



help prevent the transfer of aquatic organisms to new environments via shipping. This reduces the risk of invasion from non-indigenous species that can harm local ecosystems.

IMO treaties also play a fundamental role in limiting the dumping of waste at sea. The London Convention and London Protocol ban disposal of wastes at sea, except in very specific cases. They also prohibit the dumping of radioactive and industrial waste.

The IMO regulatory framework grants additional protection to areas known as Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs), with special measures to preserve their vulnerable ecosystems, such as ship routing. Currently, 15 areas have been designated as PSSAs, including the Great Barrier Reef and the Galapagos Islands.

ICAO Issues Guidelines to Alleviate Crew Change Crisis

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) issued new guidance to facilitate passenger and repatriation flights to allow stranded seafarers go home, and for their relief crews to be able to join ships.

The guidance outlines specific recommendations for seafarer changeover flights, including the need for advanced bilateral communication, coordination and planning between shipowners, aviation stakeholders and the relevant authorities. It also highlights the importance of seafarers and requests countries to grant rapid authorisation for the entry, departure and transit of aircraft, including seafarer changeover flights.

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim applauded the new contribution by the United Nations and expressed optimism in its effectiveness. The guidance will be reviewed and updated as necessary by ICAO as the global situation evolves.

It is estimated that about 400,000 seafarers are still trapped at sea, due to restrictions imposed by governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Sustainable Shipping for a Sustainable Planet'

IMO assembled a global audience during a webinar on September 24 to mark the World Maritime Day, with speakers from government and international organisations. The focus was how to achieve sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet.

Participants were agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic could and should be the catalyst for positive change, with international and cross-sector cooperation being the key.

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim set the tone in his opening remarks by praising the unprecedented cooperation among those involved in the maritime sector's response to the pandemic. "Never has the spirit of cooperation been more important than now," Lim stated. "I can assure you that IMO, as the global regulator of international shipping, is ready to establish new partnerships for cooperation and

sustainable economic recovery, and to help drive the SDGs, for the benefit of all humankind," he added.

New Fishing Vessel Safety Publication Launched

A new publication prepared by IMO, International Labour Organisation (ILO), and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) was launched on September 3, in a joint effort to shape the fishery sector of tomorrow.

The new brochure will help promote safe and decent work in fisheries through the application of international standards.

The publication provides an overview of the four main international binding fisheries conventions/agreements that promote the safety of fishing vessels, safety of fishers, training of fishers, and responsible and safe fisheries operations. Guidance for policy and decision-makers in the fisheries, maritime, and labour sectors is also provided with a view to encouraging the ratification and implementation of the fisheries instruments.

This publication aims to support governments in achieving their commitments towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8: promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; and SDG 14: conserving and using the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

The four main international binding fisheries conventions/agreements are IMO (2012) Cape Town Agreement (CTA), IMO (1995) International Convention on Training, Certification and for Fishing Vessels Personnel (STCW-F), ILO (2007) Work in Fishing Convention (C188), 2009 FAO Agreement on Port States Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA).

IMO Resets Meeting Calendar

IMO announced that the original 2020 calendar of meetings had been rescinded, as work got under way to reschedule the organisation's meetings. It advised in a Circular Letter that the IMO Council, which was meeting by correspondence for its 32nd extraordinary session, was considering the reconstruction of the schedule of meetings for 2020, including the possibilities for virtual meetings. Pending the issuance of a new calendar, it said the previously issued programme of meetings for 2020 (and preliminary programme for 2021) should not be used for planning purposes.

IMO said information on the rescheduling of postponed meetings and scheduling of future meetings will be made available to allow member states and other participants to make appropriate arrangements.

All IMO meetings originally planned to be held between late March and July 2020 were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Resuming physical meetings will depend on guidance from the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UK government, as well as the situation of IMO member states.



Towards A New Maritime Reporting Framework

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he Nigerian Government and Industry Working Group (NIWG) is working to finalise a new Nigerian National Maritime Reporting Framework to support merchant vessels in distress. The Joint Working Group comprised NIMASA, Ministry of Transportation,

Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Ports Authority, Marine Police Interpol and the oil industry. The oil industry is represented by Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF).

The shipping industry is represented by International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO), International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO) and the Nigerian Shipowners' Association.

They were established in May 2020 to facilitate coordination between government and industry and align efforts to deter and respond to incidents of piracy and armed robbery in Nigerian territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone.

The NIMASA/Industry Working Group was the first coordinated effort between industry and the Nigerian Government.

The objective of the working group is to accelerate efforts to tackle maritime security threats by facilitating interaction between the stakeholders and pursuing projects through mutual collaboration.

The NIMASA's Command, Control, Computer Communication and Information (C4i) Centre

has been identified as a national focal point for coordinating the multi-agency response.

These developments are a significant step forward in improving Nigeria's response capabilities and potentially enhancing security for vessels operating in Nigerian Waters, at a regulatory level, NIMASA was working directly with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in developing a National Maritime Security Strategy.

Following the entry into force of Nigeria's Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences Act, 2019 (SPOMO Act), prosecutions are underway.

The Nigerian Navy's maritime security response activities, the conduct of two military exercises (Operation Calm Water and Operation Sanga Sung) by the Nigerian Navy in recent months had been successful in testing and demonstrating response capabilities.

Importantly, considerable progress has also been made to advance the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure project, otherwise known as the Deep Blue Project (DBP).

This is aimed at comprehensively addressing insecurity and criminality in Nigeria's territorial waters and exclusive economic zone.

While COVID-19 has caused disruptions to this landmark project, delayed training required to deploy Deep Blue Project assets has recommenced.

It is agreed by the National Working Group that progressing the Deep Blue Project is a key priority, which will require continued support by industry and sustained resource from the Nigerian government.

Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Victor Ochei, (right), exchanging greetings with President General, Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN), Comrade Adewale Adeyanju (left), while Mr. Lucky Olombeni of MWUN looks on, during the National Joint Industrial Council (NJIC) meeting in Lagos



L-R: Representative of Seaports Terminal Operators Association of Nigeria (STOAN), Otunba Kunle Folarin; representative of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mr. Charles Okaya; Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, NIMASA, Victor Ochei



Representative of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, Mrs. Joyce Udoinwang (left), and President, National Association of Stereoring Companies, Mr. Bolaji Sunmola, at the NJIC meeting

PHOTO SPLASH BAYELSA GOVERNOR VISITS



Governor of Bayelsa State, His Excellency, Senator Duoye Diri (left), and Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, during the governor's visit to the Agency's headquarters in Lagos



Governor of Bayelsa State, His Excellency, Senator Duoye Diri (middle); Director General, NIMASA, Dr Bashir Jamoh (second left); Executive Director, Operations, NIMASA, Mr. Shehu Ahmed (left); Executive Director, Maritime, Labour and Cabotage Services, Victor Ochei (second right); and Executive Director, Finance and Administration, NIMASA, Mr. Chudi Offodile (right), during the visit of the Bayelsa State governor to the headquarters of the Agency in Lagos

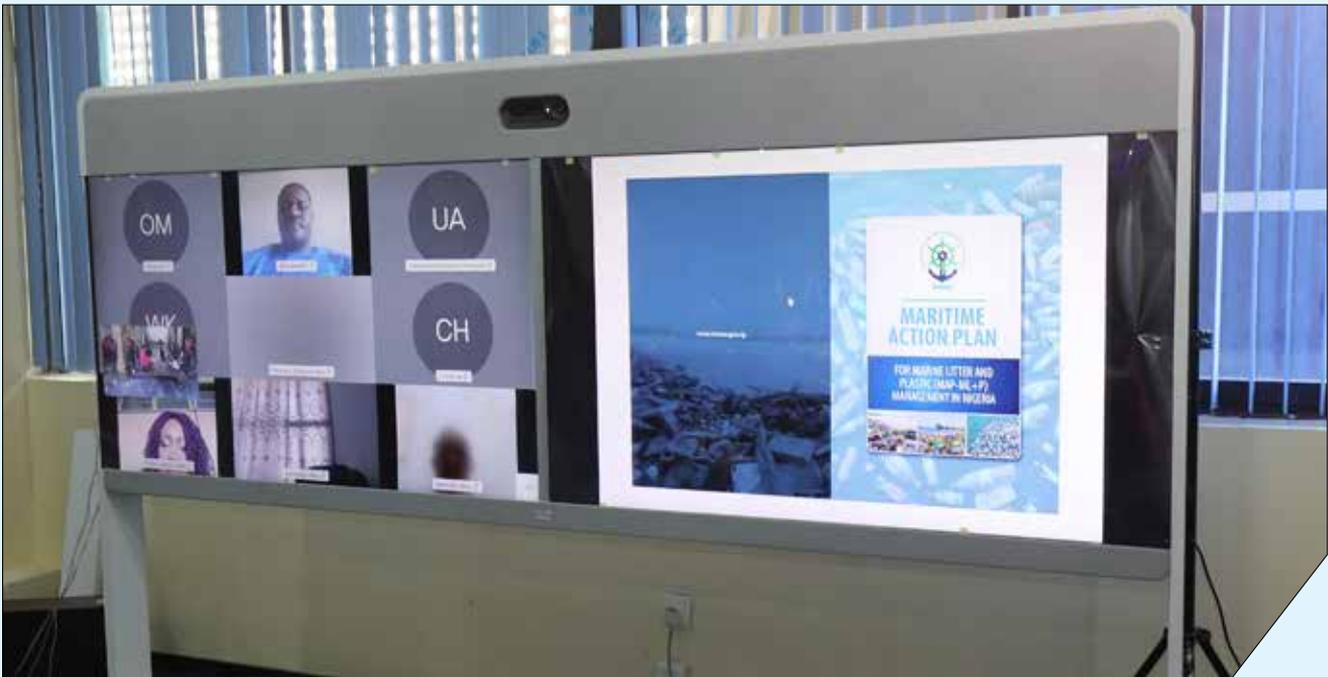


NIMASA DG, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (left), welcoming Bayelsa State Governor Duoye Diri to the Agency's headquarters

MARINE LITTERS IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE LAUNCH PHOTO NEWS



L-R: Assistant Director, Marine Environment Management (MEM), Mr. McDennis Igbo; Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Victor Ochei; Director, MEM, Dr. Felicia Mogo; and Chief MEM Officer, Dr. Auwal Bamanga, at the launch of marine litter implementation committee in Lagos



A webinar session at the event



A cross-section of participants

ABASS: Our Thrust is Decent Work Agenda for Maritime Labour

Mr. Olayemi Abass is Director, Maritime Labour Services, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA). He discusses the welfare of maritime workers, in this interview. Excerpts:

How do you intend to consolidate on the achievements of your predecessors?

It has always been my philosophy in life that whatever we do must be in the best interest of all. Is it fair to all concerned? Is it good for all concerned? My belief is, whatever is good for our people, that would empower them, create employment, engender growth, and grow the economy. Like people say, when you take care of the people, they would take care of your business. Our thrust is decent work agenda, ensuring that we keep to the international conventions and local statutes that ensure welfare, productivity, training, education, improvement of our seafarers and dockworkers, and also not neglecting the fact that there are people that create these jobs. The employers of labour, who, even in these difficult times still find time to create jobs. The terminal operators, the seafaring employers, the stevedoring contractors, and all others in the maritime labour chain.

As regards the COVID -19 pandemic, which remains a major challenge to seafarers, how are you handling the issue of crew change?

Immediately we heard about the lockdown emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Agency released a marine notice in March 2020 stating the various steps that shipping companies, vessel owners, manning agents, and seafarers need to take to make sure the pandemic is kept at bay. Being an itinerant industry, vessels move from coast to coast, from port to port. It could be a veritable platform to spread the pandemic. The issue of quarantine is not new to ships, we collaborated with the Port Health and Safety towards ensuring that vessels coming into Nigeria, right from the anchorage, were inspected and well documented to be COVID-free.

There was the issue of crew change, a lot of people were on board vessels for months and weeks, that created a psychological trauma for seamen. We had to allow some form of crew change but that was not



• Abass

without a form of quarantine. The minimum requirement was 10 days, while on board, to be quarantined, 10 days while disembarking, and those who were going to unboard the vessels were also expected to keep some form of quarantine. All vessels were supposed to have vessel risk assessment report, which was handled by professionals, to see the level of risk that people were exposed to on those vessels. We also got the cooperation of international bodies towards ensuring that itinerant workers don't bring the pandemic into our nation or outside our shores.

Recently, the National Joint Industrial Council (NJIC) organised a stakeholders' meeting on collective bargaining agreement for seafarers' wages and decent work agenda. How far has the NJIC gone on the implementation of this?

The NJIC is tripartite in nature: the worker represented by unions – we call them workers' representatives, the government in the middle, and then employers. The NJIC has been meeting on both ends for dock work and seafaring and it has been agreed that negotiations

“Our thrust is decent work agenda, ensuring that we keep to the international conventions and local statutes that ensure welfare, productivity.”



between the unions and employers would be on a company basis because the economic strength of companies differ. But we ensure that benchmarks are kept, especially the International Transport Workers Federation benchmarks for payment of crew wages and allowances.

NJIC dialogue is continuous at different levels. If not for what happened recently with regards to the recent protests we are supposed to have had one or two meetings regarding collective bargaining agreements with various companies.

Can you update us on the position of the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP), an initiative of NIMASA?

A lot of people say diverse things about the NSDP, apparently, because maybe there is a breach in communication. It has been a roundly successful programme and the statistics prove this. A total of 2,041 seafarers have been trained to date. Now, what's a breakdown from this data? Unfortunately, 10 died in the span of this programme, 120 withdrew for various reasons – personal, health, domestic – they couldn't cope. Currently, we have 552 officers who have been trained and who have their Certificate Of Competency (CoC), and out of this number, 31 are naval cadets.

Prior to this programme, we had less than five naval cadets in Nigeria and this programme has produced 31 naval cadets who are competent, who have their certifications, who can be on board, who can work on shipyards, who can work in facilities on and off shore. Majority of these gentlemen are doing well in their various places right now, not just gentlemen, also ladies, because we have quite a sizable number of ladies who were trained.

Currently, we have 446 students on sea time training and 89 are in the United Kingdom, 100 at Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, Cairo, 102 are undergoing various forms of sea time in various vessels spread all over the world. Another 100, through various maritime training institutions, are undergoing their sea time. These vessels are scattered all over the world, so we may not be able to know specific locations but we track them.

We have 60 of our students undergoing their CoC training in the Philippines and 33 of them in the UK. Now, further data shows that we have 662 out of

the 2,041 I mentioned earlier on waiting for their own sea time and the constraints are obvious. If we did not have the COVID-19 lockdown this year, this number would have been mopped up and by now, they would be on sea time training. But we intend that before the end of the year, between now and December, not less than 300 of these would be undergoing their sea time in various parts of the world on vessels of high pedigree, and reputable organisations.

We have cadets who are currently undergoing shore-based training: improvement trainings/upgrades – six of them, one in Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, Cairo, five at Liverpool John Morse University in the UK. We have 152 who have completed their sea time but are awaiting their CoC. If you tally up these figures, you get 2, 041. If you remove 662, which is the outstanding, from 2, 041, we have about 1400 competent seafarers we've injected into the system, and this was not so in the previous two decades before this NSDP.

We are also looking at new opportunities, because we want to upgrade the Maritime Academy of Nigeria, Oron. The executive management has instituted a relationship with the academy, not just based on funding, but having a new project that would make Nigerians to go to Oron, complete a similar programme as the NSDP, which is now the Nigerian version. Under the current programme, all the students schooled abroad, but we now want capital inflow. While those who have graduated are making money for the economy and for their families, we want the next crop of NSDP people to be trained in Nigeria so that our maritime academy in Oron can meet world best standards.

How did you sustain operation at Nigerian ports during the lockdown period?

I was not in this department then. But being part of the Agency, I knew the great work the Director-General, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, and his executive management did. There were a lot of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes with the unions. The leadership, led by Comrade Adeyanju, was very cooperative. They were the advocacy group for government, for the dockworkers and the seafarers. Most seafarers are in transit but dockworkers are on ground. The dockworkers have been wonderful, they have understood the challenges of the time.

PHOTO NEWS MEETING OF HEADS OF MARITIME AGENCIES



L-R: Executive Secretary, Nigeria Shippers' Council (NSC), Barr. Hassan Bello; Managing Director, National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), Dr. George Moghalu; Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh; Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Ms. Hadiza Bala Usman; and Registrar, Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria, Barr. Sam Nwakohu, during the meeting of Heads of Maritime Agencies at the NIMASA headquarters in Lagos



L-R: DG NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; MD, NPA, Hadiza Bala Usman; and Executive Secretary, Nigeria Shippers' Council, Barr. Hassan Bello, after the monthly meeting of heads of maritime parastatals in Lagos

DG NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (right), making a presentation to Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Ms. Hadiza Bala Usman, at the meeting





Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh (right), presenting a souvenir to Group General Manager, Crude Oil Marketing Division, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Mr. Billy Okoye, when a delegation from NNPC paid a visit to NIMASA



Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Chudi Offodile (left), and Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Victor Ochei



The NNPC delegation led by Okoye (right) at the NIMASA head office in Lagos



Some of the attendees



DG NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (middle), flanked by NNPC officials (left) and officials from NIMASA (right)

Nigeria Secures More Sea Time for Cadets, Despite COVID-19



Cadets of the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP)

Nigeria made significant progress in securing sea time berths for cadets trained under the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP), despite the coronavirus pandemic. Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, disclosed this in Lagos after a recent three-month extension granted the 400 Nigerian seafarers undertaking sea time in different parts of the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The three-month programme, leading to the award of Certificate of Competency (CoC) to beneficiaries, was extended for another three months by NIMASA, in the first instance, to enable the seafarers complete their training, amid the global lockdowns caused by the pandemic.

Jamoh stated that despite the outbreak of COVID-19, the Agency had intensified efforts to secure sea time opportunities for a good number of the trained cadets across the globe.

He stated, "In the first quarter of 2020 alone we secured sea time berths for over 550 cadets in various countries for the three months programme leading to the issuance of CoCs. However, due to the pandemic, we extended their sponsorship for another three months,

which comes with additional cost, and we are still looking to extend it further as we continue to monitor the pandemic and how it affects the programme."

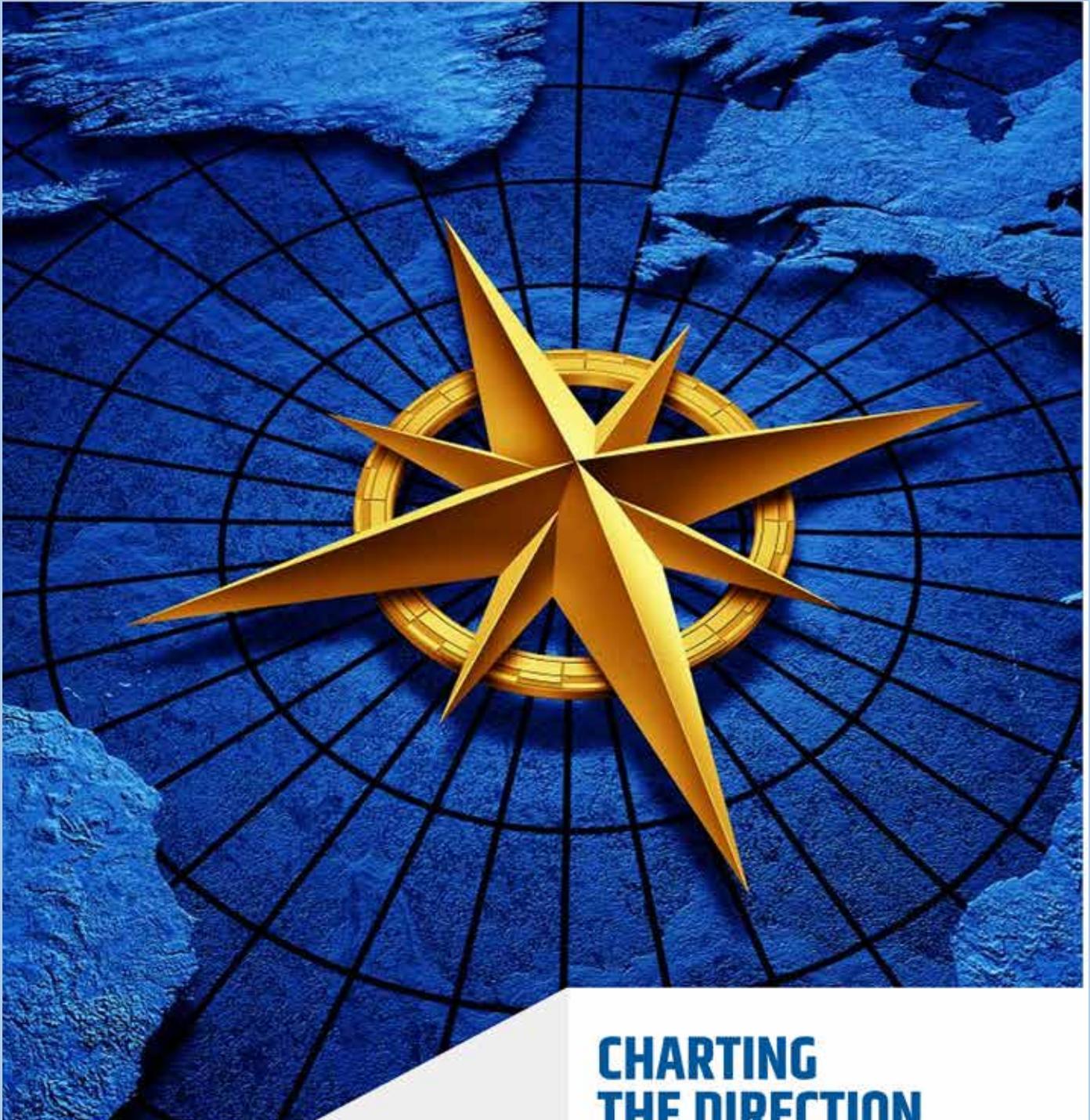
The NIMASA Director-general stated that the Agency was in constant touch with Nigerian embassies in the beneficiaries' host countries as well as the students themselves and their leaders to monitor their situations and guard against anything that could keep them stranded in a foreign country.

"We have adapted our approaches to the peculiar conditions of the different countries where we have Nigerian seafarers on sea time training," Jamoh said, adding, "The feedbacks from the students' leaders in the various countries have been very encouraging."

He disclosed that another set of NSDP cadets had been approved for training, but their enrolment was on hold due to the global pandemic.

Jamoh said the problem of sea time training, obviously, one of the biggest challenges faced by seafarers, was gradually being resolved.

NSDP was initiated by NIMASA in 2008 to deal with the dearth of trained and certified seafarers in Nigeria. So far, the programme has graduated over 2,000 cadets and many of them have undergone sea time and are currently in the employ of various international shipping lines.



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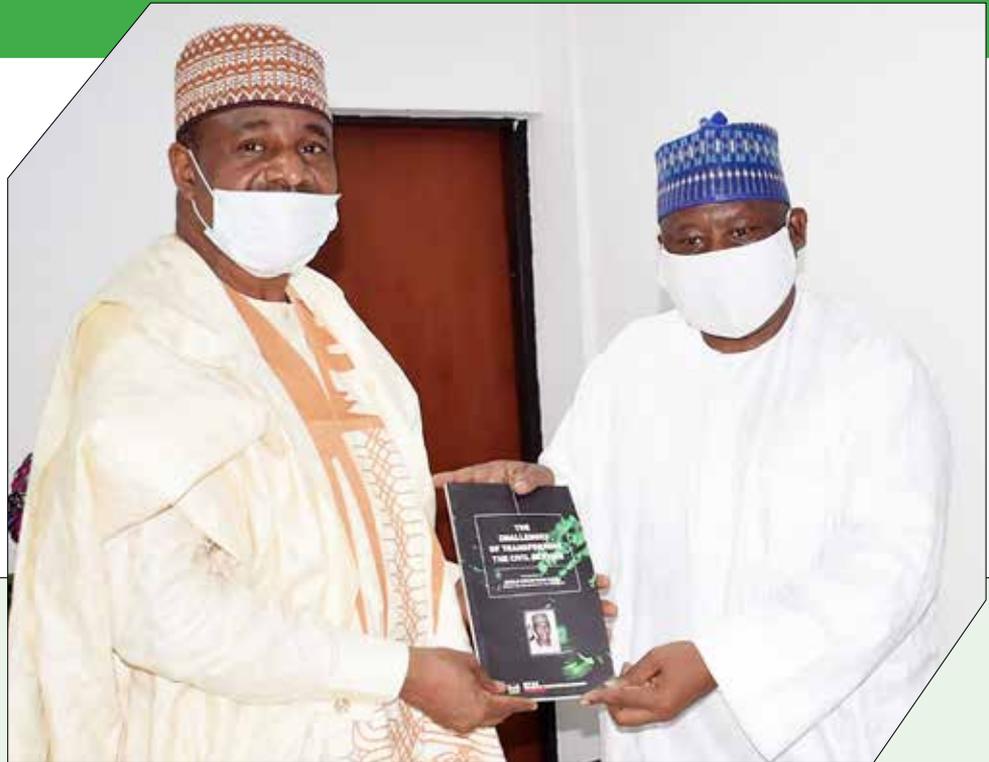
- Ship Registration
- Search And Rescue
- Cabotage Enforcement
- Shipping Development
- Maritime Labour Regulation
- Maritime Safety Administration
- Maritime Capacity Development
- Training And Certification Of Seafarers
- Marine Pollution Prevention And Control

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REGULATORY | OPERATIONAL | PROMOTIONAL | CAPACITY BUILDING

Director, Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR), Mr. Dasuki Ibrahim Arabi (right), making a presentation to Director, Reform Coordination and Strategic Management (RC&SM), Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Muhammad Kabir Murnai, during a courtesy visit by NIMASA to BPSR in Abuja



NIMASA Partners Public Service Bureau on Reform

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he Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) have committed to working together on the design and implementation of NIMASA's on-going transformational initiatives. Director-

General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, disclosed this in Abuja during a visit to the Bureau. Jamoh said the partnership would be focussed on reform initiatives and development research.

The Director-General was represented by Director, Reform Coordination and Strategic Management (RC&SM) at NIMASA, Dr. Muhammad Murnai, who led a management team on a familiarisation visit to the Bureau's headquarters in Abuja.

He said the purpose of the courtesy call was to establish a sustainable relationship between the two

Federal Government agencies.

Jamoh stated, "We are here to see how we can connect with BPSR in order to clearly understand and key into government's specific priorities, while still pursuing the specific mandates and goals of NIMASA. We promise to equip the Agency's RC&SM Unit with requisite capacity for performance.

"We hope to also open discussions with BPSR on the provision of advisory and technical support services for change management teams and working groups in our two institutions, and engender an environment of learning among MDAs."

Responding, Director of BPSR, Mr. Dasuki Arabi, pledged the Bureau's commitment to the collaboration agreement for the mutual benefit of the two agencies.

BPSR was established in 2004 to coordinate implementation of government reform policies and programmes.



L-R: Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh; Minister of Finance, Hajiya Zainab Ahmed; and Head, Abuja Zonal Office, NIMASA, Mr. Zailani Attah, during the presentation of a request for stimulus packages for the maritime sector by the NIMASA DG.

COVID-19: Nigeria Considers Tax Holiday for Maritime Industry

The Federal Ministry of Transportation is seeking a package of tax incentives for the maritime sector. This is in a bid to stimulate investment and boost activities in the industry, amid the downturn induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, who conveyed the ministry's position to the Minister of Finance, Hajiya Zainab Ahmed, in Abuja, reiterated the commitment of the Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi, to ensuring the growth of maritime in Nigeria. Jamoh said many governments around the globe had introduced massive tax reduction or elimination to spur activities in key sectors and rev up their economies during the coronavirus pandemic.

Jamoh stated, "The maritime sector is critical in the growth and development of transportation and, by extension, international trade in the country. Thus, the need for Federal Government-oriented programmes and stimulus packages to deliver a response that catalyses a sustainable economic development cannot be overemphasised."

The Director-General said the proposed incentives included zero import duty for brand new vessels imported by Nigerians or Nigerian shipping companies for use in foreign or domestic trade; 0.5 per cent import duty for vessels aged between one and five years intended for use in foreign or domestic trade; and one per cent import duty for vessels aged between five and eight years intended for use in foreign or domestic trade.

There was also a proposal for zero import duty for parts or components imported by Nigerian shipyards for local shipbuilding, which would be for an initial period of four years after which it could be reviewed by government.

Jamoh said all these were expected to give the sector the required vibrancy for growth. He said the incentives were being proposed because of the importance of the Nigerian maritime sector to the entire sub-Saharan African region. The Director-General emphasised that Nigeria accounted for more than 65 per cent of the entire shipping trade of the region. Nigeria is also the largest producer and exporter of oil and gas in the continent and Africa's largest economy, he said.

PHOTO SPLASH SERVICOM VISITS NIMASA

Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (right), presenting a souvenir to National Coordinator/CEO, SERVICOM (Service Compact with All Nigerians), Mrs. Nnenna A. Akajemeli, at a briefing on the implementation of the Open Government Partnership at the NIMASA headquarters in Lagos



National Coordinator/CEO, SERVICOM, Mrs. Nnenna A. Akajemeli (fourth right); DG NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (middle), Executive Director, Operations, Mr. Ahmed Shehu (fourth left), Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services (third right); Director, SERVICOM, NIMASA, Bolaji Kehinde (third left), at a briefing on the implementation of the Open Government Partnership in Abuja

National Coordinator/CEO, SERVICOM, Mrs. Nnenna A. Akajemeli addressing journalists at a briefing on the implementation of the Open Government Partnership in Abuja





L-R: Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, receiving a plaque from First Counsellor, Deputy Head of Deligation, European Union Delegation to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Mr. Alexandre Gorges Gomes, after an engagement session in Abuja

DG NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (left), and Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Sadique Abubakar, during a working visit by the NIMASA DG to the Nigerian Air Force headquarters in Abuja.



Governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai (right), and Director-General of Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, during a meeting in preparation for the 2020 Kaduna Marathon



SPORTS: Africa Still Trying to Cope with COVID-19

BY GANIYU ALAYAKI

2

2020 has been a year full of intrigues. It has become a cliché to talk about the impact of COVID-19 on economies around the world. However, some sectors have commenced pulling together to defy the virus, and sports is leading the way in this regard.

While many industries struggled, the sports sector, especially, in Europe devised means to commence activities, albeit with strict and robust adherence to guidelines set by the health authorities to mitigate the spread of the pandemic.

The world still awaits an effective vaccine against coronavirus. But the zeal among some sporting bodies to restart activities is commendable and inspiring.

Nonetheless, a major issue in the reopening of the activities is the absence of fans on the respective pitches. The reopening of sporting activities is laudable, but sports is for the fans and a large chunk of the revenue from sports comes from spectators coming to watch the sporting events.

In football, for instance, while Europeans and other major leagues can survive the short-term arrangement of playing without physical fans, it is hard to see how Africa can effectively navigate the problem of sporting events on arenas without spectators.

Most countries on the continent are developing, unlike Europe that always has something to fall back on due to the huge revenue garnered from successful organisation of the leagues over the years. Africa is not there yet.

Despite reducing rates of COVID infection and deaths in Africa, the continent is still battling to

commence sporting events because aside the fans who are not expected to be present, many countries in Africa cannot afford the cost of testing all players before every match. This has seemed to create the notion that sports should take a back seat for now, which is a terribly a wrong assertion in a time like this.

No doubt, African economies have been greatly hit by COVID-19, but many believe treating sports as less important for now can be dangerous. Basically, it is the youth that are mostly engaged in any form of sport, both as players and spectators. The youth need to be engaged in one form or the other because, as the saying goes, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop."

Experts have established that sports has a major role to play in crime reduction. This is one of the reasons behind the Doha Declaration Global Programme, where the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) developed the Youth Crime Prevention component under the "Line Up and Live Up" slogan to engage children and youth in sports-based life and skill training. Under this programme, UNODC developed a teaching method to provide young people with essential life skills that have proven to enhance their resistance to crime.

South Africa's Premier Soccer League (PSL) announced in August a revised schedule to recommence the league, which was a smart move to engage youths.

Going by analyses and predictions, a lot of violence may likely erupt in Africa owing to the disruption of livelihoods by the COVID-19 pandemic. But sports can come to the rescue.

Africa must see sports as a unifying and stabilising factor that cannot take the back seat, even in the face of a pandemic.



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.

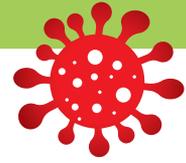
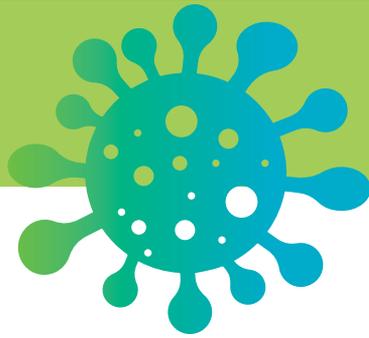
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SIGNED: MANAGEMENT



COVID-19:

Unanticipated Change and Mental Health Implications

The COVID-19 pandemic was trivialised in many quarters and likened to the outbreaks of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) that were successfully confined and could not spread beyond Asia and the Middle East. But coronavirus was quick to travel as fast as man could travel and soon landed in every region of the world.

Today, the whole world has changed so drastically that we now use words as “the new world order”, “the new normal”, and many other words to describe the new world we have all found ourselves in.

According to Warren Buffet, “What we learnt from history is that people do not learn from history.” This is very correct when you relate COVID-19 to the Spanish Flu of 1918, which was also characterised by the shutting down of businesses, places of worship, and others, while people were forced into isolation. At the end of the pandemic, which was described as the deadliest plague of the 20th Century, most of the survivors suffered heightened mental health conditions, sleep disturbances, depression, mental distraction, dizziness, and pandemic-related suicide, and those who were able to return to work had difficulty coping at work.

Are we going to expect similar conditions as post-COVID-19 health outcomes? Predictably, yes. Such cases are already spiking. What we should be doing in clinical environments is to start documenting cases properly as we see them. Heightened mental health tension induced by COVID-19 is already here with us. The words “Isolation”, “Quarantine”, “Infodemic” and “New Normal” are some of the new words frequently used in the COVID-19 era and they are greatly influencing people’s mental health and wellbeing.

In an attempt to control the spread of COVID-19, countries were forced to lock down and businesses within those countries were forced to shut their doors; employees and employees, along with their families, were forced into isolation. This was never in the 2020 plan of any of us and the pandemic had to override personal and organisational plans, disrupting them to the disadvantage of people whose moods suddenly switched from living to quest for survival. Isolation removed the concept of social integration and put on hold the support we draw from our collective

coexistent, broke down ties and threw people into solitary living, where a number of them suffered high degrees of loneliness and many “live-alone” employees suffered lone worker syndrome. This was characterised by fear, anxiety, uncertainty, longer hours of work, and irregularity in sleeping patterns, leading to varied degrees of mental health conditions.

COVID-19 will be over some day and lockdowns are being relaxed. One thing we must keep in mind is that the mental state of workers might have been impacted adversely by the COVID-19. Having this in mind, there is an urgent need to review the ways we relate to workers.

Do we need to retrain our managers, human resources team, and others on a whole new way of communication and handling of employees? Yes, we should. Remember, there is a new work order and we are also dealing with people who are coming back from isolation and not vacation. A number of them are currently flat while others may be extremely suspicious of everyone and everything. The closeness of seats has been removed to meet the physical distancing protocol required during COVID-19, fewer people are returning to work while others still work remotely. The buddy support system is gone and replaced with the COVID-19 legacy of no “no hug and no handshake”. Adjusting to all these changes comes with its own mental health constrain and proper management of people has to be the new skill in high demand in the new work order.

Management has changed. It is no longer designed for only the people we see in the offices daily. Now we have people who must work remotely. The system must now be reviewed to accommodate these two categories of workers.

The global economy has been adversely impacted. What does this mean for businesses and employees? Will this lead to loss of jobs or pay cuts? Will my organisation survive this phase? These and many more questions are raising the level of uncertainty and increasing the mental health burden of both employees and employers.

The world of work has changed, leaving us all to learn and adjust to the new workplaces and work patterns that are gradually unfolding.

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