



Sagar Sandesh

Guiding Spirit to Shipping Industry

Maritime Tabloid English Bi - Weekly E - Paper

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Competency Courses From MASSA



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SCI - Top employer of women



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EPCES is also happy to note....



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The ITF Seafarers Trust Invites You....

Maritime Education: Challenges and Course Corrections during the Pandemic By Dr. Malini Shankar, IAS (Retd.)- Vice Chancellor, Indian Maritime University; Ex Chairperson, NSB, EX DG



Dr. Malini Shankar, IAS (Retd.) - Vice Chancellor, Indian Maritime University; Ex Chairperson, NSB, EX DG

(Continued from last publication on 31st August, 2020)

The Post Sea positives

The post-sea courses, when they kick started again, had lesser number of issues. The students apparently were quite receptive of the online mode of dissemination. The students, having seen ships, were able to comprehend and have the doubts cleared swiftly. Self-study discipline, preference to

spending more time at home etc., could be the reasons for post-sea cohorts preferring the online mode. Significantly, the Faculty also were less stressful for post-sea deliveries. The downside was with the online simulator training where difficulties were encountered in monitoring terminals effectively.

Welfare

From hostel shut down till the students reached home, monitoring was done by all available means. Frequent

enquiries on health were made not only with the students but also with many parents. Over the period, the Faculty interacted with the students on tips of doing Yoga and checks on students' rooms and belongings were done and students were advised. Document deliveries were made good by courier where and when it became possible.

It needs a good mention that during the lockdown, placement exercises continued. IMU Campuses conducted mock interviews, webinars on

placements and facilitated the Shipping Companies to conduct online tests and selections.

Updates on the virus were shared during the online contact periods as well as on the website. Students were urged to download and use AarogyaSetu app. Webinars on maritime topics (e.g., Shipyard practices; Shipping Logistics etc.) were organised or routed to the students and the Faculty. Fee payment deferments were done by few MTIs.

Way forward from what we learnt so far

1. More expressive and demonstrative learning modules can be developed using virtual reality, augmented reality etc. These may complement the practical training but cannot replace it.

2. A stronger and wider network system needs to be developed.

3. More Virtual laboratories for performing experiments, virtual workshops for basic skills (e.g., welding simulator) and virtual ships and equipment for walk through and work can be developed.

4. Creative Assessment modules can be developed to assess cognitive and psychomotor domains.

5. Rubrics for assessing practical abilities can be drawn based on demonstrative actions.

6. Learning management Systems (LMS) architecture facilitating content development, uploading, assessments, two-way communication ease, administrative functions (track

attendance, marks etc.), hosting question banks etc. are needed. We are already sighting many LMSs (time tested and tailored to maritime training) and will see more in times to follow.

7. A Crisis Management Plan can be developed, which can be put on rail when such situations occur.

In no way can these efforts become a 'silver bullet' resolution package, especially considering the hands-on training which require physical engagements of both the trainer and the student. In fact, many issues such as examinations, new entry processes etc., remain to be resolved to a good finish. But these efforts have given the impetus and confidence as we forge ahead.

For MTIs, given the unique requirement for a ship berth (for training), placing the student who has completed the training on board, will be the biggest challenge. While we surmount the challenges, maritime training fraternity might well become a paradigm for the tenacity of the human spirit that may prevail.

On the note of continued efforts and action, Jonathan Winters, the comedian said, 'If the ship does not come in, swim out to it.' Well, we are all doing just that and reach the ship, we will. Lastly but importantly my gratitude to Dr Rajoo Balaji-Director IMU Chennai Campus in providing the input for this article.