



Yoji Fujisawa

## JSU strengthens ties with Manila

The JSU president and other executive members attended the Philippines-Japan Manning Cooperative Forum 2008, held at the international assembly hall in Manila on Feb. 28 and 29.

After a grand opening ceremony in the presence of Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, and attended by about 2,500 persons, including Japanese and Philippine dignitaries from the shipping industry, families of seafarers and maritime academy students.

At the forum, Japanese and Philippine panelists gave presentations. JSU President Yoji Fujisawa in his presentation said "Thus far, the JSU, in response to the wishes of unions in seafarer-supplying countries in the Asia-Pacific region, has taken the leadership in having Asian voices reflected in the international community of seafarers."

"Above all, considering that the Japanese merchant fleet relies heavily on the Philippines for the supply of crewmen, the JSU has strengthened its partnership with the Philippine seamen's union in an effort to protect seafarers' employment and rights."

"Henceforth, the JSU also intends to take an active part in seafarer education and training programs, involving government authorities as well, and strive to establish an adequate system for reinforcing qualitative competitiveness and strengthening its voice in the international community with a view to further improving the lives and working conditions of both Japanese and Philippine seafarers."

The other presentation made it clear that the Japanese merchant fleet will be expanded to more than 3,000 vessels within five years, giving rise to a shortage of more than 10,000 seamen for their

JSU, see Page 2

## THE 25TH ASIAN SEAFARERS' SUMMIT MEETING

# Shortage of seafarers seen as major core

*Delegates discuss, exchange opinions on current state and problems of FOC vessels*

The 25th Asian Seafarers' Summit Meeting took place at the JSU/AMOSUP Mariners Home in Manila, the Philippines, on Feb. 26 with 55 delegates from 17 unions attending. The JSU was represented by a seven-man delegation, led by President Yoji Fujisawa.

Present at the summit as an observer for the first time was a delegation from the ITF Secretariat comprising General Manager Stephen Cotton, ITF SSD; General Secretary Brian Orrel, NAU-TILUS UK; and National Secretary Paddy Crumlin, Maritime Union of Australia.

The meeting adopted a Resolution Seeking to Establish and Organize an Asian Seafarers' Ad Hoc Committee to exchange information, data, know-how and technology for the professional career development of Asian seafarers, submitted by AMOSUP.

It was decided to name the ad hoc committee members, in charge with specific activities for the committee, as soon as possible.

At the opening ceremony of the summit, speeches were delivered by Adm. Eduardo Ma. R. Santos, president, Maritime Academy of Asia and Pacific (AMOSUP-MAAP); Capt. Gregorio S. Oca, president of AMOSUP; and JSU President Yoji Fujisawa; followed by a keynote speech by Hon. Jose L. Atienza, secretary, Department of Environment & Natural Resources of the



JSU President Yoji Fujisawa (seated third from right), join fellow delegates of the 25th Asian Seafarers Summit Meeting in Manila on Feb. 26, 2008.

Philippines.

At the meeting, the delegates discussed and exchanged opinions on the current state and problems of flag-of-convenience (FOC) vessels of the respective countries, based on the latest data on shipbuilding trends, prepared by the secretariat.

Concerning the promotion of Asian seafarers' education and training, it was announced that the serious shortage of seafarers and the joint government/labor/management efforts to resolve such a shortage differ from country to country.

In this regard, ITF delegate Cotton proposed that the ITF Seafarers Section meeting, scheduled for June this year in Stockholm, Sweden, should take up the ITF's more positive in-

volvement in the research and study of the latest information on the trends of the world's merchant fleet and the shortage of seafarers.

Concerning the FOC campaign review as well, it was agreed to have Asian voices focused on the review committee mainly through its members in AMOSUP, the JSU, the SMOU and the SUR, since the committee is slated to undertake a phased debate toward the 2010 ITF Congress, which will reach a final conclusion on the matter.

The delegates also agreed to hold the next Asian summit meeting in Taiwan and invite seafarers' unions in Malaysia and Sri Lanka to attend the meeting. The ITF is assisting the two unions as part of its effort to organize seafarers in the Asia-Pacific region.

## Summit resolution at a glance

AWARE of the continuing shortage of marine officers and skilled ratings, which the 2005 BIMCO/ISF Manpower Update Report estimated to reach 27,000 officers by the year 2015;

MINDFUL that the duties and responsibilities of marine officers and skilled ratings are increasingly assigned to and carried out by Asian seafarers;

INFORMED that many Asian officers and ratings do not have the opportunity or the motivation to qualify and/or be licensed to advance to the next higher rank or position;

tion;

CONSIDERS that all seafarers, whether officers or ratings, by the physical demands and the technical nature of their work, is such a tremendous human resource that should be constantly developed;

BELIEVES that the seafaring profession must offer clear and effective ways for career advancement, to be able to harness this tremendous human resource potential through proper education, training, licensing and certification;

NOTES that during the Experts Meeting on Improving the Quality of Seafarers in Asia, one of the concerns on seafarers' education and training was the need to increase the sharing of information about seafarer matters;

SEEKS to establish and organize, under such terms and conditions to be agreed by the members, an Asian Seafarers' Ad Hoc Committee to exchange information, data, know-how and technology for the professional career development of Asian seafarers.

## Norwegian/Asian seafarers hold 18th meeting in Manila

The Norwegian/Asian Seafarers' Committee (NASCO) held its 18th meeting at Mariners Home in Manila on Feb. 27.

The meeting was attended by about 35 delegates from 20 seamen's unions and the Norwegian Shipowners' As-

sociation, including JSU's ITF Coordinator Shoji Yamashita.

The meeting first approved the secretariat's three agenda items on (1) ITF-related activities, (2) various activities aimed at FOC vessels, and (3) the current state of

collective agreements.

Then, the Norwegian Seamen's Union reported on the results of its FOC campaign in 2007. Of the 176 vessels inspected, almost all of them had concluded ITF-approved collective agreements, but the union took protest

actions, such as refusal of cargo handling, against 12 vessels and organized their crewmen.

As of December 2007, FOC vessels with organized crews numbered 754, up 120 from

NASCO, see Page 3

# Stowaway problem costs shippers hefty sum

## Delegates blast some ports not implementing ISPS

Illegal immigration to the U.S. and Europe from Asia, particularly China, continues to cause concern, according to a joint statement from Japanese shipping line NYK and the UK Club.

"Shippers, slot charterers and some terminal personnel continue to collude in such crime," it adds.

The P&I club's Peter Lau says that the UK Club was involved in 120 stowaway cases last year, costing about

US\$2 million.

While numbers and total costs have fallen compared to 1998-2003, average costs per case has more than doubled, to around \$14,500, in 2007.

"The impact on individual shipowners was likely to be greater given the rising deductibles and non-reporting of small and quickly solved cases," Lau said.

Ro-ro and multi-cargo vessels accounted for 31 percent of the cases for the 10-year

period from 1998-2007, followed by bulk carriers (23 percent) and container ships and general cargo vessels (both 16 percent).

The problem was discussed recently by the club and 50 members of NYK senior regional management, including terminal representatives from major Chinese ports including Shanghai and Shenzhen and UK P&I Club representatives.

At Lloyd's Maritime Aca-

demy's maritime security conference in London, shipping line delegates commented that the only benefit they had felt from the ISPS Code was a drop in stowaways carried as their detection had increased.

Delegates particularly from shipping companies were, however, acerbic in noting that ports in some parts of the world were clearly not implementing ISPS on the shore side, since stowaways still managed to reach the quaysides. (*Lloyd's Register/Fairplay*)

## Union calls for manning shake up

Seafarers see the minimum safe manning rules as "a joke" and a radical overhaul is required to ensure that they deal with the problems of fatigue and excessive workloads, Nautilus UK has warned.

Speaking at a seminar on manning levels organized by the Isle of Man Ship Registry, senior national secretary Paul Moloney said research by the Nautilus Federation had shown that more than one in five officers frequently or always work more than 91 hours a week.

Moloney, who was among a series of key speakers at the seminar, said the membership survey had shown a consistent view that crew complements fail to relate to the actual operation of vessels.

"Some companies had responded to the evidence of overload by appointing an extra third officer to deal with paperwork and administration. Other operators should follow this example," he said.

But, he added, "the authorities also need to do more to deal with the serious health and safety risks presented by excessive hours at sea. There is random testing of seafarers for alcohol, why not random testing for fatigue?"

The Nautilus official told the seminar that the issue of manning levels could not be tackled without measures to address the growing global shortage of skilled officers.

He argued that the industry needs to do more to "sell" seafaring careers to young people, emphasising the variety of employment opportunities at sea and ashore.

Improving levels of qualification, for instance through the foundation degree scheme, would also help to enhance the "value added" by skilled seafarers and promote secure employment.

As well as boosting their training efforts, Moloney suggested that employers will have to take a number of other measures to "manage" the shortage of officers. They could include "pyramid" manning structures, agreements with unions on manning models and guarantees of job security.

"We need to see more employers engaging in better planning to deal with shortages, and talking to us about that be stressed," said Moloney.

While regulation is not always possible, Moloney said, "there was a strong case for measures to protect the EU ferry sector through a framework in which competition can flourish while European maritime employment is protected." (*Shiptalk*)

## Japan to double number of locally registered ships

The Japanese government plans to double the number of Japan-registered ships in the next five years in an attempt to stem the rapid decline in the number of such vessels, according to the draft of the Basic Plan on Ocean Policy compiled by the government's Ocean Policy Headquarters.

The government also plans to increase by half the number of Japanese-crewed ships on overseas service over the next 10 years.

The basic plan will state that the government will formulate a development plan for ocean energy and mineral resources in fiscal 2008 to establish a unified system to manage the development of marine resources such as petroleum and natural gas.

As of 2006, the number of ships registered in Japan dropped below 100, and Japanese aboard ships on overseas service numbered less than 3,000.

The basic plan pointed out that the nation depends heavily on marine transport, and as such, the present state of affairs is problematic, as it means it would be difficult for Japan to secure necessary ocean transportation in the case of an emergency.

The government will request shipping companies, which will benefit from the reduced tax rate the government intends to introduce, to increase the number of Japan-registered ships and Japanese crews. (*Yomiuri Shimbun*)

## USCG boss urges seafarer respect

Coast Guard Commandant Thad Allen has urged members of his service to treat commercial seafarers "with the utmost professionalism and respect."

In a communication sent to "all hands," Adm. Allen acknowledged that he has "received reports from highly respected professionals recounting Coast Guard boardings, inspections and investigations not displaying professionalism.

"Additionally, some have said they lost the complete trust they once had in the Coast Guard and are fearful of retribution if they challenge the Coast Guard."

Allen wrote, "We must change this perception," noting that licensed and documented mariners are "professionals who share our interests in a safe, secure and environmentally compliant industry."

He recalled the words of Alexander Hamilton (the first U.S. Secretary of Treasury who launched the Revenue Cutter Service) that free men are impatient of "everything that bears the least mark of domineering spirit" and said that applies "as much today as it did in 1790 and equally to international mariners and our trading partners." (*Lloyd's Register/Fairplay*)

## Japan grants aid to Melaka security

Security is one of the major concerns of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Based on the facts from the IMO, ISPS Code was implemented due in part to the terrorist attack in the United States of America on Sept. 11, 2001.

In Feb. 25, 2008, the Japanese government granted aid to the Malaysian government for the upgrading of maritime security in Melaka Strait, which is known for its piracy incidents.

Sources said that about YEN473 million was approved by the Japanese government to improve the Malaysian maritime security in Melaka Strait.

Japanese Ambassador Masahiko Horie and Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Secretary-General Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa signed and exchanged the notes for the grant aid.

"Straits of Melaka is one of the most important shipping lanes from the eco-

nomie and strategic perspectives, carrying one-third of the world's sea trade" Horie said.

Additionally he told reporters that, "Maritime security is an obvious and vital element for Japan's international security and critical in its relations with key partners, particularly the littoral states in the Straits of Melaka," after signing the notes at Wisma Putra.

Japan noted that high anticipation of international users, increased volume of maritime interchange placed considerable demands and a financial burden on the Malaysian government.

In addition, the entry of China, India and other countries emerging economies to the globalization would result in a continued growth of the maritime trade which adds additional security implementation on the Malaysian government in Melaka Strait.

According to Horie, "Japan

remains committed in providing impetus for a fundamental transformation of Malaysia's maritime security through the development and improvement of essential capabilities."

Maritime security enforcement agencies had a key role in the protection of the vital sea lane to prevent disruption to the global supply chain," he added.

Moreover, the effective responses against threats require cross-agency, cross-boundary and cross-territorial cooperation and effort.

The Japanese government together with other organizations will be continuing to support the program of the Malaysian government to ensure safe navigation on the Melaka Strait protecting the marine resources and to advance prosperity and freedom as well as controlling terrorist attack by improving their existing Malaysian Sea

**Aid, see Page 3**

### JSU, from Page 1

operation. It was confirmed that the government, labor and management organizations concerned of both countries, will cooperate closely in pursuit of solutions to this

problem, based on a common awareness that the anticipated sharp increase in merchant ships will bring about an acute shortage of seafarers.

On March 1, a ceremony for the new "JSU-IMMAJ Campus" was held at MAAP, with many people attending from

the quarters concerned, including Philippine Vice President Manuel Noli de Castro and other government officials, JSU president, Japanese shipping firms' representatives and families of students.

The confirmation that all graduates of the campus will

be assigned to the Japanese merchant fleet has made it possible to build a campus large enough to accommodate a maximum of 1,000 students – 250 at each level. The new campus is scheduled for completion at the end of this year.

# Good night's sleep: Is it possible for smokers?

By J.M. CASTILLO  
JSU ISS Trainee

## Studies show more reasons to quit puffing

Smokers are not used to a good night's sleep, scientist said. Researchers who study the brain activity of smokers while they slept found out that smokers have less deep sleep than the non-smokers. Smokers also complain that their sleep did not leave them well rested.

Nicotine from cigarettes seems to be bad dreams for sleeping smokers. Because it can act as a stimulant, that's why they hardly to fall asleep, the researchers said. And minor withdrawal of symptoms that occur as the night drags on

can further disturb a smoker's sleep, they added.

Researchers led by Dr. Naresh Punjabi of Johns Hopkins University of Medicine set out to study more about the sleep problems of smokers. "Smokers undoubtedly, have sleep-related difficulties. They have difficulty falling asleep and maintaining sleep." The question is why they have these difficulties?

"The issue was whether sleep problems could be blamed on the medical complications brought on by smoking, or whether smoking

itself was the culprit," Punjabi said.

Researchers identified a group of 40 middle-aged smokers who had none of the many medical conditions associated with smoking, and compared to equal numbers of non-smokers of the same age and physical type.

They were hooked up to electroencephalogram or EEG machine, while sleeping in their homes, which record the brain's electrical activity. Compared to non-smokers, smokers spend less time in deep sleep and more time in light sleep.

The biggest differences took place just before after falling asleep, supporting the idea that nicotine's effects are more acute in early stage of sleep, according to the study.

"In addition to that, about 23 percent of smokers reported that they had not had restful sleep, compared to 5 percent of nonsmokers. These findings were published in the journal *Chest*, published by the American College of Chest physicians. This study provides yet one more reason to stop smoking or to never start," said Dr. Alvin Thomas, president of the American College of Chest Physicians, in a statement.

## VOICES from SEAFARERS



Capt. Rajiv Saini  
Master of **M/V AZUL CIELO**

The present high wages being enjoyed by the seafarers is long overdue. Being at sea, away from the family and society, we deserve high wages.

However, as we are being provided high wages, we are also experiencing a lot of stress due to additional work and responsibilities. With so many maritime regulations being implemented, the seafarers have less time for rest and recreation. We hope maritime authorities and shipping companies realize the stress being experienced by seafarers and do something about it.



I propose that the JSU & AMOSUP consider those future members, like cadets on board the JSU AMOSUP covered vessels, to be allowed the benefits being enjoyed by the regular seafarers.

Jo Ann Bantuana  
Deck Cadet  
**M/V BALTI HIGHWAY**



Crewmembers of **M/V KEN UN** thank the JSU for the regular ship visitation by its staff.



The crew of **M/V LILAC** told the JSU that their wages should be in compliance with the present IBF agreement.

Good Day.

I thank you so much for coming to my vessel spending your precious time explaining to my crew regarding some new benefits and privileges that we are supposed to have and enjoy.

The important information that you have relayed have given us something to depend and rely on, which could possibly help us in our time of need.

As we are working onboard a PCC vessel, the crew don't have even just a few minutes to visit the Seamen's Club in Yokohama even though it's so near to us.

And we are so glad that you are the ones coming to us to relay some important information like the free training, sea-



Capt. Willy Doruelo  
**M/V ANDROMEDA SPIRIT**

mans' home that are for us to enjoy.

I'll send your message to my company regarding the fresh watermaker for lifeboats, DVD player with CDs, and the auto-

mated external defibrillators, in order for them to request to JSU; but I hope the company will provide us with the computer to have free e-mail access, which if given will surely benefit us all especially this type of vessel which normally doesn't stay at port for more than eight hours.

With free e-mail onboard, we can communicate with our families 24 hours a day. I'll expect your visit to my ship again to check these items that we are supposed to have. The crew on the other ships I met were already enjoying this free e-mail access onboard.

See you again.  
God Bless You All.  
Best Regards,  
Capt. Willy Doruelo

## JOKE CORNER

A shipping manager was given the task of hiring a captain to command a newly built vessel. After sorting through a stack of resumes he found four captains who were equally qualified...An Indian, a Korean, a Chinese and a Filipino.

He decided to call the four in and ask them only one question. Their answer would determine who would get the job. The day came and as the four sat around the conference room table the interviewer asked, "What is the fastest thing or action you know of?"

Acknowledging the Indian captain on his right, the man replied, "A THOUGHT. It just pops into your head. There's no warning that it's on the way; it's just there. A thought is the fastest thing I know of."

"That's very good!" replied the interviewer.

"And now you sir," he asked the Korean captain. "Hmm...let me see. A blink! It comes and goes and you don't know that it ever happened. A BLINK is the fastest thing I know of."

"Excellent!" said the interviewer. "The blink of an eye, that's a very popular cliché for speed."

He then turned to the Chinese captain who was contemplating his reply. "Well, at my dad's factory, you step inside and on the wall there's a light switch. When you flip that switch, across the rooms and workshops the lights come on. Yep, TURNING ON A LIGHT is the fastest thing I can think of."

The interviewer was very impressed with the third answer and thought he had found his man. "It's hard to beat the speed of light" he said. Turning to the Filipino captain, the fourth and final man, the interviewer posed the same question. The Filipino replied, "After hearing the three previous answers, it's obvious to me that the fastest thing known is Diarrhea."

"WHAT!?" said the interviewer, stunned by the response.

"Oh, I can explain sir," said the Filipino. "You see sir, the other day I wasn't feeling so good and I run so fast to the toilet, but before I could THINK, BLINK, or TURN ON THE LIGHT, shit, I already had it in my pants."

The Filipino is now in command of the new vessel.

Submitted by: Hero

### Aid, from Page 2

#### Surveillance System.

The upgrading of the program includes the installation of a Radio Direction Finder (RDF) System and Electro-Optics System (laser camera) on Malaysia's remote sensor sites, thus allowing long-range visual surveillance in the vicinity day and night.

The IMO Maritime Security as implemented through ISPS Code in relation to the government is well supported by the Japanese government, helping other nations in developing their maritime security, promoting a safer navigation to neighboring countries is a big help to the maritime industry. (*Bernama, Malaysian National News Agency*)

### NASCO, from Page 1

year before (812 Norwegian seamen and 13,051 nonresident special union members), while organized crews of Norway's international vessels consisted of 930 Norwegians and 9,954 nonresident special

union members, according to the report.

The committee also heard a report that collective agreements had been revised for a total of 11 unions, including AMOSUP, the PSU, the NUSI/MUI and the KPI. The next session will be held in Taiwan.

# Lifeboat accidents resulting from on-load release hooks

For the last 20 years, accidents during mandatory lifeboat drills have been an ongoing issue in the discussions of the safety of seafarers.

## Background

The lifeboat accidents are associated with the on-load release functions of the lifeboat hooks which are mandatory under IMO regulations for all ships built after June 1, 1986. On ships built before this date there are generally off-load hooks that cannot be released unless the lifeboat is fully supported by the water.

The number of accidents and the number of people killed or injured runs into the hundreds. However, there are no official records for the total numbers and the lack of such records may be one of the reasons why the regulators have not managed to change the situation. The end result is reduced confidence in davit launched lifeboats.

During 2007, Gard registered two accidents resulting in one death and six others being injured. Compared to other types of accidents on board ships and in relation to the 6,200 vessels entered with Gard, one may consider these figures are low.

The dilemma is, however, that the accidents with lifeboats do not occur in normal work situations on board, but during mandatory drills with the vessel's lifesaving equipment.

Due to many accidents with lifeboats, IMO regulations no longer require people to be on board the lifeboats during lowering and hoisting. The crew members can be placed into the lifeboats by other means after launch, such as lifeboat ladders or taxi-boats in port.

Accidents with on-load release hooks are found to occur due to lack of maintenance, lack of knowledge or poor design. When complying with the IMO requirements for hooks to have both off-load and on-load capability, it has proved difficult to design sufficient barriers against the effects of poor maintenance and human error.

## General advice

Due to the increased attention to the problem of on-load release hooks, we have received many questions from members about what to do. While Gard cannot recommend one manufacturer over another, we will in the following attempt provide some general advice.

1) It is very important to know the type of hook release system which is installed on your lifeboats. While it would be natural in a shore based industry to have such an important item standardized, the Gard Conference last autumn revealed that there were 72 different systems in use, and the number is still growing.

2) Ensure you have clear and cor-

rect manuals and instructions about how to handle the hook release system on board and that such material is made available to the crew. Ensure that anyone who operates the lifeboat release gear has been trained on that particular system.

3) Do not allow anyone not trained in the operation of your vessel's particular hook system to operate it. If your crew is not trained in the operation of the system, send them for specific training or ask a specialist in that particular system to conduct training on board. Up till now, most seamen have only received mandatory shore-based training in the launching of lifeboats during their education and very rarely any training on the exact type of release gear found on board.

4) Give priority to the maintenance of lifeboats. Use strong hanging off pendants to secure the boat to the davit arm before any work is done on the hook release system. For instance, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) now requires such restraints to be present before their surveyors can enter a lifeboat. For the maintenance of hook release systems, engage service people from or approved by the manufacturer.

5) Do not have any people on board the lifeboat during lowering and hoisting, unless you know your hook release system is well main-

tained and that the crew on board both understands the mechanisms of the system and the risks represented by human error. The IMO regulations require the hook system to be capable of releasing the boat with the total load of boat, equipment and a full crew. However, if the boat is released before reaching sea level, people on board may be seriously injured or even killed.

6) Free-fall lifeboats should be considered for newbuildings. If davit launched lifeboats are selected, review the hook release systems available in the market and insist on the safest system available.

## Summary

A lot has been learned from 20 years of accidents, and there are today on-load release hooks in the market which are far safer than the first generation of hooks. We suggest that the old hook systems are replaced with new improved designs.

Since lifeboats with modern on-load release hook systems are still capable of being accidentally released before they are lowered on the water, Gard strongly recommends that all owners and shipmanagers address this issue within their respective companies and ensure that adequate training is provided to the crew on the specific hook systems within their fleet. (Source: Gard)

## Events & Advisories

The U.S. Coast Guard issued a notice stating that, effective March 20, it will impose conditions of entry on vessels arriving in the United States from Syria.

With the exception of vessels arriving from certain named ports, any vessel arriving in the United States that called in Syria during its previous five port calls must demonstrate the following:

- (1) that it implemented measures in accordance with the ship's security plan equivalent to Security Level 2;
- (2) that each access point to the vessel was guarded and that the guards had total visibility of the exterior to the ship while in the Syrian port;
- (3) that it attempted to execute a Declaration of Security;
- (4) that it logged all security actions in the ship's log;
- (5) that it reported such actions to the USCG Captain of the Port (COTP) prior to arrival in the United States; and
- (6) that each access point to the vessel is guarded and that the guards have total visibility of the exterior to the ship during U.S. port calls.

Similar conditions of entry have been imposed on ships arriving in the United States from:

- Cameroon
- Equatorial Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Indonesia
- Liberia
- Mauritania

# Management level course upgraded

The resolution states that effective Feb. 1, 2008, all OIC of Navigational Watch applying for STCW Certificates for management level must have completed and duly certified of at least any one of the function of the prescribed MLC

course for Marine Deck Officers.

OIC of an Engineering Watch applying for the upgrading of his certificates of Registration/Professional License from E4 to E3, in addition to the 12 months

seagoing service must have completed and duly certificates in Function 1 and 4 of the MLC for Marine Engineer Officer.

Effective July 1, 2008, all OIC of Navigational Watch and Engineering Watch ap-

plying for Management Level STCW certificates must have completed and duly certificated in Functions 1, 2 and 3 of the MLC course for Deck Officers and Functions 1, 2, 3 and 4 for Engineer Officer respectively. (Source: Harbor Scope)

# OWWA places emphasis on training Filipino seafarers

To catch up with the growing global demand for marine officers, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration has set aside PHP50 million (US\$1.2 million) for skills training and upgrading of Filipino seafarers.

Mechanics of the program is still being ironed out, including partner agencies for its implementation, according to OWWA administrator Marianito Roque, who had been concurrently designated as acting secretary of labor.

"We want to give assurance to our global employers that we have competent officers and that we are addressing this shortage of officers," Roque told reporters at the sidelines of the signing of the memorandum of agreement with industry leaders and the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE)-Establishing a Maritime Industry Arbitration System.

Based on a recent study, the shipping industry has a shortage of 10,000 marine and deck officers.

Roque said the government wants to keep the country's

nan sa program na ito ay iyang the next five years. Gusto nating ipakita na ngayon ang focus naman natin ay ang ating seafarers," Roque said.

The program is aiming to attract seafarers across the country to upgrade their skills for better employment prospects.

status in the global maritime industry as top supplier of competent seafarers and officers because of threats from other countries supplying seamen, such as China, Vietnam and Cambodia.

The program is aiming to attract graduating high school students, graduates of other engineering courses and seafarers across the country to upgrade their skills for better employment prospects.

"We are assessing the situation kaya ang ating tininiting-

A "study now, pay later" plan is being considered for the program, according to OWWA deputy administrator Noriel Devanadera.

An interested student may initially avail of up to PHP-30,000 loan under the program to finance his studies.

"We have no full details yet but we are planning to tie up with shipping companies so that our students will be employed immediately upon completion of the program so we could be able to recover our investment," Devanadera

explained.

The PHP50 million allotment comes in the heels of allegations of mishandling the OWWA trust fund that has been estimated at \$10 billion, generated from the \$25 contributions of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) for every two-year contract.

A committee of the House of Representatives is conducting an audit of the OWWA funds. (Source: GMA News)

**ALL JAPAN SEAMEN'S UNION**  
15-26, Roppongi 7-Chome,  
Minato-Ku, Tokyo 106-0032

**Tel.:** (03) 5410-8320  
**Fax:** (03) 5410-8336  
**E-mail:** iss@jsu.jp  
**Internet:** <http://www.jsu.or.jp>

**Publisher: Takashi Miyake**

Send inquiries to the attention of Mr. Masanobu Makizoe, Director, Foreign Trades Dept.