

# OUR MERCHANT NAVY



सत्यमेव जयते

**THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION**  
**Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**  
**Government of India**

## CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>				<i>Page</i>
I	INTRODUCTORY	..	..	3
II	SINCE INDEPENDENCE	..	..	5
III	AUTHORITY OF THE STATE	..	..	10
IV	SAFETY AND SEAWORTHINESS OF MERCHANT SHIPS		..	13
V	TRAINING OF PERSONNEL	..	..	15
VI	RECRUITMENT OF SEAMEN	..	..	18
VII	SEAMEN'S WELFARE	..	..	19
VIII	CONCLUSION	..	..	21

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

India has a glorious maritime history and a distinguished record as a sea-faring nation. Long before the rise of European maritime powers, Indian ships and vessels were sailing the high seas and carrying on trade with China, Egypt, Europe, Malaya, Sumatra and other countries. The art of shipbuilding was highly developed in ancient and Medieval India. Yukti-Kalpataru, written in the 11th century A.D., gives an account of the construction of 27 different ships in the country. The largest of them measured 276 ft. long, 36 ft. wide and 27 ft. deep. In modern terms, this will mean a vessel of nearly 2,300 tons deadweight. In the thirteenth century, Marco Polo saw Indian ships carrying ten small boats, slung on the sides with falls and tackle. The boats could be lowered into the water or hauled up over the sides. These vessels had 60 cabins below the main deck, mostly four-masters, and contained as many as 14 watertight compartments, separated by stout bulkheads. These achievements indicate the high degree of technical knowledge and workmanship that India had attained in the field of shipbuilding in the pre-British period.

With the advent of British rule, the appearance of steamships and the use of steel, in place of timber, in the manufacture of vessels, the shipbuilding industry in India received a serious setback. Restrictive navigation laws of the British, too, strangled the native industry and until World War I all attempts to revive it were discouraged. Consequently, Indian ships disappeared from the high seas;

only a few crafts plied along the coast and occasionally made a trip to the neighbouring countries.

During World War I, however, the British Government was compelled to change its policy towards Indian shipping. The naval warfare and other maritime exigencies made the Government realise the extreme urgency of maintaining a fleet of ships for uninterrupted commerce between the United Kingdom and India and the naval defence of the Indian Empire. Under the stimulus of the war, a large number of steamship companies were established but within a decade most of them were wiped out as a consequence of the freight war carried on by the British shipping interests or of the inadequate financial backing of the small companies or of the corrupt practices of the promoters of such companies. Despite these odds the Scindia Steamship Company, which was founded in 1919, survived and made steady progress. Thus, in a sense, the earlier history of modern shipping in India is the history of the Scindias.

Meanwhile, the agitation for Indian shipping services gained strength and, in 1928, the Central Legislature accepted the principle of reservation of coastal trade for Indian shipping. But the policy was not implemented in practice. On the eve of World War II, there were thus only 53 Indian ships with a gross tonnage of 126,079.

In the earlier stages of the war, the Allied ships suffered serious losses. This resulted in a dearth of shipping especially in the Indian Ocean area. It was then realised that an adequate merchant navy in India was essential from the strategic point of view. Accordingly, a Shipping Policy Committee was appointed in 1945 to consider plans for the development of the Indian mercantile marine. The Committee recommended the reservation of coastal trade for Indian ships, their increased participation in foreign trades and the expansion of tonnage to two million, within the next seven years.

At the end of World War II, the total Indian tonnage was about 100,000, a distressingly small figure for a country with 3,500 miles of coastal line, carrying on her entire foreign trade by sea. The bulk of the tonnage was owned

by the Scindia group and the balance by a few small companies employed on the west coast. The operations by the Scindias were confined to India, Burma and Ceylon; but even to get a foothold in the trade to these countries it had to struggle hard and face cut-throat competition from foreign interests. There was no national policy regarding shipping and the Government was not helpful to the Indian shipping companies.

## CHAPTER II

### SINCE INDEPENDENCE

After independence, the National Government undertook the rapid development of Indian shipping as a matter of policy. It accepted in principle the recommendations of the Shipping Policy Committee to secure for Indian shipping 100 per cent of the coastal trade, 75 per cent of the trade with adjacent countries and a reasonable share in the other overseas trades. The term Indian shipping was defined as that owned, controlled and managed by Indian nationals. The conditions for these companies were that (a) their steamers should be registered at a port or ports in India; (b) at least 75 per cent of the shares or debentures of the company should be held by Indians in their own rights; (c) all the directors should be Indians. The enunciation of this policy and the general tempo of post-war reconstruction activities resulted in the establishment of several new shipping companies including the India Steamship Company, the Bharat Line and the Great Eastern Shipping. At the same time, there was a spurt in the activities of the older companies. The Scindia Steamship Company, for instance, acquired several new vessels and started participating in the United Kingdom and North American trades. The Bombay Steam and Malabar also acquired additional tonnage for coastal trade.

## *Coastal Trade*

In 1948, the Government took steps to implement the policy of progressive coastal reservation. The Control of Shipping Act, 1947, was amended suitably to provide for a system of licensing ships engaged in coastal trade. It was by using power under this Act that the Government was able to implement its policy during 1950-52. Since 1952 the coastal trade has been completely reserved for Indian companies.

## *Participation In Overseas Trade*

Although the Scindias and the India Steamship Company had already entered the overseas trade, they could not make much headway. To create confidence and provide essential capital resources, the Government decided to participate in the industry. Accordingly, a scheme for the setting up of three corporations, each with an authorised capital of Rs 10 crore, was announced. Under this scheme, only 26 per cent of the capital is contributed by the participating company and the balance is paid by the State. The management is vested in the company.

Owing to various reasons only the Eastern Shipping Corporation could be set up in 1950. This company is managed by the Scindias and operates the Australia and Far-East cargo trades, and the Madras-Singapore and the Bombay-East Africa passenger trades.

In 1950-51, India's shipping aggregate was 3,90,707 G.R.T. To achieve further increase in the tonnage, the Government decided to give financial assistance to the shipping companies for replacements and fresh additions. Under this scheme, which was introduced in 1951, loans, amounting to two-third or more of the capital cost of the ships and repayable in six to twelve years were granted to the companies.

## *Five Year Plan*

In regard to shipping the first Five Year Plan had two objectives; (1) the implementation of the policy of coastal reservation and (2) securing increased participation of Indian

shipping in overseas trade. For this purpose, the Plan allocated a sum of Rs 19.5 crore by way of loans to shipping companies and investment in the Eastern Shipping Corporation. This amount was later increased to Rs 26.3 crore.

The target under the first Plan was to add 2,15,000 G.R.T. after allowing for an obsolescence of 60,000 G.R.T. The composition of the tonnage as envisaged in the Plan was as follows :

	<i>Before the first Plan</i>	<i>At the end of the first Plan</i>
Coastal and adjacent	2,17,202	3,12,202
Overseas	1,73,505	2,85,505
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,90,707</b>	<b>6,00,707</b>

With the implementation of the first Plan the tonnage gradually increased. At the end of the first Five Year Plan, the Indian Mercantile Navy consisted of 126 vessels consisting of 9 passenger, 6 passenger-cum-cargo and 111 cargo ships. Of these, 90 were employed in the coastal and 36 in the overseas trade. The total tonnage was 4,79,799 which was distributed among the following companies :

	<i>No. of Vessels</i>	<i>G.R.T.</i>
Scindia Steam Navigation Company Limited	40	2,02,592
India Steamships Limited	11	75,372
Bharat Line Limited	14	64,516
Eastern Shipping Corporation	6	42,293
Great Eastern Shipping Company	7	31,386
Malabar Group	7	21,492
Indian National Steamship Company	3	11,536
Merchant Steam Group	6	7,966
Bombay Steam	6	4,754
Other small shipping companies	26	17,892
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>4,79,799</b>

Taking into account ships of a total GRT of 120,000 under construction in India and abroad for Indian Shipping Companies, the target of the first Five Year Plan may be considered to have been more or less achieved, although a part of the new tonnage may actually be delivered after April 1956. Of the total amount provided in the first Plan, about Rs 18 crore have already been spent and commitments undertaken in respect of the balance.

In addition to these seagoing ships, many harbour crafts such as tugs, pilot vessels, survey vessels, dredgers, hoppers ferry boats and launches belonged to and were operated by the various port authorities in India. Many of these were manned by the Merchant Navy personnel, and several of these in charge of these crafts and their machinery held Certificates of Competency. Furthermore, there was a large fleet of sailing vessels which carried foodstuffs, oil and building material to places inaccessible by other means. These vessels, which could be seen around India's coasts except during foul weather, numbered approximately 2,000.

### *Visakhapatnam Shipyard*

Situated on the east coast of India, the shipyard at Visakhapatnam was founded by the Scindia Steam Navigation Company in 1941. The actual work of shipbuilding started in 1946 and the first ship *Jala Usha* of 8,000 tons deadweight was launched on March 14, 1948. In view of the national importance of the industry and the fact that the Scindias were unable to find adequate finances for its development, the Government decided to acquire a controlling interest in the shipyard. Accordingly, a new company, designated the Hindustan Shipyard, was floated. Two-thirds of its shares were held by the Government of India and the Company took over its management on March 1, 1952. During 1955-56, the Government acquired additional shares valued at Rs. 30 lakh.

It was decided under the first Five Year Plan to increase its capacity to 50,000 tons at a total cost of Rs. 196 lakh

during the Plan period. The scheme has made satisfactory progress and is expected to be completed by 1956.

The shipyard has four large berths and can build four ships a year. A reputed French firm of shipbuilders is in charge of technical direction on a five year contract. Apart from the experts, however, the yard is manned entirely by Indians.

Formerly, only some standard 8,000 tonners used to be built but the shipyard has been expanded and modernised. It has so far constructed 16 seagoing ships of various types and sizes and is fully booked for the next two or three years. The first model diesel-engined ship *Jala Vihar* steamed out on August 16, 1954, while one *Excise Launch*, and two more diesel ships, *Jala Vijaya* and *Jala Vishnu* were launched on August 18, 1954, March 26, 1955, and November 2, 1955, respectively.

Certain technical difficulties in the manufacture of modern vessels have arisen meanwhile and the shortage of steel has proved a handicap. The cost of construction has also been high because the undertaking is new and labour comparatively inexperienced. To ensure that the Indian shipowners will not have to pay non-competitive prices, the Government of India has decided to sell the ships built at Visakhapatnam at a price approximately equal to the cost of building similar ships in the United Kingdom, the difference being borne by the Government in the form of subsidy.

### *Major Ports*

With the loss of Karachi after the partition of the country in 1947, India's sea-borne trade was carried mainly through five major ports, namely, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Cochin, and Visakhapatnam. The annual capacity of these ports was about 20 million tons, which was quite inadequate for the country's requirements. Moreover, most of the equipment of these ports was antiquated and had to be replaced.

The main tasks in the first Five Year Plan were therefore (1) to stabilise the existing capacity of the ports through

the rehabilitation of worn out assets and the modernisation of equipment in the existing ports; (2) to establish a major port at Kandla on the west coast as an outlet for traffic previously served by Karachi, and (3) to provide port facilities for the petroleum refineries. To this end, a sum of Rs. 38.55 crore was provided in the first Plan. Of the total expenditure Rs. 27 crore incurred during the first Plan period, only Rs. 3 crore has been obtained from the resources of ports and the balance provided by the Government.

The various development programmes in the major ports include the provision of additional berths, the deepening of existing berths, the improvement of cragetug and light arrangement and additional mechanical loading and discharging equipment.

#### *Minor Ports*

India has numerous minor ports which are vital to her coastal trade. To co-ordinate its port policy, the Government set up the National Harbour Board in 1950 at whose instance a survey of these ports was made by Shri Nanjundiah. A number of recommendations were made in his report and these were accepted and implemented by the Government.

The first Plan made a provision of Rs. 225 lakh for their improvement, of which the Central Government's contribution was Rs. 100 lakh by way of loans to the State Governments concerned.

## CHAPTER III

### **AUTHORITY OF THE STATE**

Under the Constitution, merchant shipping is a Central subject and the Union Parliament has the sole authority to legislate on the subject. Most of the existing merchant shipping laws were enacted during the British period and were modified from time to time. As the United Kingdom

is the most advanced country in regard to merchant shipping, the provisions of these laws were patterned on those of Britain. Even in such matters as the registration of ships, India has followed the U.K. Merchant Shipping Acts. The revision and the consolidation of various Indian merchant shipping laws have, however, been undertaken and a consolidated bill will be introduced in Parliament in due course.

The existing merchant shipping laws are contained in (1) the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, as amended from time to time; (2) the Control of Shipping Act, 1947; and (3) the Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925. In addition to these laws there are numerous statutory rules and regulations promulgated under these laws. The more important among these are :

1. I.M.S. (Construction and survey of Passenger Steamers) Rules, 1934;
2. I.M.S. (Control of Watertight Compartments) (Rules, 1934;
3. I.M.S. (Life-saving Appliances) Rules, 1934;
4. I.M.S. (Wireless Messages and Navigational Warnings) Rules, 1934;
5. I.M.S. Load-line Rules, 1934;
6. I.M.S. (Wireless Telegraphy) Rules, 1934; and
7. Simla Rules, 1931.

According to the I.M.S. Act, the Government is authorised to enforce rules and standards relating to the safety of ships, personnel on Board, periodical surveys, enquiry into accidents, etc. The Control of Shipping Act empowers the Government to regulate the employment of ships by issuing licences. Under this Act, Indian-owned vessels are usually issued unrestricted general licences for coastal and overseas trades and foreign vessels, chartered by the Indian Companies for coastal service, are granted licences for a specified period. Sometimes, specified voyage licences are also issued to foreign vessels for the carriage of overseas transshipment cargo.

Formerly, merchant shipping and its laws were the responsibility of the Ministry of Commerce; but in 1950 the subject was transferred to the Ministry of Transport, for it

was realised that all transport subjects should be centralised and co-ordinated. Even earlier the need was constantly felt for a single executive organisation to deal with all shipping matters. Accordingly, the Directorate-General of Shipping, with Headquarters at Bombay, was established on September 1, 1949.

The Ministry of Transport deals with matters of policy, higher administration and legislation, while the actual administration of maritime institutions and merchant shipping acts and rules is the concern of the Director General of Shipping. The latter has been given statutory recognition by the amendment of the I.M.S. Act which provides that any act which is required to be performed by the Union Government may be delegated to the Director General. A large number of functions and activities have consequently been transferred to the Directorate General of Shipping.

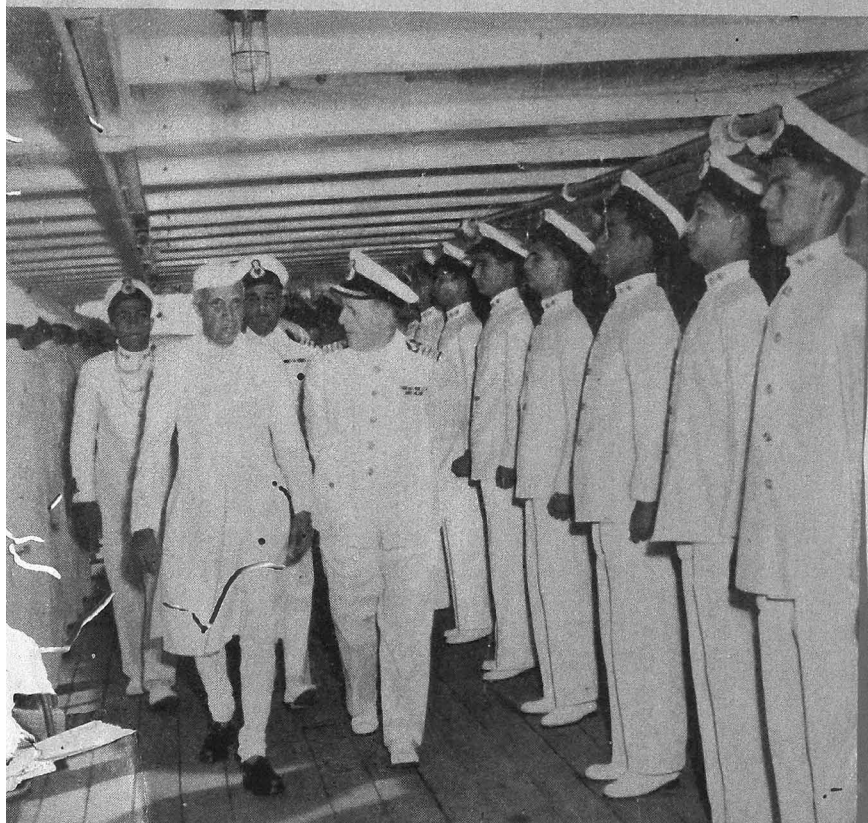
#### *The Director General*

On the technical side, the Director General is advised by the Nautical Adviser, who is also the Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates and by a Chief Surveyor who is concurrently the Chief Examiner of Engineers. In respect of administration, the Director General is assisted by two Deputy Generals and several other officials. All other departments appointed by or under the Act, namely, the Mercantile Marine Department and Shipping and Employment Offices, function under the Director General of Shipping. The training institutions and training ships are also under his supervision.

#### *Consultative Machinery*

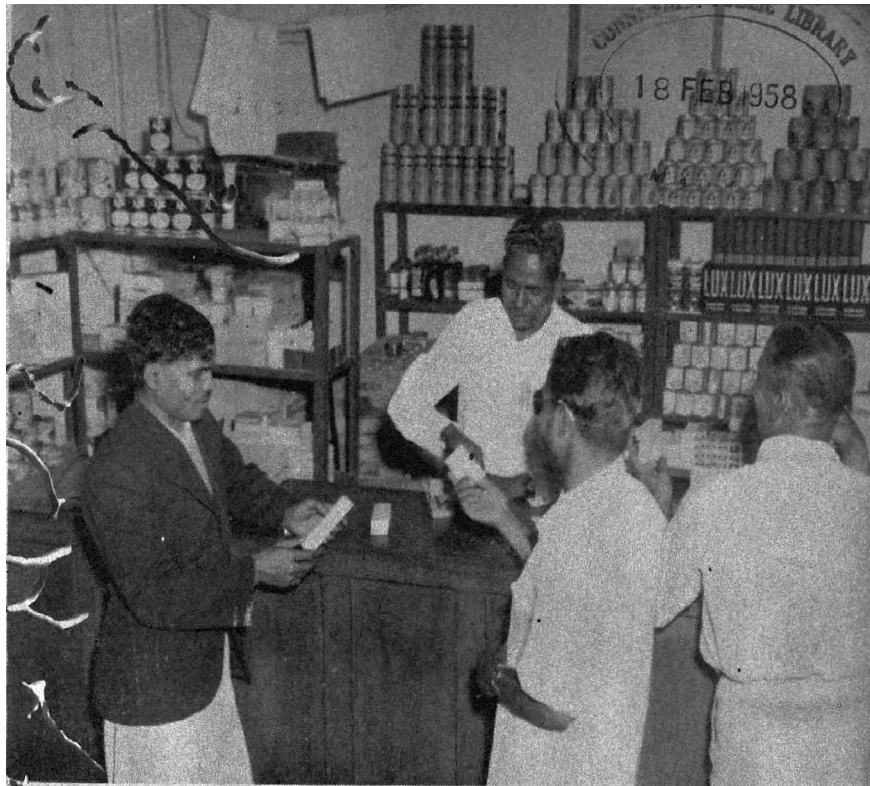
To bring about a closer relationship between the Government and the shipping industry, a consultative committee of Indian shipowners has been set up with the Union Minister of Transport as Chairman. This Committee reviews the various problems from time to time and keeps a liaison between the Government and the shipping companies. A Rail-Sea Co-ordination Committee has also been appointed to consider matters to secure co-ordinated movement of all

The Prime Minister inspecting the cadets

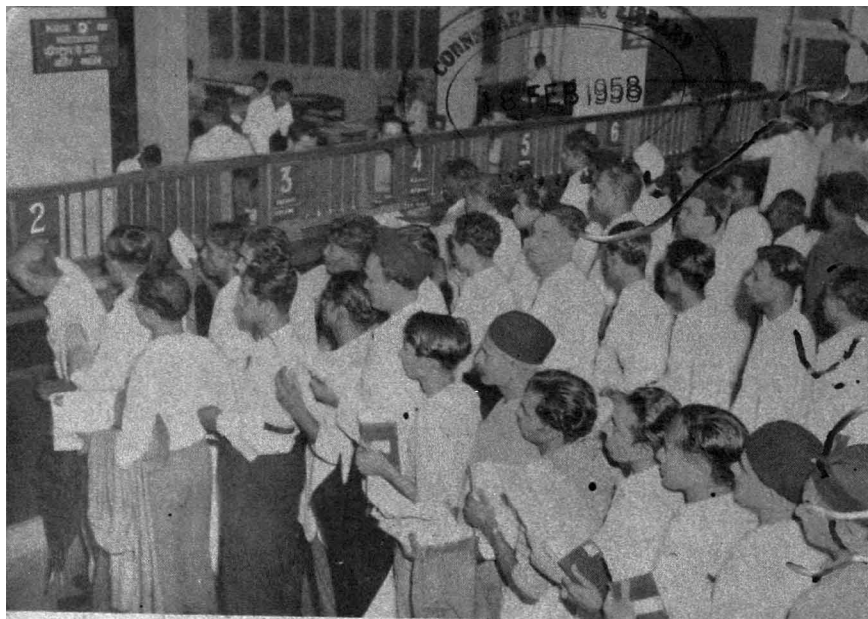




Captain Curt Carlson, Captain of the Flying Enterprise II inspecting some of the models at the Nautical and Engineering College during his visit to the institution in May 1953



A view of the canteen at the hostel



Muster for the selection of seamen—Engine room serangs standing in order of their dates of last discharge

A corner of the recreational hall



inter-port cargoes by rail and sea routes. A consultative committee of overseas shipping interests has also been constituted to enable the Government to discuss with overseas shipping companies questions such as high freight rates, lack of shipping space, etc. arising in overseas trades.

### *Passenger Welfare*

In 1954, Deck Passenger Welfare Committees, consisting of officials and non-officials, were constituted at the ports of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta to look after the comforts and welfare of the travelling public. The rules regarding the provision of bunks on the unberthed passengers ships were issued in September 1954 and the Unberthed Passenger Ships Rules, which provide for improved sanitary, medical and ventilation arrangements, came into force on November 2, 1954.

## CHAPTER IV

### **SAFETY AND SEAWORTHINESS OF MERCHANT SHIPS**

The Merchant Shipping Act lays down detailed provisions which every ship has to comply with. In the first place, a ship has to be registered in accordance with the requirements of law and must be in possession of a Certificate of Registry. Secondly, it is subject to periodic surveys by qualified and trained surveyors so that its hull, machinery and other equipment, are of the requisite standard. A ship carrying over 12 passengers is subject to annual surveys. It is required to be dry-docked and can proceed to sea only if it is able to obtain a Certificate of Survey. There are additional provisions for steamships carrying over 60 unberthed passengers. Finally, a passenger vessel must possess a Safety Certificate.

A cargo ship, on the other hand, has to keep a Load-line Certificate issued either by a classification society such as

the Lloyds Register of Shipping or by the Government of India. This certificate is issued for a period not exceeding five years at a time. The vessel is subject to annual inspection and the Load-line Certificate is endorsed each year if the condition is satisfactory. A cargo ship also requires a Safety Radio Telegraphy Certificate, which is granted by the Mercantile Marine Department after the radio equipment of the vessel has been inspected by a Radio Inspector. A third certificate now provided for relates to safety equipment and is valid for two years. If a vessel goes to sea without any of these certificates the Master of the Ship renders himself liable to penal action.

Since India is a signatory to almost every international maritime convention of importance, the rules are strictly enforced and an effort is made to ensure that the standard of safety and equipment and efficiency of the Indian vessels are on a par with those prevailing elsewhere.

#### *Mercantile Marine Department*

The responsibility for the execution of the merchant shipping acts and rules is entrusted to the Mercantile Marine Departments, which are located in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras and are headed by Principal Officers. All works relating to the safety of ships, the examination of candidates for Certificates of Competency, the registration of ships and the like are performed by these Departments.

For purposes of administration, the Indian coastline is divided into three districts, each district being controlled by the respective Principal Officers. The Bombay Mercantile Marine District consists of the former State of Bombay and Kutch and extends from West Pakistan borders to Bhatkal on the west coast. The Madras District covers the coastline from Bhatkal to Visakhapatnam and the Calcutta District stretches up to the East Pakistan borders.

The I.M.S. Act lays down a standard of manning to secure the safety of ships, passengers, cargo and crew. According to the standards adopted in practice only qualified and experienced executive and engineering officers and other personnel can proceed on a sea voyage. For instance,

In a ship at least three of the executive officers must hold a Certificate of Competency and two engineering officers and a radio operator must be properly certificated. The other personnel also, except for a very small number of the junior members, is required to possess an experience at sea for periods varying from one to four years.

The Certificates of Competency are issued by the Ministry of Transport and the examinations for foreign-going certificates are conducted each month by the Mercantile Marine Department in Bombay and Calcutta for the following grades :

**A Navigation**

- (1) Certificate of Competency as Second Mate;
- (2) Certificate of Competency as First Mate; and
- (3) Certificate of Competency as Master

**B Engineering**

- (1) Certificate of Competency as Second Class Engineers; and
- (2) Certificate of Competency as First Class Engineers.

Similar examinations are held for Home Trade Certificates. Only those persons who have either the requisite training and sea experience or have passed the lower tests are admitted to these examinations. The standards of these examinations are high and the certificates issued in India are valid throughout the Commonwealth.

## CHAPTER V

### TRAINING OF PERSONNEL

An adequate and well trained seagoing personnel is essential for the development of the maritime economy and sea power of India. After independence the National Government therefore assumed full responsibility for the training of Merchant Navy personnel. It set up several institutions which are equipped with up-to-date machines, models

and instruments. The training is carefully supervised to maintain the highest standards.

Till 1949, the Trainingship *Dufferin* provided training for both navigation and engineering cadets. On the basis of the recommendations of the Merchant Navy Training Committee, the system of pre-sea training was reorganised in 1949 and the *T. S. Dufferin* was reserved only for the training of navigation cadets. A new scheme for the training of engineering cadets was introduced and, in 1949, the Nautical and Engineering College was set up for post-sea instruction at Bombay. Adequate arrangements were also made for the training of Merchant Navy ratings. The recurring annual expenditure on the various trainingships in India is about Rs. 20 lakh.

### *The Dufferin*

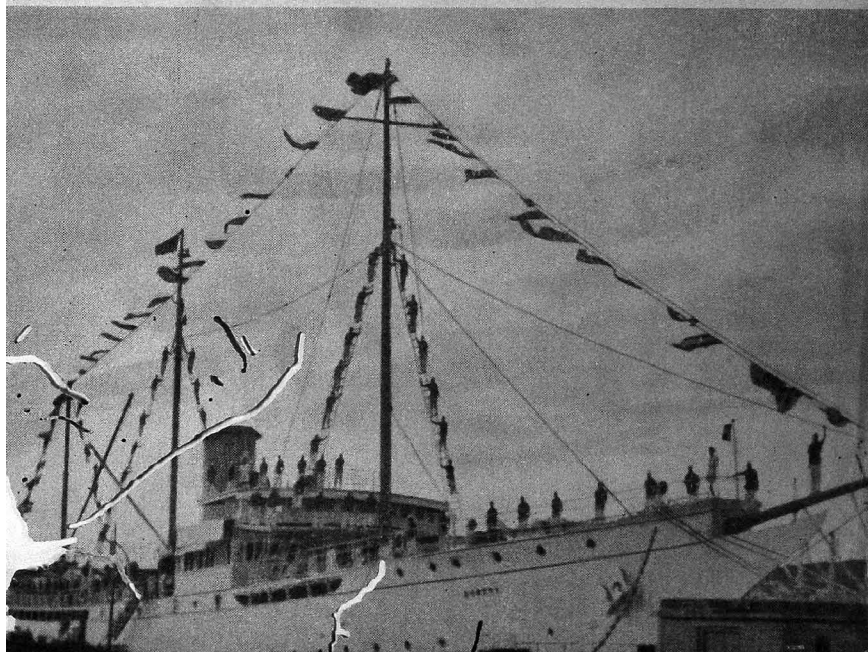
At present, boys between the ages of 15½ and 18 and possessing the matriculation qualification are selected for admission to the *Dufferin* on the basis of an all-India qualifying examination and subsequent interviews by the Governing Body. The training lasts for a period of two years and the number of boys trained each year is 50.

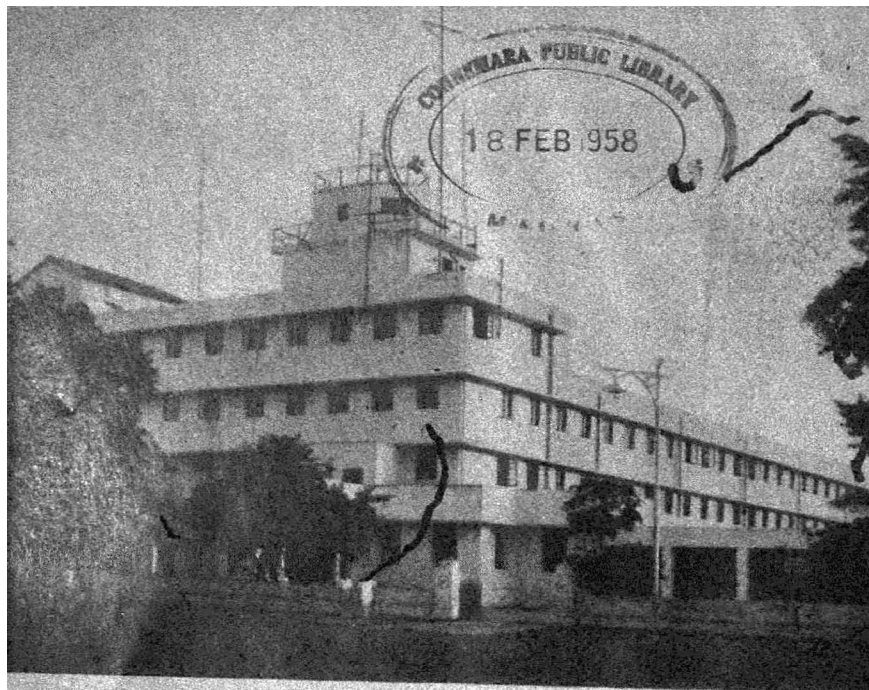
### *Marine Engineering College, Calcutta*

On the engineering side, cadets between the ages of 16½ and 19 years are selected by specially constituted selection boards at Bombay and Calcutta for a 4-year training course under the Directorate of Marine Engineering Training.

The trainees spend the first three years as apprentices in selected marine engineering workshops. During this period, workshop training is supervised and the trainees are given theoretical instructions at special evening classes. After the completion of this course, the cadets are admitted to the Marine Engineering College in Calcutta which provides a professional marine engineering training for a period of one year. Here they receive an intensive course of instruction in marine engineering subjects supplemented by practical instructions in the college laboratories and work-

BHADRA—Training ship for seamen

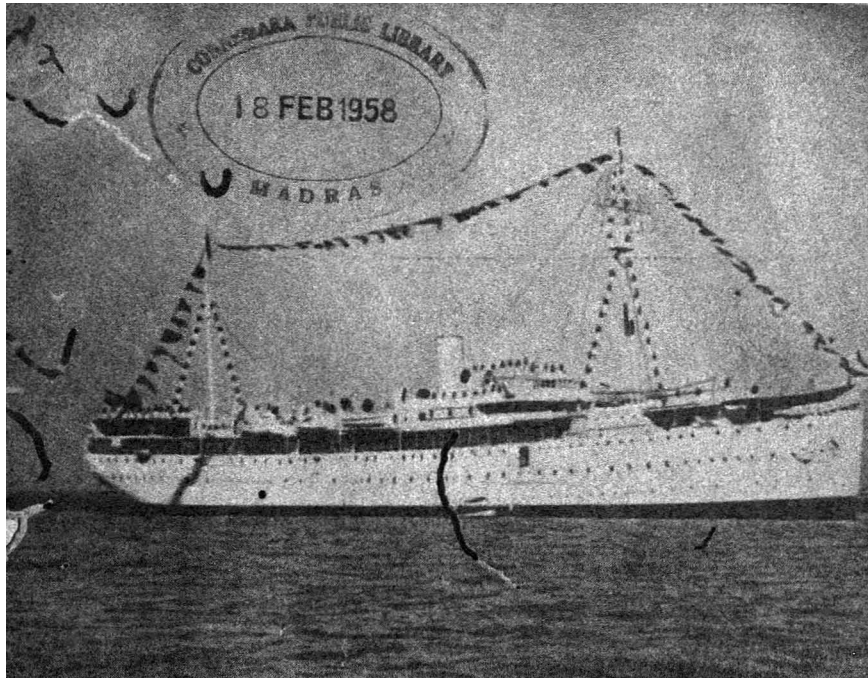




**The Marine Engineering College, Calcutta**

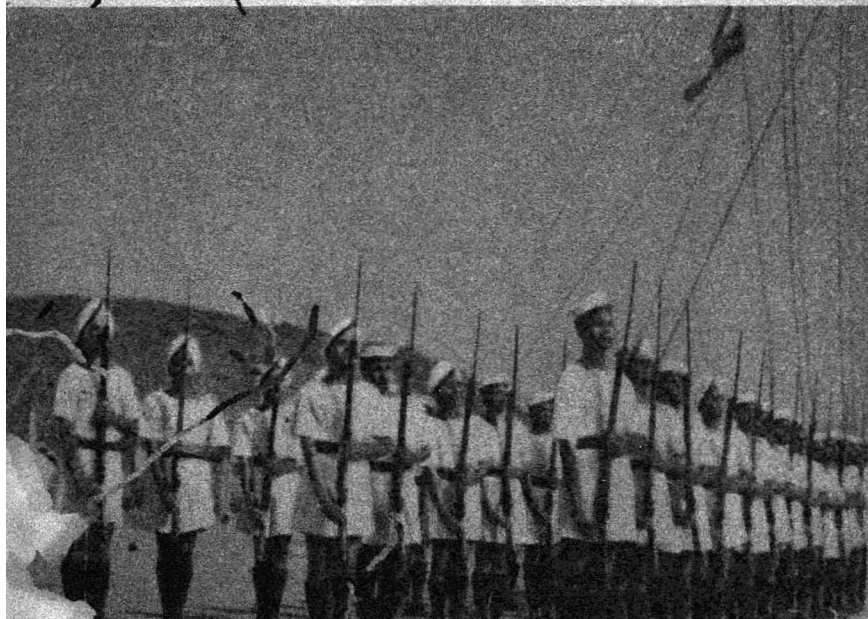
**Office of the Mercantile Marine**





Training Ship DUFFERIN

Naval trainees at gun drill



Engineer cadets overhauling machinery in the fitting shop



shops. The syllabus is planned to bring the cadets' standard up to the level of First Class M.O.T. Certificate of Competency. The Marine Engineering College, which trains 50 boys each year, is claimed to be one of the finest marine colleges in the Commonwealth.

### *Nautical And Engineering College, Bombay*

The Nautical and Engineering College provides facilities for post-sea instructions in navigation and engineering to candidates preparing for the Ministry of Transport Examinations for Certificates of Competency. Under the aegis of this College, the radar observer course has also been instituted and special signal classes are conducted for the benefit of the cadets serving their sea time on board ships. A special compass course is proposed to be started shortly.

This institution is the only one of its kind in the whole of South East Asia where admission is open to all nationals. Consequently, several nationals from the United Kingdom, Burma, China, Ceylon and Pakistan have received their training at this college.

### *Training Of Ratings*

The *T. S. Bhadra* at Calcutta and the *T. S. Mekhla* at Visakhapatnam give pre-sea training to ratings. Boys between the ages of 18 and 22 years and possessing a knowledge of Hindi or English are selected from all over the country. The period of training is three months and the boys are trained both for service in the Deck and Engine-Room Departments. The monthly output is 50 for the *Bhadra* and 40 for the *Mekhla*. It has now been decided to set up a third training establishment at Navlakhi in Saurashtra. This establishment will train 50 boys every month.

The object of these trainingships is to prepare young men for life at sea, to give them instruction in the basic principles of seamanship, and to familiarise them with the conditions prevailing in merchant ships.

**RECRUITMENT OF SEAMEN**

Indian seamen who come from various parts of the country have built up a fine tradition of efficiency, hard work and devotion to duty. These men not merely man Indian ships but also nearly a quarter of British<sup>e</sup> merchant ships. About 80,000 men at Calcutta and Bombay are directly dependent upon the employment at sea. Unlike the Navy, they are not recruited on a permanent basis but generally for the duration of a voyage which lasts from three to eighteen months. Thereafter they are discharged and have to await their turn for the next engagement.

Up to 1954, there was no satisfactory method for the recruitment of seamen. They were selected at Bombay by the Serangs at will and at Calcutta by ships' officers at open musters. Since the number of men seeking jobs was far in excess of demand certain malpractices had come into existence. The International Labour Organisation made recommendations in 1920 for the re-organisation of the system of recruitment of seamen. The investigations made in pursuance of the I.L.O. Convention of 1920 brought to light the prevailing corrupt practices in the recruitment system. To eradicate the evil of bribery and corruption, the National Government amended the Indian Shipping Act and assumed control over the supply of seamen. In 1954, the Statutory Seamen's Employment office was set up at Bombay. Later, a similar office was established in Calcutta.

Now every person, desirous of employment as seaman, has first to register at the Seamen's Employment office. Separate rosters are kept for seamen employed in various

shipping companies. As soon as a seaman is registered, his name is automatically entered in the relevant register in accordance with the last date of discharge. Whenever there is a demand for seamen the names are sent up in order of priority and selection is made on the principle of rotation.

The formal engagement of the crew in a ship is done in the presence of the Shipping Master and articles of the agreement, in token of mutual acceptance of the various terms and conditions, are signed by the Master of the Ship as well as the crew. The agreement contains the terms of engagement, discipline, scales of provisions, and particulars of the seamen. On the completion of a voyage the articles are closed and seamen discharged before the Shipping Master. If any dispute arises as to the interpretation of these articles, the Shipping Master intervenes and normally all disputes are settled in this manner.

The system of promotion has also been systematised. Promotions are now regulated according to the principles laid down by the Director-General of Shipping.

## CHAPTER VII

### SEAMEN'S WELFARE

The Welfare Offices at Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras look after the welfare and amenities of seamen in their respective areas. These offices are also being increasingly utilised for liaison work.

Among the amenities provided to seafarers are seamen's homes and hostels, canteens, co-operative stores and library and medical facilities. In Bombay, the Indian Sailor's Home and the Hostel for Indian Seamen provide accommodation for 1,000 at a nominal rate of two annas per night—a rate which does not even cover the cost of bed linens and other clothes provided free to the residents. A canteen, a co-

operative store and a laundry, which are housed in the Hostel, are greatly appreciated by seafarers of all nationalities. The maintenance cost of the Hostel is met largely from the income of the War Memorial Fund for Indian Merchant Seamen, 1947.

Newspapers and weeklies are supplied to seamen's hospitals in India and to seafarer hostels, clubs and welfare centres abroad. Thirty beds are reserved for seamen in St. George's Hospital wards. Arrangements are being made for the treatment of seamen suffering from T.B. at the Wanless T.B. Sanatorium. The charges for the T.B. patients are met from the Sick and Destitute Seamen's Amenities Fund. Recently, four beds were reserved at the chest hospital at Arundh and the charges are shared equally by the State and the Central Governments. A fully equipped 12-bed clinic at Thana Street serves as a convalescent home.

Financial assistance is offered to distressed seamen and their families by the Administrator, Sassoon Services Welfare Fund. Seamen sustaining injuries in the course of their employment are also helped in obtaining proper compensation from the shipping companies.

In Calcutta, the Nabik Griha (Seamen's Home), which has necessary recreational facilities, provides sleeping accommodation for 260 seamen. The Government has decided to appoint a committee for the management of this institution.

The off-article seamen can have, within one year, treatment and hospitalisation at Government's cost at the seamen's clinic and in other hospitals. There are four canteens and a co-operative store for seamen in the city. Five committees, namely, the Merchant Seamen Welfare Committee, the Nabik Griha Committee, the Port Health Committee, the Seamen Welfare Association and the Merchant Seamen Amenities Fund Committee, provide various types of amenities for seamen.

In Madras, a hostel and a canteen are maintained where board and lodging are provided to seamen at reasonable rates. A textile store is also run in the hostel for boarders

and visitors. A new site for the hostel is proposed to be acquired and the work of constructions will be entrusted to the Madras Port Trust.

A National Welfare Board for Seamen has been set up to co-ordinate their welfare activities. The question of extending the social security scheme for seamen is at present receiving the attention of the Government.

To meet one of the grievances of seamen against medical examination scheme, it has been decided to have medical examinations once in 5 years instead of once in two years as at present. The question of relaxing medical examinations for the second and subsequent examinations is now under consideration.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

As a result of the various steps taken by the Government such as the reservation of the coastal trade, the setting up of the Eastern Shipping Corporation, granting of loans to shipping companies on reasonable terms for the acquisition of additional tonnage, the construction of ships at Visakha-patnam and their sale to Indian shipping companies at competitive prices and preference shown to Indian ships in the allotment of Government cargo, etc. Indian shipping has shown slow but steady progress during recent years. The total tonnage which was only about 126,000 GRT in the pre-war period has now increased to about 4,80,000 GRT as mentioned above. While the Indian shipping had only an approximate share of 33-1/3 per cent in the coastal trade during pre-war years it is now carrying the entire coastal trade. While Indian ships were not moving anywhere outside the coast of India, Burma and Ceylon during the pre-war years, they are now plying in many important overseas

trades such as the India/U.K. continent, India/Australia and India/Far-East/Japan trades. The earnings of the Indian shipping companies have also shown steady increase during recent years. While during 1947-48 the earnings were about Rs. 6 crore in the coastal trade and Rs. 2.6 crore in the overseas trades the corresponding figures for the year 1954-55 were 11.06 crore and Rs. 10.49 crore respectively.

For country like India, which has an extensive overseas trade, the present tonnage should, however, be considered as being very inadequate for her requirements. During the second Five Year Plan, it is accordingly proposed to make a net addition of about 3,01,000 GRT which would increase Indian tonnage to over 9,00,000 GRT by the end of 1961. This will enable the Indian shipping companies to modernise and augment the coastal fleet to cope with the increasing volume of traffic; to expand their activities in the overseas trades which they are already operating and to enter new overseas trades such as India/North America, India/Indonesia and India/Red Sea trades. It is also proposed to make a beginning in the tanker trade and to expand tramp operations. Besides, a scheme for the setting up of a second shipping corporation to cover the Persian Gulf trade, Red Sea trade, etc., is also envisaged in the second Five Year Plan. The total cost of the scheme is expected to be about Rs. 55 crore of which the Government's share by way of loan investment in the shipping corporations and the provision of capital for the acquisition of tanker and salvage tug, etc. would come to about Rs. 45 crore (including an amount of about Rs. 8 crore carried over from the first Five Year Plan). It is expected that the additional tonnage acquired during the second Five Year Plan will enable Indian ships to carry the entire coastal trade, 50 per cent of the adjacent trade and 15 per cent of the overseas trades.

It is intended to rationalise the development of sailing vessels industry. A bill for controlling and regulating the industry is under preparation and will be introduced in Parliament in due course. It is also proposed to grant

financial assistance to the sailing vessels industry mainly for the mechanisation of vessels for which also necessary provision has been included in the second Five Year Plan.

A provision of Rs. 40 lakh has been made for the construction of a new building for the Nautical Engineering College at Bombay and certain additional buildings for the college at Calcutta.

During the second Plan the capacity of the major ports will be increased by about 30 per cent. Against an overall provision of Rs. 40 crore, the schemes for their development will cost about Rs. 76.38 crore, including the sum to be carried over from the first Plan. The programme for the different ports involve outlays of Rs. 19,88,00,000 on Calcutta, Rs. 29,30,00,000 on Bombay, Rs. 9,16,00,000 on Madras, Rs. 4,02,00,000 on Cochin and Rs. 14,01,00,000 on Kandla. The programme for the development of Visakhapatnam is included in the plan for the railways.

Furthermore, a sum of Rs. 5 crore has been allocated for the development of the minor ports. Of this, Rs. 3 crore will be spent on the development projects of the maritime States and Rs. 36 lakh on a survey vessel. The balance will be available for special schemes like the development of the ports of Tuticorin, Mangalore and Pradip.

In the report of the first Plan it was recommended that all lighthouses should be brought on to a central register and gradually taken over by the Centre. Some progress has been achieved in this direction. The second Plan envisages the completion of this scheme and provides for a sum of Rs. 4 crore for the development of lighthouses.

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