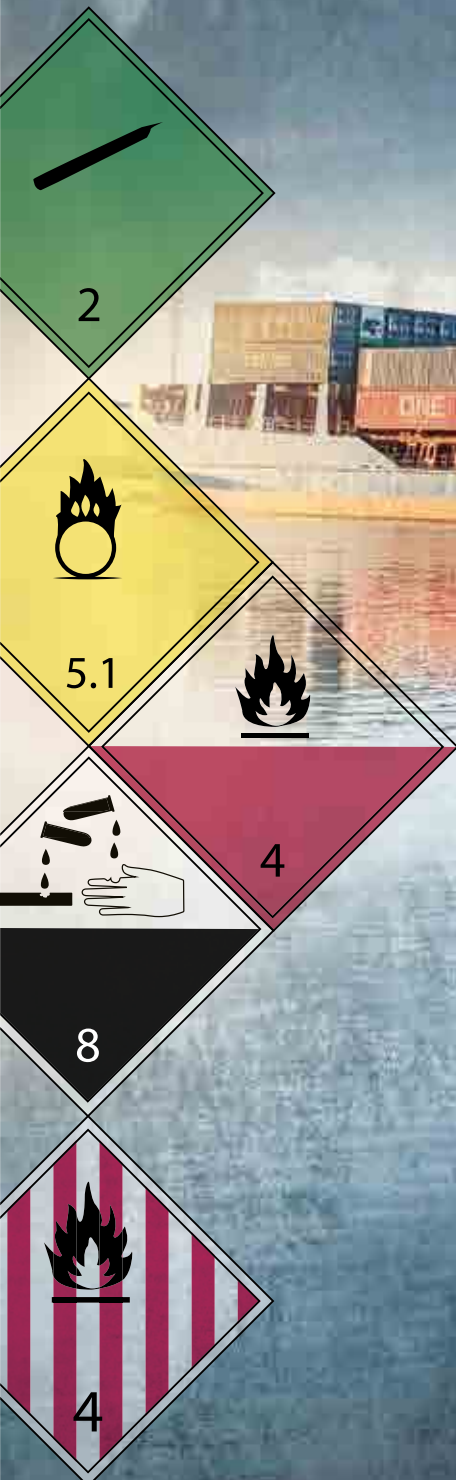




## Transport of dangerous goods maximum caution required



Excellence in maritime education  
**Bangladesh Marine Academy**

Chattogram port ranks 58th  
among world's top 100 busiest container ports

Matarbari deep sea port will be operational by 2025

Chattogram port to come under 100% CCTV surveillance

Trial run of river vessels between Bangladesh and India begins

ISSN 2617-6122

October 2020, Volume 05, Issue 03

### CPA News

A Quarterly Publication of  
Chattogram Port Authority



#### Chief Adviser

Rear Admiral S M Abul Kalam Azad  
(G), NGP, ndc, psc, BN

#### Editor

Zafar Alam

#### Board of Editorial

Rammya Rahim Choudhury  
Md. Mominur Rashid  
Md. Omar Faruque  
Mahbub Morshed Chowdhury

#### Executive Editor

Tazul Haque

#### Senior Editors

Biplob Sarkar  
Rajeev Ahmed

#### Contributors

Enamul Karim  
Qazi Meraz Uddin Arif  
Aforza Bithi

#### Reporter

Omar Faroque Emon

#### Managing Editor

Monir H Khan

#### Public Relation

Mohammad Azizul Moula  
Md. Shafiu Azam Khan

#### Photography

SM Shamsul Huda

#### Design & DTP

Toufique Ahmed  
Abida Hafsa  
Mahmud Hossain Prince

#### Production Logistics

Habibur Rahman, Alia Ferdoushi

On behalf of CPA

**Content Development, Writing,  
Editing, Design & Publication:**

ENLIGHTEN | VIBES

House 06, Road 03, Sector 05  
Uttara, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh.  
Tel: +880 02-48956748  
Email: enlightenvibes@gmail.com

#### Editorial Communique

##### CPA News

Chattogram Port Authority  
Bandarhaban, Chattogram  
Tel: 031-2510869  
Email: bandarbart@gmail.com

## Editorial

### Chattogram port abides by the IMDG code

On 4 August 2020, Beirut, the port city and the capital of Lebanon experienced a deadly explosion that instantly killed 200 people, leaving tens of thousands of others injured, destroying thousands of structures and buildings including the country's largest granary, their food bank. Bangladesh is the second most affected country after Lebanon herself in the blast. Five Bangladeshi expatriates working in Lebanon were killed and more than a hundred were injured, most of them were members of Bangladesh Navy since its ship BNS Bijoy was severely damaged as it was anchored near the port of Beirut as part of the UN peacekeeping mission. As we know, ports are a part of the delivery system of dangerous goods and every stakeholder, who is participating in dangerous goods transportation, has equal role to play for ensuring safety. Customs, freight forwarding agents, exporters, importers and law enforcement agencies should be equally active in keeping the goods described in the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code safe in the port area and beyond. Chattogram port is efficiently handling dangerous goods and following the IMDG Code to prevent any accident. A detailed feature is articulated in the lead story of this issue and it has discussed the careful handling of dangerous goods in the port by following the IMDG code.

Founded in 1973 by the Father of the Nation, Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA) today is one of the foremost academies in the world. It is a full-fledged government maritime training institute under the Ministry of Shipping. The state-owned BMA is reputed in producing professionally skilled, environmentally conscious cadets. The academy conducts internationally recognised courses on all levels from cadet training to master mariner and marine (chief) engineer. Till date, BMA has produced 4,600 skilled cadets equipped with theoretical and professional skills and leadership qualities to serve the world fleet. BMA has become a role model in South Asia and has been providing maritime education and training in English medium according to the IMO STCW Convention 2010 on Nautical Science and Marine Engineering curriculum. It has a lot to offer in the development of Maritime Bangladesh. Considering the importance of quality maritime education and training for the future maritime professionals, we have put focus on Bangladesh Marine Academy in our 'Perspective' section where we have narrated its journey to present.

About 40,000 people, including port officials and their families live in the port area. The entire population receives health care from Chattogram port hospital. During the early days, there were no separate unit for COVID-19 patients at the hospital. As a result, the affected patients had to undergo treatment at various other corona isolation centres and dedicated corona hospitals set up by the government and private sector in the city. By the beginning of May, the Chattogram Port Authority took initiatives to ensure treatment of all the officers and employees in their early stages of infection. The authority began discussing and taking steps to launch the COVID-19 medical system. Later, Rear Admiral S M Abul Kalam Azad, Chairman, Chattogram Port Authority, announced the setting up of a 50-bed isolation ward in the new building of the port hospital. In the 'Port Community' section, we have featured the Chattogram port hospital COVID-19 unit.

Besides, the 'Newsbytes' section will inform you of all the important maritime events and developments which took place during the third quarter of this year.

We cordially welcome your invaluable feedback and suggestions of new ideas for further improvement of this maritime magazine. Thank you for being with us all the while, and keep staying with us.

Thanking you

**Zafar Alam**  
Editor



04

According to SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea), the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, or IMDG Code for short, was introduced in 1965. The IMDG Code was introduced as a means to prevent maritime pollution while providing protection to the sailors and the human body. Chattogram port has been following the IMDG Code for ensuring safety in the port area.



## Lead Story

# Transport of dangerous goods: maximum caution required

02 Editorial

## News Bytes

### Maritime news, infrastructure and trade

M A R I T I M E - B A N G L A D E S H

- Matarbari deep sea port will be operational by 2025
- Chattogram port ranks 58th among world's top 100 busiest container ports
- Chattogram port sees growth despite COVID-19 impact
- First consignment of Indian goods reaches Tripura, Assam through Chattogram port
- New container line opens between Chattogram and Kolkata ports
- First shipment of low-sulphur fuel reaches Chattogram
- No wait for berthing at Chattogram port
- Mongla port earns highest revenue amid COVID-19 crisis
- Trial run of river vessel between Bangladesh and India begins
- Ten more economic zones get government approval
- Norway to fund USD 1.5mn for local ship recycling industry
- Bangladesh to get USD 3.15 billion Japanese loan
- NBR to make customs duty e-payment mandatory
- BB waives requirement of B/E in hard copy
- Government fixed USD 48 billion export target
- Chattogram port to come under 100% CCTV surveillance
- Matarbari port design deal goes to Japan's Nippon
- Bangladesh holds the second position in RMG exports: WTO
- Steps taken to manage dangerous goods in Chattogram port
- Chattogram port holds new record in export
- Commodore M Neamul Hasan joins as CPA member (Engineering)

10

## Excellence in maritime education Bangladesh Marine Academy

### Perspective



The premises of Bangladesh Marine Academy, surrounded by lush greenery of the forests in the hills and valleys by the coast of the Bay of Bengal located on the banks of the Karnaphuli River provides all the facilities required for a quality maritime education and training.

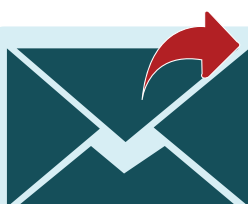
16

## COVID-19 treatment: Chattogram port hospital in a lead role

### Port Community



Beside the role of Chattogram Port Authority, the role of stakeholders is very important in any success of Chattogram port. In this time of COVID-19 crisis, stakeholder organisations stood by the port as the port officials and employees kept on providing uninterrupted services.



## We value your thoughts

CPA news is open to submissions exclusively from the maritime enthusiast writers. We are looking for strong, authentic and thought-provoking articles on maritime issues.

email your views to [cpanews@gmail.com](mailto:cpanews@gmail.com)

# Transport of dangerous goods: maximum caution required

Afroza Bithi

August 4, 2020. Just another bright sunny afternoon in Beirut, the capital and the largest port city in Lebanon, hustling and bustling with people, men, women and children returning home from their office, shopping in the market or playing in the fields. Suddenly, out of the blue, the whole city shook up violently at the tremendous noise of an explosion. Just in seconds, the pride of Beirut, the epicentre of the blast, was reduced to rubbles, instantly killing 200 people with it leaving tens of thousands of others injured destroying thousands of structures and buildings including the country's largest granary, their food bank. Five Bangladeshi expatriates working in Lebanon were killed as well and more than a hundred others injured, most of them being members of the Bangladesh Navy.

The Bangladesh Navy ship BNS Bijoy anchored near the port of Beirut as part of the UN peacekeeping mission was severely damaged. Bangladesh is the second most affected country after Lebanon herself in the blast that had the strength equal to one-twelfth of Fat Boy, the atomic bomb that blew up Hiroshima. Interesting to know, it was not part of any on-going war on the Arab lands, neither any type of extremist attacks nor a deliberate act of sabotage.

So what exactly happened on that day? Under what circumstances does one of the busiest ports become a ruin? In that same cue, is Chattogram safe? How can one avoid such a horrible incident? Below is an attempt to find answers to a set of questions that arose after the blast of Beirut.

## History, from which no one learns

It is hard to imagine of such an explosion in a well-ordered port and a nationally important facility. However, recent history has shown that such incidents are not quite uncommon. In 2015, a series of explosions at the port of Tianjin, just 165 kilometres from Beijing, rocked the western China. The explosion started when a container filled with dried nitrocellulose stored in the port warehouse got heated. As a result of this heat and shock, about 600 tons of nitrocellulose and 600 tons of sodium cyanide exploded. Both are highly combustible substances and produce toxic fumes during combustion. In addition to the many injured in the incident, 183 people died, most of whom were fire-fighters. They died in the blast that followed



while trying to extinguish the first fire without really knowing its true nature.

In 1947, one of the largest industrial accidents in US history occurred in the US port of Texas. The French ship SS Grand Camp carrying 2,000 tons of ammonium nitrate exploded while berthing at the cargo jetty. The heat caused more fires and explosions at several nearby ships and oil depots. Even two small planes in the sky also crashed. At least 561 people were burned alive. All but one member of the Texas City Fire Department were killed on that day.

Broadly, such deadly explosions are nothing but the consequences of not storing and transporting dangerous goods in a careful manner.

### IMO steps in

The primary means of transporting chemicals or any goods is by sea. However, the risk of transporting chemicals is much higher as they are unstable. Even after packaging, loading and unloading with the utmost care, there still remains a fear of accident or explosion. Besides, there is practically no hope of help in case of a sudden jeopardy while in the deep sea thousands of miles away from the land. Therefore, the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) has laid down certain rules to avoid such incidents during the transportation of chemicals. According to SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea), the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, or IMDG Code for short, was introduced in 1965. The IMDG Code was introduced as a means to prevent maritime pollution while providing protection to the sailors and the human body. The IMDG Code also ensures that the goods to be imported for safe transportation by sea are properly packaged according to their type. It has been a universal code since 2004. This means that it applies to all cargo ships around the world and must be complied with. Currently, 98% of ships operate under the IMDG Code.

With the change of time, many changes have also taken place in the shipping system. Many modifications have been made in the IMDG Code at different moments to keep pace with the times. Every two years, the Code is amended on the recommendation of IMO member countries,



*Dangerous goods are divided into nine categories according to risk*

and guidelines are issued for implementation after being approved by the IMO policy-making council.

### Dangerous cargo transportation system

Many products become dangerous when transported due to their volatility in terms of chemical composition. Different types of chemical products have to be packaged differently. Again the rolling-pitching-liquefaction process of the sea has to be considered. To facilitate safe transportation, the IMO divides dangerous goods into nine classes according to risk, with most of the divisions having subclasses. This categorisation process is approved by the United Nations Committee on Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

#### Class 1: Explosives

**Subclass 1.2:** Massive explosive that can cause a very large explosion, which is capable of destroying a town almost instantly. Such as, fireworks, ammunition, rockets, explosive charges, airbag inflators.

**Subclass 1.2:** Substances capable of causing serious explosions, which can cause large explosions.

**Subclass 1.3:** Explosives with fire, which does not cause large explosions but fires. As a result, there is a risk of other nearby objects to explode.

**Subclass 1.4:** Substances that are at risk of minor explosions. The effects of an explosion are largely confined to the packaging of the product, and debris or burning fragments after an explosion cannot be blown away and cause a larger explosion. Such substances cannot even affect other packets outside the damaged packet.

**Subclass 1.5:** A substance that does not dissolve in explosions as described in subclass 1.1. Although this class of material contains mass explosive material, it does not take part in chemical reactions as it is mixed with other compounds. As a result, even if there is a fire accident or explosion nearby, the substance of this class does not respond to it.

**Subclass 1.6:** Extremely sensitive substances or extremely inert matter in terms of explosion. As a result, there is no chance of accidental detonation or other explosion during transportation.

*To facilitate safe transportation, the IMO divides dangerous goods into nine classes. This categorization process is approved by the United Nations Committee on Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.*

## **Class 2:** Gaseous substances

**Subclass 2.1:** Refrigerant gases such as aerosols, Freon or propane, natural gas, combustible gases like acetylene or hydrogen, combustible gases that burn in contact with fire or spark. Theoretically, any substance that contains 13% or less of air and dissolves at a pressure of 101.3 kilopascals or 14.6 psi is called combustible gas.

**Subclass 2.2:** This subclass includes cryogenic gases and liquids and rocket fuels at temperatures below minus 100 degrees Celsius. High pressure stored gas, liquefied gas, cryogenic gas, compressed gas mixed with solution, asphyxiant gas, oxidizing gas also fall into this category. Theoretically, a flammable and non-toxic gas means compressed gas packaged at an uninterrupted pressure of 280 kPa, which in no way falls into the 2.1 and 2.3 subclasses.

**Subclass 2.3:** Toxic gases, if enter the human body through respiration, are capable of causing harm or death to the body. Some gases stored at temperatures of 20 degree Celsius or lower and pressures of 101.3 kPa (with a boiling point of 20 degree Celsius or less) are so toxic that

*Theoretically, a flammable and non-toxic gas means compressed gas packaged at an uninterrupted pressure of 280 kPa, which in no way falls into the 2.1 and 2.3 subclasses.*

they need to be stored with extreme caution. Due to the lack of proper research on the effects of these gases on the human body, the data is still insufficient.

## **Class 3:** Combustible liquids

A liquid is a combustible liquid if it has a flash point or a melting point. Such as acetone, diesel, gasoline, kerosene, ore oil etc. During bulk transport, such liquids must be transported at a temperature below its flash point. If the melting point is below minus 18 degrees, it is called non-flash point, if it is between minus 18 to 23 degrees, it is called middle flash point and if it is above 23 degrees, it is called liquid with high flash point, such as, alcohol, lacquer and wood varnish, gasoline, diesel fuel.

## **Class 4:** Combustible solids

### **Subclass 4.1:** Direct Combustible Substances

This is a category of substances that spontaneously ignite without external fire connection due to change in position, pressure or temperature or friction, such as, chemical powder of metal powder, phosphorus, matchstick and celluloid.

### **Subclass 4.2:** Self Reactive Unstable

## Substances

These are capable of producing heat without any other substance, even air or oxygen.

## **Class 5:** Oxidation

**Subclass 5.1:** This subclass includes substances those are capable of collecting oxygen in the air in the process of oxidation.

**Subclass 5.2:** Organic peroxide type substances such as hydrogen peroxide.

## **Class 6:** Toxic substances

**Subclass 6.1:** Substances that can cause serious risk or death if entered the body, such as medical waste, arsenic or mercury.

**Subclass 6.2:** Bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungi, pathogens, which are capable of transmitting infectious diseases to human or animal body, such as organic laboratory samples and waste.

## **Class 7:** Radioactive substances

These include uranium compounds, radioactive minerals, and medical isotopes.

## **Class 8:** Corrosive substances

This class includes substances that chemically react with living tissue or any surface to form wounds, decompose, or melt, such as, battery, acid, formaldehyde, fire extinguisher charge.

**Class 9:** Substances that pose a threat to the environment or public health but remain outside the top eight classes. Lithium ion batteries, dry ice, internal combustion engines, magnetized materials, life-saving medical equipment fall into this class.

It is the sailors, who have to do the most sensitive and risky part of the supply chain until the dangerous goods are packaged, transported, stored and delivered to the destination. If a crisis occurred in the middle of the sea during such transportation, the chances of getting help in time is very low. Marine professionals must undergo special training before boarding such cargo ships. The syllabus of these courses has been determined in accordance with the latest STCW policies and IMO guidelines. Several shore based training centres are there who impart this learning. In this

*One-twelfth of the power of the Hiroshima atomic bomb was generated in the Beirut blast  
Some 2,700 tons of ammonium nitrate exploded that day*







98% of commercial ships operate in accordance with the IMDG Code

COVID-19 pandemic, a number of training schools are also conducting their activities online, resulting in the opportunity to receive training from international standard training centres in the country.

#### What exactly happened that day?

The video of the horrific explosion at the port of Beirut shows a small explosion at first. From there, a coil of white smoke rose into the sky. Minutes later, a very sharp second explosion occurred. First, a huge fire was created, and then a gust of wind created a mushroom cloud of water vapour. After a few seconds, the huge coil of red smoke began to spiral up in the sky. Watching this red smoke, the report of the investigation committee initially confirmed that the catastrophic accident was caused by imported ammonium nitrate for the fertilizer factory that was stored in the port warehouse. The shockwave of the blast was felt even from Cyprus from a distance of 200 kilometres in the Mediterranean Sea.

#### What is ammonium nitrate?

It is a chemical that is mainly used for fertilizer production besides many other industrial plants. It is also one of the components of explosives used in mines. It was first used as an explosive device in World War I when soldiers began making cheap bombs by mixing ammonium nitrate with TNT dynamite sticks, which could have caused much larger explosions

than dynamite. According to the IMDG Code, it is a chemical classified as oxidant. As we know, when something burns, it needs oxygen. For this purpose fire extinguishers are made in such a way that cuts out the oxygen supply to the burning object. Oxidizers work the opposite. They increase the supply of oxygen to and around the burning object. As a result, combustible substances become highly combustible. Adding ammonium nitrate to any carbon-rich substance, such as, paper, cardboard or even sugar can cause a massive explosion. This means that ammonium nitrate is not an explosive in itself, but in certain cases it can turn into an explosive.

So what is the 'special condition' that can turn a thriving city into dust just in an explosion caused by a seemingly innocent chemical?

#### The highest order of disorder

According to the IMDG Code, there are a number of strict rules for storing ammonium nitrate in the oxidizing class. In particular, the storage area has to be secured in such a way that there is no fire in the vicinity. The warehouse, the epicentre of the blast had 2,700 tons of ammonium nitrate in stock, and had been kept unsafe for long seven years. The ammonium nitrate arrived at the port of Beirut in 2013 on a ship. That year, the Russian-owned MV Rhosus sailed from the Georgian port of

Batumi for Mozambique with 2,750 metric tons of ammonium nitrate. The ship stopped once in Greece to pick up oil. The Russian owner of the ship then informed the Russian and Ukrainian crew that he had run out of money and would have to carry extra load to earn the cost. The ship was then taken to Beirut. Upon arrival in Beirut, he was detained by local authorities on charges of gross violation of shipping rules. The ITF, an organization representing Russian sailors told that the Lebanese authorities detained the ship as the workers had filed complaints and the ship failed to pay the port fees. However, the Russian workers were later repatriated without pay. MV Rhosus never left for his final destination, Mozambique. Lebanese customs director Badri Daher said the ship never left the port after arriving in Beirut. However, he and other officials repeatedly warned the authorities that the ship was a 'floating bomb.' In 2016, Shafiq Merhi, an officer working at Daher's place, warned a judge involved in the case in a letter. In the letter, he wrote, 'We reiterate our request to the port authorities to re-export the goods stored in it (MV Rhosus) due to unfavourable weather conditions and to ensure the safety of the port and its crew.' However, nothing real was done about it, actually.

A few days ago, 30 to 40 bags of fireworks were kept in the same ware house. For some reason, it caught fire and the initial explosion occurs. Then the main explosion happened caused by the ammonium nitrate. That means, the Beirut Blast in August is the end result of a chain reaction, including a series of unfortunate incidents.

#### Dangerous chemicals and Bangladesh

In our country, it is mandatory to get a license from the Department of Explosives under the Ministry of Power, Fuel and Mineral Resources before importing, producing, transporting, using, selling and exporting dangerous goods and explosives. They include petroleum, gasoline, combustibles such as kerosene, gunpowder, oxidants, such as, ammonium nitrate and phosphate, emulsion (solid mixture) and slurry (slippery mud type) explosives, LPG, cylinder gas, nitroglycerin, acid,

*According to the IMDG Code, there are a number of strict rules for storing ammonium nitrate in the oxidizing class. In particular, the storage area has to be secured in such a way that there is no fire in the vicinity.*

gun-cotton, gunpowder, mercury or other metallic explosives, fog signals, fireworks, fuses, rockets, collision caps or percussion caps, detonators, cartridges and all types of ammunition and toxic substances. Only radioactive substances, which are not mentioned in nine classes in the IMDG Code, are not under this department. The Government's Atomic Energy Commission oversees everything related to the import-export-transportation-use-warehousing of radioactive substances.

After several international accidents, the government of Bangladesh issued the Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2017 for only one product, considering the gravity of such accidents. These regulations provide detailed guidelines on the transportation of ammonium nitrate, packaging, special precautionary measures to prevent accidents, storage warehouse features, use in the presence of expert chemists, and immediate action to be taken in the event of an accident. Bangladesh has imported 394 tons of ammonium nitrate in 2019-2020 fiscal year. However, in our country, the use of ammonium nitrate is more for blasting in coal mines of Dinajpur, not for use in fertilizer factories. Petrobangla's two companies Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited and Madhyapara Hard Rock Mining Company Limited mainly import it.

## Dangerous goods and Chattogram port

The country's most important port has a total of 14 sheds, of which the items described in the IMDG Code are housed in 30,375 sq. ft. P sheds. From this shed the goods are unloaded directly to the importer after customs inspection and customs clearance. Although high levels of combustible and explosives are imported through ports in Bangladesh, such substances are never stored in port warehouses. Immediately after unloading from the ship, under police protection the importer takes it away. The whole process is done under an officer of Bangladesh Navy. This arrangement is to keep Chattogram port risk free. If there is no space, it is kept in chemical containers in the open premises according to the relevant category. There is no specific law on

*Although high levels of combustible and explosives are imported through ports in Bangladesh, such substances are never stored in port warehouses. Immediately after unloading from the ship, under police protection the importer takes it away. The whole process is done under an officer of Bangladesh Navy. This arrangement is to keep Chattogram port risk free.*



Only the Department of Explosive allows the import of dangerous goods into Bangladesh

ammonium nitrate in Lebanon, which is why the Beirut port authority were able to keep such large amount of oxidants in the port. According to the IMO and existing policies in our country, there is no scope of keeping dangerous goods inside the port after customs clearance and inspection, although stocks of some chemicals have been found in the P shed. Many goods get stuck in this way if the importer does not take delivery on time or fails to meet the requirements set by the customs. When the time limit for delivery of goods has passed, Customs house calls auctions and sells them to other traders or destroys them in case of expired items. According to the rules, they need clearance from 13 to 14 organisations to destroy them. After the Beirut blast, some chemical products were found at the Chattogram port still waiting to be released. Customs house has started taking steps to remove such products as soon as possible. Primarily, the customs is auctioning 211 lots of various chemical and expired products including 60 lots of chemicals. Customs usually calls a discount auction once a month. Besides, the Ministry of Shipping has written to the National Board of Revenue to dispose, auction, destroy and remove various types of chemical, combustible, explosive and dangerous containers, cargo deposited in all the seaports and the land ports.

## For building awareness

There is just one government-recognised laboratory under the Department of Explosives for testing explosives and hazardous substances in the country. The scope for chemical testing of dangerous goods coming through Chattogram port is therefore very limited. But for testing such highly active chemicals, we need a state-of-the-art laboratory with state-of-the-art facilities, equipped with instruments, hardware and software, skilled manpower and expert chemists. Chattogram Customs House needs its own lab to speed up and facilitate the customs process by supervising the products as per the IMDG Code. Another option is to use a separate laboratory. At present, there are three international standard labs in Chattogram, owned by the Department of Environment, the City Corporation and Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR). We should consider if these can also be used in dangerous goods testing.

Secure transportation on road is another important aspect of dangerous goods stockpiled at ports. When Petrobangla and government-controlled entities import dangerous goods, they are usually transported to certain specialised warehouses under strict military supervision. While on road, these products are transported within the prescribed speed limits. But when such products come under private management, they are



subject to having a license from the Department of Explosives, but how they are actually being transported on the road is often overlooked. Although different types of vehicles are used to carry fuel oil or gaseous substances, they often cross the set speed limit. On the national highway, passenger buses or five other vehicles run in the same lane. Liquid bitumen or concentrated sulphuric acid is transported by ordinary truck or covered van. We have to be careful about such practices.

Five officials in the Department of Explosives are assigned to monitor whether the dangerously imported private goods are being safely imported and stored. Two in Dhaka and one each in Chattogram, Khulna and Rajshahi and there are inspectors inadequate compared to the need. Appropriate manpower should be mobilised to create a database on the stockpiling and use of explosives in the country.

The shed in which dangerous goods are kept in Chattogram port is quite old. If we have a warehouse where temperature and air pressure can be controlled, storage of such material will be safer. The import rate of

dangerous goods and explosives is increasing in the country. In order to cope with the pressure in the coming days, we should start building new sheds.

It is important to provide proper training in handling dangerous goods as well to the personnel engaged in loading and unloading them at the port. The products described in the IMDG Code are labelled. Every operator should have the ability to detect these logos on dangerous goods containers at a glance. Different materials have to be loaded-unloaded and stored in different conditions. They should know what to do in case of sudden fire or explosion. Such chemical fire drills should be conducted regularly. Starting from the high-ranking officials of the port to the lowest level employees should have an idea of what to do in such a disaster. Personal safety measures, emergency first aid, fire extinguishers may be used in the drill to minimise damage in such accidents.

### Conclusion

Ports are a part of the delivery system of dangerous goods, but

*Customs, freight forwarding agents, importers and law enforcement agencies should be equally active in keeping the goods described in the IMDG Code safe in the port area.*

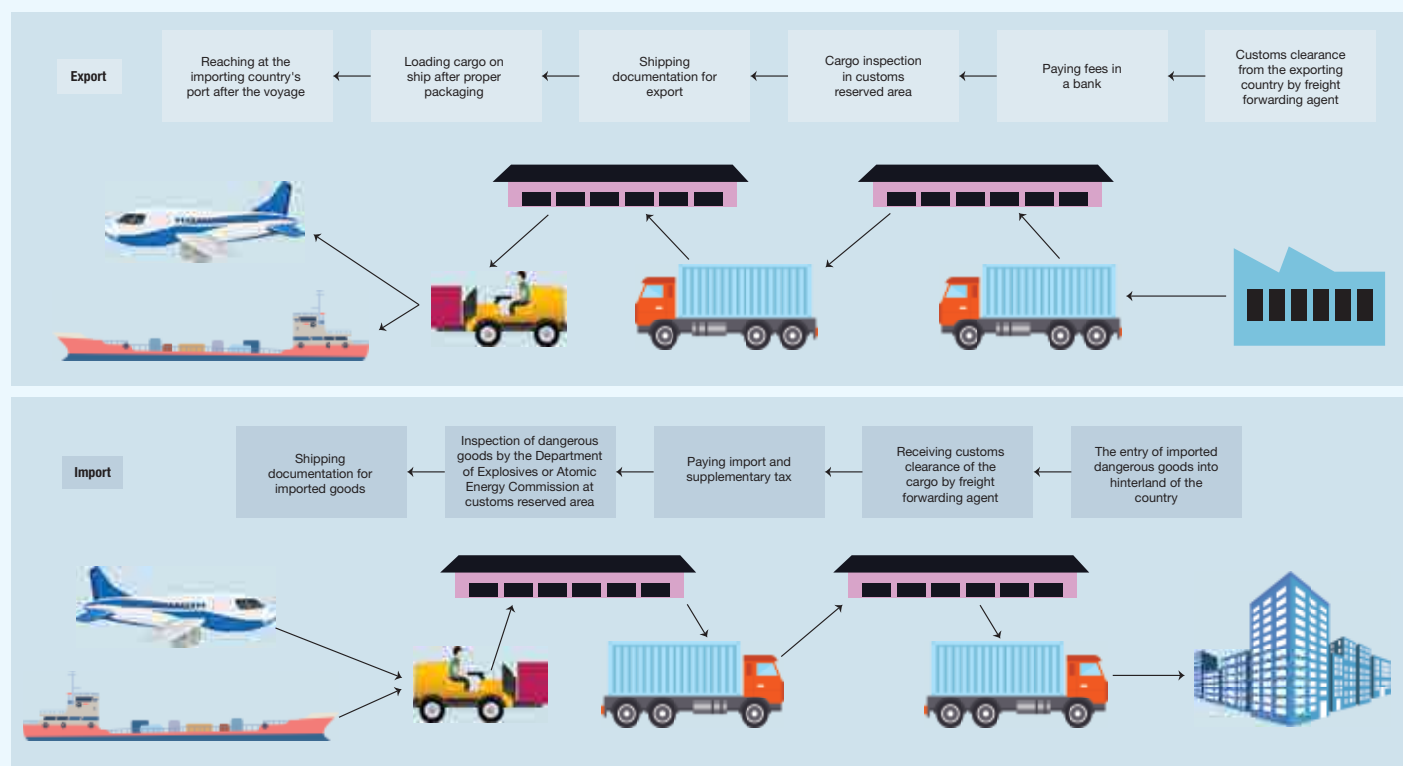
the port is not a single institution. Every stakeholder participating is equally important here. Like a pearl necklace, where displacing a single pearl means tearing the whole necklace. Customs, freight forwarding agents, importers and law enforcement agencies should be equally active in keeping the goods described in the IMDG Code safe in the port area. If we want to save the people of the country from such damage, it is important to maintain discipline on the road too. There is no substitute for maximum caution during warehousing. Chattogram port is now handling such products with utmost care after the Beirut blast occurred. It should be known that the Nimtali or Churihatta fires in old Dhaka were caused from the same substances. Therefore, the location and use of each chemical entering the country should be closely monitored. Otherwise, the recurrence of these unfortunate incidents as Beirut or Nimtali will not come to an end.

Afroza Bithi

Contributor

Bandarbarta and CPA News

Steps in import and export of dangerous goods





## Excellence in maritime education Bangladesh Marine Academy

Dr Sajid Hossain

*About 50,000 years ago, perched on wooden ships, first people from South Asia sailed to the Pacific Islands and the eventual expeditions, in fact, spread the civilization to different corners of the world. Nonetheless, today's marine life is completely different from those of the ancient days. Today, seafaring is not just a job, but a way of life. For the people on land, the sea may be a 'vacation', but to the seafarers it is their living. Almost hundred per cent of the global trade today depends on ocean-going ships.*

Currently, we mostly have to rely on small and large containers, dry bulk or tankers floating in the sea for import-export. And, with the increase in peoples' engagement in the trade, specious ships have become the demand of the hour leading to the invention of more ships with monstrous size. In addition to the vast commercial ships, there are the luxury cruise ships as well for passenger transport or entertainment. It is evident, specially trained class of people are required to operate these sophisticated ships, and we know them as seafarers, marine engineers and deck officers.

The design of the ship has also become much refined and more specialised in course of days. The twenty-first century ships are being equipped with computer-controlled panel, satellite navigation, state-of-the-art communication systems and manual labour-efficient and automated

equipment. Highly diverse, this profession requires a seafarer to concurrently study economics, commercial geography, ocean and navigation, as well as maritime law, logistics, transportation systems, supply chain, human resource development, data collection and analysis. Even subjects like navigation history, international language English, political science and anthropology have to be studied to become an all-out efficient mariner.

### Life on sea

There is a big difference between working on land and working in the sea. Ships operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The working hours of the ship revolve around the 'four hours of work, eight hours of break/rest' cycle. One may avail 2/3 months of leave after 4/6 months of continuous service in a sea-life. On the other hand, today's ships are truly like a

floating paradise, that includes amenities, like automated machinery, security, comfortable cabin, luxurious lounge, swimming pool, internet, SAT-phone, SAT-television, video, DVD, PlayStation, library, officer-in-charge, family trip for seniors, convenient train, opportunity to go ashore, long vacation at the end of the voyage and a large sum of money! The salary of a Captain or Chief Engineer is USD 5-25 thousand per month and USD 300-600 for the cadets.

However, there is more to financial security than the other professions around us. There is a saying in the maritime world, seafaring is not a job, but a lifestyle. Merely having a knowledge of oceanography or how to sail a ship will not suffice. It is equally important to have analytical capacity of thought, ability to sort out instant solution as well as an ample familiarity with the latest technological progress.



In addition to this a mariner's all-out capability also depends on positive behaviour, ability to work as a team, right application of judgment and an adequate opportunity to gain experience. It is so, as the safety and security of the ship and its contents completely depends on the skill and experience of a mariner. Moreover, the mariner must have the mental strength since he will need to stay away from his family for a long time. A mariner is born by coordinating among all these different aspects together in one single thread, added with an ordeal of four years of learning packed with extensive physical and mental training.

### Maritime Bangladesh

Blessed with a unique geographical location, Bangladesh is the largest delta in the world, adorned with more than seven hundred rivers spanning over an area of about 24,000 miles. In addition, the country features the longest uninterrupted beach in the world.

Besides, Chattogram is one of the oldest seaports operating till date. As a result, our society, way of life, religion and culture are very much involved with the sea-river-boat-ship culture. The first foreign merchants to arrive here were the Arab merchants in the eighth century. Later, the Portuguese, Dutch, and English began to arrive during the thirteenth century. In those days, European merchant ships could sail from the Cape of Good Hope to Bengal without touching any other port, sailing along the Tropic of Capricorn. As soon as the ship reached the Bay of Bengal, the wind changed direction and blew from the north, which was a blessing for these ships that were going to Central Asia or China via the Malacca Strait.

There was a time, when the builders of this country used to build ships for Turkey, Germany, China and Portugal. Even by the beginning of the twentieth century, about 60,000 seafarers (now 3,000) represented the country on international waters. The country's shipyards are currently building at least 200 riverboats holding the single top position in the shipbreaking industry. The country has a tradition of coastal fishing that dates back to thousands of years

that depended solely on indigenous technology. Craftsmen from the southern part of Bangladesh are skilled in making unsinkable sampans in the rough seas. In modern times, more and more achievements have been added to the maritime success of Bangladesh.

The country has a prestigious position among the 184 member countries of the International Maritime Organisation or IMO. We are moving forward fast in maritime education. Since 1973, Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA) is one of the three partner institutes of the World Maritime University of Sweden recognised by the IMO. Following the outstanding success of this institution, the government of Bangladesh established Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University in 2013 and four more public marine academies in 2019.

### Before the birth of BMA

After the Second World War, the global scenario began to change rapidly. Freed from the British rule in 1947, Pakistan was established along with East Bengal (now Bangladesh). However, the then government of Pakistan focused on various industry-related trainings and as part of that initiative, it was decided in 1952 to set up a Marine Academy on the shores of the Bay of Bengal. The 70-acre area of 'Jaldia Point' in the Jaldia-Rangadia valley on the south bank of the Karnaphuli River in the Bay of Bengal was selected as the ideal site of the planned academy. The place was unique in the whole of East Bengal. Apart from India, there was no other place in South Asia that had such a wonderful, desirable and suitable place on the east side of the Suez Canal.

Infrastructure construction of the academy started in 1952 with an allocation of 31.19 lakh rupees (the then currency) only. It increased to 53 lakhs in 1959 and finally reached 58.3 lakhs in 1961. Later, the Mercantile Marine Academy was established where its initial plan was to train 22 Nautical Cadet Officers and 22 Marine Engineering Cadet Officers. The newly formed Mercantile Marine Academy began operations on 3 September 1962

and in 1964, 42 Nautical/Engineering cadets of the first batch successfully completed their training. Later it became Bangladesh Marine Academy.

### The magical touch of Bangabandhu

During the great war of liberation, the then government of Pakistan shifted the activities of Mercantile Marine Academy to Karachi. Later, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of the nation and the architect of maritime Bangladesh, commenced the activities of Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA) in 1973 at the Jaldia Campus under the supervision of British Technical Cooperation (BTC). In collaboration with BTC, Bangabandhu undertook a project titled 'Development of Marine Academy 1973' which was successfully completed in 1980. The academy underwent tremendous development with new infrastructure. Besides the campus was expanded to over 100 acres of land.

Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA) is a full-fledged government maritime training institute under the Ministry of Shipping. The state-owned BMA is reputed in producing professionally skilled, environmentally conscious and promising cadets. Upon receipt of Higher Secondary (A-Level) Certificate, an average of 150 young cadets selected from thousands of aspiring candidates, get trained in Regimental and Residential training in English medium according to the IMO STCW Convention 2010 on Nautical Science and Marine Engineering curriculum. The academy conducts internationally recognised courses on all levels from cadet training to Master Mariner and Marine (Chief) Engineer. Till date, BMA has produced 4,600 skilled cadets equipped with theoretical and professional skills and leadership qualities fit to serve the World Fleet (currently 65,000 seafaring ships).

### BMA: excellence in maritime education

The premises of Bangladesh Marine Academy, surrounded by lush greenery of the forests in the hills and valleys by the coast of the Bay of Bengal located on the banks of the Karnaphuli River provides all the facilities required for a quality marine training. The academy has a glorious

*Founded in 1973 by the Father of the Nation, the academy today is one of the foremost academies in the world. Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA) is a full-fledged government maritime training institute under the Ministry of Shipping.*



past and currently is building world-class naval manpower equipped with the highest professionalism for over the last 40 years. So far, the curriculum of the only governmental and one of the top maritime educational institutions in South Asia is conducted in accordance with the 'STCW 78' code of conduct. Bangladesh was included in the IMO's White List in 2000 after fulfilling all the conditions of the International Maritime Organisation. The academy is one of its 14 top wings since 1990 approved by World Maritime University (WMU) run by the IMO in Sweden. From there, in 2019, only three academies including BMA have been upgraded to WMU's Partner Institute, a proof of its unique excellence in maritime education.

The Marine Engineer Certificate awarded by this academy is internationally recognised. Newly passed cadets are getting instant jobs in the sea-going merchant ships by dint of the third class (deck/engineer) competency certificate issued from here without any additional professional standard-setting tests. Future leaders who would trample over the three-fourths of the world surface are taught here to attain courage, patience and restraint. The ten values that are of paramount importance here are, competition, cooperation, loyalty, leadership, ethics, partnership, knowledge, sense of responsibility, teamwork and transparency. By exercising these qualities in all fields of maritime training and education, BMA continues to enhance the country's reputation in the international arena by creating the future marine officers.

#### Diary of a Marine Cadet

After passing HSC or O-level, any citizen of Bangladesh can take part in the BMA admission test. To apply here, secondary and higher secondary students must have at least 3.50 GPA separately in the science department. In addition, in the higher secondary exam, one needs to have 3.50 separately in Physics and Mathematics. Besides, a score of at least 3.00 in English or 5.5 in IELTS. Students who pass the admission tests get the opportunity to study in two departments, Nautical Science and Marine Engineering as

*After passing HSC or O-level, citizen of Bangladesh can take part in the BMA admission test. To apply here, secondary and higher secondary students must have at latest versions of the communication systems. It has ECDIS connected radar, Arpa simulator besides heavy electric generators and boilers in the machinery demonstration hall.*



Future leaders who would trample over the three-fourths of the world surface are taught here to attain courage, patience and restraint.

residential trainee cadets.

Physical fitness is a vital issue for a marine cadet. The required height should be at least 5 feet 4 inches for males and 5 feet 2 inches for females. Candidate's eyesight should be 6/6 for Marine Captain and 6/18 for Marine Engineer category. In addition, an applicant must be proficient in swimming.

No matter how strong the heart, or how steely the muscles are, if you want to survive in the ruthless deep sea and take the ship safely to its destination, you need to undergo proper training. In addition to the prescribed curriculum, it is also important to acquire a disciplined life and physical fitness. The life of a marine cadet usually starts at five in the morning. After making the bed, and at the end of the prayer, the first freehand physical exercise and the rigorous clean-ship training begins that last for an hour followed by breakfast, cleaning up, parade, colours and classroom lessons. Classes resume again after a tea break at half past ten. Classes, workshops, labs, training boat practice or prep take place after lunch and the midday prayer. A few outdoor games with teammates after the afternoon tea break that take away all the fatigue besides building the cadet's fitness. After the Asr-Magrib prayer, there is the second prep hour that takes place under the supervision of officer on duty. Exactly at 8.40 pm dinner is served that follow the round-up, lights off and pipe down events bringing the end to a busy day at the marine academy. Shore leave is sometimes available on holidays, with junior

cadets taking turns on Fridays and senior cadets on Saturdays. Cadets can visit Chattogram City by crossing the Karnaphuli River on the academy's own boat. The impact of this training of such constitutional life lasts for a lifetime. Like all men, physical exercise, a balanced diet, regular rest and sleep are essential parts of a healthy life for the mariner.

#### Expansion of training arenas

Until 2009, only 'Pre-Sea Cadet Training' courses were conducted in Nautical Science and Marine Engineering disciplines. However, since 2010, the scope of education of the academy has been expanding. At present all the preparatory and ancillary courses from Cadet Training to Certificate of Competency Class on Master Mariner and Marine Engineer are conducted in the academy. As part of the training, the cadets can get acquainted with the details of ship bridge and ship management through GMDSS simulator. The academy has a full-mission (navigation and marine engineering) simulator as well as nautical communication systems including DSC system-enriched VHF, MF/HF transceiver, inmarsat-B, nav-inmarsat-citex receiver, real EPIRB, real SART, so that mariners can get skilled in the usage of the latest versions of the communication systems. It has ECDIS connected radar, Arpa simulator beside heavy electric generators and boilers in the machinery demonstration hall. The control lab has an autotronics training system. There is a world class welding workshop where welding of gas, arc, electric arc,



MIG and TIG methods is taught. The use of various types of diesel engines, pumps, boilers and other components is taught in the marine power plant workshop. Switchboards, motors and circuits are taught in electrical workshops. There are separate workshops for thermodynamics, mechanics and control engineering. In addition to the general library, there are computer labs, English language labs and e-learning facilities. Theoretical learning for 24 months are given on Principals of Navigation, Ocean and Offshore Navigation, Coastal Navigation, Navigation Aids, Meteorology, Cargo Operations and Stability, General Ship Knowledge, Mathematics, Physics, English, Bangladesh Studies and Pre-sea Marine Engineering. At the end of this phase, the cadets are given one year paid practical training on seamanship, signaling, watch keeping as well as maritime law and convention. The following year is again for the theoretical studies. This time the curriculum includes Marine Engineering Practice Part-1, Part-2, Workshop Process and Material, Electro-technology, Naval Architecture and Ship Construction, Applied Mechanics, Engineering Drawing etc. The Marine Academy's curriculum has also been changed to keep pace with the current technology-based shipping world, keeping in line with World Maritime University.

In addition to cadet training and ancillary courses, preparatory courses for all higher qualification

certificates COC (Certificate of Competency) have been introduced here since 2011. A total of 45,000 participants took these courses from 1980 to 2019.

#### Bachelor of Maritime Science

Marine Academy cadets are always alert, aware and lively; always ready to take any responsibility on the ship. In particular, they are professionally proficient, deft in mathematics and English, and strong in leadership. From its birth until 1990, the marine cadets were mainly given a two-year professional nautical/engineering certificate. From 1991 until 2002, a two-year Bachelor's (Nautical/Engineering) degree was awarded by the National University with a professional certificate from the academy. From 2003 until 2012, a three-year Bachelor of Maritime Science (Nautical Science/Marine Engineering) degree was awarded by the National University with a professional certificate from the academy. Since 2013, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU) has been awarding Bachelor of Maritime Science (Nautical Science/Marine Engineering) degree with the professional certificate of the academy.

#### Inspiring Visits of Great Leaders

On 15 July 1975, the then Hon'ble Prime Minister Capt. M. Mansur Ali attended the Graduation Parade of the 10th Batch Cadets of the academy as the Chief Guest. This is the first time a Prime Minister

visited the academy campus. Then on January 4, 1977, the British Prime Minister James Callahan visited the academy. On January 3, 1980, the then IMO Secretary General Chandrika Prakash Srivastava visited the academy. Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina attended the Graduation Parade of the 45th Batch Cadets on 26 February 2011. On 13 January 2013, the then IMO Secretary General Eptemios E. Mitropoulos visited the academy. On June 25, 2015, the then IMO Secretary General Kozi Sekimizu was the Chief Guest at the academy's 'Golden Jubilee and Day of the Seafarer' celebrations. Incumbent IMO Secretary General Kitak Lim was the Chief Guest at the latest Academy Emerald Jubilee celebrations.

#### Ruby Jubilee, Golden Jubilee and Emerald Jubilee

With all the unique achievements over the past five decades, it is clear that the Bangladesh Marine Academy is now running at full speed (full steam ahead) across the ocean. It's time for celebration! That is why the 'Ruby Jubilee' (40 years) was celebrated in a grand manner in 2002 and the 'Golden Jubilee' in 2013. On the initiative of the former cadets, a Golden Jubilee reunion was held on 4-5 January 2013 on the campus of the academy with colourful decoration and musical arrangements. On August 28, 2017, IMO Secretary General Kitak Lim inaugurated the 'Emerald Jubilee' or 55th anniversary celebrations. In his address to the cadets, he lauded the quality of education of BMA and said, 'Bangladesh Marine Academy is a world leader in maritime education!'

#### Recent feathers in the Crown of Success

The success of Bangladesh Marine Academy is not limited in producing successful sea professionals in the country. BMA has recently been recognised by several leading international organisation as the birthplace of skilled mariners. In 2020, Commandant of Marine Academy Dr Sajid Hossain (author of the article) has been elected as one of the trustees of the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMAST), London,

*Marine Academy cadets are always alert, aware and lively; always ready to take on any responsibility on the ship. In particular, they are professionally proficient, deft in mathematics and English, and strong in leadership.*

Bangladesh Marine Academy trains a marine cadet with the full-mission simulator, real EPIRB and real SART





Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receives salute at BMA's graduation parade

the largest organisation of marine engineers in the world. In 2019, BMA received the honour of partnership as a branch of the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden. In the same year, the institution received the prestigious Erasmus Mundus Scholarship of the European Commission for education and training. The Bangladesh Marine Academy has also renewed the membership of the Global Maritime Education and Training Association (Australia) in addition to renewing the recognition of the United Kingdom Merchant Navy Training Board and Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore.

Earlier, in December 2011, BMA earned recognition of the European Union, and as a result of that, after 30 long years, our cadets now have the opportunity to get jobs on European ships. Besides gaining a partnership relation with World Maritime University (Sweden), Global Maritime Education and Training Association (Australia), Inter managers (UK), Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, UK Merchant Navy Training and the Nautical Institute (London) too recognised the training and education activities of the BMA.

In 2018, BMA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tolani Maritime Institute (Pune, India). In 2017, it won the 'South Asian Business Award 2017' as the best institution in

maritime education in South Asia. In 2016, it obtained ISO 9001: 2015 certification from DNV-GL (The Norske Veritas-German Lloyd). In 2015, the Marine Academy was recognised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (Training Division). In 2014, BMA signed a memorandum of understanding with Global Onboard (Sweden). In 2013, the Commandant of the Marine Academy was nominated as a 'Governor' of the Board of Governors of the World Maritime University (Sweden) run by the IMO. It became a member of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (London) in 2013, and for the first time in 2012 established an academic partnership with Shell Marine Singapore. The company gained accreditation from the European Maritime Safety Authority (European Commission) in 2011 after establishing professional ties with Dalian Maritime University of China, Maritime University of Vietnam and Singapore Maritime Academy. In 2010, research relationship began with Australian Maritime College (University of Tasmania), International Maritime Employers Commission, International Shipping Federation, International Transport Workers Federation, Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (INTON). In the same year, BMA became a member of the Global Maritime Education and Training Association (Australia), Inter managers (UK) and Marine Biz-TV.

## Miles to Go

Even with all these successes, the long journey of Bangladesh Marine Academy does not stop here as precise plans have been undertaken to secure the future. The plan includes procurement of training boats, sea-going training ships and full-mission dock-engine simulators, construction of Bangabandhu Techno Marina Complex (Research Centre) and reconstruction of infrastructure in line with the times, all to be implemented by 2022.

After several years of bilateral talks, a Memorandum of Understanding on educational cooperation will be signed with Southampton Solent University (UK) during 2020-21. This will be accompanied by the recognition of the United Kingdom Maritime Administration (Maritime Safety Agency). In addition, another MoU is expected to be signed with the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific in the Philippines, a leading country in maritime education, during the same period.

## Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU) and BMA

An initiative was taken to upgrade Bangladesh Marine Academy into Maritime University in accordance with this author's thesis 'A Proposal for Establishment of a Maritime University in Bangladesh, 1997' that he wrote while studying at World Maritime University (Sweden) in 1997-98. Later, as per the government decision, 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University (BSMRMU), Bangladesh' was initially established in Dhaka in 2013 and BMA was affiliated to this university. At present, the complete campus of the university is under construction on the banks of Karnaphuli River in the Mohra area of Chattogram. Under the affiliation of BSMRMU, the cadets of the academy can get 4-year Bachelor of Maritime Science Honours degree. At the same time, the cadets from the academy can get a 4-year 'Pre-sea Nautical Science' or 'Pre-sea Marine Engineering' certificate too.

## The milestone of maritime education for females

In 2012, BMA took a groundbreaking step in female empowerment in

*After several years of bilateral talks, a Memorandum of Understanding on educational cooperation will be signed with Southampton Solent University (UK) during 2020-21. This will be accompanied by the recognition of the United Kingdom Maritime Administration (Maritime Safety Agency).*



Bangladesh, opening the doors of the academy to aspiring female cadets for the first time. According to 'IMO Resolution 14: Promotion of the Participation of Women in All Levels in the Maritime Industry; STCW Conf.2/32; July 1, 2012,' the training of the academy opened for females. For the first time, 16 female cadets were admitted. Needless to say, the issue was quite challenging. To reach the rough sea they had to overcome countless obstacles, hardships and barriers. So far, a total of 70 female cadets in 6 batches have completed the 2 year pre-sea training, followed by third year of practical training on ocean-going ships and then fourth year of training, thus the 4-year Bachelor of Maritime Science Honours degree.

#### International Consultancy

Since 2011, BMA has begun participating in domestic and international professional consultancy saving a good amount of our foreign currency. The academy also participates, frequently, in joint research and maritime consultancy with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Norwegian (NORAD) and World Maritime University (Sweden).

1. Bangladesh Marine Academy (BMA), on behalf of the International Labour Organisation and the Ministry of Labour, provided the necessary consultancy for the implementation of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006 in Bangladesh in 2012-13.

2. The academy provided all the technical and professional services (draft law and project planning) required for the establishment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University in 2010-12.

3. The academy provided all the necessary technical and professional services for the 4 marine academies to be established in the public sector in Rangpur, Pabna, Sylhet and Barishal.

4. In 2015-16, BMA provided the necessary leadership in an international project on 'Recycling of Abandoned Ships' under the IMO-NORAD project. In addition to BMA,

the project consortium also included World Maritime Academy (Sweden), University of Strathclyde (UK), and Dokuz Eylul University (Turkey), Green Ship Recycling Services (Germany), BUET (Bangladesh) and Chattogram University.

#### Economic contribution of BMA cadets

Through training at BMA, a cadet acquires the highest professional skills and after that, s/he needs to spend around BDT 25 lakhs to upgrade from cadet to captain, which s/he can easily earn on his own. On the other hand, a marine officer/engineer earns about BDT 10 crore during his 20 years of professional life on average. Till date, the total contribution of about 4,600 cadets to the national economy stands at around USD 235 million.

#### Cadets around the Globe

The trained mariners of Bangladesh Marine Academy are of international standard in professionalism and efficiency. They have set their proud footsteps in every corner of the world. Graduates from here are automatically recruited on national flag bearer and foreign merchant ships and concerns e.g. the International Maritime Organisation, the International Mobile Satellite Organisation, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology. BMA cadets also play a significant role in the administration, business and training institutes and related other maritime industries.

#### Friends of WMU, Bangladesh

World Maritime University (WMU) was established in 1973 by the IMO in Malmo of Sweden, to ensure the balanced introduction of maritime law and the creation of the necessary skilled manpower. Through scholarships from various donor countries/agencies, a total of 100 students from Bangladesh, most of whom are former cadets of BMA, have so far obtained post-graduate degrees (MSc) on various maritime subjects from this university. Currently, all the top five positions, including the commandant of the academy, are held by WMU graduates. All the graduates of Bangladesh are

contributing to the development of the country through the forming of an alumni association called 'Friends of WMU Bangladesh.'

#### Conclusion

With the mission of 'Building World Class Marine Leadership', the academy aims to create the highest level of maritime education, leadership and research opportunities for the young males and females of the country as skilled marine professionals for the international shipping, maritime and sea trade.

Of all the professions in the world, this is the only profession that can honestly earn a lot of money, in comparison to others. Their salary and all allowances are paid in foreign currency (dollars), making it completely tax free. Therefore, besides bringing prosperity to the family, the mariners of Bangladesh are playing an important role in increasing the country's economy, especially the foreign exchange reserve. The government of Bangladesh is putting great importance in the exploration and extraction of aquatic resources available in the sea areas of the country. This opportunity has been further enhanced after our noted victory in resolving long-standing maritime disputes with India and Myanmar. The marine academy has been working tirelessly to create skilled marine professionals to keep pace with this development of the Blue Economy.

Skilled manpower is the first and foremost thing required in the maritime sector to build a developed and prosperous Bangladesh. Bangladesh Marine Academy is not only the principal institution of the country in creating this manpower, but also a role model in maritime education for many other countries all over the world.

*The academy also participates, frequently, in joint research and maritime consultancy with the International Labor Organization (ILO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), Norwegian (NORAD) and World Maritime University (Sweden).*

Dr Sajid Hossain  
Marine Engineer  
Commandant  
Bangladesh Marine Academy



## COVID-19 treatment

# Chattogram port hospital in a lead role

Omar Faroque Emon

*The whole world has come to a standstill with the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. Everything from our daily functions as well as the greater economic activity came to a standstill. The first outbreak of the coronavirus was reported in December last year in China, one of the most influential countries in the world trade. China has import-export trade with almost all countries and Bangladesh is no exception. The main export product of the country comes from China. In addition, we have to rely on China for other daily necessities. Most of the ships that come to Chattogram port bring goods imported from China. As a result of this EXIM activity, there is a high risk of the virus spreading from China to our country. Eventually, it began to spread to other countries of the world. As a result, the world economy is standing in a deep crisis.*

Naturally, COVID-19 impacts began to be felt in Bangladesh as well. Initially, Chattogram Port Authority was conducting its operational activities keeping in view the economic activities of the country in the one hand and protection from the COVID-19 pandemic on the other. Necessary steps are taken to manage the activities of the port while affirming protection for the workers from coronavirus. Nonetheless, even after maximum security, some officials and employees of the traffic department and mechanical department of the port were infected by COVID-19. This caused panic among the port workers. As a result, to keep the port operational, two issues came to the forefront, one, ensuring the health-safety of the officers and employees, and two, ensuring the highest level of medical services for all.

About 40,000 people, including port officials and their families live in the port area. The entire population receives health care from Chattogram port hospital. During the early days, there were no separate units for corona treatment at the hospital. As a result, the affected patients had to undergo treatment at various other corona isolation centres and dedicated corona hospitals set up by the government and the private sector in city. By the beginning of May, the port authority took initiative to ensure treatment of all the officers

*About 40,000 people, including port officials and their families live in the port area. The entire population receives health care from Chattogram port hospital.*

and employees in their early stages of infection. The authority also began discussing and taking steps to launch the COVID-19 medical system. Later, Rear Admiral S M Abul Kalam Azad, Chairman, Chattogram Port Authority, announced the setting up of a 50-bed isolation ward in the new building of the port hospital. He, along with his board members then visited the hospital. Later, the port authority consulted with Dr Bidyut Bara, an entrepreneur and chief executive of public health specialist for advice on setting up an isolation ward. After that, COVID-19 unit commenced its operation with 25 isolation beds and 25 beds for the infected COVID-19 patients.

### Recruitment of human resource

In addition to the regular medical activities of the Chattogram port hospital, new manpower and equipment were required to start the treatment of patients infected with COVID-19. Since there is no effective treatment for this new disease, the port authority has to work carefully to determine the qualifications and skills of the doctors and the medical assistants. After reviewing the complex and technical issues related to the medical system, the authorities showed laudable efficiency by making quick decisions. Following this, on June 8, the port authorities issued notices in the national and

local newspapers for the recruitment of doctors, nurses, medical assistants and necessary manpower. The recruitment of 13 doctors on 15 June was confirmed after a week-long written and oral examination on a temporary basis. Afterwards, on 18 June, the recruitment of nurses, medical assistants, technologists and other manpower was completed. A total of 159 medical personnel including 13 doctors and 36 nurses were recruited within just two weeks. The medical service commenced from 24 June over an orientation session of the newly recruited doctors, nurses and other manpower. State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury inaugurated the COVID-19 unit in the C block of the new building of port hospital on 1 July 2020. Along with this unit, he also inaugurated the newly constructed building of the hospital.

### Procurement of equipment

Patients with COVID-19 require an uninterrupted supply of oxygen. Almost all patients need this oxygen support at different stages of the disease. Effective equipment is needed to determine oxygen level. Sometimes, critically ill patients need ventilator support. To mitigate these issues, measures were taken to ensure uninterrupted high flow oxygen supply for the treatment of COVID-19 infected patients. Within the shortest possible time, flow-meter, high flow nozzle





Dedicated physicians are examining a COVID-19 patient in COVID-19 unit of Chattogram port hospital

canola, oxygen concentrator, ventilator and other necessary equipment have been added to the inventory, which were all procured through Bangladesh Navy.

#### Stakeholders step forward

The role of stakeholders is very important in the success of Chattogram port. In this time of crisis too, stakeholders stood by the port as the port officials and employees kept on providing uninterrupted services. The stakeholders stepped forward not only in conducting port activities, but also in providing the right corona treatment. Saif Powertech, one of the port's terminal operators, provided four oxygen concentrators and four ventilators for the Corona unit of the port hospital. In addition, the Birth Operators Owners Association, an association of birth operator owners, donated two high-flow nozzles.

#### Sample collection

From the onset of corona infection, samples were collected at the Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (BITID) in Chattogram. After that, sample collection started at Chattogram Medical College Hospital and Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University. Due to the high number of suspected patients with symptoms, it took much time and efforts in these institutions. Therefore, the port authority set up booths on its own to collect samples from the port officials and employees and to detect

the presence of the virus. On May 27, the booth officially launched its service at the Chattogram port Employees' Council office. An experienced physician and a pathologist were appointed for collecting the samples. These samples collected from this booth are then sent to the lab of Chattogram Medical College Hospital for testing. Test results are being published online.

#### Effective measures to prevent COVID-19

Since the beginning, the port authority played proactive role in taking effective measures to prevent COVID-19. All the departments including the medical department of

*In this time of crisis, stakeholders stood by the port as the port officials and employees kept on providing uninterrupted services.*

the port authority have been instructed to take necessary measures to prevent COVID-19 infection. The set guidelines include,

1. The officers and employees of the port will report to the port hospital through their respective department heads if any physical or other COVID-19 symptoms appear. The hospital will maintain a registrar for each patient.
2. If the patient is not admitted to the port hospital, she/he will take advice of the doctor from home and the doctor will regularly supervise about what treatment the person is taking at home.
3. If any COVID-19 patient leaves hospital without informing the doctor-in-charge of the isolation centre or the hospital, the Chief Medical Officer will immediately inform the concerned authority including the concerned departmental head.
4. It is strictly forbidden to come to anyone's office or public with the symptoms of COVID-19. Officers-employees who have symptoms need to stay locked down at their homes. The executive magistrate and the director administration will take necessary steps in this regard.
5. Necessary action will be taken against any officer-employee who disobeys the above instructions.

Omar Faroque Emon

Reporter  
Bandarbarta and CPA News

Physicians hold regular meeting to aware the health professionals about COVID-19 outbreak





### ► Matarbari port design deal goes to Japan's Nippon



The government of Bangladesh approved a deal with Nippon Koei of Japan on 22 July 2020 for the appointment of the company as the consultant of Matarbari Port Development Project at the Bay of Bengal.

Nippon will provide design and tender assistance and supervise the construction of the port under the BDT 234 crore deal approved by the cabinet committee on national purchases.

On 10 March 2020, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) approved the construction of a port at Matarbari with Japanese loan to fill the absence of a deep sea port in the country.

The Chattogram Port Authority and the Roads and Highways Division would implement the Matarbari Port Development Project involving BDT 17,777 crore with the Japan International Cooperation Agency providing a BDT 12,892 crore as loan.

According to Planning minister MA Mannan, it is 'another dream' project aimed at facilitating the country's growing exports and imports. The project is expected to be completed by 2026.

### ► Chattogram port sees growth despite COVID-19 impact

In the last four months of the just-concluded fiscal year, there had been an increase in cargo and container handling at the Chattogram port despite the hamper caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the fiscal year 2019-20, an amount of 101,565,272 tons of cargo had been handled at the port with a growth of 3.4%. In the previous fiscal year, the amount was 98,240,655 tons. Moreover, the port registered 3,004,142 TEUs container handling this year with a growth of 2.9%. In the previous financial year, the amount was 2,919,023 TEUs.

Due to the COVID-19 situation, imports from China, LC openings and ships arrival decreased for a few months. Even then, 3,764 ships have been handled in the 2019-20 fiscal year with a growth of 1.7%. In the previous fiscal year, the number of ships arrived in Chattogram port was 3,699.

### ► First consignment of Indian goods reaches Tripura, Assam through Chattogram port



As an experiment, India has for the first time sent cargo from Kolkata to Tripura and Assam using Chattogram sea port and Akhaura land port of Bangladesh.

All charges, except the one for using the

roads, were collected by the authorities of Bangladesh. The foreign affairs ministry informed India earlier this month that road fees would not be charged during the trial runs.

A vessel called MV Sejuti left Kolkata on 14 July 2020 and reached Chattogram port on 21 July 2020. Its cargo of lentils and rods were then loaded on four trailer trucks. The trailers carrying the goods reached Akhaura land port on 22 July 2020 afternoon. The goods were then loaded into Indian trailers that carried them further inland.

India has paid a transshipment charge of Rs 500 for each 20-foot trailer carrying 25 tons of goods. The total payment to Bangladesh was BDT 21,575 for the lentil and BDT 20,431 for the TMT bars (rods).

Joydeep Mukherjee, superintendent of Agartala Customs said that Tripura Chief Minister Biplob Kumar Dev formally received the goods-laden trailers from Agartala port on 23 July 2020.

Since 2016, 17 Indian cargoes have been transported using the Chattogram-Akhaura route. Bangladesh started giving transit to India in June 2016.

In 2011, India used the Ashuganj river port to carry goods for the construction of the Palatana power plant in Tripura through the Akhaura. India built diversion roads along 36 bridges and culverts in three upazilas of Brahmanbaria to carry these heavy goods.

The movement of container cargo happened after the agreement on the use of Chattogram and Mongla Ports for the movement of India's transit cargo through Bangladesh. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for this was finalised in October 2019 when the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made a visit to India.

According to the SOP, goods that reach Chattogram and Mongla sea ports will be transported on four road, rail, and water routes to: Agartala (Tripura) via Akhaura; Dawki (Meghalaya) via Tamabil; Sutarkandi (Assam) via Sheola, and Srimantpur (Tripura) via Bibirbazar.

It allows the landlocked Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura states to access open sea trade routes through the Chattogram and Mongla ports.



## ➤ New container line opens between Chattogram and Kolkata ports

A new container line has started operating between Chattogram and Kolkata seaports in a significant move to boost Indo-Bangladesh trade.

The vessel, Harmann Schepper, left the Chattogram port on 2 July 2020 while another vessel, Asiatic Moon, a Singapore flag carrier, left Kolkata port for Chattogram port on 2 July 2020.

Asiatic Moon left from Syamaee Port (SMP), erstwhile Kolkata Port Trust, carrying 300 TEUs (20-foot equivalent units) of containers.

These are the biggest vessels by size operating between the two ports till date. The vessels can carry up to 600 TEUs in a single voyage.

The vessels are now carrying chemicals, iron materials, including billets, and yarns from the Indian part. On the other hand, some clothing items and empty containers occupied most part of the vessel left from the Chattogram port.

Currently, two international shipping lines are operating on the route. Those are Singapore-based Seacon and the Hong Kong-based Gold Star Line. The distance between Chattogram and Kolkata is around 200 nautical miles and the journey time is nearly two days.

Earlier, only small barges with carrying capacity of about 80-100 containers were operational on this route through a protocol signed between India and Bangladesh.

## ➤ Chattogram port ranks 58th among world's top 100 busiest container ports

Chattogram port, the country's gateway of overseas trade, has advanced 6 steps in terms of annual handling of containers in this year's Lloyd's List, world's oldest journal on port and shipping.

The Port secured the 58th position among the 100 busiest container handling ports of the world in 2020. In 2019, the port was on the 64th position in the list of 'One Hundred Ports', prepared by Lloyd's List, the famous maritime journal.

Shanghai Port of China secured the top position in the list of 2020. It also topped the list in the two previous years.

As per Lloyd's List of 2019 the Chattogram port handled 3,088,187 TEUs of containers and in 2018 the Chattogram port handled 2,93,996 TEUs of containers. The growth rate was annual 6.3% container handling.

The Chattogram port entered the list first time in 2009 securing 98th position.

## ➤ No wait for berthing at Chattogram port

The number of container vessels waiting for berths at the outer anchorage of the Chattogram Port has come to zero.

The current situation comes as a stark contrast to what it was a few months back, when the port was practically choked by acute vessel congestion during the long nationwide shutdown aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 within Bangladesh.

A few weeks after the shutdown began on 26 March, the port reached full capacity due to ever-increasing stacks of import containers as most buyers did not accept their deliveries amid the pandemic.

In late April, the number of container vessels parked at the outer anchorage each day reached 36, with most of those ships being stranded there for at least 18 to 20 days before getting berths. However, the situation improved gradually.

"Vessels are now getting berths upon arrival without delay," said Enamul Karim, Director (traffic) of the Chattogram Port Authority.

Besides, the 10 new quay gantry cranes added to the existing four made container handling brisker, allowing ships to depart as soon as possible, according to Karim. Also, the decline in imports led to a reduction in operating pressure at the port.

Subsequently, operations can be conducted on time, leading to a lesser number of ships waiting at the outer anchorage.

## ➤ Mongla port earns highest revenue amid COVID-19 crisis



Country's second busiest sea port Mongla has achieved a record profit of BDT 115.15 crore in the just concluded 2019-20 fiscal year despite COVID-19 outbreak.

According to the Mongla Port Authority (MPA), the import-export trade of the seaport is unaffected as a total of 903 vessels have been berthed at the port which handled 1.10 crore tons of goods in the fiscal 2019-20. The port also handled 59,476 TEUs of containers in the same period.

MPA's austerity measures lessened the over expenditures in the on-going COVID-19 situation that resulted in making a net profit of BDT 115,15,30,000 after paying salaries and allowances and other development activities cost.

Chairman of MPA Rear Admiral M Shahjahan said the port activities were never stalled since the COVID-19 situation began and the profit of the port in the last financial year had been made with concerted efforts of all and this trend will continue in future.



## ➤ Government fixed USD 48 billion export target

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi said that the government has set a USD 48 billion export target for the current fiscal year 2020-2021. Of this, USD 41 billion has been fixed for goods export sector and USD 7 billion for the services export sector.

The minister came up with the information on 16 July 2020 at a virtual press briefing on the occasion of the announcement of export targets for the fiscal year 2020-2021.

The growth in goods exports has been targeted 21.75% and 9.46% in services sector, said the minister. He opined that the target was USD 54 billion in last fiscal year, which could not be achieved for the negative impact amid global COVID-19 outbreak.

The target has been fixed after reviewing recent trends in world trade, the impact of COVID-19 on the domestic and global economy, Prime Minister's announced financial stimulus, development of new products and services sector with export potential, short and medium term measures taken as per the review of the task force of the Ministry of Commerce and the growth rate achieved in the export sector last year.

He said that due to the negative impact of COVID-19 on world trade, the export earnings of the goods sector declined in March, April and May, but it has started increasing since June.

## ➤ Ten more economic zones get government approval

The government has given primary approval to set up ten more economic zones (EZ) in a bid to attract investment, create jobs and protect arable and forest land.

The 7th governing board meeting of the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave the approval on 20 August 2020. The PM joined the virtual meeting from Ganabhaban while other board members were connected from the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Division.

According to the meeting, the EZs will be set up in Nawabganj, Tangail, Naogaon's Sapahar, Dinajpur, Noakhali's Companiganj, Chattogram's Sandwip, Sunamganj's Chhatak, Pabna's Bera, Barishal's Hizla Char Megha and Manikganj's Shibalaya areas.

So far 101 EZs have been permitted including the newly approved ten, while infrastructural and land developments are on in 28 EZs.

Meantime, the concerned organisation has been instructed to connect the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Industrial City with the Marine Drive in Cox's Bazar.

The meeting also decided to change the name of 'Maheshkhali Special Economic Zone' to 'Sonadia Eco-Tourism Park'. It also decided that all agro-products processing units in EZs would get export subsidy and cash incentive like the non-EZ industries.

## ➤ BB waives requirement of B/E in hard copy



The central bank (Bangladesh Bank) has waived the requirement of submission of bill of entry (B/E) in hard copy by the importers aiming to facilitate smoother business activities in Bangladesh.

Under the relaxations, Authorised Dealer (AD) banks are now empowered to accept bill of entry accessible to them through the customs automated system to dispose IMP Form on completion of matching formalities, according to a notification, issued by the Bangladesh Bank (BB), on 21 July 2020.

In this case, the banks will have to ensure payment of duties and taxes against the imports.

The instructions will be applicable only to import through custom houses having automated system for issuance of bill of entry.

## ➤ Norway to fund USD 1.5mn for local ship recycling industry

Norway has committed approximately USD 1.5 million (14m Norwegian Krone) to support the development of ship recycling industry in Bangladesh through the third phase of IMO's Safe and Environmentally Sound Ship Recycling in Bangladesh (SENSREC) project.

The agreement between IMO and the Government of Norway to support Phase III of the project was signed on 24 July 2020 by IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim and the Norwegian ambassador to Bangladesh, Sidsel Bleken.

The project was implemented to enhance safe and environmentally sound ship recycling in Bangladesh and help the nation towards becoming a party to the IMO Hong Kong Convention treaty on safe ship recycling.

The Agreement follows the successful implementation of Phase I (2015-17) and Phase II (2018 - 2020) of the SENSREC Project, both mainly funded by Norway. With the additional funding, Phase III of the project will be implemented over 18 months, starting from November 2020.

SENSREC Phase III will focus on improving ship recycling standards in compliance with the Hong Kong Convention and enhancing capacity building for the Government of Bangladesh on legislation and knowledge management. Bangladesh will be provided with specific technical assistance to establish a facility for treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes. IMO said there will be a special focus on evaluating the impact of Covid-19 on the ship recycling industry in Bangladesh.



## ▶ Trial run of river vessel between Bangladesh and India begins

The trial run of river vessel between Bangladesh and India started as a vessel carrying 10 tons of cement reached Sonamura Port of Tripura from Daudkandi of Cumilla through the Gomti River on 5 September 2020.

BIWTA Chairman Golam Sadeq formally inaugurated the test run operations of river vessel through releasing balloons at Bibir Bazar in Cumilla.

Speaking on the occasion at the Bibir Bazaar Landport, the then Indian High Commissioner Riva Ganguly Das said the Sonamura (Tripura)-Daudkandi (Bangladesh) route was included in the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) routes signed by the two countries in May this year. The other river route is Rajshahi to Duliha of India.

"As per that deal, the trial run of river vessel between the two countries carrying cement began today. Now other problems including lack of navigability in the river route will be addressed in phases. Through this, cordial relations will be further developed between the two countries while connectivity will be enhanced," she said.

Terming it as a 'historic day' for both Bangladesh and India, the Indian High Commissioner further said with the launching of the river route, the friendly relations between the two countries will further increase while a new window will be opened on exports and imports.

Meanwhile, at another function held at Sonamura in Tripura marking the launching of the river route, Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb extended his heartfelt thanks to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for materialising this initiative.

## ▶ Matarbari deep sea port will be operational by 2025

Bangladesh's first ever deep sea port, Matarbari port will be made functional by 2025, said the officials at the contract signing ceremony for the 'Consultancy Services of Matarbari Port Development Project' held at Hotel InterContinental, Dhaka on 23 September 2020.

Planning Minister MA Mannan MP and State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury virtually joined the ceremony as chief guest and special guest respectively. Mohammed Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, secretary of the Shipping Ministry chaired the programme.

Senior officials from the government, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the Embassy of Japan were present on the occasion. Two contracts were signed between Chattogram Port Authority with the Nippon Koei JV and Roads and Highways Department (RHD) with Oriental Consultants Global Company Ltd.

Matarbari Port Development Project is an important Fast Track Project of the Government of Bangladesh. This project is an outcome of the concept of "BIG - B" (The Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt) jointly announced by the premiers of Bangladesh and Japan in September 2014.

The objective of the project is to develop a reliable and low - cost logistic network for seaborne cargo/freight handling and transporting facilities to maintain competitiveness of Bangladeshi products in the global market.

In order to achieve these objectives, a new commercial port and a port connecting road with national highway (N1) at Matarbari, Moheshkhali and Chakoria area in Chattogram Division will be constructed, thereby contributing to create facilities with neighbouring countries.

The government of Bangladesh received a loan amount not exceeding 2,655,000,000 yen from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for the implementation of Matarbari Port Development Project.

## ▶ Commodore M Neamul Hasan joins as CPA member (Engineering)



Commodore Mohammad Neamul Hasan, (L), BN joined as a member (Engineering) of Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) on 8 July 2020.

He took over the charge from the outgoing Member (Engineering) Capt M Mohidul Hasan (E), PSC, BN. He joined Bangladesh (BN) Navy on 1 January 1988 and commissioned on 1 July 1990 in Electrical Branch.

After obtaining his Competency Certificate, he was appointed onboard various smaller crafts and frigates as Electrical Officer.

He was a project member of the Castle Class Offshore Patrol Vessel regeneration project and worked in A & P Tyne Shipyard in the UK.

He is an alumnus of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and completed his graduation on Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) and masters on Communication Engineering (CE) from the same university. He did a specialisation in System Engineering Management Course (Weapon Engineering) in Royal Navy at HMS Collingwood, UK. Before joining in CPA, he was Principal, BN College Dhaka.

## ➤ Bangladesh holds the second position in RMG exports: WTO

According to World Statistics Review 2019, Bangladesh has achieved the second highest export growth globally over the past decade (2008-2018) and the highest among South Asian nations thanks to the spiralling apparel shipment.

Vietnam topped the list with a 14.6% export growth while Bangladesh gained 9.8%. Exports of China and India grew by 5.7% and 5.3% respectively. Bangladesh exceeded the export growth of many leading economies like China, India, Brazil and Turkey and some developing nations because of the high volume of garment export.

“Bangladesh’s exports of apparel and clothing more than trebled between 2008 and 2018,” the WTO said.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh maintained the title of second largest garment exporter worldwide grabbing 6.4% of the trade while China maintained its dominance occupying 31.3% despite a slight decline in the growth in 2018.

According to WTO data, the share of Vietnam in apparel trade grew to 6.2%, India 3.3% and Turkey 3.1%.

## ➤ Steps taken to manage dangerous goods in Chattogram port



The Chattogram Port Authority has taken a number of steps to handle, preserve and deliver cargos loaded with dangerous and hazardous goods efficiently following concerns over the existing management of the goods in the country’s premier sea port after the deadly explosion in Beirut port in Lebanon.

The initiatives that include expediting direct delivery of dangerous goods from the port, construction of a modern shed for preservation of such goods and appointing a private off-dock to handle cargos with such goods will be implemented by various agencies, including the CPA and the Customs House Chattogram (CHC).

The decisions were made on 22 August 2020 at a meeting with stakeholders on management of dangerous cargos and goods, including chemical and other inflammable items. As per the decisions, the CPA will set up a shed at a safe place with state-of-the-art technology following the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code. The authority will immediately renovate the P Shed, the designated place for storage of dangerous goods in the port, to make the shed fit to preserve chemical and other hazardous goods.

## ➤ First shipment of low-sulphur fuel reaches Chattogram



The first consignment of environment-friendly low-sulphur fuel arrived in Chattogram on 14 September 2020.

The Chairman of Bangladesh

Petroleum Corporation (BPC), Md Shamsur Rahman and other high officials were present when an oil tanker named ‘MT TMN Pride,’ carrying 15,000 tons of furnace oil from Singapore, took berth at Dolphin Jetty No 5 of Meghna Oil Company at Patenga. Previously, BPC announced the import of low-sulphur fuel to reduce marine pollution.

This is the first time BPC has imported marine fuel containing 0.5% sulphur. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) made it mandatory to use marine fuel with 0.5% sulphur from 1 January 2020. In its 2019 guideline, IMO — the United Nations agency responsible for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution — recommended banning ships from using fuel containing more than 0.5% sulphur to reduce marine pollution.

Before the introduction of the new guideline, ships all over the world, including 35 in Bangladesh, used furnace oil containing 3.5% sulphur content. 95% of shipping companies worldwide have switched over to low-sulphur fuel to comply with the environment-friendly recommendation.

## ➤ Chattogram port holds new record in export

The export through Chattogram port has set a new record despite the COVID-19 pandemic. In July this year, 72,000 TEU containers of goods were exported through this port, highest in the last 18 months. Bangladesh is overcoming the financial obstacles laid by the COVID-19 pandemic. Not just in exports, the country sees good come back in import sector as well. Traders say that the Prime Minister’s bold decision to open up factories and businesses amid the pandemic has boosted exports.

The Main Line Operators (MLO), who are responsible for transporting goods from Chattogram port to various destinations, informed that 61,700 TEU containers were transported through Chattogram port in March. Due to the COVID-19 impact, exports came down to 13,000 TEU containers in April. The number increased slightly to 30,000 TEUs in May. In June, it increased to 50,000 TEUs. In July, the number increased to 72,359 TEU containers - the highest among the first six months of the current year. This picture clearly illustrates that that Bangladesh has been overcoming the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic.



## ▶ Bangladesh to get USD 3.15 billion Japanese loan



Japan confirmed largest ever loan package of USD 3.15 billion for Bangladesh to bankroll seven development projects in the country.

Under the 41st Official Development Assistance (ODA) package, the Japanese donor JICA would provide the loan to Bangladesh government.

Mr ITO Naoki, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh and Ms

Fatima Yasmin, Secretary, Economic Relations Division (ERD) signed Exchange of Notes of the 41st ODA in Dhaka on 12 August 2020.

Japan Embassy in a statement said this year's loan package comprises assistance of seven projects amounting to JPY338.247 billion (approximately USD 3.14 billion), the largest ever loan package since its inception in 1974.

Based on this agreement between the two countries, Mr HAYAKAWA Yuhō, Chief Representative of JICA Bangladesh Office and Ms Fatima Yasmin signed a relevant loan agreement. Japan has been the single largest bilateral donor for Bangladesh since 2012, and the total amount of its aid as Yen Loan has reached USD 22 billion.

Under the 41st ODA package, the Japan will provide JPY 89.016 billion for the Jamuna Railway Bridge Construction Project (II), JPY 80 billion for the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport Expansion Project (II), JPY 72.194 billion for Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project (IV), JPY 55.696 billion for the Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project (Line 5 Northern Route) (I), JPY 1.906 billion for the Chattogram – Cox's Bazar Highway Improvement Project (E/S), JPY 11.218 billion for the Food Value Chain Improvement Project and JPY 28.217 billion for Urban Development and City Governance Project.

Bangladesh will have to repay the loan at 0.65% interest rate in 30 years where 10 years grace period will be available.

## ▶ Chattogram port to come under 100% CCTV surveillance

The Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) will install 477 more CCTV cameras by February 2021, aiming to ensure flawless safety by bringing the port yard under complete monitoring.

According to CPA Secretary Md. Omar Faruque, 100% security at the port will be ensured when the installation of another 477 CCTV cameras is completed.

CPA said that it took this step to fulfill the conditions laid out in the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. The ISPS Code is a set of measures to enhance the security of ships and port facilities. It was developed in response to the perceived threats to ships and port facilities after the 9/11 attacks.

The increased number of CCTV cameras will enhance the overall operations of the port and prevent pilferage from the containers, yards, sheds, and vessels.

On 27 September 2020, CPA Chairman Rear Admiral S M Abul Kalam Azad inaugurated the Chattogram port CCTV Command and Control Centre at the port. From now on, all the CCTV cameras of the port will be monitored from the command and control centre.

Previously, the port installed the Vessel Traffic Management Information System, a video surveillance system to track vessel movements. To streamline operations, the port also introduced the Container Terminal Management System (CTMS).

According to Lloyd's List, Chattogram port, in terms of annual container handling, is now the 58th busiest container port among 100 top ports in the world.

Lloyd's List stated that Chattogram port's flourishing export trade of ready-made garments continues to drive throughput numbers.

## ▶ NBR to make customs duty e-payment mandatory

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has decided to make electronic payment mandatory to facilitate faster and smoother customs duty payments for importers and exporters.

Traders, mainly importers, are unable to reap the benefits of the customs e-payment launched in March 2017 to modernise the payment system due to the optional status of the online payment procedure of import-export duties and taxes and a lack of awareness among stakeholders, including customs and clearing agents of traders. Analysing the situation, the revenue board had decided in principle to make the e-payment system mandatory in phases for all.

Initially, it will be made compulsory for payments of large amounts of duties and taxes and all kinds of payments will be gradually brought under the system by December 2021.

In addition, the NBR will also arrange workshops, seminars and awareness programmes for traders to make the system popular.



## **CPA NEWS**

A Quarterly Publication of  
**Chittagong Port Authority**