

THE

VOYAGE



VOL.9 NO.2. 2021

Deep Blue TIME TO ACT



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VESSELS

3 SPECIAL
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HELICOPTERS

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THE VOYAGE is a publication of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA)

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April – June 2021 edition.

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ISSN: 2006-5124

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Dr. Bashir Jamoh,
DG/CEO NIMASA

DEEP BLUE PROJECT: Signed, Sealed, Delivered

T

he Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), popularly known as the Deep Blue Project, has finally become a reality. With its official

inauguration by President Muhammadu Buhari, the process of fully guaranteeing the safety and security of Nigeria's maritime corridor, including its exclusive economic zones, up to the Gulf of Guinea, has assumed a new impetus.

With the project, Nigeria is adequately equipped to play the leading role that is expected of her in a region where she accounts for about 70 per cent of maritime trade.

The first of its kind in the annals of maritime

security in Nigeria, the project is a mechanism that is designed by NIMASA to enable to manage, control and protect the country's maritime environment. It is one of the many initiatives, which the Agency has put in place to make Nigeria's waterways secure and safe for maritime activities to thrive, for the betterment of the country's economy and that of the entire Gulf of Guinea.

On the surface, the project would appear to be all about assets and platforms. But then, these cannot, by themselves, address the challenge of maritime insecurity in the country. Having enough assets and platforms through which piracy can be reduced by early detection or arrests – where crimes have been committed – is not enough if there is lack of capacity to prosecute those arrested at sea for committing maritime offences.

It is against this background that one must consider the relevance of the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act of 2019, which has revolutionised the fight against insecurity in Nigerian waters. It is now possible to prosecute maritime cases in court.

It bears mentioning that since the deployment of the Deep Blue Project assets in February 2021, there has been a continued decline in cases of piracy on Nigeria's waterways, on a monthly basis, a situation we believe would be sustained..

Bashir Jamoh

WORDS ON MARBLE

The NIMASA ship on my watch will keep sailing, both with the winds and against the winds, till we reach our desired port of destination of maritime safety, maritime security, and shipping development.

– DR. BASHIR JAMOH



Philip Kyanet

NIMASA to the Rescue

R

arely has a government agency received such local and global accolades as the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has garnered lately on account of its contribution to national and international issues. In addition to laurels honouring its transparent practices and work ethics as a government agency under an administration with zero tolerance for corruption, NIMASA has earned a reputation for attracting great national figures at its public functions.

One such occasion was when the country launched its flagship maritime security programme, domiciled in NIMASA, the Deep Blue Project. It is a loaded package of strategy for combating the scourge of piracy and sea robbery, not just on Nigeria's high seas, but also in the vast expanse of the Gulf of Guinea, reputed for a notorious volume of fatal piracies. The nationalistic instincts of the Agency's supervising ministry, Federal Ministry of Transportation, have led it to tie this initiative to the quest for the diversification of the Nigerian economy through more reliance on the multi-faceted sea commerce.

President Muhammadu Buhari honoured NIMASA with his august presence. The Honourable Minister of

Transportation, Chibuike Amaechi, NIMASA Director General Bashir Jamoh, governors, their representatives, lawmakers, past NIMASA bosses, and other top personalities were at the launch of this critical intervention policy. The gathering earned a global flavour with Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Kitack Lim sending a goodwill message hailing Nigeria's role in the grand effort to achieve security in the Gulf of Guinea.

In this edition, you will learn more about this groundbreaking leap by Nigeria to align national and worldwide moves to tame insecurity on the oceans, and, thus, pave the way for mankind's thrust into the inexhaustible riches of the depths.

We are also offering our readers a great harvest of features to make your day as you flip through this bumper package. Although you will come across regular features, they are robed in a language that suits your taste.

The interviews, news stories, health tips, sports presentation, photo gallery, and social column are all for your reading delight to make you comfortable as you sail with us on this trip.

Bon 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 oceans and enhanced maritime capacity in line with global best practices towards Nigeria's economic development.

Deep Blue TIME TO ACT



President Buhari launches a comprehensive scheme intended to reset the Gulf of Guinea maritime security landscape. **Vincent Obia** reports

T

he idea of a specialised security structure to effectively police the country's maritime domain has been on point for the last couple of decades. But in 2017, Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi, moved to not only theoretically decipher the vision of a comprehensive scheme that

guarantees maritime security from land, sea, and air, but also to practicalise it. It was a time the world was fast becoming aware of the huge potential of renewable energy and Nigeria was seeking a greater role for

maritime in its economic diversification drive, while the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) highlighted the rising insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea maritime area.

"Due to these facts, I developed an agenda to secure the channels of maritime growth, review shipping cost, and expand indigenous participation in the maritime sector in order to facilitate increase in the contribution of the sector to national revenue and GDP," Amaechi stated. "To achieve this, the Ministry of Transportation developed an Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure, otherwise called the Deep Blue Project."

The Gulf of Guinea, which stretches from Senegal



President Muhammadu Buhari (second left); Speaker House of Representative, Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila (third left); Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi (right); Ekiti State Governor, Kayode Fayemi (left); and Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (second right), inspecting one of the Unmanned Aerial Systems at the official launch of the Deep Blue project, Lagos

to Angola, covering over 6,000 kilometres of coastline, and comprising over 20 countries in West and Central Africa, is one of the world's richest regions in terms of unexploited natural resources. The sea basin is of geo-political and geo-economic importance for the transport of goods to and from West, Central, and Southern Africa.

The Gulf of Guinea is a strategic route for African energy trade, particularly with the intensive oil production in the Niger Delta.

An important maritime route, the Gulf of Guinea is, however, also widely regarded as the most dangerous sea for piracy. The area has experienced an unprecedented rise in attacks on ships since the last decade, accounting for about 95 per cent of crew members kidnapped from their vessels in 2020, according to IMB. The increase in piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has gone hand-in-hand with upsurge in armed robbery in Nigerian waters.

The attacks have meant increased cost of shipping, with high war risk insurance premiums paid by shipowners. In 2020, the Joint War Committee (JWC) expanded its Gulf of Guinea risk area. The change, which was last done in 2013, allows underwriters to charge more to cover vessels that travel through the region.

To tackle the challenge of insecurity in its waters, the Nigerian government has introduced a number of intervention measures.

In 2003, the Federal Government set up the Presidential Implementation Committee on Maritime Safety and Security (PICOMMS) to make up for the depletion of maritime security platforms following Nigeria's involvement in efforts to end the Liberian civil war. PICOMMS was also to help in the implementation of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code) in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack in the United States.

However, in 2011, Global West Vessel Specialist Limited was commissioned by the Federal Government to take over the functions of PICOMMS. The maritime security company provided the fleet to police Nigerian waters. That arrangement subsisted till 2015, when the President Muhammadu Buhari administration was inaugurated.

The Buhari government, desirous of a comprehensive maritime security approach, initiated the Deep Blue Project.

The Deep Blue Project was initiated following a contract signed in July 2017 between the Federal Ministry of Transportation and HLSI Security Systems and Technologies, with the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) as the operating agency. The actual implementation of the project began in 2018.

The country's plan for comprehensive maritime security was in embryo until May this year, when the acquisition and installation stages of the Deep Blue Project were completed.

Then at a ceremony in the sprawling port city of Apapa on June 10, Buhari launched the Deep Blue Project. It was a time to act. The President led the who's who of national security matters to the launch of the scheme meant to comprehensively secure Nigerian waters, up to the Gulf of Guinea. Friends of Nigeria from Africa and beyond were also there to witness the making of history, a feat intended to reset future maritime security narratives about Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea.

Nigeria made a rousing statement that it was able and ready to lead efforts to address the menace of insecurity in the maritime region.

"The Deep Blue Project is a critical step towards the realisation of maritime security in the region, which underscores Nigeria's commitment in providing the necessary framework and resources in cooperation with other nations and maritime users," Buhari stated



at the flag-off of the Deep Blue Project.

He added, "This flag-off is an important step in the continuing shift in strategic action about regional maritime security. It will serve as a benchmark for member states in the Gulf of Guinea and other relevant stakeholders to further develop innovative strategies and align efforts with the subsisting framework to improve maritime security in the region."

To Amaechi, "This project is about Nigeria's ability to secure its future by exercising sovereignty over its territorial waters, protect maritime trade in the Gulf of Guinea, and position the country for the post-oil economy."

The minister said the Project Management Team would work out a structure for the maintenance and sustainability of the Deep Blue Project.

Director General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, called the launch of the Deep Blue Project the delivery of a strategic mandate. Jamoh, who has pursued a threefold agenda (Triple S) focusing on Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, and Shipping Development, since assumption of office last year, stated, "We devoted most of our energy and focus in our first year to addressing the problem of maritime security. Securing our seas became a pressing mandate."

He said, "The mission has been accomplished."

The maritime security infrastructure is domiciled in NIMASA, while the Maritime Security Unit (MSU), comprising personnel drawn from the Nigerian Armed Forces, Nigeria Police, Department of State Services, and NIMASA, is responsible for its operational deployment.

The project aims to prevent illegal activities in Nigeria's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), enforce maritime regulations, enhance safety of lives at sea, and prevent

"I developed an agenda to secure the channels of maritime growth, review shipping cost, and expand indigenous participation in the maritime sector in order to facilitate increase in the contribution of the sector to national revenue and GDP."

illegal activities in the inland waterways.

The Deep Blue Project comprises land, sea, and air assets meant to comprehensively tackle maritime security issues in Nigerian waters up to the Gulf of Guinea.

The land assets include the Command, Control, Computer, Communication and Intelligence (C4i) Centre, 16 armoured vehicles for coastal patrol, and a 600-strong Maritime Security Unit specially trained for interdiction.

The air assets include two Special Mission Aircraft for surveillance of the EEZ, three Special Mission Helicopters for search and rescue, and four Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

The sea assets comprise two Special Mission Vessels and 17 Fast Interceptor Boats.

The Deep Blue Project has the following facilities:

i. C4i Centre. This is a key component of the Deep Blue Project with the primary aim of providing maritime domain awareness intelligence for informed enforcement operations and maritime safety and security interventions. The C4i Centre provides coastal radar up to 300 nautical miles and external system integration with the Nigerian Navy's Falcon Eye and the Lloyd's List Intelligence. It was commissioned in August 2019 and



“It will serve as a benchmark for member states in the Gulf of Guinea and other relevant stakeholders to further develop innovative strategies and align efforts with the subsisting framework to improve maritime security in the region.”

has been in operation since then.

ii. Training classrooms at the Nigerian Maritime Resource Development Centre, Lagos.

iii. Training facilities at the Nigerian Navy Basic Training School, Onne, and shooting range at the Nigerian Army Base, Elele, both in Rivers State, for the training of Maritime Security Unit personnel.

iv. Operational Bases across the coastal states for timely intervention and deployment of assets.

Stakeholders from across the maritime community sent messages of commendation to Nigeria for the conscious effort to secure its waters and the Gulf of Guinea. The NIMASA/Joint Industry Working Group praised the growing security cooperation among national and international players in the region.

The group said such strategic collaboration was behind the successful delivery of the Deep Blue Project, “a co-ordinated joint maritime protection initiative targeted at protecting significant investments in Nigeria’s offshore, safeguarding seafarers within the Gulf of Guinea, and protecting whilst also encouraging further investment in Nigeria’s blue economy,” in a goodwill message by Managing Director, Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (SPDC), and Country Chair, Shell Companies in Nigeria, Mr. Osagie Okunbor. “There is a unity of purpose in this project. All of us stakeholders – government, maritime administrations, military, and industry – are aware of the importance of the project.”

Nigeria is not attempting to fix the security problem of the Gulf of Guinea alone. The country acknowledges shipping is a global venture and no state or people can go it alone. It has spearheaded critical regional and international partnerships aimed at guaranteeing maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Nigeria and the Inter-Regional Coordination Centre (ICC), Yaoundé, recently floated the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum and Shared Awareness and De-confliction conference (GOG-MCF/SHADE) after meetings between the Director General of NIMASA, representing Nigeria, and Executive Director of ICC Yaoundé, Admiral Narciso Fastudo, Jr. GOG-MCF/SHADE’s inaugural plenary is scheduled to hold July, with the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute (GOGMI) in Accra, Ghana, as host. SHADE is co-chaired by ICC and the Nigerian Navy.

GOG-MCF/SHADE emerged on the back of the success of the industry stakeholders’ forum, equally led by Nigeria, the NIMASA/ Joint Industry Working Group. The group chaired by NIMASA was formed in 2020 in the pursuit of a lasting solution to the menace of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. It comprises international shipping as well as oil and gas associations, like Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF), International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO), and International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANCO).

IMO Secretary General Kitack Lim said in his goodwill message to the launch of the Deep Blue Project, “I’m encouraged to envisage the promise of inter-regional cooperation on so many levels.” Lim said the project reflected “Nigeria’s commitment to lead the fight against the piracy, not in your national waters, but in the Gulf of Guinea.”

Nigeria has a number of bilateral agreements with its neighbours to strengthen the country’s maritime borders and promote security and safety in the region.

ICC- IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Report – First Quarter 2021
TABLE 1: Locations of ACTUAL and ATTEMPTED attacks, January - March 2017 – 2021

LOCATIONS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
S E ASIA Indonesia	7	9	3	5	2
Malaysia	1	1		1	
Philippines	9	2	1	2	1
Singapore Straits	1			5	6
EAST ASIA China	1	2	3		
Vietnam		2			1
INDIAN SUB Bangladesh	4	4		1	
CONTINENT India	1	2	1	5	
AMERICAS Brazil		1	1	1	1
Colombia	2		1	1	3
Dominican Republic			1		
Ecuador	1	1			1
Haiti		3		1	1
Peru	1	2	1	3	5
Venezuela	2	5	4		
AFRICA Angola				3	2
Benin		5	1	3	1
Cameroon		1	1		1
Dem. Rep. of Congo					1
Gabon				1	2
Ghana		1	3		2
Guinea		1			
Gulf of Aden*		1			1
Ivory Coast			1	1	
Liberia			1		
Mozambique	1			1	
NIGERIA	7	22	14	11	2
Sao Tome and Principe				1	4
Sierra Leone	2				
Somalia*	2	1			
The Congo	1				1
Togo			1	1	
Sub total	43	66	38	47	38
Total at year end	179	201	162	195	

All incidents with * above are attributed to Somali pirates.

Source: ICC-IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Report

Notable among the pacts are: the agreement signed in 2012 with the Republic of Benin, tagged, "Operation Prosperity", to provide a joint maritime patrol between the waters of both countries; and the 2016 agreement signed with Equatorial Guinea for the establishment of a combined maritime policing and security patrol committee. There are similar agreements with Ghana, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Sao Tome and Principe.

The Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (RMRCC) in Lagos has intervened in several safety and security related ship distress calls. The Lagos RMRCC, 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. The centre coordinates Search and Rescue activities within the waters of nine countries in this region, namely, Republic of Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Togo.

The centre is equipped with the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) with the capacity to respond to distress calls from vessels. It is also complemented with a standby ambulance and medical team to provide first aid for purposes of Search and Rescue.

In October 2019, Nigeria hosted the Global Maritime Security Conference (GMSC) in Abuja in the continued search for regional and international solution to the security issues in the Gulf of Guinea. The conference was attended by many international, continental, and regional maritime institutions and stakeholders, as well as representatives of over 80 nations.

The GMSC came out with resolutions that addressed four major clusters of issues within the Gulf of Guinea, namely, legal/policy/regulatory framework for maritime security; institutional framework and capacity; material, human, financial, technological, and other resources needed to enhance security; and ways and means of



DG/CEO NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (right) showing the President (third left) and other dignitaries one of the Armoured cars under the Deep Blue project

“Nigeria’s efforts to secure the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain are beginning to bear fruit.”

implementing the necessary strategies for enhanced maritime security in the region.

A key outcome of the GMSC was the firm declaration seeking to internationally criminalise illegal activities in the Gulf of Guinea and ensure “resources that are illegally harvested/explored in the Gulf of Guinea, including stolen oil and Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishery, are intentionally banned, as was the case with the ‘blood diamonds’.” That label was given by the United Nations to diamonds mined during the recent civil wars in Africa.

On the legal front, in 2019, Nigeria emerged the regional capital of the admiralty law avant-garde, with the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act, the first standalone antipiracy law in West and Central Africa.

The SPOMO Act 2019 provides a legal framework for the prosecution of piracy and other maritime crimes through the country’s Maritime Administration, NIMASA, and the Nigerian Navy. The Act fulfils a major international requirement for standalone legislation on piracy. It gives effect to the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982, and the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA) 1988 and its Protocols.

The law has multidimensional elements: a Nigeria element, where a violated ship is a Nigerian vessel,

and the offence was committed by a Nigerian against a fellow citizen; SUA Convention element, where the ship concerned is flagged by a state party to the SUA Convention, the alleged offender is a citizen of a state party, or offence is committed in the territorial sea of a party to the convention.

Nigeria is trying to remould and positively influence how the world views the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain – and the country’s waters.

The Gulf of Guinea is a major shipping route for Africa, carrying about 40 per cent of oil consumed in Europe and 29 per cent of crude consumed in North America. The region hosts about 60 per cent of Africa’s oil production, with Nigeria as the largest oil and gas producer in the continent. Besides Chad and Sudan, all oil producing countries in sub-Saharan Africa are located in the region. In addition, nearly 80 per cent of cargo ships headed for West and Central Africa are destined for Nigeria.

Nigeria’s efforts to secure the Gulf of Guinea maritime domain are beginning to bear fruit. Statistics from IMB show a remarkable reduction in attacks in Nigerian waters in the first quarter of this year, with the deployment of the Deep Blue Project assets.

Nigeria is optimistic that the success story in its waters would be gradually and systematically extended to the wider Gulf of Guinea maritime area.

“As a country, our determination to keep the Gulf of Guinea safe and secure is for enormous stakes,” said Jamoh. “Nationally, we have our economic wellbeing to protect, and, internationally, we are helping to develop the global maritime industry by securing an important shipping route.”

The NIMASA Director General said, “We only hope the maritime world would be pragmatic enough revisit the high risk insurance premium imposed on shippers coming to Nigerian waters.”

Deep Blue We've Set Standard for Africa

His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari at the official flag-off of the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure (Deep Blue Project) on Thursday 10 June 2021

I

am delighted and pleased to be here for this official flag-off ceremony of the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure project in Nigeria (the Deep Blue Project).

This project has been initiated to bolster the maritime security architecture and ensure greater enforcement action within Nigerian waters and beyond.

This assemblage of new maritime security assets is coming at a critical time when global discussions are centered on piracy activities and the new dimension it has taken in the Gulf of Guinea region.

With the world's waters accounting for over 80% of transportation requirements of the global economy, concerted efforts and innovative actions are required to address attendant security challenges.

Therefore, the flag-off of the Deep Blue Project marks an important milestone in this regard and in our collective effort to tackle security challenges in the form of piracy and other maritime crimes in Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea. It is also a demonstration of government's strong commitment to ensuring security.

This intervention, no doubt, will facilitate a conducive environment for the maritime sector to thrive and contribute to the diversification of the Nigerian economy.

The Deep Blue project is a critical step towards the realization of maritime security in the region, which underscores Nigeria's commitment in providing the necessary framework and resources in cooperation with other nations and maritime users.

This is evident in the recently established Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Framework by Nigeria and the Inter-regional Coordination Centre Yaoundé through the facilitation of NIMASA/Industry Joint Working Group to tackle maritime security in the region.



This forum is to help galvanize regional and international efforts to ensure security in the Gulf of Guinea. Its main focus is counter piracy and armed robbery prevention by bringing together regional, international, industry and NGO partners to advance and coordinate near-term maritime activities, with a view to working towards a set of common operational objectives off the coast of west and central Africa.

I therefore, commend this initiative and use this opportunity to call on Member States and other stakeholders to join, and work collectively in pursuit of this common objective and most importantly, keeping our seafarers safe.



Armoured vehicles on display

“As we begin the operationalization phase of the project, I wish to assure you of government’s commitment to ensure its sustainability and invite all critical stakeholders to work collectively in this direction for the greater benefit of all Nigerians, member states of the Gulf of Guinea and the global maritime community.”

I am confident that the project, which provides a robust maritime security architecture, will enhance maritime domain awareness capability and improve law enforcement action, particularly in the prosecution of suspects under the Suppression of Piracy and other Maritime Offences Act which I signed into law in June 2019.

In this regard, I have been informed that since the coming into force of the law, ten convictions have been secured for various offences under the Act.

This Flag-off is an important step in the continuing shift in strategic action about regional maritime security. It will serve as a benchmark for member states in the Gulf of Guinea and other relevant stakeholders to further develop innovative strategies and align efforts with the subsisting framework to improve maritime security in the region.

I commend the Honourable Minister of Transportation, Honourable Minister of Defence, the Chief of Naval Staff, the Director General NIMASA, Members of the Steering Committee and the Project Management Team and all other government stakeholders who have worked together to bring this initiative of the administration to fruition.

As we begin the operationalization phase of the project, I wish to assure you of government’s commitment to ensure its sustainability and invite all critical stakeholders to work collectively in this direction for the greater benefit of all Nigerians, member states of the Gulf of Guinea and the global maritime community.

I hereby flag off the Deep Blue Project.

Thank you and God Bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Deep Blue Nigeria Has Demonstrated Capacity to Secure its Future

Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi (Minister of Transportation)

W

hen I assumed office as the Minister of Transportation in 2015, I carefully evaluated the transportation requirements of the country and the overall state of the Nigerian economy. I came to the conclusion that the development of the maritime sector

was the future of the Nigerian economy. The reality of climate change precipitated a scramble for alternatives to the use of fossil fuels and the frenzied research into renewable energy sources became the priority of developed nations with immediate and future consequences for the oil dependent Nigerian economy. Oil industry uncertainties created by the Shale oil revolution in the United States of America only compounded the problem.

Based on these realities, I developed an agenda to secure the channels of maritime trade, reduce shipping costs and expand indigenous participation in the sector, in order to facilitate increase in sector contributions to national revenue and the gross domestic product. To achieve this, the Ministry of Transportation developed a comprehensive Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure framework, otherwise called the Deep Blue Project.

However, as soon as this project was presented, all hell was let loose. I was accused of all manner of things from corruption to treason. But I must commend President Muhammadu Buhari, who approved the project despite all attacks and numerous attempts to frustrate it. Which is why I must make it very clear: This is not Rotimi Amaechi's project or NIMASA's project. This is about Nigeria's ability to secure its future by exercising sovereignty over its territorial waters, protect maritime trade in the Gulf of Guinea and position the country for the post-oil economy.

The contract for the Deep Blue Project was signed on 27th July 2017 between the Federal Ministry of Transportation and the Home Land Security International with NIMASA as the Discharge Agency. The actual implementation of the contract commenced in early



2018 and is today fully completed and operationalized with the full support of the Ministry of Defence and all arms of the military, particularly the Nigerian Navy. A symbiotic relationship was carefully put together to ensure that whereas NIMASA retains ownership of the Deep Blue Assets and determines operational needs in line with the International Maritime Organization [IMO] conventions, the military takes charge of its operational deployments.

The Deep Blue Project comprises of four key components. The Marine Assets, the Aerial Assets, the Land Assets and the Command and Control Communication Information Centre otherwise called the C4i. The Marine Assets include two special mission vessels and 17 interceptor boats. For the Aerial Assets,

“With the foregoing investments, President Buhari has laid the foundation for a robust maritime sector and paved the way for a smooth transition to a post-oil economy. I am convinced that despite the difficulties being experienced in Nigeria today, history will be kind to him and his government.”

there are two special mission aircrafts, three helicopters and four unmanned air vessels. The Land Assets include 16 armoured vehicles and 340 fully trained intervention team drawn from the Armed Forces.

The C4i. is the command and control communication computer and intelligence system which provides coastal radar up to 300 nautical miles and external system integration with the Navy Falcon Eye and the Lloyds List and was indeed the first of the assets to be operationalized and commissioned on the 16th of August 2019. Meanwhile, these are huge, sensitive and very expensive assets, which must be run efficiently in a sustainable manner. The Project Management Team shall work out a framework for administrative, maintenance and operational sustainability.

The scope of the Deep Blue project covers Nigeria's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which is 0-200 nautical miles off the coast but with the approval given by the president for NIMASA to take over operations of the Secure Anchorage Area in Lagos from a private company called OMSL, a quick operational adjustment had to be made.

I made it clear when I assumed office as Minister of Transportation that once you have a situation where an individual is offering protection to a country, that is clear evidence of failure of that system. I moved

against it and suspended the contract of OMSL over the Lagos Port Secure Anchorage Area. This time, something worse than hell was let loose. But we were resolute and once again, the president gave approval for NIMASA to take over the SAA. Some of the assets for the Deep Blue Project designed for the EEZ were immediately deployed to SAA of Lagos and the results are there for everyone to see. There is therefore the need to expand the project to cover the additional scope of the SAA of Lagos and possibly Bonny.

With the launch and full deployment of the Deep Blue Project Assets and the passage of the Suppression of Piracy and other Maritime Offences Act, 2019 by the National Assembly, security of maritime trade in our territorial waters and the Gulf of Guinea are largely guaranteed. The unnecessary security costs borne by shipping companies running into millions of dollars annually has been finally removed. We shall now focus on the expansion of indigenous participation in the maritime trade.

With the foregoing investments, President Buhari has laid the foundation for a robust maritime sector and paved the way for a smooth transition to a post-oil economy. I am convinced that despite the difficulties being experienced in Nigeria today, history will be kind to him and his government.



DB Abuja... one of the Special Mission Vessels under the Deep Blue Project

Deep Blue

World Maritime Community Should Reconsider War Risk Insurance on Nigeria-bound Cargo

Dr. Bashir Jamoh, Director General/CEO, NIMASA

W

hen I took up office with my executive team, we set out on a triple S agenda of Maritime Security, Maritime Safety and Shipping Development. We devoted most of our energy and focus in our first year to addressing the problem of maritime security.

Without security of our seas, no meaningful seaborne trading or shipping economy can be possible. Securing our seas became a pressing mandate.

Today marks the fulfillment of that mandate. March 2020, upon assumption of office as the Director-General of NIMASA, and at the inauguration of the agency's Governing Board, we were given a clear mandate to fund and deliver the Deep Blue Project. Mr. President, may I respectfully, with the permission of my Supervising Minister of Transportation, announce that the mission has been accomplished.

The Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure, popularly known as the Deep Blue Project, is the brainchild of this administration with a clear objective to Manage, Control and Protect Nigerian Waterways. In line with the mandate given us we explored various initiatives all geared towards ensuring our waters are safe so that business can thrive to impact positively on the economy of the country and the Gulf of Guinea.

There is no doubt that Deep Blue Project is about assets and platforms. But these Assets and platforms by themselves cannot address the challenges of maritime insecurity. Even if you have assets and arrest the pirates, if you don't prosecute offenders it is wasteful exercise. That is why, Mr. President, today the maritime industry thanks you for signing the Suppression of Piracy and other Maritime Offences (SPOMO Act) into law. The very first of its kind in the entire Gulf of Guinea that is fast becoming a model for other African maritime nations. Under this law, we have successfully prosecuted, convicted and sentenced several offenders for the first time.



Next is NIMASA's partnership with various international organizations that has helped to improve regional approach to solving issues of maritime challenges. We are beginning to witness an era of proper coordination, meaningful collaboration and productive cooperation. Today we are working ever more closely with the IMO for purposes of restoring sanity to our seas and there can be no greater proof and encouragement than the evidences of the International Maritime Organisation's Secretary-General's endorsements of Nigeria's leadership efforts for curtailing criminality along our coastal corridor.

On the home-front, upon assuming office as DG of NIMASA, we immediately established the Maritime Intelligence Unit (MIU) in order to reset our paradigm and approach towards understanding and properly



Command, Control, Computer, Communication and Intelligence (C4i) Centre, Lagos

profiling the behavioural patterns of the young people who engage in sea crimes and piracy. This became for us a more proactive approach to the problem of maritime insecurity.

The success of the Maritime Intelligence Unit also provided us the capacity to intervene using the carrot and stick approach in a meaningful manner to salvage our young people that have been prone to being recruited into piracy along our coastal states. Coupled with our littoral states outreach to the state Governors, a new partnership is emerging that will deal with potential piracy issues before they occur.

Realising the enormity of the economic loss from attacks on our shipping activities, we also created a window of opportunity for the industry to engage regularly with the agency as regulator. This gave birth to the NIMASA Joint Industry Working Group. The monthly forum of candid interactions with critical stakeholders such as BIMCO, InterCargo, InterTanko among others provided a sounding board for shaping policies that have impacted on maritime security strategies and protection of our seafarers. It is worth noting that a major milestone resulting from this partnership with industry is the new Framework for jointly Tackling Maritime Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea signed and co-chaired by the Inter-Regional Coordinating Centre (ICC), Yaoundé and the Nigerian Navy / NIMASA known as GoG-SHADE.

We have also recorded progress on the issue of

harmonization of surveillance between NIMASA (C4i), NPA, Nigerian Navy (Falcon Eye) and the Nigerian Police. All of these will complement the DEEP BLUE Assets to ensure that it is fully robust.

Mr. President, The project we have come here to officially launch is the final piece of our strategy for combating the menace of piracy and sea robbery in not just our waters but also the Gulf of Guinea. Deep Blue comprises of 2 Special Mission Vessels, 3 Special Mission Helicopters, 4 Unmanned Air Vehicles/ Drones, 16 Fast Moving Interceptor Boats, 17 Armoured Vehicles, Over 300 Specially Trained Personnel for the Maritime Security Unit and the C4i Centre. ALL SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED.

Let me conclude by using this auspicious occasion of the official launch of Deep Blue to report that since the deployment of the assets in February, we have experienced continued decline in piracy attacks in our waters on a monthly basis. We therefore invite the international shipping community to rethink the issue of war risk insurance on cargo bound for our ports – Nigeria has demonstrated enough commitment towards tackling maritime insecurity to avert such premium burden.

Let it be clear that for us at NIMASA, Security is Priority – We are for Safer Seas and Calmer Coasts. Seafarers will never have cause to worry when they sail our waters. Shipping will be safer for trade to boom. I welcome you all to this epoch-making celebration.

Deep Blue

A Great Boost to Nigeria's Blue Economy

NIMASA/Joint Industry Working Group

A goodwill message on behalf of the Shipping/Joint Industry Group by the Managing Director, the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (SPDC), and Country Chair, Shell Companies in Nigeria, Mr. Osagie Okunbor, at the launch of Project Deep Blue by the President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari (GCFR) on Thursday, 10 June 2021, at ENL Terminal, Apapa Port, Lagos State

O

n behalf of the Joint NIMASA/Industry Working Group, it is my great pleasure today to convey our best wishes to the President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari, (GCFR) for his belief in the project vision and most of all his unwavering support.

Such a high-level support led to the delivery of Project Deep Blue, a co-ordinated joint maritime protection initiative targeted at protecting significant investments in Nigeria's Offshore, safeguarding seafarers within the Gulf of Guinea, and protecting whilst also encouraging further investment in Nigeria's blue economy.

There is a unity of purpose in this project. All of us stakeholders - Government, Maritime Administrations, Military and Industry - are aware of the importance of the project.

The industry very much appreciates the notable cooperation between NIMASA and the Nigerian Navy for the successful delivery of the project.

My presence here today, I hope, is a testament to the importance that the Maritime industry and all partners with investments in Nigeria's blue economy (Nigeria's offshore waters) place on solid partnership with Nigeria.

Underscoring such important are the great opportunities inherent in working collaboratively to address the maritime security challenges confronting the industry and other maritime stakeholders – from our family members within the communities who fish in these waters for their daily livelihoods to the shipping companies with large vessels traversing our economic zone – all of us



deserve to be safe at sea.

Your excellences, ladies and gentlemen, the reality staring us in the face is that a lot needs to be done to make our waters in the Gulf of Guinea safe. According to the latest figures from the ICC International Maritime Bureau, the Gulf of Guinea accounted for nearly half (43%) of all reported piracy incidents in the first three months of 2021.

It is therefore commendable that as a country we were able to recognise the importance of the sea to our economy and also admit that we needed to confront maritime insecurity with contemporary solutions by delivering this "state of the art" capability to protect our maritime domain.

This, in itself, is a big step forward, but progress towards a safe and secure maritime environment doesn't stop



Air assets... Special Mission Helicopters (left), Special Mission Aircraft (top), and Unmanned Aerial Systems

here until we make this project achieve its objectives. That is the commitment we need to make here and now.

As an industry leader, I am enthused by Nigeria's efforts to energise cooperation and collaboration to create a new International Maritime Framework across the region in partnership with the Inter Regional Coordination Centre in Yaoundé.

This framework with Project Deep Blue at the centre will encourage all interested stakeholders to work together by sharing and de-conflicting operations with the Gulf of Guinea. When further supported by a robust legal solution, it offers a complete detection, interdiction, and prosecution process.

The Project Deep Blue propends an end to indiscriminate pirate attacks, kidnappings and serious criminality in our waters. This should create a positive

impact on Nigeria's international reputation and our viability for investments.

Mariners come to Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea to trade. Trade is the foundation of the global and Nigerian economy; the effective deployment of the Project Deep Blue's capabilities will improve the safety and ease of doing maritime business in Nigeria.

Our partnership is extremely important, for we can make a greater difference by continuing to work together in mitigating maritime risks – you have the industry's commitment in this regard.

Once again, on behalf of all Maritime industry stakeholders and as a Nigerian, I feel proud and please accept my congratulations to Your Excellency, and to all those who worked tirelessly to deliver Project Deep Blue.

Deep Blue

IMO Remains Committed to Support Nigeria

Kitack Lim, Secretary General, International Maritime Organisation



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resident, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I am very pleased to provide remarks at this important event, the launch of Deep Blue Project and thank Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency for the kind invitation.

I'll like to extend my deepest appreciation to Nigeria government for the continued contribution towards the endeavours to ensure safe and secure maritime operations in the Gulf of Guinea.

The tour on seafarers on shipping and on the region. From the illicit maritime activities, including piracy. The unfortunate situation must not be allowed to persist.

Despite the on-going threat, I am encouraged to say the promise in the region with the initiative and

cooperation on so many levels. I'll like to express my deepest appreciation for Nigeria's active engagement in all each global and regional initiatives, today marks a major development in the walk to address piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, I wholeheartedly welcome today's launch of Nigeria's deep blue project, reflecting Nigeria's commitment to lead the fight against piracy not only in your national waters but in the Gulf of Guinea. The launch of this project is a welcome step to enhance maritime security in the region.

There is still more work ahead for all of us the world is watching, we must ensure that we succeed in our objectives to enhance security in the Gulf of Guinea region.

IMO remains committed to support Nigeria and the region in all your efforts.

I wish you a successful event. Thank you.

“There is still more work ahead for all of us the world is watching, we must ensure that we succeed in our objectives to enhance security in the Gulf of Guinea region. IMO remains committed to support Nigeria and the region in all your efforts.”

Deep Blue Management of HLSi



L-R: Capt. MA Mohammed (Captain, DB Abuja) and HLSi officials

T

he Deep Blue Project is a strategic maritime security solution. It was designed to improve the capacity and operational capabilities of the stakeholders. It got the mandate to do so from the government.

The Deep Blue Project is about prevention, intelligence, and technology. But more than any other thing, it is about collaboration between those stakeholders. This project is the outcome of a strong leadership that is ready to do everything possible in order to improve the safety and security, as well as to protect the lives and property of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and by doing that, to create a safe environment for the maritime sector.

But more importantly, the project was designed by the honourable minister, and owned and run by the government of Nigeria, and works 24/7 for the people of this nation.

It is an honour for HLS International to take part in this major, important project. We have delivered the assets, we have completed the training, and now is just the time for collaboration, sustainability, and strong infrastructure that would make this project to take Nigeria to the next level.



NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)

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

Maritime House: 4 Burma Road, Apapa, P.M.B. 12861, Lagos.

E-mail: info@nimasa.gov.ng Website: www.nimasa.gov.ng

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

**The Director,
Maritime Safety and Seafarers Standards
Department,
2nd Floor, Administrative Block,
Nigerian Maritime Resource Development Centre
(NMRDC) Kirikiri, Lagos.**

Email: msssd@nimasa.gov.ng, msssdnma@yahoo.com

Telephone: +234 – 7034172913, +234 – 9096417095,
+234 – 8030555975

SIGNED: MANAGEMENT

Acting Head, Marine Environment Management (MEM) Department, NIMASA, Mr. Isa Mudi (second right); representing the DG NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; Deputy Director, MEM, Dr. Oma Ofodile (third right); Assistant Director, MEM, Unit Head, Liabilities and Compensation, Mrs. Chinyere Azike (third left); Assistant Manager, Operations, Dangote Oil Refinery Company, Engr. Bessie Nabena (second left); Assistant Director, Head, Climate Change Unit, MEM, Mr. Kabiru Bello (left); and President, Centre for Marine Surveyors Nigeria, Engr. Akin Olaniyan, during a stakeholders meeting with modular refinery operators on availability of 0.5 per cent m/m sulphur compliant bunker fuel in Nigeria, organised by NIMASA in Lagos



SHIP POLLUTION:

NIMASA to Ensure Availability of Sulphur Compliant Fuel

• **Seeks cooperation of refinery operators, fuel oil suppliers**

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) is determined to ensure availability of marine fuels that comply with the regulation by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) limiting the sulphur in the fuel oil used on board ships to 0.50 per cent m/m (mass by mass). Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, stated this on Wednesday in Lagos at the opening of a two-day meeting of the Agency with modular and other refinery operators and fuel oil suppliers in the country.

Jamoh, who was represented by Acting Head, Marine Environment Management (MEM) Department, NIMASA, Mr. Isa Mudi, said the Agency had made deliberate effort to conform to the new fuel oil mandate, known as IMO 2020.

Jamoh said, "As the country's shipping regulator, we have had interfaces with the relevant stakeholders on how to reach a win-win agreement on Nigeria's compliance with the IMO sulphur content cap. We are happy to announce that the coast is clear for us to achieve this mandate.

"Nigeria has an advantage ab initio, because we produce low sulphur crude. The challenge for us now is conversion of this advantage to availability of bunker fuels that meet the IMO mandate.

"I make bold to say that we have all it takes to be the bunker fuel hub for Sub-Saharan Africa. There is a \$2 billion bunker fuel market in Sub-Saharan Africa waiting to be harnessed by our business men and women."

Jamoh added, "Our refineries are not working at full-capacity, and this is an opportunity for the modular and other private refineries to come in to fill a vital gap in the marine fuel supply chain. Bunker fuel is a critical element in the shipping business.

"With the coming into effect of IMO 2020, we assure you as an Agency that the country's shipping community will be galvanised to ensure availability, supply, and, in fact, self-sufficiency in 0.5 per cent sulphur content fuels in line with the IMO standard."

In their contributions, representatives of the refineries and fuel oil suppliers pledged their cooperation with NIMASA and other relevant government agencies in the attempt to make the required fuel accessible.

The new sulphur oxide emissions cutting regulations mandate a maximum sulphur content of 0.5 per cent in marine fuels globally. The change is driven by the need to reduce air pollution generated in the shipping industry by reducing the Sulphur content of fuels that ships use.

The regulation came into force on January 1, 2020, marking a significant milestone in efforts to improve air quality, preserve the environment and protect human health.

The IMO 2020 rule limits the sulphur in the fuel oil used on board ships operating outside designated emission control areas to 0.50 per cent m/m, a significant reduction from the previous limit of 3.5 per cent. Within specifically designated emission control areas, the limits were already stricter (0.10%). This new limit was made compulsory following an amendment to Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

There was a large turnout of refinery operators and industry stakeholders at the meeting. They included representatives of Niger Delta Refinery (NDR), Ship Owners Association of Nigeria (SOAN), and OPAC Refinery.

The meeting had in attendance representatives of government agencies, including the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON), and Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

REDUCE YOUR RISK OF COVID-19 INFECTION



WASH YOUR HANDS

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



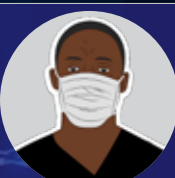
COVER YOUR COUGH OR SNEEZE

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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SUNDAY UMOREN: Recognising Seafarers as Key Workers a Big Relief to Global Maritime

Captain Sunday Umoren, Secretary General of Abuja MOU (on West and Central Africa Region), speaks on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the maritime industry. Excerpts:

What would you say about the working condition of seafarers, especially, in the era of COVID-19?

S

Seafaring has always been very challenging in terms of working condition. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), in collaboration with International Maritime Organisation (IMO), came up with the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) in 2006, which was more on

better living condition for seafarers. It has always been challenging for seafarers.

However, it became more challenging with the onset of COVID-19 and, thankfully, seafarers were now acknowledged as key workers and efforts have been made to ensure that the working conditions are improved.

COVID-19 brought in a lot of restrictions in terms of tour duties. Seafarers were no longer able to go on leave as scheduled; the ones that were on leave had extended stay at home. When a vessel got into port, seafarers were not allowed to go out, which is usually a work-life balance situation. Going out sometimes eases off the tension that they have on board the vessel. But that was taken off. The issue of vessel staying longer at sea, cruise vessels were totally shut down, a lot of issues came up with COVID-19. A typical example is the case of a captain who died on-board. The vessel was not allowed to berth in the

Far East and they had to steam the vessel back to Europe to get the captain off the vessel. Such things are harsh conditions for seafarers.

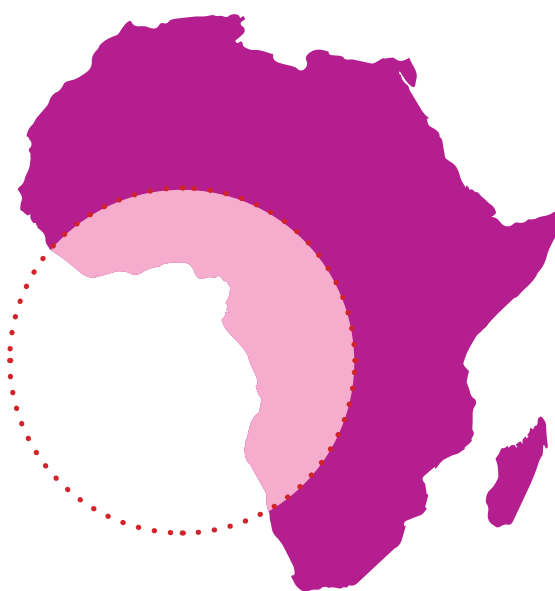
What do you think the Federal Government should do to improve the working conditions of seafarers?

We look at the structure of prorogation of conventions, guidelines, and codes for seafarers. IMO principally is responsible for such. ILO and IMO have come up with the rules, part of which is the world seafarers' day. They have kick-started the process. It is now for the government to look at the implementation, so the government should look at implementing those requirements ensuring that their own flag vessels or vessels coming into their ports are fully compliant. The major aspect would be enforcement by the flag states.

Every flag state should ensure that vessels visiting their ports are inspected and a clear confirmation obtained with respect to the living conditions of seafarers on-board the vessels. And, of course, for people like us, the MOU, we will also work on enforcement and implementation, so the state Ports Officers go on-board the vessels and possibly interview the officers and crew on-board the vessel and look at the situation on-board the vessel using MLC 2006 as the basis to ensure that the working condition is implemented.



Nigeria, ICC Yaoundé Pioneer Initiative to Counter Piracy in Gulf of Guinea



N

igeria and the Inter Regional Coordination Centre (ICC) Yaoundé have formed a forum to galvanise regional and international efforts to ensure security in the Gulf of Guinea (GOG). Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum (GOG-MCF/SHADE) was floated after

meetings between Director General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr Bashir Jamoh, representing Nigeria, and Executive Director of ICC Yaoundé, Admiral Narciso Fastudo Jr.

A joint statement by NIMASA, the Nigerian Navy, and ICC Yaoundé said GOG-MCF/SHADE, which was purposed to facilitate shared awareness and deconfliction of activities in the Gulf of Guinea, “will be open to all GOG countries with similar capacities to join on a voluntary basis.”

The statement dated April 26, 2021 said, “GOG-MCF/SHADE will focus on counter-piracy and armed robbery by bringing together regional, international, industry and NGO partners to advance and coordinate near term maritime activities with a view to working toward a set of common operational objectives in

order to protect seafarers and ships operating off the coast of West and Central Africa.”

Jamoh and Fastudo agreed to hold the first virtual meeting of GOG-MCF/SHADE as soon as practicable, saying modalities would be announced later. They said due to its complementary nature, the G7++Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7++FOGG) would support the creation of GOG-MCF/SHADE, which would comprise an open plenary session; working group meetings; working group chairs, coordination meeting; and a plenary session report.

Jamoh said, “The new maritime security framework speaks to our own integrated approach to security in the country’s waters and the Gulf of Guinea. We have always believed in bringing all maritime stakeholders on board in the search for security, and we have proffered that as a solution at various forums with our regional and international partners.

“I am confident that cooperative efforts and shared capabilities are the best approach to success in our collective quest for maritime security.

“GOG-MCF/SHADE is coming as a powerful new force for security in the Gulf of Guinea.”



L-R: Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, NIMASA, Mr. Victor Ochei; Executive Secretary, Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC), Mr. Hassan Bello; Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; and Executive Director, Operations, NIMASA, Mr. Shehu Ahmed, during a working visit by Bello to the NIMASA headquarters in Lagos

NIMASA, Shippers' Council Move to Curb Delay, Corruption at Ports

• *Harmonise Rates, Operations*

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and the Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC) have agreed to implement joint measures to minimise delay and corrupt practices at the country's ports. This emerged in Lagos during a working visit to the NIMASA headquarters by the Executive Secretary of NSC, Barr. Hassan Bello.

Both agencies of the Federal Government noted that full automation of processes at the nation's ports would go a long way to curb human interface, delays and corruption at the ports. NIMASA and the Nigerian Shippers Council thus agreed to harmonise the implementation of Port and Flag State Administration to minimise human direct contact onboard vessels, calling at the nation's ports in line with provisions in the Nigerian Port Process Manual (NPPM).

The Director General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, noted the Agency's operation was close to 85% automated, adding that NIMASA has undertaken an in house harmonisation exercise to reduce human interface and now fully ready for inter-agency harmonisation. He also commended the management of the Shippers Council for its commitment to ensuring the success of the introduction of cargo tracking notes in port operations.

"We thank you for obtaining approval for the cargo

tracking note. This will reduce loss of man-hour and assist in exposing non-declaration or under declaration at the nation's ports. Thus, improving revenue generation for the federal government," he said.

Commenting on the Secure Anchorage Area, Dr. Jamoh noted that since the Deep Blue project took over security working closely with the Nigerian Navy, the nation has witnessed a reduction in the number of security breaches at the anchorage.

"We are beginning to record a reduction in attacks in our waters, and we hope to sustain this and later demand a change in status of cost of insurance of vessels visiting Nigerian waters.

On his part, Barrister Hassan Bello said the cost of Port operations in Nigeria could be reduced by over 35% when standard operation procedures contained in the Nigerian Port Process Manual were fully implemented.

"Our Ports are in competition with other Ports in the Region, so we need to strengthen collaboration on the establishment of indicative freight Rates," the NSC Executive Secretary said.

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo launched the manual on December 9 last year in Abuja, during the 2020 International Anti-Corruption Day. It is a collection of processes taken from the Standard Operating Procedures of stakeholders in the port sector, and it aims to improve operations, service timelines, efficiency, and accountability at the ports.



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Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (right), and Flag Officer Commanding (FOC) Naval Training Command, Rear Admiral Kamarudeen Lawal, during the FOC's visit to the Agency's headquarters in Lagos



NIMASA to Facilitate STCW Status for Navy, Accredite Professional Courses

• *Collaboration Between Navy, Agency Inevitable – FOC*

Nhe Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) would assist in the accreditation of professional courses offered by the Nigerian Navy. The Agency would also facilitate the attainment of International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) status for the Nigerian Navy's training institutes. Director General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, said these in Lagos, when the Flag Officer Commanding (FOC) Naval Training Command, Rear Admiral Kamarudeen Lawal, visited the Agency's headquarters.

Jamoh spoke in response to requests by Lawal, who believed collaboration between the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA was not only required for success of the country's maritime goals, but also inevitable.

The Director General said, "NIMASA is all for anything that would enhance safety and security in our waters and promote shipping. This is in line with our mandate. We would support and advance courses and causes geared towards maximising our maritime potential.

"Our maritime training institutions and courses have their basis in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW). We would help the Nigerian Navy obtain the STCW status for its training bodies, and facilitate the accreditation of its programmes, on purpose to advance our common goal of maritime

safety and security."

Taking cognisance of the need to maintain the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) standards, Jamoh said NIMASA would study the training curriculum of the Nigerian Navy. He emphasised the need for training and retraining of naval personnel to improve their capability, especially, in respect of the Navy's leading role in the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure (the Deep Blue Project), which is domiciled in NIMASA.

Earlier, the FOC said the visit was in view of NIMASA's critical role in the maintenance of standards and safety in the country's maritime environment. He said the relationship between the Nigerian Navy and NIMASA had led to improved maritime safety and security in Nigerian waters.

Lawal commended efforts by NIMASA to ensure safety and standards in the maritime environment.

"This makes collaboration between the Command and NIMASA desirable and inevitable," Lawal stated. "In order to achieve this objective, the Command desires further assistance and collaboration with NIMASA in the area of certification for International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers," he added.

Lawal also requested Jamoh to "facilitate the accreditation of our professional courses through collaborative efforts with the Maritime Academy of Nigeria (MAN), Oron."



President Muhammadu Buhari



Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi



Senator Ibikunle Amosun and Minister of State for Transportation, Senator Gbemisola Saraki



Speaker, House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila



Ogun State Governor Dapo Abiodun (front) and Minister of Information and Culture Lai Mohammed



Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State (front) and Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State



Minister of Works and Housing, Babatunde Fashola

PHOTO NEWS DEEP BLUE FLAG-OFF



President Muhammadu Buhari



President Muhammadu Buhari cutting the tape to flag off the Deep Blue Project. He is flanked by the host Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State (left); Speaker, House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila (second left); and Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun



President Muhammadu Buhari (middle), Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi (right); and Director General/CEO, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh



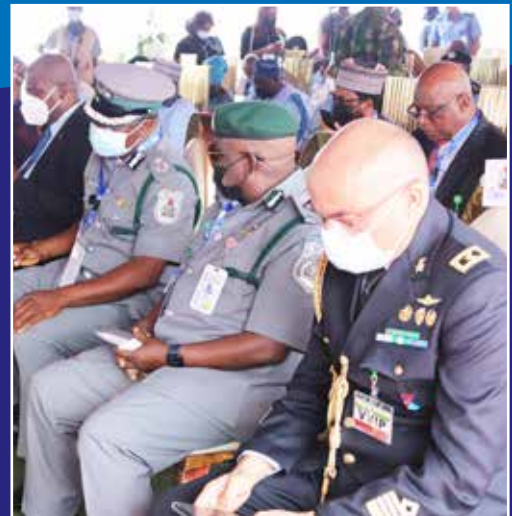
President Muhammadu Buhari (second left); Speaker House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila (third left); Minister of Defence, Maj. Gen. Bashir Salihu Magashi (rtd) (second right); Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu (third right); Ekiti State Governor, Kayode Fayemi (left); and Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh



R-L: Minister of Defence, Maj. Gen. Bashir Salihi Magashi (rtd.); Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Awwal Zubaru; Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Isiaka Oladayo Amao; and the Chief of Army Staff, Maj. Gen. Farouk Yahaya, at the official launch of the Deep Blue Project in Lagos



L-R: Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, NIMASA, Mr. Victor Ochei; Executive Director, Operations, Mr. Shehu Ahmed; Executive Vice Chairperson, ENL Consortium, Dr. Vicky Hastrup; and President General, Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN), Comrade Adewale Adeyanju



Participants



HLSi team



President Muhammadu Buhari (third left); Speaker, House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila (second left); Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi (third right); Minister of Defence, Maj. Gen. Bashir Salihu Magashi (rtd) (second right); Lagos State Governor, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu (left); and Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh



R-L: Chairman, House Committee on Maritime Safety, Education and Administration, Hon. Lynda Ikpeazu; and other participants



Minister of State for Transportation, Senator Gbemisola Saraki performing the symbolic naming of vessel



L-R: Former Director General, NIMASA, Temisan Omatseye; Managing Director, National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), Dr. George Moghalu; and a stakeholder



L-R: President Muhammadu Buhari; Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi; and Director General/CEO, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, inspecting one of the Deep Blue Assets during the official launch of the Project in Lagos



L-R: Mr. Victor Ochei; Hon. Lynda Ikpeazu; Director, Accident and Investigation Unit, NIMASA, Mrs. Rita Egbuche; and Director, Maritime Safety and Security, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Dr. Paul Adalikwu



L-R: Special Assistant to Director General, NIMASA, Communications and Strategy, Mr. Ubong Essien; Managing Director/CEO, Starz Marine and Engineering Limited, Greg Ogbeifun; Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; renowned journalists and newscasters, Cyril Stober and Eugenia Abu; and Managing Director, Sea Transport Services Limited, Mallam Aminu Umar



L-R: Director, International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, Mrs. Aisha Jidda; Director, Reforms and Coordination, Kabir Murnai; Director, Administration and Human Resources, Mrs. Moronke Thomas; Registrar of Ships, Mrs. Nneka Obiayor; Deputy Director, Special Duties, Mr. Isichei Osamgbir; Director, Cabotage Services, Mrs. Rita Uruakpa; and Head, Health, Safety and Environment (HSE), Dr. Anslem Nwanze all of NIMASA



Fast Interceptor boats on display

OTUNBA KUNLE FOLARIN: There should be More Opportunities for Seafarers' Training

Otunba Kunle Folarin is Chairman, National Seafarers Welfare Board and former Chairman, Regional Welfare Board of West and Central Africa, covering over 13 countries. Folarin tells **The VOYAGE** that bettering the competence, working condition, and future of seafarers should be a priority and a continuous exercise for the government. Excerpts:

In what specific ways do you think the authorities in Nigeria can advance the welfare of seafarers?

In my own opinion, the government has a responsibility to ensure that they encourage and support the seafarers so that they can have a guaranteed future in their chosen field. For example, the National Assembly must domesticate the Maritime Labour Convention of 2006 so that it can get into our statute books and become a law in Nigerian maritime administration.

Secondly, the Nigeria government must continue to engage maritime practitioners and professionals on the best way to advance the future of the seafarers. There must be more opportunities for training and creation of more maritime academies so that youths and young people who want to go into the profession can have the opportunity to do so.

Thirdly, we must raise the bar to ensure that the standard of the maritime academies in Nigeria are up to the globally acceptable best practices so that our seafarers from the Nigerian academies can be accepted all over the world, to get placements and also have opportunities to advance more in their profession and also onshore. Nigeria must encourage them with the help of other stakeholders to provide minimum



Folarin

recreational activities for the seafarers onshore and, of course, the ship-owners must ensure that on-board their vessels there are minimum comfort zones for the seafarers, medical, recreational, and, in fact, the food they eat must be up to the standard that gives them the strength to work very hard in carrying out their duties.



Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP) Cadets during a parade

What is your message for seafarers on the occasion of the Day of the Seafarer 2021?

I want to assure the seafarers globally, wherever they are, that they are supported. I want to assure the seafarers that their profession is noble and very critical to the development of global trade. I want to assure the seafarers that their education, training and skill acquisition are also guaranteed because the world needs their services, they are essential workers and very important to the global economy.

How do you think the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the international maritime community at large can better ensure a fair future for seafarers?

In my view, for the seafarers to contribute to the global economy, there must be security, there must be safety, there must be guarantee of employment. In recent times, the seafarers in the open seas are being attacked by pirates and armed robbers, which creates an impediment in the way they do their work, creates fear in the way they do their work and in the way they live on-board the vessels in the open seas. It is very important that as a continuous effort, government and the world maritime agency, IMO, and the United

Nations as a whole, and even sovereign countries must ensure that they enact laws that prevent and serve as death threat to pirates and armed robbers who harass seafarers at sea.

I must at this stage applaud the Federal Government of Nigeria for recent efforts to ensure that safety and security measures are put in place. Recently, the Nigerian government has demonstrated that through the Federal Ministry of Transportation and Nigeria Maritime Administration and Safety Agency. Seafarers' concerns about their safety and security are being looked into in a continuous and sustainable manner so that, globally, the Nigerian maritime space will be seen as safe and secure for international trade.

In addition, the Nigeria government must contribute to all efforts, globally, to ensure that we do not only have safe sailing, safe territorial waters, but also that our commercial gains are guaranteed because before now all risks and other sub-charges are levied on Nigeria-bound cargo. That has impact on the cost of goods and services in Nigeria and it is, therefore, harmful to our economy. Seafarers must be supported, must be encouraged to continue to deliver their best to Nigerian trade and global trade and the world at large. That is my message to seafarers on this day.

Facilitating Improved Conditions for Business through Maritime Security

Following rapidly improving security in Nigerian waters in the wake of the deployment of maritime security assets, NIMASA wants a review of war risk insurance liability for Nigeria-bound ships. **Chinweizu Amuta** reports

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aking in 17 countries from Senegal to Angola, the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) is richly endowed with vast reserves of hydrocarbon, solid minerals (diamond, tin and cobalt), and fisheries, making it a highly strategic area. While not a major international shipping route at

present, the Gulf of Guinea represents 25 per cent of African maritime traffic and has nearly 20 commercial seaports.

According to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, the Gulf of Guinea is home to 4.5 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves (with 60 per cent of Africa's oil production) and 2.7 per cent of proven global natural gas reserves.

Two-thirds of these reserves are concentrated within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Nigeria, the centre of gravity in the region, whose oil sector accounts for 75 per cent of the state's revenue and 90 per cent of total exports.

The recently launched Deep Blue Project offers an opportunity for improved ease of doing business conditions in Nigeria, and the greater Gulf of Guinea area. It is envisaged that this concerted effort to permanently address maritime insecurity would lead to a reversal of the issuance of War Risk Insurance being charged on cargoes and vessels headed for ports in the GoG region.

PAYING FOR INSURANCE AT WAR RATES

War Risk Insurance is coverage provided on losses resulting from events, such as war, invasions, insurrections, riots, strikes, and terrorism. War risk insurance is offered as a separate policy, as it is excluded from standard insurance policies due to the high risks involved.

Due to the frequently reported cases of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, insurance underwriters charge more to cover vessels that travel through the region because ship-owners who are required to sail in the Gulf of Guinea will have to obtain the approval of their

insurer before they can enter these waters.

The obvious consequence of this development has meant higher costs of goods to end users and reduced profit margins, which negatively affect economic development, not just in Nigeria, but in GoG countries, in general.

HOW ARE GOG PIRACY FIGURES REPORTED?

It is important to understand how piracy and other maritime crimes are reported because this has a direct bearing on how decisions affecting the economies of GoG countries are made, including charging of War Risk Insurance on vessels plying these waters.

Piracy data is often used as an indicator of general maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, but unless it is carefully interpreted, using it could lead to poor responses.

Reports from the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), as well as other sources, such as the Interregional Coordination Centre in Yaoundé, greatly influence public and policy discourse on the state of maritime security in West and Central Africa. Yet, the extent of the threat is disputed and the numbers need to be carefully examined to avoid misreporting the true situation on ground.

For instance, the Nigerian Navy reported 339 incidents of piracy in 2020. But according to the definition of the crime under international law, 214 out of these would not be considered 'piracy' but acts of armed robbery, as they took place in Nigerian territorial waters and not on the High Seas.

Incidents of armed robbery at sea are the responsibility of the coastal state if they occur fewer than 12 nautical miles from the coast. The location of attacks is therefore significant, both to interpreting the data and crafting responses. Effective law enforcement far out at sea is beyond the capacity of most regional states. This means that any solution to the problem of piracy is a collective one requiring multinational support as envisioned in the Yaoundé Agreement of 2013.

A DEEP BLUE ANSWER?

In any case, the reality remains that the maritime security situation in the GoG could be much improved and to this end, the Federal Government, with the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) at the spearhead, has brought the Deep Blue Project into play.

The Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure, as the Project is otherwise known, was launched by President Muhammadu Buhari on June 10 with the remit to secure Nigerian territorial waters up to the Gulf of Guinea.

The land assets include the Command, Control, Communication, Computer, and Intelligence Centre (C4i) for intelligence gathering and data collection; 16 armoured vehicles for coastal patrol; and 600 specially trained troops for interdiction, known as the Maritime Security Unit.

The sea assets include two Special Mission Vessels and 17 Fast Interceptor Boats, with the air assets comprising of two Special Mission Aircraft for surveillance of the country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ); three Special Mission Helicopters for search and rescue operations; and four Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

It is important to note that the Deep Blue Project is the first integrated maritime security strategy in West and Central Africa with the aim of tackling incidents of piracy, crew kidnappings for ransom, and other maritime crimes.

PRESENT REALITY ON GROUND

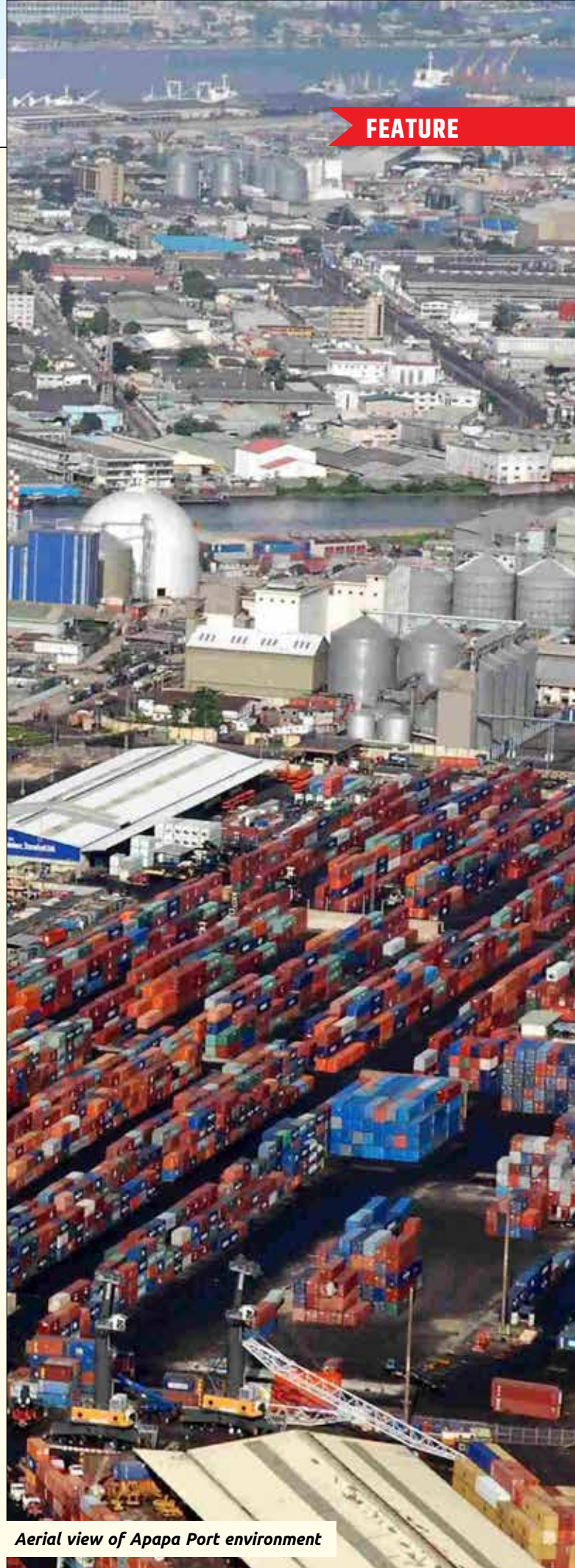
Amidst the reduced piracy incidents in Nigerian waters and the Gulf of Guinea since February, when NIMASA deployed assets under the Deep Blue Project, the Agency's Director General, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, has called for an end to the charging of War Risk Insurance to Nigeria-bound vessels.

Speaking during the recent official flag-off of the DBP, Dr Jamoh said: "Since the deployment of the Deep Blue Project assets in February, there had been a steady decline in piracy attacks in Nigerian waters on a monthly basis.

"We, therefore, invite the international shipping community to rethink the issue of war risk insurance on cargo bound for our ports. Nigeria has demonstrated enough commitment towards tackling maritime insecurity to avert such premium burden."

Although, according to Dr. Jamoh and Industry-watchers alike, piracy in Nigerian waters is waning, stakeholders in the industry are worried that offshore underwriting firms still insist on very high premiums be paid by companies conveying cargoes to the GoG area.

While the Deep Blue Project enters implementation stage, NIMASA will not be complacent as it will continually evolve strategies, including wide consultation with stakeholders and application of cutting edge technology, in the fight against maritime insecurity.



Aerial view of Apapa Port environment



Defence Reporting: NIMASA, Army Collaborate on Training

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he Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and the Nigerian Army have announced a plan to cooperate on the training and retraining of journalists and other public communication practitioners in the country's security sector. This was the highpoint of a meeting

in Lagos between the Management of NIMASA, led by the Director General, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, and a team from the Nigerian Army School of Public Relations and Information (NASPRI), led by the Acting Commandant, Col. Aliyu Yusuf, at the Agency's headquarters.

The Nigerian Army delegation said the courtesy call was to explore areas for further collaboration with NIMASA.

Jamoh stressed the cordial relationship between NIMASA and the Armed Forces, especially the Nigerian Army, which plays a leading role in the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure (the Deep Blue Project), domiciled at the Agency.

"We have a very cordial relationship with the Armed Forces," Jamoh stated. "Both establishments are working towards the same goal of national security

and development," he added.

The Director General said, "The Nigerian Army is a strategic partner in our search for maritime security; it plays a critical role in the Deep Blue Project. We are happy to work with you in the dissemination of information on national security issues. We have a responsibility to manage security information in ways that would engender confidence in the polity – and not endanger the country."

Jamoh restated the plan by NIMASA to set up a media academy for the training and retraining of professionals that report the maritime industry. He said the Agency's Public Relations Unit would interface with NASPRI to come up with a robust curriculum and information sharing method that would serve NIMASA and the Army in the implementation of their respective mandates.

Yusuf, earlier in the meeting, commended the warm relationship between the Nigerian Army and NIMASA, saying he looks forward to more partnership between the two establishments. He said NASPRI had trained many maritime journalists, members of the Armed Forces, and others involved in security reporting.



L-R: Mrs. Ronke Thomas, Nneka Obianyor, Temisan Omatseye, Dr. Anslem Nwanze, Mrs. Obigor Obioma, and Mr. Isichei Osamgbi, all of NIMASA



Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (middle) and members of the Deep Blue Project committee



Managing Director, Sea Transport Services Limited, Mallam Aminu Umar (left), and a participant



Members of the Diplomatic Community



Staff of the Planning, Research, Data Management and Statistics (PRDMS) Department of NIMASA



IMO News



IMO ENVISAGES 'FAIR FUTURE FOR SEAFARERS' ON DAY OF THE SEAFARER

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he Day of the Seafarer, held on 25 June every year, draws global attention to the contribution that seafarers make to world trade. As the world slowly moves through the pandemic, it is more important than ever not only to acknowledge the efforts that seafarers have made to keep the supply chain open, despite extremely challenging conditions, but also to

ensure that the future being built is one that is fair to them. This is why IMO's 2021 Day of the Seafarer campaign has chosen the theme of "A Fair Future for Seafarers".

For a second year in a row, the world marked the day as hundreds of thousands of seafarers continued to face restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to repatriation, shore leave and medical support all continued to be a challenge. Although there has been a significant reduction in the number of seafarers caught up in the crew change crisis, the numbers remain unacceptably high.

Currently only 60 IMO member states have designated seafarers as key workers.

SUPPORTING MARITIME SECURITY IN GULF OF GUINEA

IMO has taken part in the annual meeting of G7 Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7++ FoGG) which focuses on dealing with illegal activities at sea in the Gulf of Guinea. The online event, held June 23 – 25, included discussions on how the Yaoundé Code of Conduct will function going forward. The Code's primary objective is to manage and considerably reduce the adverse impacts from piracy, armed robbery against ships and other illicit maritime activities. It was developed with technical support from IMO and adopted in 2013.

The role of civil society organisations and their role in addressing the causes of piracy was highlighted, providing a valuable insight into some of the social, cultural and economic challenges facing the region.

In his opening remarks, IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim highlighted the urgency of the security situation, stating, "Now is the time to make real progress. I call upon all stakeholders to display genuine commitment to confront these issues head on."

The FoGG was hosted under the Co-Chair of the United Kingdom and Senegal, with participants from G7++ FoGG countries, including those in West and Central Africa, international organisations and industry.

ONE YEAR EXTENSION FOR IMO GLOLITTER PROJECT

The IMO's GloLitter Partnerships Project, which aims to help the maritime transport and fishing sectors in developing countries move towards a low-plastics future, has been granted a one year extension by the initial funding body, Norwegian Agency for Development

Cooperation (Norad). The USD 4.6 million project was originally launched in December 2019 with a deadline of 2023 but faced delays in implementation because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, NORAD has approved an extension to June 2024.

Chief, IMO Department for Partnerships and Projects, Jose Matheickal, said, "A low plastics future is vital to maintain a healthy marine ecosystem. This extension demonstrates the faith that NORAD has in our ability to deliver the goals of the GloLitter Partnerships Project. Our ambition is to have this project serve as an example of best practice and inspire other countries to take action against marine plastic litter."

The GloLitter Partnerships' project, which is jointly implemented by IMO and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), helps developing countries apply best practices for prevention, reduction and control of marine plastic litter.

SPAIN ACCEDES TO SHIP RECYCLING CONVENTION

Spain is the latest country to accede to IMO's treaty for safe and environmentally-sound ship recycling – the Hong Kong Convention. The Convention covers the design, construction, operation and maintenance of ships, and preparation for ship recycling in order to facilitate safe and environmentally sound recycling, without compromising the safety and operational efficiency of ships.

Under the treaty, ships to be sent for recycling are required to carry an inventory of hazardous materials, specific to each ship. Ship recycling yards are required to provide a Ship Recycling Plan, specifying the manner in which each ship will be recycled, depending on its particulars and its inventory.

The 17 Contracting States to the Convention represent approximately 29.77 per cent of the gross tonnage of the world's merchant shipping. They are Belgium, Congo, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Japan, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Serbia, Spain, and Turkey.

MARITIME LEGAL COURSES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Knowledge of maritime legal matters is crucial for development. To support ongoing education during the COVID-19 pandemic, 103 officials from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and from the seven IMO-established Women in Maritime Associations (WIMAs) were recently awarded fellowships to undertake short professional development courses organized by the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI).

The five specialised legal courses, held remotely from November 30 to June 4 2021, help to enhance the professional capacity and understanding of participants, to better assist them with domesticating treaties. Topics covered included the Law of Treaties, Law of Ports, Seafarer' Rights, Protection of the Marine Environment and Ocean Governance, and International Maritime Security Law. IMO officials contributed to the courses by offering lectures in their field of expertise.



DIVERSITY AND OIL SPILL PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

The benefits of diversity were top of the agenda during the recent International Oil Spill Conference (IOSC) 2021, held remotely from 10 to 14 May 2021.

Under the theme: Prevent, Prepare, Respond, Restore, IOSC 2021 was attended by thousands of professionals from the international spill response community, private sector, government, and non-governmental organizations, who came together to discuss challenges and share oil spill preparedness and response expertise and ideas from around the world.

As well as contributing to the development of the IOSC 2021 programme, IMO facilitated the allocation of four scholarships under IOSC's programme to candidates from Brazil, Curaçao, Panama and the Solomon Islands.

During the event, IMO's Clément Chazot delivered a presentation on the MV WAKASHIO incident, which occurred off the coast of Mauritius in July 2020. His presentation highlighted the challenges of responding to a spill of Very Low Sulphur Fuel Oil (VLSFO), amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

IMO also co-organised a virtual side event on Empowering Women in Oil Spill Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Restoration (13 May 2021), which was attended by more than 150 IOSC registered delegates. IMO's Patricia Charlebois participated in a panel discussion, sharing her experience and lessons learned as a female expert working in the oil spill response community, highlighting the importance of mentorship programmes and networks to help women in oil spills access training opportunities and break the glass ceiling in this male-dominated industry.

AUTONOMOUS SHIPPING, COVID-19 IMPACT, SECURITY AND FUEL SAFETY IN SPOTLIGHT

The foundations for the future development of a regulatory framework for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) will be laid at the 103rd session of IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), held in remote session from 5 to 14 May 2021. The Committee will consider the outcome of a regulatory scoping exercise on MASS carried out over the last couple of years and identify priorities for further work. In addition to discussing the

most appropriate ways of addressing MASS operations from the regulatory perspective, meeting attendees will also consider submissions relating to MASS trials.

MSC 103 will also explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on shipping and seafarers. The Committee is expected to discuss a number of submissions, including a proposal for adoption of a resolution on prioritising seafarers for COVID-19 vaccination.

Another important item on the agenda is maritime security, including cyber security, piracy and armed robbery. The Committee is expected to discuss in particular the ongoing piracy problems in the Gulf of Guinea.

Fuel safety is also high on the agenda, with the Committee expected to establish a working group to examine issues including fuel flashpoint, blended fuels and fuel sampling and testing.

In response to the growing need for safer operation of domestic ferries, the Committee will be considering a set of draft model regulations on domestic ferry safety that can be incorporated into national law.

The MSC will also consider a number of proposals for future work, including how to address the problem of containers lost at sea.

PROMOTING NATIONAL MARITIME TRANSPORT POLICIES

IMO is continuing to introduce countries to the concept of National Maritime Transport Policies (NMTPs). Officials from 10 countries, including Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) took part in the 4th Advanced Maritime Leaders' Programme (20 April).

IMO and World Maritime University experts covered the development, formulation and content of an NMTP. The objective is to achieve the maritime vision of a country and ensure the sector is governed in an efficient, sustainable, safe and environmentally-sound manner.

The session included an example of a sample policy decision made at an IMO body, allowing participants to better understand the context and issues to consider before transposing such a decision into their own NMTP. It also gave the opportunity for attendees to intervene with specific questions related to NMTP.

The event was organized by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Academy (MPAA).

IMO Secretary General

MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE SEAFARER

25 June 2021

The world depends on shipping, and shipping depends on seafarers. But the life and work of seafarers have been affected dramatically by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout the crisis, seafarers have faced enormous challenges concerning repatriation, travel to join their ships, proper access to vaccinations and medical care, and shore leave. Yet seafarers on board ships have continued working, providing an essential service for people everywhere.

The members of this multinational workforce of 1.6 million people must be recognized as key workers who deliver an essential service, and be given access to transit and travel. Seafarers must also have equitable access to vaccines, as nobody is safe until everyone is safe.

During 2020, the number of seafarers needing to be relieved from ships – effectively stranded onboard – reached an unacceptably high of 400,000. Thanks to the efforts of all concerned parties, the number is currently estimated to be about 200,000. But the toll on seafarers continues to be immense. We must do more to help the fatigued and stressed workforce that operates the ships that deliver vital goods – including food, fuel and medical supplies. This is both a humanitarian issue and a potential threat to the safety of navigation.

On the International Day of the Seafarer, we must acknowledge that the future of world trade depends on the people who operate ships. All stakeholders must work together to ensure a fair future for seafarers.

L-R: Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva; Director General/CEO, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; Executive Director, Finance and Administration, NIMASA, Mr. Chudi Offodile; Commander, 631 Aircraft Maintenance Depot, Air Commodore John Laoye; Commander, 301 Heavy Airlift Group, Air Commodore Patrick Obeya; and an official of HLSi Security Systems, the contractors handling the Deep Blue Project, during the reception of one of the Special Mission Aircraft (in the background) under the Project, at the Nigerian Air Force Base, Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos.



Jamoh: We're Zeroing Out Attacks in Nigerian Waters

● As Nigeria Receives Last Batch of Assets Under Deep Blue Project

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Special Mission Aircraft was received in Lagos, in the final phase of the delivery and installation of assets under the Deep Blue Project designed to secure Nigerian waters up to the Gulf of Guinea. Director General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and

Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, received the aircraft, in company with Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, and NIMASA's Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Mr. Chudi Offodile.

Jamoh had earlier inspected three Special Mission Helicopters at the Naval Base, Apapa, under the project billed for launch on May 21.

Addressing journalists at the Nigerian Air Force Base, Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja, during a brief ceremony to mark the arrival of the aircraft, Jamoh said the assets would further improve security in Nigerian waters.

The Director General revealed a drastic reduction in the rate of attacks in the country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with the deployment of the Deep Blue Project assets, saying the goal is to eliminate entirely such incidents.

He said, "There has been a drastic decrease in the rate of security breaches in our waters in recent times. This is a clear indication that we are getting it right with the Deep Blue Project.

"The figures we are getting from the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) are encouraging. We ultimately aim to completely eradicate security hindrances to shipping and business generally in the Nigerian maritime domain."

IMB, a specialised division of the International Chamber

of Commerce (ICC), is the global focal point in the fight against maritime crimes and malpractices. The organisation has in recent months reported a consistent year-on-year drop in the number of attacks on ships in Nigerian waters.

The latest IMB quarterly report of piracy and armed robbery against ships recorded only two incidents in Nigerian waters between January and March this year, compared to 11 attacks within the same period last year.

"These figures are a proof that we can make our waters safe and secure, and we are determined to do so," Jamoh stated. "Today, we are here to receive the final phase of assets under the Deep Blue Project to further boost our capacity to secure our waters up to the Gulf of Guinea," he added.

The Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure, popularly called the Deep Blue Project, is designed with three categories of platforms to tackle maritime security issues on land, sea, and air. The land assets comprise the Command, Control, Communication, Computer, and Intelligence Centre (C4i) for intelligence gathering and data collection; 16 armoured vehicles for coastal patrol; and about 600 specially trained troops for interdiction, known as Maritime Security Unit. On air, there are two Special Mission Aircraft for surveillance of the EEZ, one of which was received Wednesday, with the second expected to arrive May 18; three Special Mission Helicopters for search and rescue; and four Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. The sea assets consist of two Special Mission Vessels and 17 Fast Interceptor Boats.



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NSDP
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REGULATORY | OPERATIONAL | PROMOTIONAL | CAPACITY BUILDING



MAGNUS IBE: We Want Full Implementation of Maritime Labour Convention

Magnus Ibe, Human Resources Director for Bourbon Interoil (Nigeria) Limited, believes it is necessary for the Nigerian government to ensure full implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006, which sets out the minimum working and living standards for seafarers. Excerpts:

What is your opinion on the working conditions of Nigerian seafarers against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic?

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he COVID-19 pandemic came with a lot of challenges, a lot of restrictions, and this, indeed, affected the seafarers. It, indeed, affected crew changes, entry into ports walls, and restricted entry into different offshore facilities. We are restricted even entry into countries.

So, yes, NIMASA did very well with the marine notice they came up with to help, first, recognising seafarers as critical workers and, then, to also make easy their movement in and out of the facilities on the ports. But this also has a lot more in terms of head checks, quarantine, seafarers testing positive, and all that. So a lot more can be done to ease movement of seafarers in and out of facilities.

Look at the quarantine rules, today, you have one rules of quarantine by the government; the

offshore facilities also have their own. So we need to marry everything together to make sure that the life of the seafarer is made easier than it is today.

In what ways do you think the Federal Government can facilitate better working condition for the Nigerian seafarers?

A lot of ways, but I will take only a few. The Federal Government can ensure that we have full implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) in Nigeria that will guarantee good working conditions for seafarers, because that in all says everything that every organisation, every ship-owner, even the seafarers themselves, have to do to make sure that the seafarers are comfortable and they have good working condition. If the Federal Government can fully implement the MLC to make sure that it is working in Nigeria it will go a long way in improving the life of the seafarers in Nigeria.

There is also a tripartite agreement already with



Night view of Apapa Port environment

NIMASA, labour unions, and ship-owners, but this must be enforced or implemented. Of course, people must come together to talk willingly, nobody should be coerced into it. It has to be a situation where everybody comes, agrees on these conditions to make life better for the seafarers working on-board different vessels.

It puts a standard, the seafarers should have standard of life, standard of welfare, standard of working condition implemented for them in Nigeria.

What is your take on the quality of seafarers' certifications issued in Nigeria?

The Nigerian seafarer today has his certificate issue in Nigeria, his license is issued here, but many countries do not accept these licenses. The Nigerian government must vigorously pursue bilateral agreements with other maritime nations. This way, the Nigeria seafarer can be guaranteed that when I go to America, for instance, I can work, when I go to England, I can work, when I go to Liberia, I can work, and when I go to the EU they will accept my license. That, in fact, would make them saleable and make them earn other currencies for the country, make the seafarer comfortable to say, "I am a Nigerian seafarer, I can go anywhere and work."

What is your opinion on Nigeria's efforts to ensure safety and security in its marine environment and the Gulf Guinea?

The Federal Government has done well in NIMASA with this Deep Blue Project. We commend them very well for that, but also more can be done. We have to make sure that the Deep Blue Project works to ensure a secure marine environment, where our seafarers are assured that when they go to work they are safe, they won't be dealing with pirates going after them, they won't be afraid of being kidnapped or something will happen to them.

The Deep Blue Project by NIMASA is commendable and should be encouraged. We can even take it beyond the Deep Blue Project to make sure that we

do everything possible as a government to ensure that the maritime environment is secure.

June 25 is marked as international Day of the Seafarer and the theme for this year is, "Fair future for Seafarers." What steps do you think the international maritime community can take to ensure better working conditions for seafarers?

As we mark the world seafarers day for 2021 to ensure globally that we have a fair future for seafarers, MLC is there, they must ensure that countries who have not signed up should sign up. This is key because this guarantees good working condition for seafarers, it guarantees the future of seafarers, it guarantees their safety. It is important that countries are encourage to sign-up.

The other point I will like to make here is that autonomous ships are coming, we can't run away from it. Today, we have bigger ships with fewer people, the regime of the autonomous ships definitely is here. How are we preparing our seafarers for this regime of autonomous ships? The only way is, we must train them, retrain them and we must build capacity to ensure that our seafarers can do what they are meant to do. Before we can finally say we are operating autonomous ships our seafarers should be able to operate the computers, they should be able to operate a lot of the equipment. When vessels started using Dynamic Position, a lot of officers and seafarers who didn't have the DP licenses were nowhere, they didn't have a job, they had to go back and train for DP before they could be guaranteed jobs on-board DP vessels as officers, same with diesel electric vessels. When these diesel electric vessels came on board engineers who didn't have that experience were not carried along. So, our seafarers must be ready to face the regime of autonomous ships.

On this note, I wish the seafarers happy celebration, we see them as very important in the maritime sector, for without the seafarers there is no maritime sector, we wish them a fair future.



L-R: Director General, Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (NIALS), Professor Muhammed Tawfiq Ladan; President, Court of Appeal, Hon. Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem; and Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, at the maiden edition of the Nigerian Admiralty Law Colloquium organised in Lagos by NIMASA, in collaboration with the National Judicial Institute (NJI)

NIMASA DG: SPOMO Act Improving Nigeria's Image

• Agency Vital Organ of Economic Development – Court of Appeal President

T

he Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act, signed into law by President Muhammadu Buhari in June 2019, is producing a better appreciation of Nigeria's determination to end piracy and sea robbery in Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea. Director-

General of Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, disclosed this at the maiden edition of the Nigerian Admiralty Law Colloquium organised in Lagos by the Agency, in collaboration with the National Judicial Institute (NJI).

President of the Court of Appeal, Hon. Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, lauded NIMASA as a key organ of economic development, saying the admiralty law conferences introduced by the Agency are helping to streamline application of the antipiracy law.

The colloquium had the theme, "Achieving Maritime Safety, Security and Shipping Development (TRIPOD S) through Enforcement of Legislations and the Implementation of the Deep Blue Project: The Role of the Judiciary and State Actors."

Jamoh said the admiralty law conference, in its 10th edition this year, had achieved significant

milestones in the continued effort to better maritime law administration in Nigeria. But the meeting was renamed this year to reflect current challenges and widen the scope of participation, he stated.

Jamoh stated, "The Admiralty Law Conference instituted by NIMASA has achieved important milestones in the pursuit of its target of continuously improving maritime law administration in Nigeria. I am happy to announce that the key recommendations captured in the communiqué of last year's conference would be sent to the National Assembly for the necessary legislative actions expected to improve the SPOMO Act.

"We have made good progress in the implementation of the SPOMO Act. We have secured convictions at the Federal High Court in Port Harcourt and Lagos, and more judgements are expected next month.

"These prosecutions and convictions have greatly helped to improve Nigeria's image in the international community by producing a better appreciation of the country's role and determination to end piracy and other maritime crimes in its territorial waters and the Gulf of Guinea."

The NIMASA Director-General also spoke on the



EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



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Employee of the Month
April 2021
SERVICOM Unit



CHIGOZIE CHARITY AYOZIE-OKEKE
Employee of the Month
May 2021
Ship Registry Unit



ANTHONY PREYE PREGHAFI
Employee of the Month
June 2021
Ship Registry Unit

The **Employee of the Year** and **Employee of the Month** awards reward and recognise outstanding performance among staff; motivate other staff to emulate excellence in those rewarded; and replicate the superior performance in order to enhance productivity and fulfill the Agency's vision and mission.

NIMASA DG: SPOMO ACT IMPROVING NIGERIA'S IMAGE

Continued from page 46 —————→

adjustment in the name of the maritime law sessions, saying it is prompted by the need to bring on board a wider range of stakeholders, including Supreme Court justices.

"From next year, Supreme Court justices and more lawyers would be included in the continuous attempt to fine tune the processes and procedures of justice administration in maritime issues," Jamoh stated.

President of the Court of Appeal said NIMASA was "a vital organ in the economic development of Nigeria." She said the maritime sector was indispensable, and being global in nature, "Informed knowledge of the law in the global environment" was necessary in efforts to advance the sector.

"What touches this sector should be treated with great care," Dongban-Mensem stated.

The admiralty law sessions had for the first time this year the President of the Court of Appeal in attendance. Others in attendance included Administrator of the National Judicial Institute, Hon. Justice Rosaline Bozimo, who was represented by a Director in the institute, Olumo Abdulazeez; Director-General, Nigerian

Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (NIALS), Professor Muhammed Tawfiq Ladan; and Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, represented by Justice Ayokunle Faji.

The admiralty law seminar was instituted by NIMASA in 2009 for judges in pursuit of the agency's broad mandate to promote the development of shipping and capacity building in the maritime sector. The initial target was judges of the Federal High Court, who have exclusive jurisdiction over admiralty matters under Section 251 (1) (g) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended). The scope was later expanded to include judges of the State High Court of the littoral states. It was further enlarged to include justices of the Court of Appeal, due to their strategic role in the dispensation of justice.

Plans have been concluded to include justices of the Supreme Court in future editions of the colloquium.

The Ninth Strategic Admiralty Law Seminar for Judges last year was themed, "Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act, 2019: Key to Accelerating and Achieving Safe and Secure Shipping in Nigeria."



NIMASA Takes Maritime Capacity Building to Schools

• *Announces Scholarships for Best Students*

T

aking its drive for maritime capacity building to the younger generation, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) visited Premier Academy School, Lugbe, in Abuja, to mark this year's Children's Day.

The Agency donated educational materials to the school as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility.

Director General of NIMASA, Dr Bashir Jamoh, reiterated NIMASA's commitment to capacity building in the maritime industry, saying secondary schools in the country are a good place to begin the awareness. Jamoh encouraged the students, especially those in the sciences, to show interest in maritime by choosing maritime related careers, especially given the increasing role of maritime in Nigeria's economic diversification effort. He said the current Cabotage regime had opened up many opportunities in maritime for indigenous investors and professionals.

The Director General announced the setting up of an endowment seat and scholarships for best students from the school willing to study maritime related courses in tertiary institutions. He said the Agency was willing to train such students in Nigeria and abroad.

Jamoh said in pursuit of NIMASA's mandate to build capacity in the maritime industry, it was necessary to let students know the careers in the sector. "From time to time, we do visit schools and, as you are aware, we have a number of tertiary institutions in the six geo-political zones we are funding in terms of maritime education," he stated.

He added, "When it comes to capacity building it is very important to have a very good foundation from secondary schools before you go to tertiary institution."

The Director General said the Children's Day celebrations presented a good opportunity to talk to students on the opportunities in the maritime industry.

He talked about the Federal Government's resolve to ensure safety and security in the country's waters, saying, "We are trying to get it right through the Deep Blue project that will be launched soon by President Muhammadu Buhari.

"We are now going out in full force to make sure we avert or stop this issue of maritime insecurity."

He disclosed that there had been improvements in maritime security in the country since the deployment of assets under the Deep Blue Project began some months ago.

The items presented to the school included books, computers and T-shirts.



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Transport Minister Underscores Need for Fair Treatment of Seafarers

T

he central role of seafarers in domestic and international commerce underscores the importance of ensuring improvement in their welfare and work conditions, Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi, has said. Amaechi stated this on June 25 in Lagos in his address at the 2021 Day of the Seafarer.

This year's event had the theme, "Fair Future for Seafarers."

The Minister challenged ship-owners and other stakeholders in the Nigerian maritime industry to prioritise the welfare of seafarers, saying they should device creative ways of ensuring improved welfare for seafarers, while proffering permanent solutions to issues that affect their work. He extolled seafarers the world over for their enormous contributions to global commerce and economy.

Seafarers "contend with perils of the seas and sometimes put their lives on the line just to ensure that goods are safely delivered at designated ports," Amaechi stated. "This is one of the reasons we celebrate the seafarers every year."

Director General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Bashir Jamoh, in his welcome address, spoke to the subject of war risk insurance premium charged on cargo headed for the Gulf of Guinea. Jamoh insisted there was need for a reconsideration of the high



premium. He was reacting to the response of the Lloyd's List Intelligence, a specialist business information service dedicated to the global maritime community, to his earlier call for review of the high insurance based on improved security conditions in the Gulf of Guinea.

"As we celebrate the seafarers' day, let us further identify and proffer workable solutions to the issues that will still be relevant to the seafarers after the pandemic, such as fair treatment, living and working conditions of the seafarers, etc.," Amaechi told maritime stakeholders.

He lamented the harrowing experiences seafarers endured in the course of their job, especially at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic last year.

"I am, however, glad to inform you that Nigeria, as a member state of the IMO, was one of the first countries to declare seafarers essential workers in order to ease their sufferings," the Minister stated. He added, "The nation through the Federal Ministry of Transportation and its Agencies will continue to



• **Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi (TOP)**
 • **Cadets of the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (LEFT)**

ensure that government policies are tailored towards improving the welfare and working conditions of the seafarers in line with international standard and statutory conventions."

Amaechi reiterated the commitment of the Nigerian government to ensuring that the country's maritime domain remained safe and secure for seafarers working on ships transiting through the waterways. He identified the Deep Blue Project launched by President Muhammadu Buhari on June 10 as a major effort by the government to curb the hazards of seafaring.

The Minister said the provision of the integrated maritime security architecture was "to help combat these maritime criminalities that hinder the security of crew members."

Nigeria also has an antipiracy law, the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences Act 2019, to prosecute maritime offenders, the Minister said.

Jamoh restated his call on the international community to re-examine the war risk insurance imposed on Gulf of Guinea-bound ships, saying security

conditions in the region are rapidly improving.

"It is significant that critical stakeholders in the world shipping community, like Lloyd's List, are recognising Nigeria's efforts to make the Gulf of Guinea safe and secure for seafarers and ships," the Director General said. "But it would be unfair for the world to sidestep such huge investment and commitment to maritime security and retain the high war risk insurance premium on ships bound for our waters."

He said continuing the war risk insurance would be a disservice to Nigeria and investors in the country's maritime environment.

Jamoh stated, "Since the world now acknowledges our commitment to maritime security and the recent improvements in security, it is only fair that relevant stakeholders should begin to rethink the charges that predated such efforts by Nigeria."

"The poor masses of this country should not be made to pay for the actions of a few individuals bent on tarnishing Nigeria's image."

The highlight of the event was the presentation of Certificates of Competency (COC) to cadets of the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP) who recently graduated from the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, Alexandria, Egypt, by the NIMASA Director General.

June 25 every year is designated as the Day of the Seafarer by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to celebrate seafarers and their contributions to human progress.

BLUE ECONOMY: Wike Applauds NIMASA's Strategy

• **Agency Seeks Greater Role for Coastal States in Maritime Security**



Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State (right) and DG, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, when Jamoh paid a courtesy visit to the Governor in Port Harcourt

R

ivers State Governor Nyesom Wike has commended the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) for designing and pursuing a Blue Economy strategy purposed to replace the current oil economy in about 10 years. Wike stated this in Port

Harcourt, when he received the Director General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, who was on a courtesy visit.

The governor said NIMASA's plan for sustainable use of Nigeria's abundant maritime resources was in line with the country's economic diversification drive.

Jamoh earlier appealed for greater involvement of the littoral states in the implementation of the Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure – also called the Deep Blue Project. The security scheme, which is domiciled in NIMASA and being executed in conjunction with the Nigerian Armed Forces and other security agencies, aims to check piracy and armed robbery in Nigeria's waters up to the Gulf of Guinea.

The NIMASA Director General had visited many of the eight littoral states to seek more participation from them in the Blue Economy initiative and the Deep Blue Project. He urged them to set up committees to work with the Agency in the execution of the economic and security plans.

Addressing the governor and members of his cabinet in the exco chamber, Jamoh appealed to the Rivers State government to set up a committee to work with the Agency to identify the state's areas of comparative advantage in harnessing its vast ocean resources. He told his host, "The Agency commenced the issue of Blue Economy to ensure that we have something that we will fall back on. Let us give ourselves at least within the next 10 years, so we can develop our ocean resources."

The DG appreciated Wike's effort in rebuilding Rivers State into reckoning with tremendous investment in infrastructure, health, education, and the judiciary that had bettered the lives of the people.

Responding, Wike commended Jamoh for the new initiative of harnessing ocean resources to serve as an alternative revenue source that would end the mono-economy status of Nigeria. He said, "Let me commend the DG for taking the bull by the horns; by coming to visit, regardless of whoever appointed you, to do the right thing.

"Let me thank you as one of those who have looked into the future that Nigeria cannot continue to depend solely on one product and that is oil. There comes a time that the wells will dry up, and when the wells are dried, what is the alternative? Is it at that time we will begin to seek for an alternative? So you are on the right track by identifying that we should go for the blue economy."

The governor pledged to partner with NIMASA in the area of human capital development and proposed the adoption of Government Sea School, Isaka, in Okrika Local Government Area, as an institution for seafarers' training.

"This will help the industry and create a lot of manpower for our people and employment," he said.

The governor expressed the readiness of the state government to partner with NIMASA on the Deep Blue Project, saying it would help to enhance security and youth capacity in Rivers State. He promised that the state government would constitute a committee to liaise with NIMASA on the Deep Blue Project.

Wike requested for the return of the Agency's Cabotage Department, which had earlier been moved to Lagos, to Rivers State. He said his administration had procured gunboats for the security agencies, particularly, the Nigeria Police and Nigerian Navy, to assist them to ensure security on the waterways and boost the business activities in the maritime environment.

Jamoh had visited Bayelsa, Lagos, Delta, and Ondo states in his effort to mobilise the littoral states and their governments to participate in the Blue Economy and Deep Blue Project.



NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)

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

Maritime House: 4 Burma Road, Apapa, P.M.B. 12861, Lagos.

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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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SIGNED: **MANAGEMENT**

PHOTO SPLASH DAY OF THE SEAFARER



Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (middle), Executive Director, Operations, NIMASA, Mr. Shehu Ahmed (left), Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Mr. Victor Ochei (right); with the recently Graduated Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme graduands from the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT), Alexandria, Egypt



Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh and Director, Maritime Labour Services (MLS) Department, Mr. Olayemi Abass



Director, Cabotage Services, Mrs. Rita Uruakpa; Director, Accident and Investigation, Mrs. Rita Egbuche; and Director, Internal Audit, Mrs. Olamide Odusanya, all of NIMASA



Director General, NIMASA and Executive Directors congratulating the recently Graduated cadets



Former Director Generals of NIMASA – Dr. Ade Dosunmu (left) and Temisan Omatseye



L-R: Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, NIMASA, Mr. Victor Ochei; representative of Director, Maritime Safety and Security, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Imam Aminu; Director General, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; representative of the Minister of Transportation, Augustine Makama; Executive Director, Finance and Administration, NIMASA, Mr. Chudi Offodile; and Executive Director, Operations, NIMASA, Mr. Shehu Ahmed, during the 2021 Day of the Seafarer in Lagos



R-L: Chudi Offodile; Imam Aminu; and Augustine Makama



Director General, NIMASA and Executive Directors congratulating the recently graduated cadets



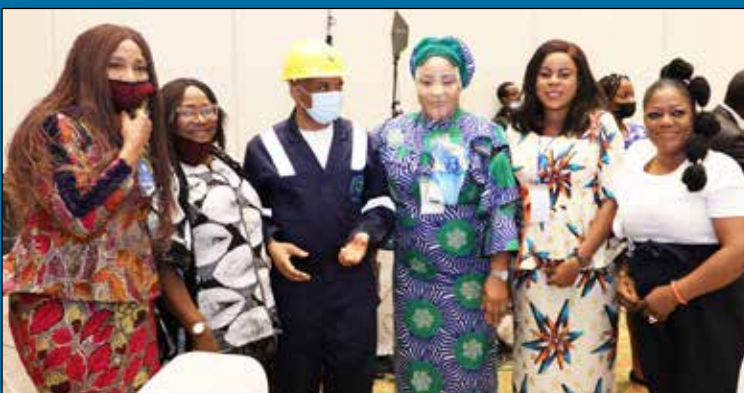
Dr. Bashir Jamoh



Augustine Makama



Maritime Stakeholders



Director General, NIMASA, flanked by members of Women's International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA) Nigeria



Representatives of Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria

TOKYO OLYMPICS: Nigeria Primed for Shot at Glory

BY NNAMDI OKOSIEME

If you critically assessed Nigeria's decades of participation at the Olympics, you would hardly feel any burst of excitement at the approach of the 2020 edition of the games holding in Tokyo, Japan from July 23 to August 8. A measly total haul of 25 medals in its 69 years of appearance at the Games tells the story of heartbreak and missed opportunities.

Yet there have been magical moments and memories to cherish.

Nigerians recall with relish the Miracle of Atlanta. The Atlanta 1996 Olympics was in full swing and Nigeria squared off against world football powerhouse, Brazil, in the semi-final of the football event. With 15 minutes to go, Nigeria trailed Brazil 3-1. For millions of Nigerians and football fans watching the game, it was done and dusted – or so it seemed. The talented Nigerian footballers on the pitch, however, had a different mind-set.

With a relentless will, they charged at the South Americans again and again, forcing their frontline to rally to defend their goal. The efforts of the Nigerian lads paid off soon enough with the then Monaco-based forward, Victor Ikpeba, collecting a pass and slicing through the Brazilian defence to rifle home a cracker to pull one back for Nigeria.

Moments later the lithe and elegant Arsenal forward, Nwankwo Kanu, finding himself with space in the Brazilian box, outwitted the Brazilian defence and slotted home Nigeria's third goal to draw the game level. Game on!

The atmosphere at the stadium and at home in Nigeria changed instantly. Nigerians at home, distraught for much of game, spurred to life. The Nigerian players themselves pressed on till the game ended in regulation time. The game went into extra time. However, unlike in normal football games, FIFA, world footballs governing body, was experimenting with a new format called the Sudden Death, whereby the team that gets to score first during extra time wins the game. As the game wore on in the first half of extra time, Kanu waltzed into the Brazilian final third, picked up a pass from a teammate; rounded two Brazilian defenders and slipped the ball into the net, leaving the Brazilian keeper stranded. It was a beauty of a goal, which broke the back of the Brazilians and sent Nigeria into its first final in Olympics football.

Riding on the euphoria of that epic victory a few days later, Policewoman, Chioma Ajunwa etched her name in gold, when she leapt 7.12 metres on her first jump to win the Long Jump event, pushing more celebrated athletes, Fiona May of Italy and Jackie Joyner Kersee of the United States, to second and third place.

OPENING THE GATES

It was a jinx breaking moment for Nigeria. Ajunwa's feat

ended the country's 44-year wait for gold at the quadrennial games. Barely 24 hours after the Policewoman's achievement, Nigeria struck gold again. This time the valiant U23 football team, which had dispatched the star-glutted Brazil team that included World Cup heroes, Romario and Bebeto, in the semi-final, scalped another football heavyweight, Argentina, 3-2, to lift the football trophy. Nigeria stood tall and on top of the world. It left the Atlanta Games with a total of six medals – a silver medal from its women's 4x400 metres relay team, comprising Falilat Ogunkoya, Bisi Afolabi, Fatima Yusuf, and Charity Opara, and a bronze each from Ogunkoya in the women's 400 metres, Mary Onyali in the women's 200 metres, and Duncan Dokiari in the men's Super Heavyweight boxing.

The Atlanta 1996 Olympics was Nigeria's finest hour, her best in her 44 years of participation at the Olympic Games. Although Nigeria went on to win another gold by default after members of the victorious American 4x400 men's relay team, which won gold at the 2000 edition of the Games in Sydney, Australia, was stripped of their medals for doping, she has failed to match her Atlanta 1996 performance. In fact, it seemed that with subsequent editions her athletes' performance at the Games deteriorated, the lowest point being the London 2012 Olympics, where her athletes returned without a single medal but hauled home bags full of accusations, recriminations, and bickering.

CUTTING LOSSES

For this year's Olympics, the Nigerian government, through the Federal Ministry of Sports, is putting its money where its mouth is. Unlike in the past when it participated in practically all the sports run in Nigeria, this time it is concentrating on only nine sports. Minister of Sports, Sunday Dare, says his ministry's target is for Nigeria to replicate her Atlanta 1996 performance. Speaking recently in an interview with the CNN, Dare said the Tokyo Games will be different for Nigeria.

"I want to assure you that the Tokyo 2020 Olympics is going to be different because we have seen through our public private partnership our athletes being adopted and supported both financially and their welfare being taken care of. That is how we have excellent performances. We want to surpass the feat of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics in Tokyo," Dare said.

With national trials in the different sports concluded, the key performers for Nigeria have emerged. One of them is Blessing Okagbare-Otegheri, eight-time national champion in 100 metres and Olympics, World Athletics Championships, and Commonwealth Games medallist. At the national trials on June 17, she blew the field, racing to victory in a time of 10.63 seconds, the second fastest time in history jointly held with world champion, Shelly Ann Fraser-Price of Jamaica. The time is yet to be ratified by World Athletics, the governing body of athletics in the world. Nonetheless, Okagbare-Otegheri is, barring any untoward development at the Games, a top medal prospect for Nigeria. After outpacing her competitors to snag the national 100 metres title in June,



Nigeria's women's relay team



Nigeria's men's basketball team



Aruna Qadri



Kanu Nwankwo scoring against Brazil in the semi final of the men's football tournament at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Nigeria won 4-3.



Sports Minister, Sunday Dare

Okagbare-Otegheri pronounced herself ready for the Olympics. "Since the start of this season, I see myself as very ready," she said.

Okagbare-Otegheri added, "I feel healthy, stronger and like the real Blessing Okagbare again. I am really happy that this time came down today, it will boost my confidence, my faith and trust in God. I just hope this same thing happens at the Olympics.

"I have been working on everything and I hope it counts at the big stage, that's the Olympics. I was very disappointed at my last meet when I ran 11.2, I was like this is not me. So when they mentioned the trials, I said I am going to be there, not because I just want to run, but because I really want to compete and run well.

"But above all, I am healthier and when you have good health, the confidence will be there, and I am hoping for the best in Tokyo. I have to go to the Olympics, do better than I did or better still replicate it, you might not need to run like this to win the Olympics, at the Games you just want to get to the finishing line."

Okagbare-Otegheri is not the only top track and field star in Nigeria's contingent to Tokyo. In her company are top performers like Ese Brume, Divine Oduduru, and Tobi Amusan. Brume, an African and Commonwealth Long Jump champion, has made a strong statement of her intention to annex a medal in Tokyo. In May this year in California, United States, the athlete, who made it to the final of the Long Jump event at the 2016 Rio Olympics (the only Nigerian to make it to the final of any event), shattered her compatriot, Chioma Ajunwa's 25 year-old national Long Jump record set at the Atlanta 1996 Olympics. Her leap of 7.17 metres erased Ajunwa's gold medal winning effort of 7.12 metres.

Beside herself with excitement after her feat, Brume told the Nigerian Guardian newspaper, "I am so glad for this achievement. I have been training and attending events to be in shape ahead of the Olympics. I thank God for being with me and I also thank my coach who has worked tirelessly to take me to this level."

ROARING TIGERS AND TIGRESSES

Besides its prospects in athletics, Nigeria is also primed for action in sports like table tennis, basketball, badminton, canoe sprinting, gymnastics, rowing, taekwondo, table tennis, and wrestling. Of these sports, Nigeria's chances appear brightest in wrestling and table tennis. In table tennis, Nigeria will be relying on the experience and talent of Aruna Qadri, Nigeria's captain to the Games, and the legendary Funke Oshonaike, who will be making her seventh appearance at the Olympics in Tokyo. The pair of Qadri and Oshonaike will help stiffen the resolve of youngster, Elisabeth Anyanacho, to give her participation at the Games her best shot.

Apart from the burden of captaincy resting on his shoulders,

Qadri also carries the weight of the expectations of millions of Nigerians. The only African to make it to the quarter final of the table tennis event of the 2016 Rio Olympics, Qadri, who was the world Table Tennis Player of the Year in 2014, knows he must give his best not to disappoint his teeming fans in Nigeria.

For basketball, Nigeria's male and female teams, DTigers and DTigress, are going into the Olympics as Africa's best. In the latest ranking released by global basketball body, FIBA, DTigress remained Africa's top ranked team. Despite slipping three spots from the previous ranking to 17th place, it retained its position as Africa's top team. Absent at the last games in Rio, the Nigerian ladies have their work clearly cut out in a group that includes the USA, fifth placed team in the world, France, and Japan, ranked number 10.

The DTigress, coached by American, Otis Hughely, face a tough task in their opening game against the USA on July 27. It would be the first meeting of the two teams since the Nigerians lost by a slim margin to the Americans during the qualifying games in Belgrade, Serbia, in 2020. It is clearly a tough group for the DTigress, but the African champions are nobody's pushover. They will strive to make it to the quarter-finals of the tournament from their group either as one of the two top teams or as one of the best losers.

For the DTigers, being drawn in a tough group including Australia, Germany and Italy means the players cannot afford to slip up. Just fresh from camping, where Coach Mike Brown initially invited 49 players before settling for his final squad, the team has been hit by the loss of some key players. Some of them are the experienced Al-Farouk Aminu, Toronto Raptors forward, OG Anunoby, and Michael Eric. Eric, a winner of the European Basketball Championship with Russian club, CSKA Moscow, tested positive to COVID-19.

Despite this loss, the team still packs a punch with players like Monte Morris of Denver Nuggets, Miami Heats, Precious Achiuwa, KZ Okpala, and Utah Jazz's Udoka Azubuike, to mention a few.. How deadly that punch can be will be seen once the tournament gets underway.

GAMES LIKE NO OTHER

No matter how prepared or determined athletes will be, this year's Olympics will be different. Blighted by the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 virus, which will keep international fans away from the games, the Tokyo Olympics will be sure to rank very low in the excitement, colour, passion and grit usually associated with the games.

Already, organisers of the games have limited the number of domestic fans to 10,000 spectators or half the venue capacity of watch events at the Games.

With the interaction between fans and athletes, which usually lights up the Olympics, almost obliterated by COVID-19 restrictions, the motivation for athletes to hit the peak will most likely be muted.

A Discourse on Back Pain ...Causes and Remedies



PHOTO: google.com

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ello, esteemed colleagues. It is a privilege to welcome you to the official Health, Safety & Environment (HSE) forum of the Agency.

NIMASA, being a safety regulator, makes it an imperative to ensure we practise what we preach, hence Occupational Safety & Health should be like charity starting from home.

Therefore, this is primarily an interactive forum to share health, safety and environment information focused on the subject of back pain, especially in the work place.

BACK PAIN – ADVICE FOR EMPLOYEES

This advice will help you to understand the causes of back pain and what to do if you are a sufferer. Knowing what the risks are can help you to reduce the possibility of developing back pain.

ACTIVE WORK

Active work has a positive effect on your physical and mental wellbeing. The notion that manual handling or repetitive movements is “bad for employees” is a myth. But it is true that active work approached wrongly can sometimes contribute to health conditions, like back pain and other musculoskeletal disorders (MSDS), such as muscular aches and strains.

Just doing your job can help you meet the recommended target for exercise (30 minutes of physical activity at least five days each week). This exercise can be broken down to 10 or 15 minute chunks, if more suitable to you.

Being physically active promotes the release of chemicals that help improve your mood and make you feel more relaxed.

CAUSES OF BACK PAIN

Back pain is common. Nearly everyone is affected by it in some way. For most people affected by back pain, episodes are nearly always short-lived.

The exact cause of back pain is often unclear, but back pain is more common in work roles that involve:

- Repetitive tasks – such as manual packing of goods.
- Force – heavy manual labour, handling tasks, pushing, pulling or dragging heavy loads.
- Posture – poor/awkward postures, such as stooping, bending over, crouching, stretching, twisting and reaching.
- Duration – prolonged periods in one position, for example, working with computers or driving long distances or working when physically overtired.

- Vibration – operating vibration tools.
- Cold temperature – working in low temperature environments, for example, outdoor working in winter.

WARNING SIGNS

Back pain is not usually due to any serious damage or disease. The pain usually improves within days or a few weeks, at least enough to get on with your life.

Only a few people have back pain that is caused by a more serious issue, such as a slipped disc or a trapped nerve, and even these usually get better by themselves.

Investigations (x-rays and MRI scans) in the first four to six weeks are not beneficial, unless there are warning signs present. Such investigations can detect serious spinal injuries, which are very rare, but they don't usually help in ordinary back pain.

If you have back pain and suddenly notice any of these symptoms, which are rare, you should see a doctor straightaway. They include:

- Difficulty passing or controlling urine.
- Numbness around your back passage or genitals.
- Numbness, pins and needles, or weakness in both legs.
- Unsteadiness on your feet.
- Severe pain, which gets worse over several weeks (especially at night or when lying down).
- Unexplained weight loss.

DEALING WITH BACK PAIN

Sometimes, the pain can make you miserable, but you should still control it.

IN THE EARLY STAGES:

- Avoid bed rest – prolonged bed rest is harmful.
- Stay active (including work) – your back is designed for movement, so the sooner you start doing your ordinary activities the better.
- Use prescribed pain killers, preferably taken at regular intervals (Paracetamol or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs).
- Heat or cold applied to the sore area may help.
- Seek help from a qualified professional (osteopath, physiotherapist or chiropractor).
- A short course of manipulation/acupuncture can help relieve back pain for some.
- A structured exercise programme tailored to your needs (to include aerobic activity, muscle strengthening, postural control and stretches) may help relieve pain.
- Stay at work – or early return to work, with modifications if needed.



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