airspace and restriction of movement across the country to curtail the spread of the virus. But Buhari directed that the seaports and associated services should remain open.

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) followed up the Federal Government directive by developing guidelines to support essential shipping services. The guidelines made it clear that dockworkers and seafarers were essential workers who were exempt from the COVID-19-induced movement restrictions. The advice said the job of dockworkers at the country's seaports, terminals, and jetties was essential to the national economy and, therefore, dockworkers should be granted passage between their residences and the seaports/terminals and

jetties to perform their duties.

The guideline also contained safety precautions in line with those issued by the United Nations agencies, including the World Health Organisation (WHO), IMO, and International Labour Organisation (ILO), as well as the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

It said, "All suspected cases of COVID-19 infections shall be isolated from other employees. Any case shall promptly be reported to the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). Employers are responsible for providing, where necessary and so far as is reasonably practicable, adequate protective clothing and protective equipment, at no cost to the dockworkers."

"All dock labour employers shall develop risk assessments and safety intervention guidelines for all personnel and operations in the areas of vulnerability within their maritime operations that can be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, including, but not limited to, cargo handling, access control and rostering procedures."

Vessels continued to bring in critical supplies to the country, with crew members of ships, nonetheless, working at great personal sacrifice, amid susceptibility to disease. Some were infected and even paid the supreme price.

Even though seafarers had always been a critical workforce, their activities during the pandemic gave them wide acclaim as frontline responders.



“The guidelines made it clear that dockworkers and seafarers were essential workers who were exempt from the COVID-19-induced movement restrictions.”

Unsurprisingly, IMO themed the 2020 Day of the Seafarer, “Seafarers are Key Workers.”

In his opening address at a webinar to celebrate the 2020 Day of the Seafarer, the IMO Secretary General thanked seafarers for their work, especially during the pandemic, and urged governments of member states to continue to support them.

Lim stated, “Even in good times, seafarers are the unsung heroes of the global economy. More than 80 per cent of global trade is delivered by sea. Seafarers’ work is physically and mentally demanding, lonely and remote. But this year, we are in the unprecedented situation of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Medicines, food, fuels and personal protective equipment – all delivered by seafarers even as COVID-19 has gripped the world.”

The IMO scribe paid tribute to seafarers, saying, “The ability of seafarers to deliver vital goods is central to responding to, and eventually overcoming this pandemic. The work that seafarers have done during the pandemic has been heroic.”

Shipping has continued to operate under strict guidelines in line with the realities of the pandemic. One very obvious reality is the challenge of Crew Changes and Repatriation of Seafarers. This has brought about concerns as to the safety of seafarers and shipping. Some seafarers have been onboard for months without a clue as to when they could reconnect

with their families owing to travel restrictions around the world. Fatigue could set in, impair judgment and threaten safe shipping.

To address that challenge, IMO has urged member states to designate seafarers as key workers, “So that they can travel between the ships that constitute their workplace, and their countries of residence.” IMO has further issued circulars to its member states on, “Recommendations for ports and coastal states on prompt disembarkation of seafarers for medical care ashore during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Apparently, there is need for regular evacuation of onboard ship personnel for medical attention ashore in order to safeguard the seafarers themselves without compromising public health.

Another challenge thrown up, especially for developing economies, like Nigeria, is the need for digitisation of ports and associated processes to reduce the volume of human contact during transactions. The coronavirus is transmitted through human contact. So if port processes were automated, to a large extent, the spread of the virus would be reduced.

Beyond COVID-19, automation of port processes has the triple advantage of improving efficiency, enhancing productivity, and blocking revenue leakages. Before COVID-19, all maritime agencies in Nigeria had, to a considerable extent, automated their processes, but they were all working in silos.



Bringing the different agencies to close ranks and integrate their platforms for the overall benefit of the Nigerian maritime industry is one of the main goals of the Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh.

The issue of settlement of charter agreements is another challenge that has confronted the maritime industry. At the height of COVID-19, many countries closed their borders and restricted movement and this affected some charterers, especially those on Time Charter agreement. In this kind of charter, a vessel owner agrees to hire out a vessel to a charterer for a specified period from the port of delivery to the port of redelivery. Usually, the charterer may have gotten a contract, which the vessel would be used to execute. But COVID-19 has introduced the challenge of settlement – if the job is stopped and the lease period expires. In certain cases, this could degenerate into disputes leading to litigations.

The effect of COVID-19 on shipping has been felt globally, although the pandemic started at a time when shipping activities are usually not at their highest. China, where the virus originated, is a major producer and trading partner of many countries. It is also one of the global leaders in shipbuilding. Usually, during the Chinese New Year celebrations, shipping activities emanating from there slow down, and this naturally affects global shipping.

This year, the economic impact of the Chinese festival has been higher due to the pandemic. Ship-technology.com, in an April 2020 analysis, observed

"The ability of seafarers to deliver vital goods is central to responding to, and eventually overcoming this pandemic. The work that seafarers have done during the pandemic has been heroic."

that contrary to known projections, port warehouses in China experienced a boom while shipping declined, as many vessel operators operated at limited capacity as "shutdowns and limited activity further led to labour shortages across Chinese maritime segments, which in turn affected trade".

The Ocean Freight Market Update, as published by the DHL Global Forwarding on June 30, 2020, projected that container trade was not expected to return to the pre-COVID-19 levels earlier than 2022. According to the analysis, "Already, before the COVID-19 crises, containerised trade grew only modestly by 1.7 per cent in 2019. Containerised trade is expected to decline by 14 per cent this year, the largest year-on-year decline on record.

"In 2021, we will start to see a recovery toward pre-COVID-19 volumes. Container trade will almost be back at 2019 levels in 2022, and is estimated to grow by 3 per cent after that."

With low demand for hydrocarbons and major cuts in production output by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its effect



Seafarers... Standing together in celebration of freedom and adventure on the sea

on shipping, the fortunes of the shipping industry are expected to further dip in the months ahead.

At the height of the pandemic, there were fears that the world would sink into another recession, after the last one in 2008. The World Bank in its June 2020 Global Economic Prospects, said, "The global economy will shrink by 5.2 per cent this year. That would represent the deepest recession since the Second World War, with the largest fraction of economies experiencing declines in per capita output since 1870."

The forecast stated, "Economic activity among advanced economies is anticipated to shrink 7 per cent in 2020 as domestic demand and supply, trade, and finance have been severely disrupted. Emerging Market and Developing Economies (EMDEs) are expected to shrink by 2.5 per cent this year, their first contraction as a group in at least 60 years. Per capita incomes are expected to decline by 3.6 per cent, which will tip millions of people into extreme poverty this year."

Some analysts, however, predict that the recession would be short-lived, provided the world can win the war against COVID-19 by developing a treatment or vaccine against it. But as things stand, the solution may not be near.

Nigeria is not left out of the COVID-19-made challenges of the global economy. UNCTAD projected that the cost of the pandemic to the global economy would be in excess of \$2 trillion in 2020 alone. The Nigerian economy experienced marginal growth

after emerging from the 2016 recession, which was occasioned by a sharp drop in crude oil prices and inadequate foreign exchange to support import. The coronavirus appears to have brought a more serious impact. It has forced crude oil prices down, as factories close in order to adhere to social distancing protocols and stay-at-home directives of the federal and state governments.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) stated in a recent report, "China, the United States of America (USA), and India are Nigeria's major import trading partners with 31.34 per cent, 11.35 per cent and 7.49 per cent of the country's total imports, respectively." These countries all have high incidences of COVID-19 with substantial disruption to their economies, which in turn affects the volumes of their trade with Nigeria, and produces revenue drops in the country.

The 2020 national budget of N10.59 trillion was based on a crude oil benchmark of \$57 per barrel, at an output of 2.18 million barrels per day, and estimated revenue collection of over N8.24 trillion. But the Federal Government has been forced by the COVID-19 pressures to revise the budget to N10.8 trillion based on crude oil benchmark of \$28 per barrel at an output of 1.8 million barrels per day.

Buhari said the government revised the 2020 Appropriation Act to reallocate resources for effective implementation of necessary health and emergency measures, and mitigate the negative socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.



The government had projected a 10 per cent growth rate for the Nigerian maritime sector in 2019-2020, as contained in the Nigerian Maritime Industry Forecast published by NIMASA. The projection was predicated upon the outlook for the economy for the period, concerns about a substantial global economic growth slowdown, a stronger dollar and volatile oil prices, possibly averaging below US\$60 per barrel.

As at June, however, the cost of crude hovered around \$40 per barrel, having risen from less than \$30 per barrel at the height of COVID-19, which was below the estimated figures on which the 10 per cent growth projection was based. The value of the dollar to the naira in the open market is currently around N440. This means the growth projection for the maritime sector in 2020 may not be realised.

The NIMASA Director-General told some stakeholders in his office recently that the situation in the maritime industry should be taken as a *force majeure*.

According to Jamoh, "Nobody envisaged that COVID-19 would attack the world the way it is doing today and this has affected the global economy. We must look at the pandemic as a *force majeure* that was completely unexpected and regroup to build our industry."

"But, first, we must be alive before we achieve this and that is why I urge all Nigerians to strictly adhere to the protocols of hand washing, wearing of facemasks, and social distancing as outlined by relevant authorities as necessary precautions to stem the spread of the virus."

"As an Agency, we have already cut down our expectations by 25 per cent in line with the realities of the times, as revenue may not equal the projections we had already outlined for the year due to disruption of economic activities in the world that is bound to negatively impact shipping."

Jamoh said the Agency had also taken steps to protect stakeholders and operators in the industry

"Nobody envisaged that COVID-19 would attack the world the way it is doing today and this has affected the global economy. We must look at the pandemic as a *force majeure* that was completely unexpected and regroup to build our industry."

by issuing periodic advisories on vessels originating from infection-prevalent countries calling at Nigerian ports. He said it was necessary to alert the relevant authorities to handle such vessels with extra precaution.

Chairperson of Shipowners Forum, Mrs. Margaret Orakwusi, told **THE VOYAGE** that the effect of COVID-19 on the financial obligations of Nigerian shipowners was huge. Orakwusi said, "Most operators are indebted to financial institutions due to the capital intensive nature of our business and when a situation like what currently obtains (COVID-19) takes place, loan repayments are still due, regardless." She urged the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to come to the aid of the shipowners by helping to renegotiate interest rates and extend moratoriums on loan repayment.

COVID-19 has changed life on earth, and it has changed the shipping industry. With many countries re-opening their economies for business, the expectation is that a lot of caution would be taken to avoid a resurgence of the virus. The pandemic shocks on the global economy so far are bad enough; a second wave may be the tipping point of economic catastrophe.

REDUCE YOUR RISK OF COVID-19 INFECTION



WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser.



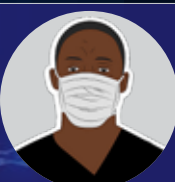
COVER YOUR COUGH OR SNEEZE

Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve or tissue. Dispose and wash hands afterward.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

Stay at least 2 metres away from other people. Take responsibility.



WEAR A FACE MASK

Wear your face mask when in a public place.



STAY AT HOME

Always stay home when there is no urgent or important reason to stay out of the house.



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**DAY OF THE
SEAFARER**
—25 JUNE—



Day of the Seafarer 2020 celebration on Webex

Celebrating Seafarers in the New Normal

Nigeria joins the rest of the world to honour seafarers in the first virtual Day of the Seafarer, amid COVID-19. **Vincent Obia** reports

S

trange events often reshape familiar experiences – either for better or for worse. The coronavirus pandemic has done exactly that to the world economy with a mishmash of effects in the various sectors. But the maritime industry appears to be among the

hardest hit.

Braving the danger of infection by the ravaging virus, seafarers remained at their duty posts, setting

sail across countries and continents to deliver vital supplies. This was the condition that prevailed on June 25, when the world came together to mark this year's Day of the Seafarer, in honour of the nearly two million seafarers worldwide. It was also the situation that motivated the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to theme the 2020 Day of the Seafarer, the 10th anniversary of the occasion, "Seafarers are Key Workers."

The gathering this year was virtual, a new normal.



COVID-19 brought a lot of changes on how people live on a daily basis, including how celebrations are conducted. Owing to physical contact restrictions imposed by health authorities, it has become standard practice to go online to hold gatherings.

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) joined the rest of the maritime world to mark the Day of the Seafarer on June 25 by hosting a webinar at the Agency's headquarters in Lagos.

The meeting featured local and international participants, with the welfare of seafarers on the minds of all present. The key speaker and consultant at Transbasin Limited, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Karen Ogidigben Onimisi, and Nigerian Labour Attaché at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Switzerland, Essah Aniefiok Etim, delivered speeches calling for better welfare and support for seafarers.

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, announced at the occasion that Nigeria was developing policies to improve the training, certification, and remuneration of the over 8,000 seafarers in the country. Robed in orange seamen's overalls, Nigeria's

"Number One Seafarer" called seafarers heroes, saying his mission is to ensure that the country's seafarers are competitive and among the world's best.

Karen, who is Director and Maritime Sector Consultant at Transbasin Limited, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, called on the international community to render necessary assistance to seafarers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. She commended NIMASA for supporting seafarers during the pandemic and emphasised the need for Nigeria to develop post-pandemic measures to make the country's seafarers internationally marketable and competitive.

The Nigerian-born expert said, "Seafarers are part of the global supply chain and should have access to shore leave at ports in accordance with global regulations. There is also a need to look at improved ways to mitigate the challenges that COVID-19 has brought before us, commencing with digitalisation of our processes, including local training and licensing of Nigerian seafarers."

Etim spoke to issues in the labour component of the maritime industry. He said seafarers, "Should be





treated with dignity and respect so that they can continue to provide valuable and vital service to the world."

The envoy lamented the plight of seafarers, stating, "In some cases, many workers, including seafarers, have made the supreme sacrifice while playing their critical role of maintaining the steady flow of vital goods and services."

While many workers had adapted to working from home or online in the heat of the COVID-19 crisis, he said, the nature of the seafarer's job could not permit them to work that way. He stressed that in the light of the theme of this year's celebration, "Seafarers are key workers," the world should pay more attention to the condition of seafarers with a view to "assisting them to actualise their shared dream and aspiration of decent work".

Etim also called for appropriate reward systems for seafarers, stressing that measures should be put in place to mitigate the threat of job losses in the post-COVID-19 period.

The labour attaché advocated the emergence of strong and independent labour unions and collective bargaining to protect the rights and welfare of seafarers.

In his address during the webinar, Jamoh stated, "Policies are in the pipeline to improve the quality of training and certificates we give to the seafarers. We are taking steps to standardise the curriculum of our training institutions in line with international standards.

"We are also working on increasing the remuneration of our seafarers. These policies would be announced as soon as we complete work on them."

He described seafarers as courageous, stressing that the theme for this year's Day of the Seafarer,

"Seafarers are Key Workers," is a "testament to the fact that the world cannot do without seafarers. Seafarers hold the key to humanity's survival on a day-to-day basis.

"They hold the key to our wellbeing in this COVID-19 period."

Jamoh extolled seafarers for sustaining the global supply chain during the pandemic, and facilitating the distribution of urgently needed medical supplies, despite enormous risk to their lives and families.

"The seafarers are unsung heroes, they are also our invisible heroes. We see their handwork every day and everywhere in agricultural machinery, the food we eat, and the unbroken run of the manufacturing base, despite the global lockdown."

Jamoh spoke on the challenges faced by seafarers during the coronavirus pandemic, including stringent work conditions in some countries, movement restrictions, lockdowns, crew change difficulties, fatigue and seasickness, and disruption of contracts.

But he said, "As a regulatory body, we have taken steps to alleviate the suffering of the seafarers. NIMASA was among the first government agencies to declare seafarers as being on essential duty, and we published this in a marine notice. We also issued COVID-19 guidelines to incoming ships towards ensuring that there is no importation of the virus by sea.

"NIMASA was the first in West Africa to issue a COVID-19 marine notice.

"We challenged ship-owners and employers of seafarers to take necessary proactive measures to lessen the pains of seafarers.

"We also walked in lockstep with the IMO to tailor all our marine notices in the early period of COVID-19 towards supporting the extension of the validity



A virtual session on the welfare, challenges of seafarers

“We have taken steps to alleviate the suffering of the seafarers. NIMASA was among the first government agencies to declare seafarers as being on essential duty, and the first in West Africa to issue a COVID-19 marine notice.”

of seafarers’ certificates, crew change, guidelines, procedure and their designation as essential workers.”

Jamoh added, “It is said that a good sailor weathers the storm he cannot avoid; COVID-19 was a storm seafarers could not avoid. As tried and tested seamen and women, our seafarers have continued to weather this storm for us.

“We celebrate you today. Nigeria thanks you, the world appreciates you, NIMASA as a regulator will never abandon you. We will support you all the way.”

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim’s message on the Day of the Seafarer equally highlighted the unique and essential job of seafarers. Lim stated, “Just like other key workers, seafarers are on the front line in this global fight. They deserve our thanks. But they also need – and deserve – quick and decisive humanitarian action from governments everywhere, not just during the pandemic, but at all times.”

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres saluted seafarers the world over for their work, and urged all countries to honour them as key workers and render to them necessary assistance, including travel support to ensure safe crew changes and

repatriations.

Guterres said, in his address, “Seafarers are among the world’s unsung heroes. The International Day of the Seafarer is a time to honour the world’s two million seafarers whose dedication and professionalism keep the vast majority of world trade moving safely, delivering vital goods – including food, fuel, and medical supplies.

“Seafarers have continued to provide this essential service under the unprecedented and difficult conditions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even in the best of times, seafarers work for long periods away from home, their contributions largely unheralded.

“Yet in recent months, their burdens have grown exponentially with COVID-related travel restrictions that have prevented hundreds of thousands of seafarers from leaving ships. Fatigued and weary, their time at sea has been extended months beyond the standards stipulated in international conventions. This is an unsustainable humanitarian crisis.”

In commemoration of this year’s Day of the Seafarer, IMO held a webinar on the theme, “Seafarers are key workers: essential to shipping, essential to the world,” on June 26. The webinar addressed problems faced by seafarers, particularly, during the pandemic.

Celebrating the Day of the Seafarer this year in the shadow of COVID-19 certainly made one of the glamour events of the global maritime community a low-key affair. But as one participant observed during the online event in Lagos, “The peculiar circumstance of this event is a blessing in a way. It has opened the occasion to all and sundry via the web community, and removed the cordon that restricted the class of participants, expanding awareness of the job of seafarers among the general public.”

COVID-19:

NIMASA Extends Certificate Validity for Seafarers

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) extended the validity of Statutory and Trading certificates for all Nigerian registered vessels. These included Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) certificates for seafarers issued by the Agency.

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, who made this known at the Agency's head office in Lagos, said NIMASA remained committed to implementing its mandates during the COVID-19 crisis. Jamoh said it was necessary to ensure uninterrupted shipping, despite the pandemic, stressing that shipping is one of the major ways of moving medical facilities across the globe.

"Our determination to ensure that shipping continues during this trying times remains unwavering and this is why we have continued to come up with measures to keep the global shipping chain moving in line with the recommendations of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO)," Jamoh stated.

Jamoh said the Agency was aware of the difficulties seafarers would be facing and the need for them to keep their jobs even beyond the pandemic. He said this had necessitated the Agency's publication of a notice to extend their certificates and other statutory certificates that would ensure uninterrupted shipping.

According to him, "One of our major priorities is to keep our seafarers in job while not jeopardising their safety in terms of contracting the deadly virus. We have, therefore, come up with a notice that would extend the validity of their certificates, for those of them that might be expiring soon. We have also issued guidelines that would regulate crew change during this pandemic."

Expatriating on the notice issued by the Agency, Jamoh disclosed that following IMO's recent guidelines on the certification of seafarers and fishing vessel personnel, the Agency had extended the validity of relevant certificates, including STCW; Mandatory and Safety certificates; and Certificates of medical fitness.



Others were the Statutory and Trading Certificates related to SOLAS '74, as amended, MARPOL 73/78, as amended, Certificates of Ship Registry, National requirements for Power Driven Small Craft (PDSC), and MLC, 2006, as amended.

He said the extension would apply to all Nigerian flagged vessels and seafarers sailing on-board Nigerian flagged vessels, as well as seafarers with Nigerian Certificate of Competency sailing on foreign flagships.

Jamoh said the extensions would enable Owners and Masters of Ships to permit personnel to continue performing duties in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and the nationwide lockdown in Nigeria.

The DG charged Owners and Masters to report any deficiency that may affect the approved capacity and performance standards of all Fire Fighting Appliances (FFA) and Life Saving Appliances (LSA) on-board vessels.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, shipping has been the focus of attention in major maritime nations and NIMASA has regularly issued guidelines aimed at preventing adverse effects on the Nigerian shipping industry.



Cadets of the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme

COVID-19: Dockworkers/Seafarers are Essential Workers, Exempted from Travel Restrictions, Says NIMASA

In line with protocols endorsed by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) designed to lift barriers to crew change, amid the coronavirus pandemic, the Management of NIMASA designated seafarers and dockworkers as essential workers who should be exempted from travel restrictions. The exemptions were contained in guidelines developed and published by the Agency to support essential services in Nigeria's shipping sector.

The guideline stated that the jobs of dockworkers at the country's seaports, terminals, and jetties were essential to the national economy and, therefore, dockworkers should be granted passage between their places of abode and the seaports/terminals and jetties to perform their duties. The advice also declared that seafarers were on essential duty and, so, exempted from curfew and travel restrictions, which might hinder necessary movement for crew change operations. It directed companies employing the services of seafarers to provide special and dedicated means of transportation to convey them, adding that such transport system must be disinfected within the recommended minimum hours.

The guideline specifically provided for the mandatory use of facemasks within all terminals and jetties, mandatory temperature check on all staff before access to terminals, and denial of entry to persons who presented temperature above 38°C. It made it mandatory for all dock labour employers to develop risk assessments and safety intervention guidelines for all personnel and operations in the areas of vulnerability within their maritime operations that could be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, including

cargo handling, access control, and rostering procedures.

Dock labour employers were also to devise methods of ensuring that dockworkers absent from their duties for issues relating to COVID-19 were quarantined and compensated for the suspension of earnings they suffered as a consequence. Furthermore, all dock labour employers were to ensure that buses deployed during the COVID-19 pandemic carried a 50 per cent maximum capacity in line with Federal Government directives, and all passengers wore facemasks. Such buses must have hand sanitisers for drivers' and passengers' use and be frequently disinfected, the advice stated.

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, said the latest advice was meant to contain the coronavirus pandemic while also supporting the continuation of the economy.

Jamoh stated, "Like President Muhammadu Buhari said, no economy can survive total lockdown. If you look at it critically, maritime is an essential duty, with the major actors being seafarers and dockworkers. This is why we continually come up with guidelines to ease their operations so that activities in our ports will not suffer."

The Director-General reiterated the prohibition of loitering around port premises and charged dock labour employers to ensure that social distancing of two meters was maintained between people in the workplace and other public spaces within and around port terminals.

The guideline is in sync with those issued by the United Nations agencies, including the World Health Organisation (WHO) and International Labour Organisation (ILO), as well as the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

ANTIPIRACY WAR: UN Commends NIMASA, Nigerian Navy

T

he International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the specialised shipping regulatory agency of the United Nations, has delivered a glowing appraisal of Nigeria's effort to stem piracy in its waters and the Gulf of Guinea, commending the country for sending a "strong and

valuable message" to the global community. IMO also commended the new Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, for his brave and dynamic approach to maritime security, in a letter addressed to him by the Secretary-General, Kitack Lim. The letter followed recent arrests and first-time prosecution of suspected pirates under the country's new anti-piracy law.

The Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act was signed into law in June last year by President Muhammadu Buhari. The law made Nigeria the first in West and Central Africa to have a distinct anti-piracy legislation.

Lim said he was impressed by Nigeria's effort "to address maritime security threats in the region," and commended Jamoh's "leadership and proactive response" to maritime security issues.

Jamoh had told the IMO Secretary-General at a previous virtual meeting following the arrest of some pirates by the Nigerian Navy, in partnership with NIMASA, that piracy in the region was being sustained by powerful foreign collaboration. He appealed for support from the international community to complement the steps being taken by Nigeria towards ridding the country's waters of maritime crimes.

"I would also like to reiterate my congratulations to the Nigerian Navy on the successful capture and arrest of pirates from the fishing trawler Hailufeng II, and, more recently, on the rescue of the crew members of the containership, Tommi Ritscher," Lim stated in the letter. "Those actions, together with all the other initiatives you highlighted in our meeting, including progress with the Deep Blue Project, send a strong and valuable message to the international community with respect to the considerable efforts your government is making to curb piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Gulf of Guinea," he added.

Jamoh had during the virtual meeting bemoaned the adverse effects of foreign collaboration on Nigeria's



IMO Secretary-General, Kitack Lim

anti-piracy effort. He said, "The recent arrests of pirates have opened our eyes to a new and even more dangerous dimension to the issue of piracy and armed robbery in our waters, and that is the issue of foreign collaboration. The arrests involved Nigerians and other nationalities, whose identities I cannot disclose because the cases are under investigation.

"Piracy is taking an international dimension. We now know that pirates and other maritime criminals in our waters and the Gulf of Guinea operate with strong backing from powerful international collaborators.

"So we earnestly desire the cooperation of the international community, individual countries, organisations, and individuals to stem the ugly tide of insecurity in our waters.

"We will continue to do our best and update IMO as we make progress with our strategies."

The IMO Secretary-General reiterated the organisation's readiness to assist NIMASA in the training of personnel and technical aid, and also declared his willingness to talk to other member countries to assist in that respect. He said IMO would help to deal with the issue of synergy in laws regarding piracy with other neighbouring countries.

The Nigerian Navy recently arrested a vessel, MFV Marine 707, which was engaged in illegal fishing in the country's waters. Ten pirates, who had on May 15 attacked and boarded a Chinese vessel, MV HAILUFANG II, off the coast of Côte d'Ivoire and directed it towards Nigerian waters, were also arrested by the Navy.



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DG, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (left), and Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas, when Jamoh paid him a working visit at the naval headquarters in Abuja



MARITIME SECURITY: Navy, NIMASA Set to Improve Information Sharing

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he Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and the Nigeria Navy are set for a regime of improved information sharing, with arrangements to integrate the Command, Control, Computer Communication and Information Centre,

otherwise known as the C4i Centre, of NIMASA's Deep Blue Project and the Falcon Eye of the Nigerian Navy. This emerged when the Flag Officer Commanding (FOC) Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Oladele Bamidele Daji, led senior officers from the command on a working visit to NIMASA.

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, emphasised the importance of cooperation between the Navy and NIMASA, saying both agencies have mandates that are interwoven. Jamoh said since NIMASA was not an arms-bearing organisation, it was important to support the Navy with necessary platforms to be able to optimally safeguard Nigerian waters.

Jamoh stated, "Just like we did by ensuring that our Special Mission Vessels are manned by men of the Nigerian Navy, we are also looking at the possibility of effectively linking the C4i centre at Kikiriki with the Falcon Eye of the Nigerian Navy. This is to ensure safety of lives and property for safer shipping in the Nigerian maritime domain so that the maritime industry remains virile for economic prosperity."

The Director-General also disclosed that the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) at Takwa Bay, Lagos, would become functional soon. He said the facility would enhance intelligence gathering and information sharing with the Nigerian Navy, which had also approved the establishment of a naval formation at Takwa Bay.

Speaking on other challenges in the maritime corridor from Navy town to the Harbour in Apapa, Lagos, the NIMASA DG noted that the activities of unapproved ship scrapping yards was a source of concern. He said, working with the hydrography department of the Nigerian Navy, all identified wrecks would be removed.

Jamoh warned that those involved in illegal scrapping of vessels and other nefarious activities would be made to face the full wrath of the law if they failed to desist from those acts. He said, "We are aware of the challenges wrecks, derelicts and activities of illegal scrap yards pose on our waterways. We will share information with the hydrography department of the Nigerian Navy, so appropriate steps, which will be in the best interest of the country, will be implemented."

The FOC praised the existing relationship between the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA. Daji stressed the need for information sharing between the Navy and NIMASA to ensure a safer and more secure maritime sector. He reiterated the country's zero tolerance for piracy, stating that the Navy is prepared to tackle the issues head-on.

Daji appealed for cooperation with the NIMASA hydrography unit, especially with regard to standard charting of the Nigerian waters and mapping out of wrecks. He said this would help to ensure unhindered navigation.

Jamoh had at the inception of his administration introduced a three-point agenda hinged on Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, and Shipping Development.

Others present during the visit were the Executive Directors of the Agency and senior officers of the Western Naval Command.

NIMASA Board Inaugurated



*Hon. Asita O. Asita
Chairman*



*Dr. Bashir Y. Jamoh
Director-General/CEO*

The Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, inaugurated the Board of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) in Abuja, with a charge to the members to speed up completion of the Deep Blue Project. The maritime security project, also known as the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure, aims to comprehensively tackle insecurity on Nigeria's territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone, up to the Gulf of Guinea.

Amaechi told the new board members that the Deep Blue Project was critical to maritime security in Nigeria and the entire West and Central Africa region. He disclosed that the Federal Government had paid about 60 per cent of the project's cost.

The Minister told the Management and Board of NIMASA to "go and complete the Deep Blue Project," stressing that the success of NIMASA is, to a great extent, dependent on completion of the project.

In his remarks, Chairman of the Board, Honourable Asita O. Asita, thanked President Muhammadu Buhari for the honour bestowed on them. Asita pledged to work



*Mr. Shehu Ahmed
Executive Director, Operations*



*Victor Ochei, Executive
Director, Maritime Labour
& Cabotage Services*



*Hon. Chudi Offodile,
Executive Director, Finance
and Administration*



*Mr. Adekola Adefemi,
Member*



*Mr. Mohammed Abubakar,
Member*



*Mr. Hassan Rasaq Mahmud,
Member*



*Dr. Paul Adalikwu,
Member (representing
Federal Ministry of
Transportation)*



*Mr. Eyewumi Daniel
Neburagho, Member
(representing Federal
Ministry of Labour &
Employment)*



*Rear Admiral Ibikunle
Taiwo Olaiya, Member
(representing the Nigerian
Navy)*

harmoniously with the NIMASA Management to deliver the Agency's mandate.

The board chairman stated, "If we must trade as a country, we need the waterways to be safe." He said the security of the maritime domain was of utmost importance to the country, adding that

NIMASA cannot afford to play with the issues of safety and security.

Other members of the 11-member Board are the Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Victor Ochei; Executive Director, Finance and

Administration, Hon. Chudi Offodile; and Executive Director, Operations, Shehu Ahmed. Also on the Board are Adekola Adefemi, Mohammed Abubakar, Hassan Rasaq Mahmud, Eyewumi Daniel Neburagho, Dr. Paul Adalikwu, and Rear Admiral Ibikunle Taiwo Olaiya.



IMO: Milestones in Aid of Seafarers on the Frontline of COVID-19

Chinweizu Chidi Amuta looks at some of the steps taken by the International Maritime Organisation to alleviate the plight of seafarers during the coronavirus pandemic

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he COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on the global shipping industry, in general, and on seafarers, in particular, with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) working at all levels to find sustainable solutions to the difficulties encountered by

seafarers. Travel restrictions imposed by governments around the world have created major hurdles to crew changes and repatriation of seafarers, which have led to a growing humanitarian crisis as well as concerns for the safety of seafarers and shipping.

IMO has intervened by urging its member states to designate seafarers as key workers, to enable them travel between the ships that constitute their workplace, and their countries of residence. IMO has established a Seafarer Crisis Action Team (SCAT) to help them out of a variety of critical situations, and resolve individual cases, often working alongside other organisations like the International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), and International Chamber of Shipping (ICS). Since the beginning of the crisis, this dedicated team has worked around the clock, contacting national



governments, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOS), and trade unions for the interest of seafarers, and orienting seafarers towards the right organisations to find solutions.

The United Nations maritime regulatory agency has also set out general measures and procedures designed to ensure that ship crew changes can take place safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here are some examples of IMO's interventions that made a difference for seafarers around the globe:

Repatriated after more than 100 days offshore

On May 10, a fatigued seafarer on an offshore support vessel contacted IMO. He and many of his colleagues had spent 100 days offshore – some had



• *Evacuating a seafarer in distress*

already counted 140 days – with no break and no prospect of crew changes. The seafarer was worried because his employer was planning to extend crew contracts by another two months.

“We are all feeling the strains of the long period offshore, especially having no end date in sight. To many of us that is not good and certainly puts safety on the line,” the seafarer wrote in an email to SCAT.

SCAT brought the message to the attention of the relevant NGOs in consultative status with IMO and liaised with the maritime authorities of the flag and port states concerned.

Following this swift intervention from IMO, the port state confirmed it would take the necessary measures to facilitate crew change while the ship was in its port or terminal, and the seafarer was

able to go home and be reunited with his family.

Protecting seafarers’ mental health

A seafarer onboard a container ship sent a call for help to IMO on April 12. His contract, which was due to finish at the end of March, had been extended for another month. The seafarer said his company was failing to take action to change crew, even though government assistance made that option possible.

While the seafarer recognised that he and his colleagues were not in a critical situation physically, he described serious impacts on their mental health. “We have meals, everything is okay, but the main thing is our psychological health,” the seafarer told





SCAT in his first email.

SCAT referred the seafarer to the relevant national maritime administration and trade unions, while also bringing the matter to the attention of the flag and port states concerned. This diplomatic intervention helped resolve the case, and the flag state confirmed it would assist the seafarer with his contract and repatriation.

The seafarer and another crewmember were able to return home safely in May. In an email, the seafarer warmly thanked a SCAT team member for his help and support, writing, “You are really a man with a big heart.”

Repatriated to assist vulnerable relatives

A British seafarer was desperate to be reunited with her family after months of working on a passenger ship in the Pacific. Her vulnerable relatives back home needed her support in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and she was determined to be by their side.

But her plan to fly home mid-March was derailed. Immigration authorities of the port state initially denied permission to travel, because the rules had been changed with almost no notice. The seafarer was stuck on the ship at anchor with no means of returning home.

On March 31, she emailed a plea for help to IMO. “As I am sure is the case for so many other seafarers right now, I am so desperate to get home. My parents

and grandmother are vulnerable and I cannot think about anything else,” she said.

The seafarer added that her mental health was seriously affected, and she feared the situation would also impact on her ability to perform her duties as a bridge officer.

IMO immediately contacted the port state and seafarer state and informed the relevant NGOs. Those efforts helped resolve the case. Thanks to the efficient cooperation between the local seafarer’s union and the port state, the seafarer was allowed to fly home on April 12.

In a message sent to IMO the next day, she thanked the organisation and the port state for ensuring she could be reunited with her family.

Urgent medical evacuation

On May 14, IMO received information about an emergency situation on board a cargo vessel at anchor. A chief officer was suffering tremendous pain due to a swelling that was spreading from his gum to the left side of his face and part of his neck. The vessel and charterer had requested a doctor visit to the ship five days earlier; but this was refused by customs authorities on the basis of COVID-related restrictions.

During a video consultation, a doctor confirmed that emergency surgery was needed, as the risk of sepsis was very high. The seafarer’s health was deteriorating every day, and he was already very



weak and unable to move.

Further attempts by the ship's Master to secure medical evacuation were unsuccessful. Port authorities refused to allow the seafarer to disembark to receive the urgent medical care he needed, due to the 14-day quarantine requirements and because no quarantine hotels were available to host him.

His colleagues and the Master on board were fearful for the seafarer's life. "It is very difficult to understand, that in such dangerous situation there is no proper support to save the life of a human," one colleague wrote in a message that was transferred to IMO.

After being informed about the case, SCAT immediately intervened, in cooperation with ICS and ITF, and contacted focal points of the port state and the seafarer's home state. Intense discussions and good collaboration helped resolve the case rapidly.

On May 15, one day after IMO was informed of the situation, SCAT got confirmation that the seafarer had been able to disembark and was being transferred to a hotel. As long as the COVID-19 test result was negative, he would be taken to hospital for the surgery he urgently needed.

Spectacular rescue of seafarer suffering a stroke

When a 45-year-old Russian seafarer aboard a large cargo ship began to show signs of suffering a stroke, in mid-April, the ship's captain was immediately alerted.

The next day, the seafarer's condition worsened. He seemed confused, his speech was laborious, he had pain under the left shoulder and his left arm and leg were paralysed. The captain knew he needed to act – and fast.

Global Voyager Assistance, a remote medical assistance provider, confirmed the stroke diagnosis. But the ship was more than 220 kilometres from the nearest port, and the port authorities rejected initial appeals for emergency medical assistance, due to COVID-19 restrictions in place. Despite repeated requests from the vessel's captain, the seafarer's national trade union and that of the country the ship was headed for, the ship could not enter port.

After several hours of intense discussions, the ship initially received confirmation that the vessel could enter port for the medical transfer to take place. However, that decision was reversed just six hours before the ship was due to arrive, and the captain was advised to set course for another port, in a different country, over 600 kilometres away.

The clock was ticking. The captain insisted and made a further request to obtain medical evacuation for the seafarer, but that second attempt was also rejected by the authorities, including immigration and a local COVID-19 Task Force – again due to COVID-19 restrictions.

ITF was then notified. It called on two UN agencies, IMO and ILO, to intervene urgently at government level to ensure international conventions were respected so the seafarer could receive the immediate medical attention that his life depended on.

IMO and ILO quickly took action. IMO contacted representatives from the national government while ILO offered to prepare an intervention letter. As a result, the medical evacuation was finally authorised and a police vessel was dispatched to evacuate the seafarer.

'Seafarers Are Key Workers'



BY OBIAGELI CHUMA UGBO

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race Hopper once said, "A ship in port is safe but that is not what ships are built for." It means a ship must constantly navigate through the sea to meet the purpose she was built for.

The ship is built to move a large amount of goods across the globe, and findings have emerged that without shipping the world would not have been as connected as it is currently.

The most important thought that comes to mind when the keel for a ship is about to be laid is the crew that would man the ship. This is because the crew are the ones who would ensure the ship sails through all kinds of weather. In fact, they weather the storms together and it is through their expertise that the ship manoeuvres through everything it experiences. Sadly, these seafarers sometimes lose their lives in a bid to make the world more enjoyable.

Though people in the maritime world know that the most important asset in shipping is the human element, the world never really felt how important this set of professionals were until the outbreak of COVID-19 across the globe. The world was not prepared for the outbreak of the pandemic, so many countries decided to shut all businesses. Flights were grounded and a lot of industries were seen as not essential. But the shipping chain remained, albeit with a lot of regulations, to contribute its own quota to efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus.

June 25 every year is the Day of The Seafarer

(DoTS), the day set aside by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to recognise the invaluable contribution seafarers make to international trade and the world economy, often at a great personal cost to themselves and their families.

DoTS was first celebrated in 2011, following its establishment by a resolution adopted by parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) during their conference in Manila, Philippines, in June 2010. The conference adopted major revisions to the Convention and Code.

Technically, this year's edition is the 10th anniversary of the celebration and IMO has chosen for it the theme, "Seafarers are Key Workers." According to the specialised agency of the United Nations in charge of shipping regulation, seafarers are on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic, playing an essential role in maintaining the flow of vital goods, such as food, medicines, and medical supplies. However, the crisis has led to difficult working conditions for seafarers, including uncertainties and difficulties about port access, re-supply, crew changeovers, and repatriation.

Who does not know how important these people are? Should they not be celebrated alongside the health workers, as the MVPs of this generation? Without them majority of the drugs and food supplies would not even reach their destinations. It is important to note that majority of the economies would have been shut down but for shipping, because the world did not prepare for the effect of the pandemic.

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim recently issued a moving personal message to seafarers everywhere,



DG, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, flanked by maritime workers during the 2020 Day of the Seafarer

assuring them that IMO understands the unique problems they face during the coronavirus pandemic and has been working tirelessly at all levels to find solutions to them. The message, tagged “you are not alone”, also highlighted the fact that a lot of seafarers face the challenges of repatriation to their home countries and bases during the pandemic because of travel restrictions, which also made crew change extremely difficult.

It is important to note that back home, the period of COVID-19 also coincided with the appointment of Dr. Bashir Jamoh as Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) by President Muhammadu Buhari. What else could test a budding administration than a pandemic like this? However, the handling of the pandemic by the NIMASA DG has revealed that he is the round peg in the round hole.

Jamoh has continuously issued guidelines on seafarers' welfare. They include the extension of their certificates and other trading certificates, which would ensure that their jobs are not put in jeopardy. Under Jamoh's watch during the pandemic, the maritime administration has also issued guidelines for crew change and informed the relevant authorities that seafarers are essential workers, who should be allowed free movement, as they are the ones that keep the economy going.

Truly, seafarers are key workers, and they must be celebrated on June 25, either virtually or by the gathering of a few people in a hall to honour this great people. We must celebrate them!



NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)

(Established under the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency Act, 2007)

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MARINE NOTICE

To ALL: Fishing Vessels and Fishing Canoe Operators, Ship Owners, Ship Masters/Captains/ Agents, Maritime Stakeholders and the Public

RESTRICTION ZONE OF 50 METRES BETWEEN SHIPS AT BERTH, SHIP TRAVERSING THE PERIMETER OF THE PORT AND FISHING CANOES/ POWER DRIVEN SMALL CRAFTS

Pursuant to the Agency's statutory mandate to provide Directions & Ensure Compliance with Vessel Security Measures and Maritime Security.

NOTICE is hereby given as follows:

1. That from **January 1st, 2019**, there shall be a restriction zone of 50 meters between All Vessels at berth or traversing the perimeters of the port or quays and power driven small crafts such as Dugout Canoes and similar boats engaged in fishing activities.
2. That the restriction is aimed at preventing attacks on ships and stowaways activities and enhance the safety and security of ships within the Nigerian territorial waters.
3. That failure to adhere strictly to this directive may lead to fines, detention of the vessel, revocation of certificates, permit or license or/and will attract appropriate sanctions prescribed under the NIMASA Act and its Regulations.
4. Please be guided accordingly.

For further information, please contact

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SIGNED: MANAGEMENT



Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (right), and Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Chudi Offodile



Director, Admin. and Human Resources, Mrs. Moronke Thomas (left), and Director, Cabotage Services, Mrs. Rita Uruakpa



A cross-section of participants at the webinar to mark the 2020 Day of the Seafarer at the NIMASA headquarters in Lagos



Director, Planning, Research & Data Management Services, Anthony Ogadi (left), and Deputy Director, Public Relations, Philip Kyanet



Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Victor Ochei



Participants at the webinar



Head, Maritime Safety and Seafarers Standards, Capt. Sunday Umoren



Items donated by NIMASA to maritime workers during the Day of the Seafarer

Amaechi: FG Determined to Provide Safer, Cheaper Means of Cargo Transport



Transport Minister, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi

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etermined to ensure safety on Nigerian roads, the Federal Government is revitalising the rail lines across the country to diversify transportation and provide alternative means of cargo movement. The Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi, stated this during

an inspection tour to Itakpe, in Kogi State, to test run the newly mounted coaches on the Itakpe-Warri rail corridor.

Amaechi, who conducted the inspection to assess the readiness of the standard gauge railway for commercial operation, said the rail renewal project would guarantee a cheaper and more convenient means of moving cargo. This, he said, would free the roads from mishaps and hitches often associated with transporting heavy goods by road.

The Minister expressed satisfaction with the level of work done by the China Civil Engineering and Construction Company (CCECC) and, the project consultant, Technical Engineering Architectural Management (T.E.A.M). He said when operational, the Itakpe-Warri route would



Coaches at Itakpe-Warri rail corridor



serve as a catalyst for the resuscitation of the long abandoned Ajaokuta steel mill.

On when trains will resume operation in the country, the Minister disclosed that the Ministry of Transportation and the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) were working with the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19 on guidelines that would protect commuters. He added that besides the other safety measures, NRC had been directed to convey 25 passengers per coach, as against 80, to ensure social distancing.

Amaechi also spoke on the Lagos-Ibadan rail project, saying the pandemic has affected the planned completion date of May 2020. He, however, assured that the project would be completed soon.

The highpoint of the occasion was the naming of the Agbor Station after former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.

In the company of the Minister were Managing Director, NRC, Fidett Okhiria; the representative of CCECC; the representative of T.E.A.M, Engr. Chiedu Nwazojie; and Director, Rail, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Mohammed Babakobi, among others.



Itakpe Railway Complex



Dr. Bashir Jamoh

Jamoh: Security in Our Waters is of Paramount Importance to Me

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, assumed office in March, and since his coming, the maritime sector has recorded a number of notable firsts, especially in the area of security, thanks to his proactive efforts. Jamoh tells **THE VOYAGE** that guaranteeing security of shipping in the country's territorial waters is at the top of his agenda. Excerpts:

Give us an overview of your experience since your appointment about three months ago.

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he last 100 days have been challenging. As you are aware, COVID-19 has plagued the globe. We have not been able to achieve all we planned, but we thank God we have recorded some achievements.

I came in as part of the Agency's family.

I have been in the Agency since 1993-1994 and I have known the inner workings. I was fortunate to be part of the previous executive management and I know the inner workings of the management. So my administration is a continuation of the former administration. We had five broad agenda during the last administration. But I have tried to reduce them to three for maximum effect, and bearing in mind the need to align them with the Agency's mandate. The three areas are: maritime



safety, maritime security, and shipping development.

What is the wisdom behind the reduction of the items in your agenda to three?

Our main mandate centres on maritime safety, security, and then marine environment management, shipping development and capacity building, maritime labour and Cabotage. When you say capacity building, you look at the issue of Cabotage. If you talk about shipping development, you are talking about areas like capacity building, seafarers' development, and fleet expansion. If you check our marine environment management, before 2007 we did not have a department called marine environment management. Marine environment management was with the maritime safety standard department. So if I say maritime security, it subsumes the issue of marine environment management.

Therefore, the five pillars of the previous management have been collapsed into three, which I call the "Triple S". I subsumed the core responsibilities of the Agency into three pillars, a tripod, which I called Triple S or 3S, so that it can be easily remembered and understood. They are Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, and Shipping Development. In this 3S you have the entire gamut of the mandate of the Agency.

What is the motivation behind your focus on security?

The security issue is paramount the world over; there is nothing you can do without security. The issue of

maritime security has become a big phenomenon in the international arena and we need to change the narrative. This requires a bold approach to assure the international community that the Nigerian government is making efforts to guarantee security in our waters.

The first thing we tried to introduce when we came on board was synergy and collaboration among players in the industry. We improved our relationship with the Nigerian Navy, Nigeria Police, Department of State Services (DSS), and other stakeholders. We pursued this, first, in our own territorial waters and, then, extended it to the Gulf of Guinea, because if you look at the Gulf of Guinea, the sub-regional countries look up to Nigeria.

Today, if you have a cargo that is coming across the Gulf of Guinea, and Nigeria by extension, you will pay higher fees than anywhere in the world because we are paying the whole premium. The Gulf of Guinea is considered a dreaded zone in the maritime world. In terms of premium, Nigeria pays much higher, and by extension, each and every individual in Nigeria is paying the cost of insecurity within the Gulf of Guinea and Nigerian territorial waters.

We are doing something and the international community understands and knows we are not sleeping. The issue of miscreants and hoodlums that attack vessels is one that affects every country. Of course, piracy did not start in Nigerian waters. A few years ago, we used to hear about the issue of Somalia and other

“I subsumed the core responsibilities of the Agency into three pillars, a tripod, which I called Triple S or 3S, so that it can be easily understood. They are Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, and Shipping Development. In this 3S you have the entire gamut of the mandate of the Agency.”



places. Today, that is becoming history, with Nigeria being the target now. But we are getting to the root of the matter.

What is the major obstacle to maritime security in the country's waters? How is it being addressed?

The major challenge is the question of platforms. When you talk about maritime security, the first thing that comes to mind is the reporting line. When you have an attack at sea you have to know where, and platforms are needed to ensure quick response. But the problem is being tackled using various approaches.

The synergy between NIMASA, Nigerian Navy, Nigeria Police, and other actors in the maritime domain has improved significantly in the last three months, and that has brought about the apprehension of the 10 pirates recently arrested by the Nigerian Navy. Currently, we have about 10 suspected pirates in the custody of the Nigerian Navy, and 17 others being detained by the Nigeria Police in Port Harcourt. These 10 are in Abuja already and investigation is underway. So we have a total of 27 suspects in custody.

Between 2013 and 2016, I think we made a few arrests, but between 2016 and now, we never had one single arrest of a suspected pirate before the recent arrests. So these arrests are significant; they send a very strong signal to the international community that Nigeria is not playing with the issue of piracy and maritime crimes.

What is your take on the issue of foreign involvement in maritime crimes in Nigerian waters?

It may interest you to know that these crimes are not only masterminded locally in Nigeria. We are seeing a new dimension of international affiliation in the sponsorship of these crimes. But investigation is underway and we cannot start disclosing why and who

are involved until we complete investigation.

The suspects, when put on trial, would be the first to be prosecuted under the country's new antipiracy law.

Are you confident of a successful prosecution?

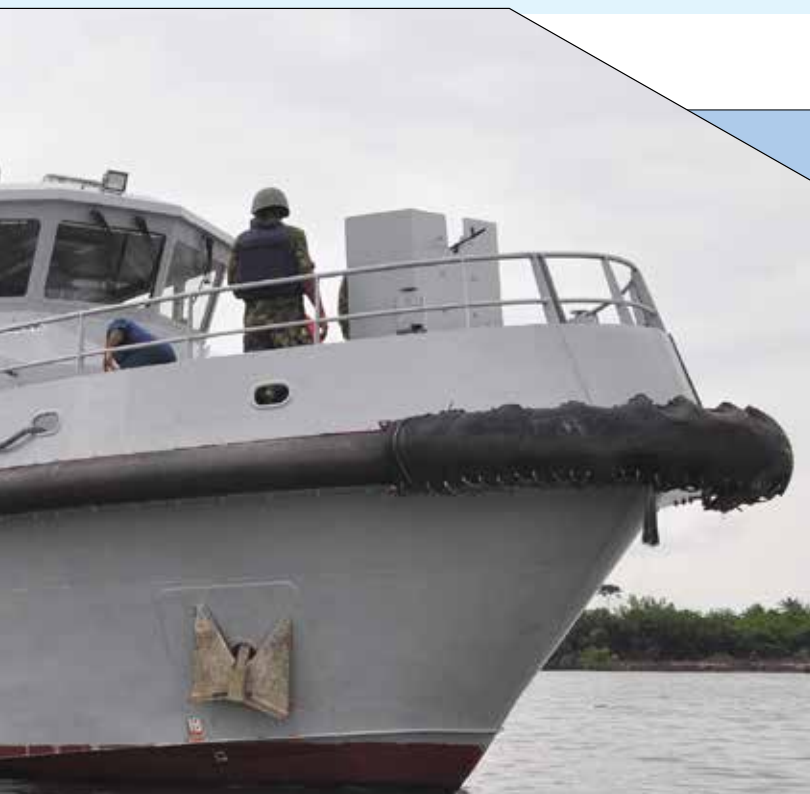
Yes, we are quite confident. Last year, in June, Mr. President signed into law the antipiracy law. And we have just developed our regulations that would facilitate and fast-track the judicial process during the trial of the suspects. This is a signal to the world that it is no longer business as usual, as the Nigerian government is determined to fight piracy head-on.

We understand the challenges when it comes to the arrest and prosecution of piracy suspects. You cannot successfully prosecute an arrested suspect at sea where there is no equipment or gadgets to take samples or specimens for evidence in court. So we need to train personnel of the Nigeria Police, whose responsibility it is to handle the prosecution. The Nigerian Navy, though having knowledgeable and well trained officers, also need the specialised training as regards the antipiracy law.

So far, we have trained 156 persons from the Nigerian Navy, NIMASA, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Nigeria Police, and office of the Attorney-General of the Federation, whose responsibility it is to put the suspects on trial.

How are you tackling the question of platforms for the fight against maritime crimes?

Talking about the platforms needed to combat security related challenges in our maritime domain, we would be relying mainly on the Deep Blue Project. Under the project, we have the C4i centre at Kirikiri, in Lagos, that provides surveillance in our waterways. Using the satellite system, the centre watches and records whatever goes on in our territorial waters and



NIMASA Vessel – MV Honour

exclusive economic zone.

Under the Deep Blue Project, we have a number of assets, including two Special Mission Vessels, 17 fast intervention vessels, two special mission aircraft, and three helicopters. About 80 per cent of the assets are already in the country, while some are due to arrive Nigeria in a couple of months.

How would you assess the reaction of the international community to Nigeria's efforts so far to tackle piracy in its waters?

I am happy to inform you that we recently received a letter from the IMO Secretary-General, Kitack Lim, congratulating Nigeria, NIMASA, and the Nigerian Navy for their efforts to ensure security in our waters. The Secretary-General noted, especially, the arrest of the 27 suspects and promised to continue to cooperate with Nigeria in the attempt to ensure security in our maritime domain.

Please, elaborate on the level of cooperation between NIMASA and other agencies in the effort to build a common front against maritime crimes and ensure security and safety in the country's waters.

Maritime safety and security are interwoven, they work hand in hand. Because of that, I would like to discuss them together.

Often, you find out that NIMASA has invested so much to provide certain infrastructure, like platforms, which you also find at NPA, NNPC, and other places. Oil companies and other private stakeholders also provide similar things. So the major challenge is how to harmonise the various efforts and avoid duplication of effort.

We are trying to take stock of our security assets. For instance, NIMASA has the C4i as our own system for overseeing the waterways, NPA has a similar thing,

which they call C3i, and the Nigerian Navy also has something similar, called Falcon Eye. We are trying to harmonise because we are all serving the same government. We have agreed to work on how to make these platforms interface with each other, so that in case there is a safety issue, the platforms can see and locate where that particular problem lies. So we are taking stock of what each player has. When we understand that, we would be able to know where the strength of each agency lies and then know where and how to harmonise all for the good of the industry. By this, we will build a concrete and solid platform that can fight maritime insecurity prudently.

There are non-state actors who assist us when we have the problem of platform or other issues. We can call them anytime and they come to our aid.

In the area of safety, we rely on our Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) at Takwa Bay in Lagos, which is also the Regional Maritime Coordination Centre that takes care of nine countries in Africa. With this, at the touch of a button, we know when a ship is in distress.

Wherever there is a challenge within these nine countries, the centre is mandated to respond. We have four such centres –at NIMASA's Nigerian Maritime Resource Development Centre, Kirikiri; Takwa Bay, Lagos; Bonny, in Rivers State; Escravos, in Delta State; and Oron, in Akwa Ibom State.

What have you done so far in the area of shipping development?

Shipping Development is the third element of the tripod. Shipping development has three legs, one has to do with fleet expansion. In terms of fleet expansion, we look at increase in indigenous ownership, which, obviously, has to do with Cabotage.





Dr. Bashir Jamoh

“The first thing we tried to introduce when we came on board was synergy and collaboration among players in the industry. We improved our relationship with the Nigerian Navy, Nigeria Police, Department of State Services (DSS), and other stakeholders.”

Fleet expansion has to do with indigenous ownership of vessels. We have tried to study the fleet owners in the last five years. The questions are: what is the position of fleet ownership in the country? Is indigenous ownership of ships increasing or decreasing? If it is increasing, why and how? If it is decreasing, why and how?

Our findings suggest that the Nigerian fleet has continued to deplete through the years and this is, apparently, due to the economic situation, lack of government incentives, as well as the non-disbursement of the CVFF.

Early this year, the Minister of Transportation inaugurated a committee, chaired by me, to review the guidelines for the Cabotage waiver cessation. The Cabotage guidelines, as you are aware, have been there since 2003. But up till now, we have never utilised it, so most of the provisions have become obsolete.

We have concluded the review. Very soon the committee will meet and endorse the new guidelines and present them to the Honourable Minister. Soon, we would begin the disbursement of the CVFF.

The second leg of shipping development has to do with the ship repairs. We have a multibillion naira modular floating dock. NIMASA initiated and brought it. It arrived Nigeria last year. We have had challenges as to where to berth and commence operations on the modular floating dock. Fortunately, we now have an agreement with the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) to berth it in their shipyard.

So any moment from now, we will move the floating dock from the Naval Dockyard to the continental shipyard, and we will enter into an agreement with NPA and the continental shipyard on its management.

It is one thing to have the floating dock, and another thing to have the stakeholders' confidence to take their vessels for repairs at the modular floating dock. Within the last 100 days, our target has been to ensure that

we move the modular floating dock to the new place and commence operations. We have made progress in that direction.

The floating dock, when operational, would provide huge employment and training opportunities for Nigerians, in addition to revenue for the government.

Today most of the ship repair companies in the country are operating at full capacity. So the NIMASA floating dock holds enormous potential for the country.

What is your plan for seafarers' development?

The seafarers' issue is an international issue, it affects every country. We don't have enough ships in the world to train seafarers. So to tackle the issue of training, NIMASA introduced the national seafarers' development programme in 2008. From 2008 to 2015, we have been sending Nigerians for maritime studies. We started with a 60/40 arrangement, where the seafarer's state of origin provided 60 per cent of the cost of training, and NIMASA provided 40 per cent. With this arrangement, people were sent to study maritime-related courses in countries like Egypt, UK, and India, and obtain the Certificate of Competency (CoC). Then, we would place them on vessels for 18 months, depending on the field of study. That is the first window.

The second window was where individual seafarers provided the 60 per cent to take up slots the states could not utilise, and NIMASA matched that with 40 per cent for them to go and study. The third window is the 100 per cent scholarship by NIMASA. Here, we select persons through due process and send them to different institutions to study on scholarship.

We have trained about 3,000 persons under the programme.

But due to issues bordering on lack of planning, a number of them have finished without sea time. NIMASA has intervened to try to secure sea time for them on a first come, first served basis. Sea time is expensive, so we do this based on availability of funds.



Suspected pirates arrested by personnel of the Nigerian Navy

Nigeria Set to Prosecute alleged Pirates

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IMASA restated its commitment to collaboration among relevant agencies and stakeholders for the security of the country's maritime domain. Director-General of the Agency, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, stated this in Lagos during the official handover of pirates arrested by the Nigerian Navy for prosecution.

The 10 pirates had on May 15 attacked and boarded a Chinese vessel, MV HAILUFANG II, off the coast of Côte d'Ivoire and directed it towards Nigerian waters. They were arrested by the Nigerian Navy, which had dispatched a ship to intercept the vessel after it got an alert.

The prosecution of the pirates would be the first trial of bandits arrested in international waters under the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act signed into law in June last year by President Muhammadu Buhari. The law made Nigeria the first in West and Central Africa to have a distinct antipiracy legislation.

Jamoh attributed the successful operation that led to the arrest of the pirates and rescue of the ship and its crew to collaboration between NIMASA and the Nigerian Navy. He said the Agency will continue to work with relevant security agencies in order to achieve its goal of eradicating piracy and other forms of illegality in Nigerian waters.

The Director-General stated, "We have just witnessed

the handover of pirates. This is as a result of the robust collaboration between NIMASA and the Nigerian Navy. There has been a lot of synergy between NIMASA and the Navy with regard to the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences Act.

"I also want to seize this opportunity to thank Mr. President for signing the antipiracy law, which would facilitate proper prosecution of the pirates."

Jamoh, who was represented by the Agency's Head of Legal Services, Mr. Victor Egejuru, said with the antipiracy law, there was ample legal framework to prosecute pirates and other perpetrators of maritime offences in the country.

Commander of Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) Beecroft, Commodore Ibrahim Shettima, who gave details of the naval operation, said the vessel had 18 crew members, comprising Chinese, Ghanaians, and Ivorians.

Shettima said, "On interception of the vessel about 140nm south of Lagos Fairway Buoy, the pirates had refused to comply with the orders of the Navy ship, hence the Nigerian Navy had to conduct an opposed boarding of the vessel. All ship crew were safely rescued, while the 10 pirates were also arrested."

He stressed the need for increased regional cooperation and information-sharing, disclosing that the arrest of the pirates was due to a tip-off by the Beninese Navy. Shettima warned criminal elements to stay away from Nigerian waters and the Gulf of Guinea, saying the Navy has the capability to deal with such threats.

Ambulances donated to some states by NIMASA in aid of efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19



COVID-19: NIMASA Presents Ventilators, Response Vessels, Ambulance To Lagos State

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he Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) presented a number of medical equipment and items, including ventilators, ambulances, buses, and response vessels to Lagos State Government towards the fight against the spread of COVID-19.

While presenting the items to the governor of Lagos State, the Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, stated that the Agency considered it necessary to make the donations to the state, the epicentre of the virus in Nigeria, to help the government's effort to contain the disease. He commended Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu for his proactive response to the pandemic.

"I want to commend Mr. Governor for his exemplary leadership in the management of this pandemic," Jamoh said. "We, as a regulatory Agency, felt it was necessary to support the state as responsible tenants of Lagos, and we hope this would go a long way in our collective effort to fight COVID-19."

Jamoh disclosed that the Agency was also assisting the state government with N20 million, adding that all the geopolitical zones would benefit from the Agency's humanitarian gesture.

He said, "Our donations are not limited to Lagos, this is just the flag-off. We will also make donations to other states affected and ensure that all geopolitical zones of the country benefit. This we will continue to do as we fight against this deadly scourge."

Commenting on the vessels that were made available to the state, the NIMASA DG stated that they were meant to assist Lagos State to respond to incidents

in the coastal areas. He explained that the crew on board would be volunteer staff from the Agency, who had been trained to man the Fast Intervention Vessels.

Jamoh also appreciated the Federal Government for its timely response to the pandemic, stating that the government has created roles for the relevant agencies in the fight against the virus. He particularly commended the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) for its prompt response to infected persons, and appealed to the media to play its role of sensitising the public on measures to contain the disease.

Receiving the items on behalf of Lagos State, the Commissioner for Finance, Mr. Rabiul Olowo, said the state government was overwhelmed by the goodwill and support from NIMASA.

"This is most welcome and on behalf of the governor and the good people of Lagos State, I say, thank you," Olowo stated, adding, "As you are all aware, Lagos State is the epicentre of this pandemic in Nigeria. Everyone is fighting this pandemic across the globe."

"We have seen the response of the state and the true leadership of the governor. This donation will go a long way in supporting and complementing the state's efforts towards fighting this pandemic."

Items handed over to the Lagos State Government included ventilators, ambulances, Fast Intervention Vessels, buses, oxygen concentrators, personal protective equipment, and hand sanitisers.

NIMASA also pledged that there were handy volunteers from the Agency and experts ready to work with the government in the use of fire engines for the fumigation of public places.



L-R: Executive Director, Finance and Admin, Chudi Offodile; Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Victor Ochei; Executive Director, Operations, Ahmed Shehu; Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; and Commissioner for Finance, Lagos State, Mr. Rabiul Olowo, during the presentation of the medical aids and equipment to the state



Anesthetic workstations donated by NIMASA



Jamoh (right) making a presentation to the Flag Officer Commanding (FOC) Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Oladele Bamidele Daji, during a working visit by the FOC to the NIMASA headquarters, Lagos

Nigeria Begins Trial of Pirates under New Law

...Plans incentives for maritime operators

Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi



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iming to rid Nigeria's waterways of criminalities and reassure the global community that it was getting on top of the security issues in its maritime domain, the country commenced the prosecution of suspected pirates under the Suppression of Piracy and

Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act. Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, disclosed this during interactions with journalists in Lagos.

The Nigerian Navy had arrested the pirates, recently, with intelligence support from NIMASA, and their trial will be the first under the antipiracy law signed in June last year by President Muhammadu Buhari.

Jamoh said the Agency was mounting a spirited campaign to root out piracy and armed robbery in the country's waters. He said Nigerian waters were now safer for navigation, as the proactive approach of NIMASA to safety and security at sea had started yielding fruit, as evidenced by the multiple arrests of suspected pirates in the second quarter of the year.

The Director-General revealed that NIMASA had sent a proposal to the Federal Government on the provision of incentives for stakeholders in the maritime sector. The Federal Ministry of Transportation was also putting final touches to arrangements for the disbursement of the Cabotage Vessel Financing Fund (CVFF), he revealed, stressing that operators in the maritime industry would soon begin to access the fund.

Jamoh said the use of intelligence and technology in the fight against crime was the hallmark of his administration.

Members of the Fourth Estate, who were at the briefings, pledged their support for the Agency's efforts to get rid of the pernicious obstacles to safe and secure navigation in the country's waters.

Jamoh, who launched a three-point agenda focused on Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, and Shipping Development, with the acronym 3s, on assumption of office, stated, "Collapsing our agenda into security, safety and shipping development has given us a bird's-eye view of the challenges inherent in our sector. Our strategy of nipping piracy in the bud is yielding positive fruit and that is why the Navy and the Police have arrested

a total of 27 suspected pirates in the last two months."

He added, "Our findings have revealed that these criminals work with the cooperation of international allies and that is what makes them sophisticated. We have set out to tackle them through intelligence gathering and collaboration with relevant stakeholders. Our recent arrests have shown the international community that we are not handling illegalities in our waters with kid gloves."

He expressed delight in the changing international opinion on safety and security in Nigerian waters, as seen in a recent congratulatory letter by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to Nigeria for its zeal to make the country's waters safe and secure.

On the question of incentives for the maritime sector, Jamoh stated, "We have made proposals to President Muhammadu Buhari through the Honourable Minister of Transportation, Rt. Honourable Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, for approval to grant different kinds of incentives that would help grow the industry. We are also working to ensure the disbursement of the CVFF. We believe that other sectors, like manufacturing and aviation, have leveraged on this sort of incentive to grow and that is the reason we are also looking in that direction."

Jamoh also spoke on the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP), saying it is being redesigned to make it more effective. He appealed to the media to ensure adequate and fair reportage of the activities of NIMASA in order to properly inform and educate the public. He said the sector had the potential to exponentially grow the Nigerian economy, given the enormous flora and fauna in the maritime environment, besides mineral resources and shipping activities.

Speaking during the engagements, President, Nigerian Guild of Editors, Mustapha Isah, said the media was willing to support NIMASA to achieve its mandate. Isah said the success of the Agency was vital to the whole country. He urged his colleagues to give more attention to maritime developments in their reports.

NIMASA and the Nigerian Navy recently got commendations for their efforts to ensure security in the country's territorial waters and the Gulf of Guinea.

'Government Needs Cooperation from All Sectors to Fight Coronavirus'

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he Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) and Chairman of the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19, Mr. Boss Mustapha, says the Federal Government requires the cooperation of all and sundry in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic

ravaging the world. Mustapha stated this in Abuja while receiving, on behalf of the Federal Government, volunteer personnel, ambulances, buses, and some medical equipment donated by the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) to the COVID-19 taskforce. He described the fight against COVID-19 as a collective responsibility.

Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, said the Agency was deploying its existing facilities, such as fast intervention vessels, ambulances, and buses, among others, to support the efforts of the federal and state governments to solve a national medical emergency requiring all hands on deck.

The materials donated included ventilators, oxygen concentrators, personal protective equipment, rapid test kits, and hand sanitisers, as well as a cash donation of N30 million.

Commending NIMASA for the gesture, Mustapha advised other organisations and well-meaning Nigerians to emulate the Agency and support the effort to curb the spread of the pandemic, so that Nigerians could live their normal lives again.

The SGF stated, "I wish to restate that this is a war on Nigeria and the Federal Government, in conjunction with other stakeholders, will continue to do all it takes to win this war, as we are more prepared than ever before to protect the lives of our citizens."

Mustapha also spoke on the lockdown, saying, "Let me encourage Nigerians to endure this lockdown order, as it is not intended to trample on their fundamental human rights. Rather, it is to assist government trace infected persons and curb the spread. In no distant time, we will all go back to our normal lives."

Speaking at the presentation of the materials, Jamoh praised the Federal Government's proactive steps to contain the pandemic. He declared that COVID-19 was a challenge Nigeria must overcome, saying he is pleased to see that the Agency's existing facilities are coming in handy in the attempt to contain the outbreak.

The Director-General, who was represented



Coordinator, Abuja Zonal Office, NIMASA, Mr. Zailani Musa Attah (left), who represented the NIMASA DG, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, handing over medical facilities and equipment donated by the Agency to the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) and Chairman, Presidential Task Force on COVID-19, Mr. Boss Mustapha, in support of the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, in Abuja.

by Coordinator, Abuja Zonal Office of the Agency, Mr. Zailani Musa Attah, stated, "We at NIMASA have decided to deploy our extant capacities and facilities in the fight against this pandemic. We did not invest new funds in purchasing these ambulances and buses. We simply deployed them to fight this common enemy. COVID-19 is a common enemy and all hands must be on deck to win the war against it at this critical time in the country's history.

"We have had to readjust our priorities to contribute our quota in the urgent need to get Nigeria out of this national emergency."

Jamoh added, "I wish to commend the efforts of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19. I salute your dexterity in ensuring Nigeria is totally free from this virus. As a responsible Agency, we will continue to support government's efforts across the board and I am confident that, collectively, we will win this fight, with the help of the Almighty God."

NIMASA also extended its humanitarian gesture to Anambra State, where it donated medical materials for use in the treatment of infected persons and halting the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

Secretary to the Anambra State Government, Professor Solo Chukwulobelu, who received the materials on behalf of the state government, commended the Management of NIMASA and pledged that the materials will be well utilised. Among the materials donated were ventilators, oxygen concentrators, and hand sanitisers.

MARITIME:

Deep Blue Project to Secure All Anchorage Areas – FG

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he Federal Government has concluded arrangements to make the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure, also called the Deep Blue Project, the central security architecture for all anchorage areas in the Nigerian

maritime domain. It said this was to reduce the cost of shipping of goods into the country. Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Ms Hadiza Bala Usman, disclosed this in Lagos after a meeting with the Executive Management of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) led by the Director-General, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, at the Agency's headquarters.

Usman also disclosed that NPA and NIMASA had agreed to work out modalities for removal of wrecks and derelicts that might hinder navigation in the Nigerian waters. She urged more collaboration between the two agencies for the growth of the maritime industry. Usman also disclosed that arrangements were in top gear to berth the NIMASA floating dockyard permanently so that it could commence operations.

According to her, "We had a range of discussions bordering on the Secure Anchorage Area. Our supervising ministry desires the Deep Blue Project to provide security for all anchorage areas in the country. Aside saving the country a lot of money, it will ensure that the security of the Nigerian maritime domain is given a focal attention."

Usman also disclosed that both agencies agreed to interlink their intelligence systems, NPA's C3i and NIMASA's C4i, in order to exchange information that would assist the Nigerian Navy's response to security.

"We have the C3i Command, Control and Intelligence centre at NPA and NIMASA has the C4i, while the Navy has Falcon Eye," she stated, adding, "We need to interlink these facilities and we believe that this would assist the country in response to maritime



One of the Special Mission Vessels under the Deep Blue Project

security threats."

Jamoh restated the need to harmonise the working models of the maritime agencies to avoid duplication of duties, which increases cost. He said the Secure Anchorage Area, which had been the subject of debate among stakeholders, would now be covered under the multi-spectrum security architecture, the Deep Blue Project.

He said, "There is absolutely no need for us to have private security in our maritime space. You are aware that this increases the cost of shipping in our country. By the time the Deep Blue Project becomes fully operational, the cost of shipping would drastically reduce."

The NIMASA Director-General pointed out that the floating dockyard would employ hundreds of Nigerians and also earn huge revenue for the country. He said, "We are finalising arrangements with the NPA to get a permanent berth for the floating dockyard. The interesting thing is that aside earning a huge amount of revenue, it also has the capacity to employ over 300 Nigerian youths directly."

From Left: The Consular General, Republic of Korea, Mr. Kim Ln-Taek; Commander, Maritime Guard Command, NIMASA, Commodore Aniette Ibok; and Second Secretary, Consular of the Ghana High Commission, Mr. David Ako Sowah, at the official hand over of suspected vessel Marine 707 and 51 crew members to their respective authorities in Lagos.



PIRACY: Nigeria Hands Over Suspected Vessel, Crew to Ghana

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he Nigerian government has handed over the fishing vessel suspected of carrying out illegal activities in the Gulf of Guinea, Marine 707, to the Ghanaian authorities for further investigation and possible prosecution. Nigeria also handed over the 51 crew members, including 48

Ghanaians and three South Koreans, to the governments of Ghana and Korea, respectively.

The Nigerian Navy arrested the vessel, which had authorisation to fish in Ghana and Benin waters, on May 18 around the southwest of Lagos waters with her Automatic Identification System (AIS) switched off. This followed suspicions that the vessel was used for piracy or as a mother ship to conduct piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. The Navy handed her over to the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) after preliminary investigations.

Speaking during the official handover of the Ghanaian-flagged vessel and the crew to the respective authorities, the Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, said the Navy-NIMASA partnership had put Nigeria in a stronger position to win the war against piracy and other illegal acts at sea. Jamoh, who was represented by the Agency's Commander, Maritime Guard Command, Commodore Aniete Ibok, disclosed that though preliminary investigation could not establish that the vessel and her crew were directly linked to piracy, the vessel still ran foul of international law by switching off its AIS 36 times in the last six months, three of which were in Nigerian waters.

According to him, "We are handing over this vessel to the Ghanaian authorities in the spirit of the bilateral cooperation both countries enjoy. We have done our preliminary investigations and we are yet to establish any concrete evidence against the vessel, but again, we would not know what she was doing whenever she turned off her AIS, which occurred 36 times without being logged in her record book in line with international protocols, and three of these were in our domain.

"However, in the spirit of brotherhood that Ghana and Nigeria enjoy, we are handing over the vessel to Ghana for further investigation."

The NIMASA Director-General warned that individuals or organisations perpetrating illegalities in the Gulf of Guinea would face the full wrath of the law, with the new antipiracy law.

Jamoh said, "We will not condone any act of illegality in our maritime space. We have improved our intelligence sharing with relevant agencies and with what we are doing now, in no distant time, piracy will be a thing of the past in the Gulf of Guinea.

"We have a robust antipiracy law that will deal with perpetrators of illegalities in our waters."

While receiving the vessel and the crew on behalf of the Ghana Maritime Authority, Second Secretary, Consular of Ghana in Nigeria, David Ako Sowah, commended the Nigerian authorities for their professionalism in the handling of the case. He said what Nigeria did was for the benefit of all the countries in the Gulf Guinea.

Sowah said, "As the big brother in this region, Nigeria has done well in showing a lot of maturity in handling this case and I want to assure you that Ghana would also look into more collaborations in Nigeria to ensure that the Gulf of Guinea remains safe for maritime activities."

Equally speaking, Consular General of the Republic of Korea in Nigeria, Kim Ln-taek, commended those handling the case. Ln-taek said his findings from the captain of the ship, a Korean, revealed that the AIS was bad. He noted that the vessel and her crew erred by not following the protocols of logging it in the record books when the AIS was down, stating, however, that he is happy that the case has been resolved up till this point.

The vessel with International Maritime Organisation (IMO) number 7419755 and registration number 316880, was owned and operated by World Marine Company Limited, Japan. At the time of arrest it had 51 crew on board, all Ghanaians, except three from the Republic of Korea.



BASHIR JAMOH: A Burning Passion for Service

BY VINCENT OBIA

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popular African proverb says the morning determines the day. The morning sets the tone for the rest of the day. And experts say morning habits play a significant role in the success of an individual.

That is why Dr. Bashir Jamoh's early steps as Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) merit attention by stakeholders and the public, generally.

His coming happened under the shadow of COVID-19, at the start of the devastating hit to the national and global economies by the coronavirus pandemic. The world was virtually locked down, but maritime came to humanity's rescue, offering strategic movement for badly needed goods and services. Jamoh was there to provide crucial direction for the safe and secure movement of the seafarers and the vital supplies they delivered.

NIMASA developed and published new guidelines, via marine notice, designating seafarers and dockworkers as essential



“We created awareness as regards what to do in the event of attack by pirates or sea robbers. We started with our own territorial waters and escalated it to the Gulf of Guinea.”

workers who should be exempted from travel restrictions. It was in line with newly endorsed protocols by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) designed to lift barriers to crew change and support the shipping sector, amid the pandemic.

Maritime safety and security are topics that are close to Jamoh’s heart. Doubling down on some of the industry’s biggest problems on assumption office in March, he flagged commitment to Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, and Shipping Development as his administration’s roadmap to the sector’s progress in the next four years.

“I subsumed the critical responsibilities of the Agency into three pillars, a tripod, which I called Triple S or 3S, so that it can be easily remembered and understood,” he said. “They are Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, and Shipping Development. In this 3S you have the entire gamut of the mandate of the Agency.”

Jamoh is no stranger to the challenges in the maritime sector. He has seen the industry’s ups and downs in the last 32 years. And with the wisdom of hindsight – and foresight – he has set for his administration’s targets to overcome the challenges and move the industry forward.

The route is rough and long, but Jamoh knows the right place to start and how to invest where the shoe pinches. With great determination, he has set about fixing the mechanism for solution to the security issues behind the bad press that Nigeria consistently gets in the global maritime community.

“The first thing we tried to do when we came on board was to ensure collaboration and synergy

among the actors,” Jamoh stated. “We improved our relationship with the Nigerian Navy, Nigeria Police, Department of State Services (DSS), as well as the stakeholders. We created awareness as regards what to do in the event of attack by pirates or sea robbers. We started with our own territorial waters and escalated it to the Gulf of Guinea.”

The new synergy between NIMASA, Nigerian Navy, Nigeria Police, DSS, and other maritime security actors in the last few months has yielded visible results. About 27 suspected pirates and sea robbers have been arrested, the first since 2016, in a strong message to the criminal elements and the international community. These suspects would be the first to be tried under Nigeria’s new antipiracy law, the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act, which was signed into law in June last year by President Muhammadu Buhari. The law made Nigeria the first in West and Central Africa to have one such distinct legislation.

The law aims to ensure safe and secure shipping at sea by criminalising and prosecuting piracy and other breaches. It provides a legal basis for the criminalisation and prosecution of piracy and other maritime crimes through the country’s maritime security enforcement agencies: the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA.

The Antipiracy Act contains unmistakable definitions of piracy and other maritime offences. It has provisions for penalties upon conviction for maritime crimes, restitution of violated maritime assets to owners, and forfeiture of proceeds of maritime crime to the government.

“The current management of NIMASA takes very seriously the question of synergy among the maritime stakeholders, both locally and internationally.”



The law vests exclusive jurisdiction in the Federal High Court and provides relevant authorities with powers to seize pirate vessels or aircraft in Nigerian or international waters.

As part of the deliberate effort to ensure maritime security through concerted actions, NIMASA is leading moves to harmonise and intensify information sharing among the surveillance systems of the key maritime agencies. Jamoh is determined to achieve the synchronisation of NIMASA's C4i with the Navy's Falcon Eye, and the C3i, which belongs to the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA).

The Command, Control, Communication, Computers, and Intelligence Centre (C4i Centre), which commenced operations on a 24-hour basis last year, is the intelligence arm of the Deep Blue Project, also known as the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure. The initiative aims to comprehensively tackle insecurity on Nigeria's territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone, up to the Gulf of Guinea.

The Deep Blue Project is a brainchild of the Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi. The policy intervention takes into consideration the lapses of previous security arrangements and seeks to address them, according to Jamoh.

“When the minister came in at the inception of the present government in 2015, he sought to emplace a maritime security architecture that is strong enough to overcome the failures of the past systems, sophisticated enough to outpace the ever-

growing complexities of crime, and flexible enough to fit into the country's own peculiarities as well as international best standards,” the Director-General said. “Those were the thoughts that went into the making of the Deep Blue Project, and that is why the current management of NIMASA takes very seriously the question of synergy among the maritime stakeholders, both locally and internationally.”

He added, “In trying to harmonise, we have agreed to make these platforms interface with each other because we all are serving the same government. After taking stock, we would be able to see where the gaps exist in terms of what is still lacking, so that we can connect the dots. With this, we can build a concrete platform to fight maritime insecurity.”

There have also been vigorous attempts by NIMASA to ensure safety at sea. The Agency hosts the Regional Maritime Coordination Centre (RMCC), located at the Nigerian Maritime Resource Development Centre, Kirikiri, Lagos. The Lagos RMCC, one of the five designated Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres in Africa, is the secretariat of the West and Central African Search and Rescue Region. It coordinates Search and Rescue activities, and assists craft or persons in distress within the waters of nine countries in the region, namely, Republic of Benin, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Congo Democratic Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Togo.

Besides the one located at NIMASA's Nigerian Maritime Resource Development Centre, which is



fully up and running, there are three other centres in the country. They are located at Tarkwa Bay, in the Lagos/Western axis, Bonny, Escravos, and Oron. These three are expected to be fully operational by the end of this year.

The search for maritime safety and security through collaborative efforts has not been limited to domestic stakeholders. NIMASA co-chairs a working group of international stakeholders, including International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO), an association of independent tanker owners throughout the world; International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO); International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), which brings together the main international trade association in the shipping industry, representing shipowners and operators in all sectors and trades; international oil companies; and Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), the largest international shipping association representing shipowners, with membership in over 120 countries. BIMCO members control about 65 per cent of the world's tonnage.

The working group meets monthly with representation from the Nigerian Navy, Nigeria Police, Federal Ministry of Transportation, and local stakeholders. The meeting discusses issues of common interest and solutions are proffered, with the ultimate aim of ensuring safety and security in Nigerian waters.

The recent initiatives, especially the attempt to

stem piracy in Nigerian waters and the Gulf of Guinea, have earned Nigeria special praise from IMO. In a letter to the NIMASA Director-General last month, Secretary-General of IMO, Kitack Lim, said with the current prosecution of arrested pirates, Nigeria was sending a "strong and valuable message" to the global community about its commitment to safety and security in its waters and the Gulf of Guinea.

Lim commended the steps "taken by Nigeria to address maritime security threats in the region." He stated, in a glowing appraisal of Jamoh's style at the wheel of power, "I commend your leadership and proactive response. I would also like to reiterate my congratulations to the Nigerian Navy on the successful capture and arrest of pirates from the fishing trawler Hailufeng 11, and more recently on the rescue of the crew members of the containership Tommi Ritscher.

"Those actions, together with all the other initiatives you highlighted in our meeting, including progress with the Deep Blue Project, send a strong and valuable message to the international community with respect to the considerable efforts your government is making to curb piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Gulf of Guinea."

Many believe Jamoh's proactive early steps are likely to prove very consequential in determining the trajectory of the maritime sector in the years ahead. As one stakeholder put it, "This voyage certainly has the right man in the wheelhouse."

NIMASA Appoints New Spokesman

The Agency appointed Mr. Philip Kyanet as its new Head of Public Relations. The appointment was part of an ongoing restructuring by the newly appointed Executive Management of NIMASA led by Dr. Bashir Jamoh. Kyanet replaced Mr. Isichei Osamgbi, who was deployed to the Special Duties (External Relations and Technical Cooperation) Unit in the Office of the Director-General.

The new spokesman is a member of several professional bodies, including the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) and Chartered Institute of Transport Administration of Nigeria (CIOTA). He has over 15 years work experience in NIMASA, nine of

which is in the Public Relations Unit.

A graduate of History from the prestigious Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Kyanet also holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Public Administration from the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Badagry, Lagos. He has attended many professional courses locally and internationally.

His working career, spanning over two decades, has seen him at various times at the Federal Ministry of Solid Minerals, as Personal Assistant to the Hon. Minister, the late Sir Patrick Ibrahim Yakowa; National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), as Head, Abuja Liaison Office; Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST); and the defunct Joint Maritime Labour



Philip Kyanet

Industrial Council (JOMALIC), before its merger with National Maritime Authority (NMA) to form NIMASA in August 2006.

Until this appointment, Kyanet was an Assistant Director in the Public Relations Unit.

According to the Director-General, the ongoing redeployment exercise is intended to inject fresh ideas from all staff across board with the aim of reinvigorating the mandate of the Agency.

... As Zailani Takes Over as Abuja Zonal Coordinator

NIMASA also approved the posting of Mr. Zailani Attah Musa as its new Abuja Zonal Coordinator. Zailani replaced Alhaji Ali Indabawa, who recently retired after 35 years of meritorious service to the Agency.

The newly deployed Zonal Coordinator is a member of several professional bodies, including Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) and Chartered Institute of Transport Administration of Nigeria (CIOTA). He has over 27 years work experience in the Agency.

Zailani holds an HND in Business Administration and a Post Graduate Diploma in Port, Shipping and Transport Management from Rotterdam Maritime University, and MBA in the International Business from the prestigious Maastricht School of Management (MSM), all in the Netherlands. He has attended several international courses, and has worked in almost every department of the Agency in his nearly 30 years' career in NIMASA.

Zailani was Assistant Director in charge of Final Billing at the Agency; Assistant Zonal Coordinator, Central



Zailani Attah Musa

Zone, Warri; Port Services Controller, Calabar; and Assistant Port Services Controller, Onne Port, in Rivers State.

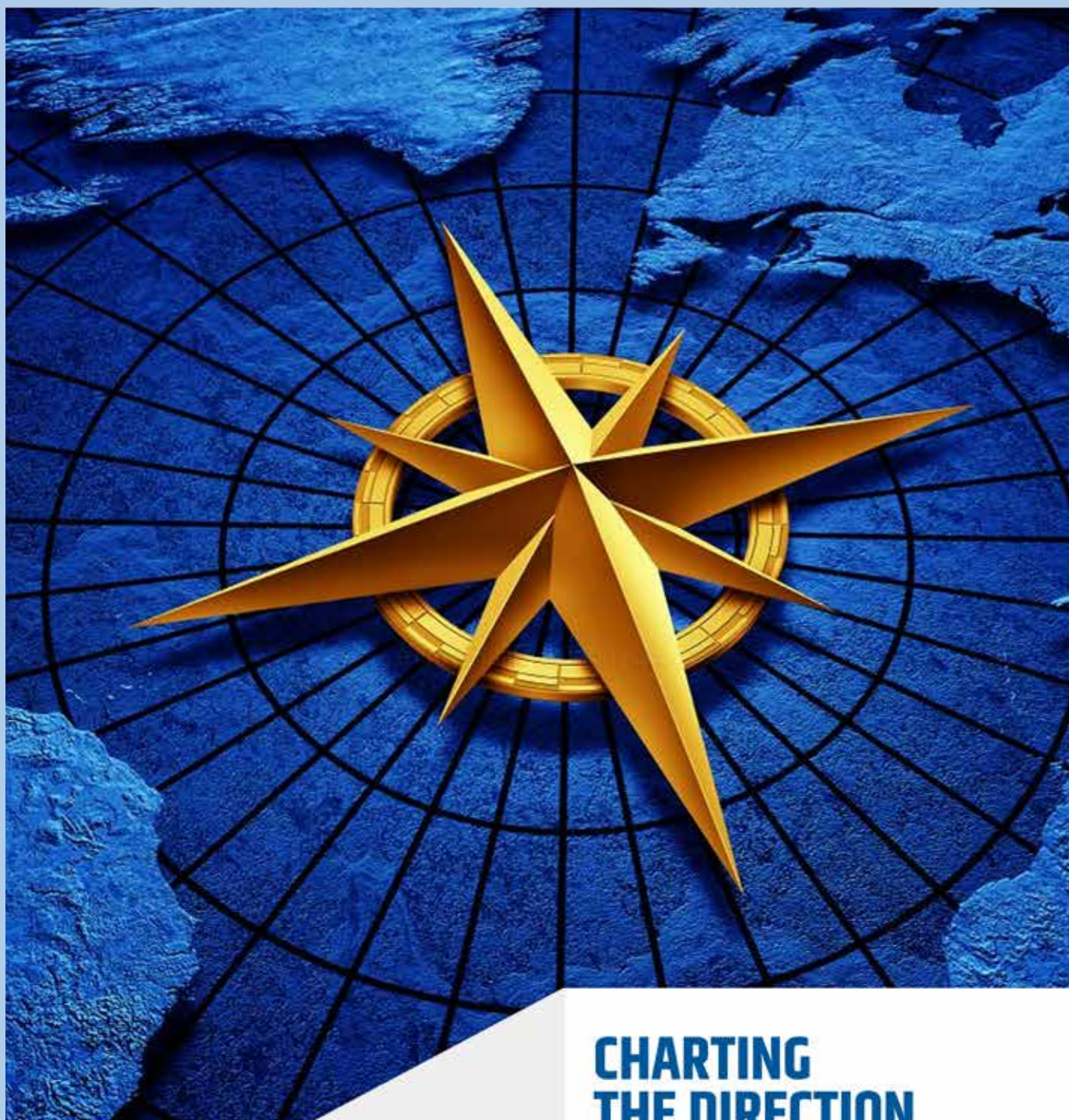
Zubairu, Shippers' Council PR Head



Rakiya Zubairu

Nigeria Shippers' Council appointed Rakiya Zubairu as Head, Public Relations. Zubairu has 21 years experience with the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), where she covered politics, business, and the State House, and also anchored Network programmes. She has worked with the Bank of Industry, from where she took a two-year leave of absence in 2007 to serve as Special Adviser on Communications to then Minister of Health, Professor Onyebuchi Chukwu.

Rakiya is an alumna of the University of Maryland. She also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Government and Politics, and a Master's degree in Political Science from the University of Lagos.



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L-R: Managing Director, Ports and Terminal Multiservices Limited, Ascanio Russo; Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; and Executive Secretary, Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC), Barrister Hassan Bello, during a meeting with stakeholders at the head office of NIMASA in Lagos

COVID-19: NIMASA, Shippers' Council Collaborate to Sustain Shipping

A

gainst the background of the coronavirus pandemic, Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, said the Agency was working in partnership with the Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC) to ensure safe and unimpeded shipping. Jamoh stated that the guidelines for vessels calling at Nigerian ports, recently issued by the Agency, were to make sure shipping was conducted in a way that did not allow the spread of COVID-19 or endanger the workers. He spoke in

Lagos when the Executive Secretary of NSC, Barrister Hassan Bello, led some stakeholders, including those in shipping companies, on a visit to the NIMASA head office.

The Director-General said while the Federal Government was concerned about the lives of the citizens, the economy must be sustained to support lives and livelihoods. He acknowledged that the coronavirus pandemic had slowed down activities in the sector, and appealed for more understanding from stakeholders, saying the global economy is going through trying times.



"We are in trying times and all hands must be on deck to sustain the Nigerian economy," Jamoh said. He added, "Let me assure all stakeholders and the shipping community that on our part as a regulatory Agency, we will continue to embrace collaboration. This is a phase and it will soon be over, because today's pains are necessary for tomorrow's gains."

He elaborated on the guidelines, saying they are issued in consultation with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and in line with global best practices.

Jamoh, however, said the guidelines were still open to review, all in the interest of the stakeholders.

He stated, "The world was not prepared for the pandemic and that is why we are trying to ease the pressure on our industry, while taking necessary precautions to safeguard lives. We will continue to review these guidelines, where necessary, to ensure that shipping does not suffer, especially when it comes to movement of medical facilities through the sea."

Bello spoke in a similar vein, and appealed for

more cooperation from the shipping companies and stakeholders. He assured that the Federal Government agencies in the maritime sector would work together to improve information sharing through a single data window to help the sector to grow.

According to him, "At this period, we must sustain our economy through shipping, though, it is a delicate balance, considering the havoc the pandemic has caused the world. That is why we are working hand in hand to ensure port activities continue, while not being detrimental to human lives."

Earlier, representatives of some shipping companies, who attended the meeting, appealed to NIMASA to consider voyages less than 14 days in future reviews of the guideline for vessels calling at the country's ports to avoid undue delays and port congestion. They commended the proactive efforts of the Agency in issuing the notice.

Managing Director, PIL Shipping, Jack Langrishe; Managing Director, Ports and Terminal Multiservice Limited, Ascanio Russo; General Manager, ARKAS Line, Iain Lindsay; and the Executive Directors of NIMASA were also at the meeting.



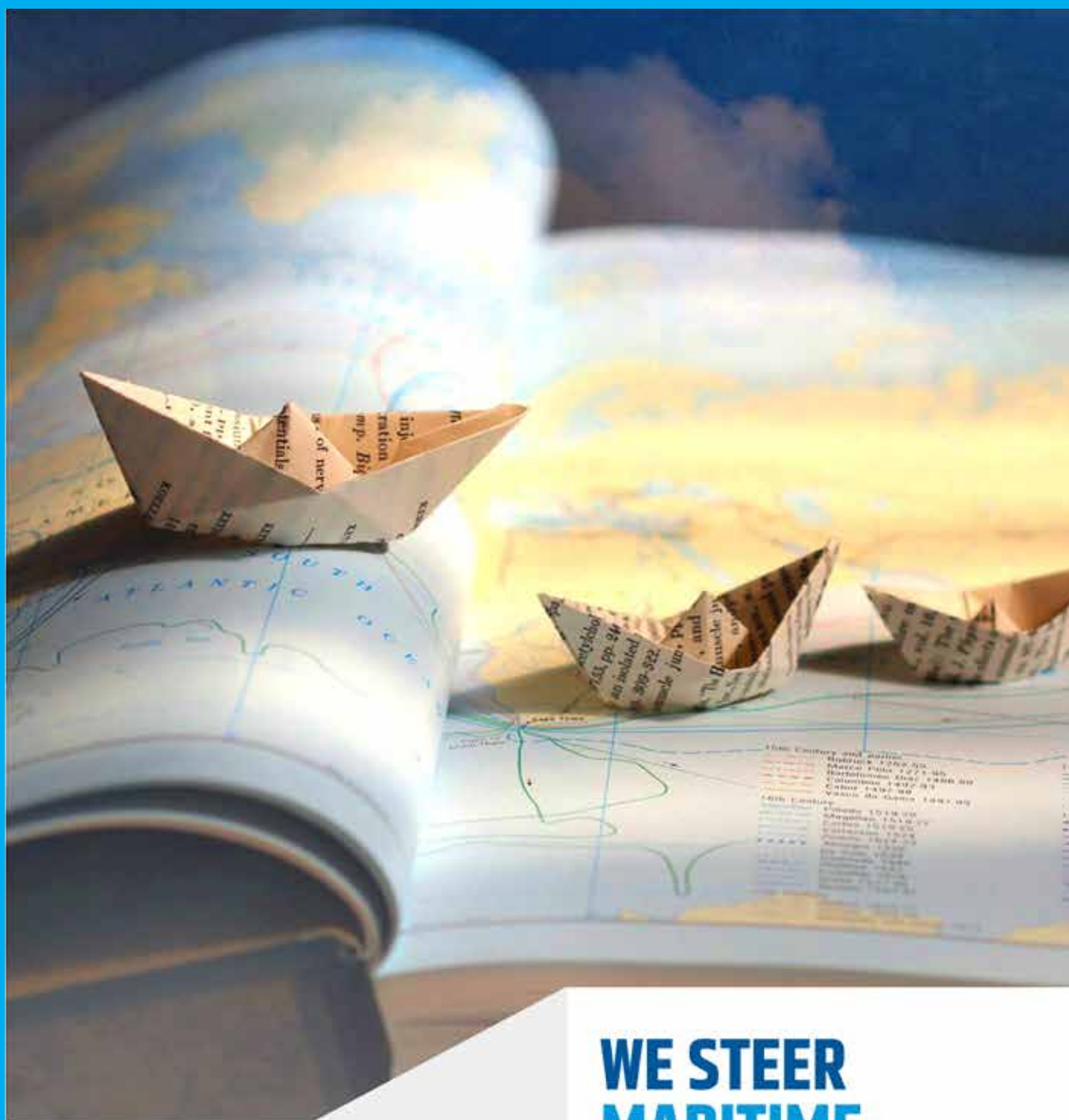
Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (right), and Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, during a working visit by the NIMASA DG to the Force headquarters in Abuja.



Director, Legal Services Unit, NIMASA, Mr. Victor Egejuru (left), discussing with the Commander, NNS Beecroft, Nigerian Navy, Commodore Ibrahim Shettima, at the Western Naval Command, Lagos



Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (third right); flanked by Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Victor Ochei (second left); Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Chudi Offodile (second right); Executive Director, Operations, Shehu Ahmed (right); publisher of Shipping World Magazine, Asu Beks (third left); and publisher, Business and Maritime Magazine, Okey Ibeke, during the Director-General's engagement with maritime editors in Lagos.



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Sports: Pandemic Brings Everyone Closer Together

PHOTO CREDIT: <http://unisci24.com/>

Ganiyu Alayaki looks at lessons in unity humanity can take from the sporting world amid COVID-19

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he world entered 2020 with hopes, aspirations, and plans. But COVID-19 struck and shattered most of what was planned and hoped for. Then, confusion set in, first, regarding a proper name for the deadly virus, and, of course, a cure for it. Yet, a third confusion related to how to manage physical distancing, one of the most popular words in the new medical lexicon imposed on the world by the pandemic.

While the first dilemma was quickly resolved, society has yet to get around the second.

Sports, arguably the greatest victim of the third COVID-induced impasse, is still struggling and staggering from the hit of the virus. The sporting world is still trying to figure out how to manage the crowds, perhaps, its biggest strength and appeal.

Interestingly, sports is a game of challenges involving, primarily, the devising of means and strategies for defeating the opponent. In this case, the opponent is the pandemic.

The world knew the virus could be beaten with cooperation, sacrifice, teamwork, and optimism – the typical elements in the character of sports, which health workers and others on the frontline of the war against COVID-19 quickly imbibed to save humanity from the ravaging virus. The spirit of unity, which sports epitomises, has also come in handy in addressing the most adverse effects of the pandemic on the game.

Sports is big business and the pandemic stretched the sources of revenue for sporting clubs. For instance, the World Economic Forum in one of its reports stated that the American men's professional basketball league, National Basketball Association (NBA) current TV deal was worth \$24 billion over nine years. The English Premier League agreed a new contract with broadcasters last year equivalent to \$12 billion over three years, and the Major League

Baseball has a seven-year media arrangement worth over \$5 billion.

All of these were seriously threatened by the spread of the virus, and the sporting world had to team up to face the common enemy.

Most noteworthy here was how the sport world united to, first, suspend all sporting activities. This was despite the cost of the preparation for the sporting events and the expected revenues.

Back home in Nigeria, the cost of preparing for the National Sports Festival, which was slated for Edo State, was huge. Imagine what the Edo State Government would have spent in renovating the various stadia that were expected to host the event. Talk about mobilisation for event planners, broadcast right, and publicity. All that went down the drain. Certainly, life is worth more than anything used to sustain it.

According to some reports from Japan, the cost of pushing back the Tokyo Olympics due to the outbreak of COVID-19 is estimated to be about \$6 billion. No one can quantify how much fans have lost in terms of funds and emotional investment in anticipation of the summer Olympics, which may be once in a lifetime opportunity.

Despite the whopping cost of the investments, and the attendant cost of rescheduling most sporting events, the sporting world remains unanimous in the determination to team up to beat the deadly virus. It believes this is the best way out.

The English Premier League, the German Football League and most of all other leagues devised means to conclude all championships. This comes with a cost. But there is a lesson here: sports teamed up to beat COVID-19.

As the world continues the gradual opening of economies, the sense of unity and courage sports supplied to everyone to believe there is life beyond the pandemic would continue to be a big source of strength and hope.



NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)

(Established under the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency Act, 2007)

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COVID-19 MARINE NOTICE

TO ALL: SHIP OWNERS, SHIP OPERATORS, MASTERS OF SHIP, SHIP AGENTS, SHIPPING COMPANIES AND MARITIME STAKEHOLDERS

Pursuant to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, the Agency has developed the following Guidance to support all types of ships that operate in the Nigerian maritime domain. The purpose is to help shipping companies and all maritime stakeholders to follow advice provided by United Nations agencies including the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), as well as the Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC). NOTICE is hereby given as follows:

- That all maritime stakeholders shall develop risk assessments and safety intervention guidelines for their personnel and operations on the areas of vulnerabilities of their maritime operations that can be affected by the COVID 19 pandemic including but not limited to offshore operations such as crew/personnel changes, visits from onshore and other locations for provision of supplies, maintenance and repairs etc.
- That all ongoing and/or other scheduled offshore operations requiring new crew or crew changes from affected countries shall ensure that pre-departure tests for COVID 19 are conducted on such persons, and self-isolation procedures for the prescribed period are instituted for such new crew/personnel before exposure to other personnel.
- That only international marine vessel which had planned and informed of their call into a Nigerian Port not later than 1st February, 2020 may be allowed to call on such port.
- That any international marine vessel or any member of its crew and/or passenger therein having a travel history of visiting any of the COVID-19 affected countries mentioned in the adjoining link (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>) since 1st Feb, 2020; shall not be permitted to enter any Nigerian port from 30th March, 2020 to 12th April, 2020. And any further dates as may be reviewed from time to time.
- That only international marine vessel having thermal screening facilities for passenger and crew may be allowed on the ports.
- That Shipping Agent/Master of Vessels shall submit all documents related to crew and passengers regarding their travel to/from the COVID-19 affected countries.
- That no sick passengers/crew shall be allowed to board any ship by the Shipping agent and/or Master of Vessel.
- That updated information on COVID-19 shall be provided to each international marine vessel and should be as per guidelines of The Federal Ministry of Health Nigeria and Nigeria Centre for Disease Control.
- That all passengers and crew members shall fill the Self Reporting Form as prescribed by Nigerian Port Health Authorities.
- That Port Health Officer (PHO) shall carry out thermal screening of all the passengers and crew members on board ship and until clearance is given by the PHO no passengers and or crew members shall be allowed ashore.
- That Port and or Local hospitals shall assist PHO by supplying additional doctors and medical staff and logistics etc.
- That if any passengers and or crew members show signs or symptoms of the disease, disembarking of such passengers/crew shall not be permitted.
- That such passenger shall be quarantined on the ship and samples of the patient shall be collected and sent to designated hospital/lab for testing. If sample is tested positive, the passenger shall be taken to the isolation facility attached to the Port and the ship shall

be required to cast off. If sample is negative, the passengers and crew members may be allowed shore excursion. A declaration to follow this procedure shall be taken from all ships before they are allowed to enter the Port.

- That when seafarers certificates expires and the need to renew arose within the prevalent condition in relation to COVID-19 a flexibility on a case by case basis would apply.
- That strict compliance with Port Health and Nigerian Immigration Services laws should be adhered to in relation to the issuance of shore-pass to local and international seafarers.
- That where a seafarer is confirmed to have contacted the COVID-19, the Shipping Company, Agent or Crewing/Manning Company should report to the Agency in addition to submission of daily situational report on action taken.
- That all Marine vessels are required to take these special measures to prevent COVID 19 patients from boarding vessels which include but not limited to the following:
 - i. Any cruise guests who have traveled through China, Hong Kong, Iran, South Korea and Italy and other affected countries (as defined by WHO in their daily reports <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>) in the past 14 days are automatically denied boarding by the marine vessel lines.
 - ii. Any person having contact with anyone within the last 14-days prior to travel who has travel history to mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Iran, South Korea, or Italy or any other affected countries is automatically denied boarding.
 - iii. Mandatory screenings shall be performed on persons with influenza like illnesses (ILIs) in boarding ports terminals.
 - iv. All guests onboard have to fill out self-declaration health forms.
 - v. At the check-in counter of the boarding ports, the guest's passports are verified for any stamps from COVID-19 affected countries.
 - vi. The passports are double checked by marine vessel personnel inside the terminal at boarding ports as double measure to ensure prevention of boarding such crew.
 - vii. All passports are also checked onboard by marine vessel staff alongside Nigerian Immigration Officers, wherever the Immigration Officers boarded in the previous foreign ports for enroute clearance.
 - viii. All ships shall be regularly sanitized.
 - ix. All cruises carry out daily examination of all passengers for symptoms for COVID-19.
 - x. All cruises shall have sufficiently oriented health staff with adequate logistics like masks, personal protection equipment etc. along with sufficient isolation beds where any crew/passenger suspects can be isolated in case of detection of any symptoms.

For further information, please contact:

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PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.physiciansbriefing.com/>

Childhood Conditions and Adult Health

BY OBIAGELI URIAH

T

here are significant health inequalities in early life, which often translate to inequalities in adult health. This inequality between groups has led to the debate asking if a childhood circumstance is linked to adult health or if adulthood social position is the determinant of

health outcome. We will use the life course model to evaluate how childhood circumstances may influence adult health by focusing on coronary heart diseases (CHD). The life course model consists of the critical period model, pathway model and accumulation model.

Coronary heart disease

Coronary heart disease refers to the failure of coronary circulation to supply adequate circulation to cardiac muscle and surrounding tissue. It is the major single cause of death among men in the industrialised world. It was estimated that 35,000,000 people died in 2005 due to CHD and it was predicted that by 2010, entire regions of the world would be affected by this disease.

The proximal causes of CHD are unknown. However, many risk factors, such as smoking, unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, hyperlipidemia, and alcohol have been associated with the disease. Nevertheless, with the absence of these major risk factors, CHD is a rare cause of death.

Most recently, the coronavirus was linked with high mortality rate among patients with CHD. Furthermore,

socio-economic circumstances are also attributable risk factors for CHD. For instance, the social gradient is the major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Smoking alone can explain approximately half of the excess burden of morbidity and mortality experienced by disadvantaged socio-economic groups.

This therefore implies that an analysis of the life course model (i.e critical period model, pathway model and accumulation model), are essential in understanding the influence between childhood socio-economic circumstances and adult health.

Critical period model

The critical period model can be defined as when an exposure during a specific period has lasting or lifelong effects on the structure or function of organs, tissues and body systems, which are not modified in any dramatic way by later experience. This is also referred to as biological programming or the latency period. In addition, it has been argued that the critical period is the basis for the fetal origins of adult disease. Moreover, it also indicates that the diseases, which make a key contribution to the socio-economic gradient in health, have their origins in exposures occurring in "sensitive periods" of development. For example, the Barker's foetal programming hypotheses suggests that exposure during the critical periods of development in utero have long term effects on adult chronic diseases, principally in terms of diabetic and coronary heart disease patients

• **To be continued.**

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