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From: **Reliance Shipping** <crew@reliancebd.com>

Date: Mon, Jan 4, 2016 at 7:19 PM

Subject: Bangladeshi seafarers at Nigerian Jail

To: zillur.bhuiyan@gmail.com, sajidocean@yahoo.com, baten18@gmail.com

Cc: toufiqinam07@gmail.com, khair.captma@gmail.com, crew@reliancebd.com

To : Captain Zillur Rahman Bhuiyan
Mr Baten (18, SGP)
Mr. Sajid, Commandant Marine Academy

SUB:

a) M/T ASTERIS, Registry- Panama. Held at Lagos, Nigeria since 27th March 2015 on allegation of illegal oil trade at Nigeria.

b) FOUR (4) NOS OF INNOCENT BANGLADESHI SEAFARERS AT JAIL AT LAGOS, NIGERIA.

c) Details of seafarers:

1. 3rd engineer Rafiqul Islam : Seaman Book no- C/O/5869, Passport No- AF 6171936, Date of Joining:16th March'15, Joining port- at Anchorage of Port of Cotonou, Republic of Benin.

2. 3rd Engineer G M Shahinul Islam : Seaman Book No- C/O/5303, Passport No- AF1427571, Date of Joining: 20th March'15, joining port- at Anchorage of Port of Cotonou, Republic of Benin.

3. Pumpman Shibly Nomay Bappy : Seaman Book No-T/30016, Passport No- AA7761289, Date of Joining: 02th March'15, Joining port- at Anchorage of Port of Cotonou, Republic of Benin.

4. Chief Officer Zahirul Islam : Seaman Book No- C/O5255, Passport No- AF 9720849, Date of Joining: 3rd March'15, Joining port- at Anchorage of Port of Cotonou, Republic of Benin.

d) THE VESSEL IS OWNED AND OPERATED BY M/S WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING S. A;
24 Nafsikas St. 166 73, Voula, Athens, Greece. Email:crew@westmedship.gr;
westmedship@gmail.com

PIC: CAPT. PANAGIS ZISSIMATOS, Tel: + 30 210 89 53 419, Fax: 30 210 89 53 416

Dear Sirs/ Madam,

We would very humbly like to bring to your kindest consideration of a serious miscarriage of Justice took place against Four numbers poor seafarers of Bangladesh origin. This is very unfortunate that they have been convicted for an offense which they had nothing to do. As a result now suffering at Nigerian jail without food, water, medicines, treatment or any kind of assistance including legal assistance.

The Ship owner, their Local agent have abundant them to the in human suffering and no visible effort taken by the Ship Owner to release them from the Jail.

THE ALLIGATION BROUGHT AGAINST THE MENTIONED SEAFARERS:

By- G.K. LATONA ESQ, Head of Legal Prosecution Dept, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Lagos zonal Office. Address: 15A AWOLOWO road, IKOYI, Lagos.

CHARGES:

Sub Vessel is found carrying 3423MT of Crude oil without appropriate License.

Mentioned Bangladeshi Seafarers at sub C cannot be held responsible for the above charge because:

1. As per international Law and Norms, operation level crews have no involvement at all with the cargo the vessel is carrying as well as the documents/ License of the cargo loaded/unloaded.
2. Cargo matters and its documentations solely lies with Master, Owner, Charterer, Shipping agent, Port authority, Customs of Loading port and the Terminal authority.
3. Our crew joined the Vessel at port of Cotonou anchorage between dated 3rd March'15 and 20th March'15, whilst Vessel was undergoing main Engine repair. Vessel was already been loaded with the alleged Cargo.
4. Our crew never had been to territorial water of Nigeria.
5. Whilst Vessel was captured by the Nigerian Navy on dated 27th March'15. She was steaming in the international water over 100NM away from the nearest coast.
6. None of our crew ever served any Ship belonging to this Company ever before. We have been first time introduced with this Ship Owner only few days prior actual joining of the crew.
7. We believe during prosecution **the defense Lawyer Mr. FEMI ADEGBITE**, engaged by the Ship owner failed to bring the above facts to the honorable Judge. Which means our innocent people had no chance to prove them **NOT GUILTY** of the Charge.
Ultimately this highly professional and well trained Engineers and Officers fully certified as per STCW 95, who has taken this dangerous seafaring profession to serve to make a living. Throughout their professional life they have successfully served the international shipping Industry and never been charged/involved with any kind of illegal activities at home or abroad or onboard.
8. We have absolutely clean police record of these mentioned crews and all their sea services has been recorded and documented with the Govt. Shipping Office, Bangladesh.

TODAY THEY ARE FACING JAIL TERM OF FIVE YEARS OR PENALTY USD 100,000/-. They and their families has no capacity to bear the a huge amount to release them. Therefore they have no option but to serve five years jail term in that hostile and horrible jail of Lagos for no fault. Their parents, Wives and Children are immensely suffering and their sea faring carrier is getting destroyed. The Ship owner's details in the above (subject: d) treated these ill-fated seafarers like modern day slaves. Never paid single penny as salary did not arranged to bail out them during prosecutions, failed to provide necessary support and assistance to prove them innocent. Not taking initiative to pay the penalty and release the crew, though it is hid responsibility. **THIS IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY.**

WE ARE IN DIER SITUATION, AND EARNESTLY SEEKING YOUR HELP IN WHATEVER WAY POSSIBLE TO RELEASE THESE BOYS AND TO GIVE THEM THE JUSTICE EVERY HUMAN DESERVE. ONLY YOUR LITTLE HELP CAN SAVE THESE BOYS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM DESTRUCTION AND WILL REHABILITATE THEM TO THE LIFE AND TO THE CAREER.

Regards,

Capt. Abul Khair

Ph: +880 1713103044

Reliance Shipping Services.