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# SAMUDRA

A bi-monthly Publication of the Singapore Organisation of Seamen and Seacare Co-operative Limited

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## OUR PEOPLE OUR HOME NDP2014



## SAMUDRA

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# LEE VAN CHONG RECEIVES PUBLIC SERVICE MEDAL

SOS and Seacare would like to congratulate Mr Lee Van Chong for being conferred the Public Service Medal (PBM) at the National Day Awards 2014, for his invaluable service as union Treasurer for 37 years.

Currently the Executive Committee Member of SOS and Deputy Chairman of Seacare Co-operative Ltd, Mr Lee was one of the four unionists to receive the prestigious award, after he was nominated by the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) earlier this year. The following is an extract of his citation:

Mr Lee Van Chong has served with distinction as a union leader of SOS, a union that looks after seamen or ratings, who work on board ocean-going ships and are often away from their home in Singapore for long stretches of time. Mr Lee's rapport with the seamen through his good understanding of their aspirations and problems laid the foundation for his distinguished service with SOS.

His active involvement with the Labour Movement began with his joining SOS as an Industrial Relations Officer in 1975, when SOS was not even sure about its own survival and had hardly any prospect for a long lasting career. Nevertheless, Mr Lee persevered and gained the support of seamen to be elected Treasurer in April 1976. The seamen, because of the nature of their working life, needed a trusted person like Mr Lee to hold a key post on their behalf. He amply repaid the trust of the seamen by his dedicated service to SOS as Treasurer until his retirement 37 years later.

Mr Lee has strongly supported as Treasurer the adoption by SOS of the policy to promote leadership renewal in SOS. In line with this policy, Mr Lee stepped down as Treasurer in 2013 to make way for a younger leader. Mr Lee can look back at his long career with justified pride as he has played a pivotal role in guiding SOS through an eventful history of ups and downs, particularly during its formative years.

Mr Lee is now an Ordinary Member of SOS Executive Committee, where he still continues to serve SOS with distinction by freely and actively sharing his long-serving experience and expertise as Treasurer of SOS with his successor and younger members who are potential leaders. Mr Lee leads by example the effective implementation of SOS's leadership renewal policy.

While he was Treasurer of SOS, Mr Lee showed his interest in other aspects of union work by serving and contributing as a member of various committees outside

the fold of SOS. The committees numbered among them NTUC Pasir Ris Resort Management Committee, Advisory Committee to Promote the Employment of Married Females and Older Persons and SCORE (Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises) Training Committee. While as Treasurer, Mr Lee has actively supported the decision of SOS Executive Committee in 1994 to found together with NTUC, the Seacare Co-operative Ltd. Today Seacare owns and manages a 16-storey hotel in Chin Swee Road that serves seafarers and the maritime industry. Seacare also operates various other enterprises in and outside Singapore. Mr Lee continues to serve in the Seacare Co-operative as the Deputy Chairman.

As Managing Director of Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd, which has been an appointed NTUC Membership Recruiter since October 2001, Mr Lee firmly believes a stronger Labour Movement will benefit workers and Singapore and is instrumental in helping NTUC to increase its membership strength. In collaboration with the Employment and Employability Institute (E21), the Community Development Council and NTUC Women's Development Secretariat, Seacare Manpower under the inspired leadership of Mr Lee organised mass recruitment campaigns. At the same time, Seacare Manpower has kept on securing job opportunities in schools to help retrenched workers, retirees and back-to-work housewives to join the work force and become NTUC members again. Through these efforts under the direction of Mr Lee, Seacare Manpower significantly contributed to NTUC's membership growth by recruiting 223,196 NTUC members to date.

***"The success of SOS and Seacare would not have been possible without the support from NTUC. It is an honour to be part of this successful evolution. I count it a privilege to play a role in transforming the lives of seafarers and making a difference. It has been a thrilling adventure journeying with my fellow trade unionists,"*** he said.



# THE HEART OF THE SINGAPORE STORY



The celebration of Singapore's National Day at The Float@ Marina Bay on 9 August 2014 was a visual extravaganza featuring fireworks, march-past of different contingents, laser displays and more. The Singapore stories of ordinary folks displaying the can do, resilient spirit evoked patriotic vibes of those present at the parade and home viewers.

"Singapore has come a long way," Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said in his National Day Rally address.

"It is the work of generations, each standing on the shoulders of the one which came before and it started with one special generation – the Pioneer Generation.

Our pioneers were ordinary people who worked together to do extraordinary things. They overcame difficult and dangerous situations to build a sovereign, independent country. They transformed Singapore from Third World to First and they always looked to the future and strove to give their children better lives than themselves."

In his speech, PM Lee highlighted that Singapore is changing. There is a new generation with new aspirations. There is the ageing population, which is creating new social needs.

"Amidst these changes, Singaporeans ask ourselves, "How can I improve my life? What happens to me when I get old? Where will Singapore be in the future?"

Singapore, said PM Lee, must always give the people full opportunities to achieve their potential. Multiple stakeholders, many government agencies, employers and unions need to work together to help individuals progress and upgrade. Unions, he said, have to be fully behind the effort, championing lifelong learning like what they are doing in the Devan Nair Institute.

Within the Government, the natural agency to take the lead in doing this is an expanded Workforce Development Agency (WDA). But the WDA will need strong support from other agencies, employers and unions.



We have all contributed to the Singapore Story. At the heart of the Singapore Story is our belief in Singapore, belief that we can turn vulnerability and despair into confidence and hope; belief that out of the trauma of separation, we could build a modern metropolis and a beautiful home; belief that whatever the challenges of this uncertain world we can thrive and prosper as one united people. Let this belief and spirit burn bright in each one of us and guide us forward for the next 50 years and more. Together, let us be the pioneers of our generation. Together, let us create a brighter future for all Singaporeans.

– Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong



## OUR PLEDGE TO STAY AHEAD

At the International Labour Conference held in Geneva this June, I met union leaders from other countries. We shared on the labour situation in our own countries and the challenges faced by our workers.

My typical opening lines were: In Singapore, unemployment rate is low; employment rates for women and mature workers are going up; and wages are rising faster than inflation.

When I finished, their typical opening lines were: Now that we have heard your list of good news, we will share our list of not-so-good news - Unemployment, especially youth unemployment, is still high; wages remain stagnant; and employment outlook is uncertain.

It was a refreshing change when a European unionist shared some good news: Unemployment rate in her country has finally come down. Unfortunately, not because there are more jobs, but because more workers have left to look for jobs elsewhere.

The general mood of the Conference was cautious. With more

than 200 million people joining the global workforce in the next five years, global unemployment may not improve. And if the quality of these new jobs is not good enough, more workers will suffer the pain of under-employment.

The International Labour Organisation, therefore, calls on all countries to put in more effort to create enough jobs, both in number and quality. This will not be easy. I believe only a minority of countries will succeed, and we want Singapore to make it.

Our workers are good. Our economy is competitive. Most importantly, our tripartite partnership is constructive and effective. By valuing, respecting and appreciating each other more, we can work even better together to be more ready for the future.

I hope the next time when we share our Singapore Story with tripartite leaders of other countries, it will be an even better story. Not just low unemployment and higher wages but also higher re-employment age for



mature workers; a more progressive wage ladder for lower wage workers; a more capable and productive workforce; and a more inclusive and gracious society that accepts, appreciates and respects one another.

On this National Day, let us pledge to stay ahead as one strong workforce and one dynamic economy. Let us strive to succeed where others may fail and make our future shine bright for everyone.

Happy National Day!

– NTUC Secretary-General  
Lim Swee Say



# BOOSTING BILATERAL TIES WITH MTUC



Officials from SOS, Seacare and MTUC sharing a joyous moment together in a symbolic group photo outside The Seacare Hotel

A group of officials from the Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) Committee of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) called on SOS and Seacare on 23 June 2014, as part of their official visit to meet their counterparts from the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and Ministry of Manpower (MOM).

Led by MTUC's Deputy General Secretary, Mr A Balasubramaniam, the delegation met with key officers of SOS and Seacare to discuss ways to strengthen bilateral relationship and to establish common grounds for future collaborations.

The 20-member delegation which represents various business sectors in Malaysia, was given a brief presentation of the union/corporate structure and administration of SOS and Seacare Co-operative, as well as an overview of the business functions and investment projects under the Seacare Group of Companies. They were also hosted to a Q & A session by Seacare Co-operative Executive Chairman Mr Leow Ching Chuan and SOS General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat, along with other key appointment holders.





Meeting of old friends: Mr A Balasubmaniam (left) catching up with his friend of 30 years, Mr Leow Ching Chuan before the meeting



SOS President Mr Mohamed Idris Mohamed Ibrahim (left) presenting souvenirs to the MTUC delegates

The visit of the Malaysian delegates was significant in establishing contact with the new leadership in MTUC and provided an opportunity for the reiteration of the strategic importance of the MTUC-SOS/Seacare relationship.

“This meeting provided an opportunity for us to celebrate the special friendship between SOS, Seacare and MTUC, which is fostered by strong bilateral, commercial and historical ties.

We hope the visit will open up new opportunities for future cooperations and business developments in both countries,” said Mr Leow.

Mr Kam shared the same view about the bilateral relationship. He said that the meeting provided an excellent opportunity for both sides to learn from one another and share management and operational experiences.

The MTUC delegates, who stayed at The Seacare Hotel, described their visit as constructive and positive, while noting the possibilities for future joint ventures and collaborations with Seacare under various business sectors.



Mr Kam Soon Huat (left) receiving a souvenir from Mr Matkar Siwang (FIEM), MTUC Vice President (Private Sector)

The **MTUC** is a federation of trade unions that represent all major industries and sectors in Malaysia with approximately 500,000 members.

# HONOURING SEAFARERS AT 'DAY OF SEAFARER'

Photo credit: Maxime Felder



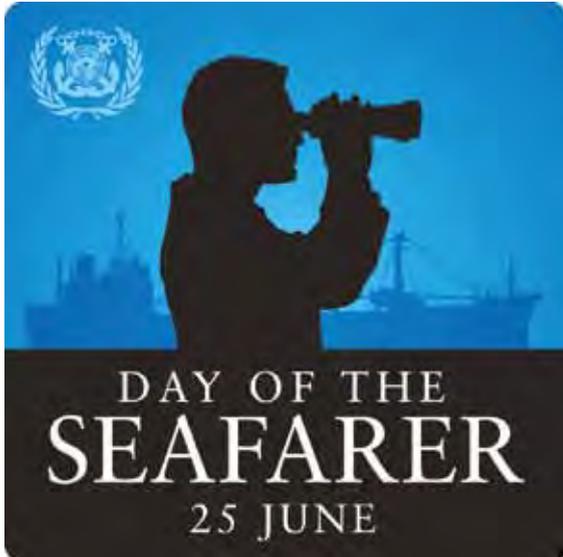
Since 2010, when the International Maritime Organization (IMO) designated a Day of Seafarer to fall on 25 June, it has been celebrated all over the world, in honour of the contributions of more than 1.5 million seafarers worldwide, who drive the shipping industry.

In Singapore, the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS), Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and

Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU), jointly organised a hamper distribution ceremony. Held at the PSA Building on 25 June 2014, the Day of Seafarer was marked with the presentation of hampers, book prizes and financial grant. Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Transport Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, was the Guest-of-Honour at the event, where he presented the hampers to 30 representatives from the shipping industry.



SOS President Mr Mohamed Idris Mohamed Ibrahim (third from right) celebrates the Day of Seafarer with Guest-of-Honour A. Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim (centre) and tripartite partners of the maritime industry



To promote continuous learning and encourage young officers and seafarers to pursue a seafaring career, MPA presented book prizes to the top students who are studying for Certificate of Competency (CoC) and maritime diploma courses in Singapore.

Capt Segar, Assistant Chief Executive (Operations) of MPA, gave out book vouchers to cadets in recognition of their outstanding performance. Capt Segar also presented a financial grant of \$100,000 to the Mission of Seafarers, which would be distributed to the Norwegian Seamen's Mission, the Danish Seamen's Church, and the International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission. The annual grant supports a wide range of welfare services for seafarers, ranging from ship visitations to counselling services and pastoral care at the mission centres.

MPA and the unions have put in place an array of welfare benefits for seafarers, young and old, such as training facilities, educational training programmes, retirement award and recreational activities. As part of the celebrations the unions and MPA would jointly distribute 600 gift hampers, reaching out to 9,000 seafarers on ships that call in Singapore.



# IBF'S 3-YEAR DEAL: WAGE AND WELFARE BENEFITS FOR SEAFARERS

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and the Joint Negotiating Group (JNG) successfully concluded a set of negotiations, in a deal which will benefit some 121,000 seafarers covered under the new International Bargaining Forum (IBF) Framework Agreement.

The IBF, which took place in Indonesia from 4 to 5 June 2014, had agreed to an incremental pay increase for seafarers sailing on JNG vessels - 6.5 percent in three years.

According to ITF and JNG, the negotiations were particularly tough this year, due to the challenging global shipping market, compared to the last agreement negotiated in 2011. While both parties agreed on the need to support growth of the market, they also acknowledged the need to maintain sustainable and fair employment for the seafarers sailing onboard JNG vessels worldwide.

The three-year agreement had also included the revision of the Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor to an IBF Extended Risk Zone status and the retention of all other risk areas previously agreed. The new agreement likewise covered the enhancement of welfare support for seafarers and changes to various contractual clauses.

Mr Dave Heindel, Chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section, shared: "Considerable progress has clearly been made from both parties over this round. The ITF has understood the challenges facing the JNG members in their ability to afford a pay increase, but it has been important to secure a pay increase for our members, to ensure a fair wage and conditions of employment. There have at times been differing views by both parties, but both have been able to put aside these differences to conclude the negotiations."



JNG Chairman, Mr Tsutomu Iizuka who spoke at the IBF meeting in Indonesia, agreed and noted that the last eight months of IBF discussions have been tough: "Both sides commenced the progress at different ends of the spectrum, wishing to best represent their respective members. There has been considerable movement from each side, which has been difficult at times and has only been possible due to the mutual respect between the parties to the IBF, gained over the past 10 years."

Speaking on the outcome of the new IBF Framework Agreement, JNG Spokesperson, Mr Giles Heimann said: "The past few years have been particularly challenging for shipowners. Although we have seen signs of market recovery, many owners are still facing challenging times. The JNG has worked hard to get a mutually acceptable outcome, which will aid owners to financially recover, but at the same time, will recognize the welfare of the seafarers that they employ."

According to Mr Paddy Crumlin, President of the ITF, the negotiations were understandably difficult given the market conditions. He noted however, that the successful conclusion was a reflection of the maturity of social dialogue and engagement within this aspect of the shipping industry.

"In a truly international industry employing seafarers from virtually every nation, reaching a single standard of employment that is enforceable and supported by the social partners is an extraordinary achievement," he said.

# OFFSHORE TASK FORCE GROUP CONVENES IN LONDON



With the demand for oil and gas in the world today, the global offshore oil and gas industry has been growing by leaps and bounds. And so has the demand for offshore jobs which are extremely challenging and may demand long working hours in harsh conditions. The seafarers who work offshore, mostly on oil and gas mobile offshore units and their support vessels often have to cope with a unique set of working and living conditions.

At this year's International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Offshore Task Force Group (OTFG) Meeting held in London, SOS Executive Secretary Mr Daniel Tan joined 30 unionists from ITF affiliated Unions across the globe such as Australia, Brazil, Denmark, Indonesia and Russia; the focus was on the occupational health and safety of seafarers on offshore vessels.

The three-day meeting, which was held from 17 to 19 June 2014, updated unionists on the last OTFG meeting held in Brazil, 2013. Reports on membership and current activities from regions such as the Americas and Caribbean, Asia Pacific and Europe were submitted. OTFG also reaffirmed the ITF Offshore Continental Shelf/ Flag State, Jurisdiction, Policy (CSFJP). Guest speakers from the IndustriAll Secretariat and Skills for Oil and Gas (OPITO), shared on Occupation Health and Safety Regulatory Overview.

In solidarity with Britain's biggest union Unite, unionists backed the 'Back Home Safe' campaign, which calls for immediate improvement in the safety of offshore flight.



## ASIAN SEAFARERS' SUMMIT MEETING

The 31st Asian Seafarers' Summit Meeting (ASSM) took place in Manila, Philippines on 13 June 2014.

The summit, hosted by the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) at the union's Training Center was attended by delegates from 14 unions.

The SOS delegation was represented by Vice President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar, General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat, Treasurer Mr David Sim and Assistant Secretary Mr David Shoo.

One notable subject documented at the summit was the implementation of the emergency communication flow and support system among ASSM members for maritime incidents and abandonment of seafarers. Concerns were raised at the summit on the safety and security of seafarers, working hours, human resource development in Asia, etc. The delegates also exchanged views and shared their preparations for the upcoming ITF Congress, which would take place in August.

Prior to the meeting proceedings, delegates were given a tour around the Seamen's Village in Barangay Sampaloc III, Dasmariñas, Cavite, a community housing project established by AMOSUP for seafarers.

# STPL CONDUCTS ITS 30<sup>TH</sup> COOKS TRAINING COURSE

SOS through Seacare Thrift Ptd Ltd (STPL) conducted a two-day Certified Cooks Training Course for a group of experienced cooks from Ocean Tankers on 3 July 2014.

The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006 compliant course, taught by trainer and former Executive Chef, Mr Maximilian Theodore, was also the 30<sup>th</sup> course to have been conducted since it was launched more than a year ago.

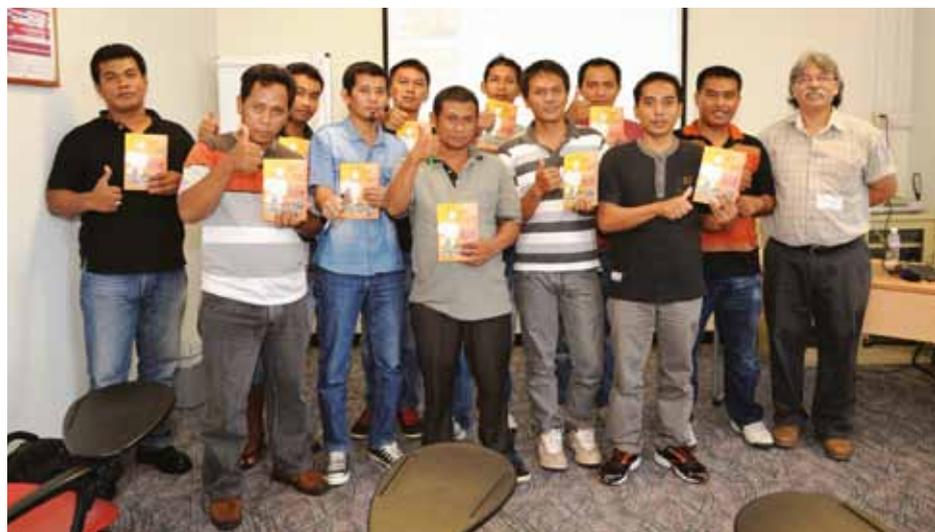
The course includes a thorough explanation of the duties and the skill sets required to work in the galley. It also covers requisite special topics such as Catering Health and Safety; Basic Cooking Technique; and Diet and Nutrition. According to Mr Maximilian, the explanations and theories covered in the course syllabus – when combined with practical training – will equip trainees to acquire the necessary competence and versatility for a ship's cook.

The 11 trainees paid close attention to the different topics explained through slides and videos; they also asked questions to clarify their doubts about food and galley management. During the two days, the trainees took the opportunity to share with one another their experience in the galley, including the challenges faced in their daily operation.

As part of the course, Mr Maximilian shared with the trainees about the compliance of Regulation 3.2 and Standard A3.2 of the MLC. He also updated them on the Convention's guidelines on the training of ships' cooks – which includes a cook's ability to prepare fresh bread and bakery

products, as well as international cuisines.

Since the Certified Cooks Training Course was launched in 2013, it has trained over 400 local and foreign SOS members, who work onboard as a Chief Cook or Second Cook. The certificate, which is recognised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), will be issued to trainees who have successfully completed the course.



SOS IR Assistant Manager and former executive chef, Mr Maximilian Francis (far right) with the 30th batch of trainees (from Ocean Tankers) in the Certified Cooks Training Course



## HANDS-ON SESSIONS FOR TRAINEE COOKS AT SHATEC AND CDA



**E**ighteen trainees from the Seafaring Cooks Place & Train Programme by SOS and e2i kicked off their first day of training in SHATEC for the WSQ certificate in Culinary Arts, Principles of Asian Cooking and Principles of Baking.

Over a period of two months, the trainees were trained in a range of culinary proficiencies, both theory and practical, including the basics of dry cooking, Asian food, dessert preparation and pastry making.

The programme was designed according to Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC) regulation on Food and Catering and its new Guidelines on the training of ship's cooks, which recommends that ships cooks be competent to bake bread and pastries as part of their service onboard.





The classroom training in Shatec took place from 2 June to 6 August 2014. Upon the successful completion of the programme in SHATEC, the trainees would proceed to attend the MLC Certified Cooks Training Course at Seacare.

As part of the Place & Train programme, the trainees also attended a two-day lesson on fire prevention and fire fighting at the Civil Defence Academy (CDA) in Jalan Bahar on 30 May 2014.

The Training and knowledge on fire prevention and fire fighting would serve the trainees well in future and prepare them for the conducting of any fire drills onboard or the occurrence of fire in the galley.

Guided by instructors, the trainees learnt to manage and contain a fire breakout on board ships, using a variety of drills and team formations with using water hoses and fire extinguishers.



# SEACARE QUALITY COOKS TRAINING (SQCT) IN NANTONG



The Singapore (Nantong) International Maritime Institute (SNIMI) conducted its 27<sup>th</sup> batch of the Seacare Quality Cooks Training Programme (SQCT) in Nantong, China from 17 June to 11 July 2014.

The programme was conducted to train 16 pre-seafaring trainees to be familiarised with the work functions onboard vessels.

During their month-long training, they acquired knowledge and skills in onboard safety, which included the identifications of international notices and signs; the applications of life-saving equipments; and the functions of different emergency alarms.

The trainees had to master the use of fire-fighting and emergency response systems. In addition, they were required to identify and abide proper garbage handling and disposal regulations, among other important international regulations.

As part of the programme requirement, the trainees had to achieve competency in Personal Grooming - which comprised behaviour and work attitude, personal hygiene and interview tips - as well as Maritime English.

According to SNIMI's course trainers, most of these trainees struggled initially with the understanding and application of conversational English, a commonly spoken language used onboard international vessels; however, they overcame their fear through repetitive exercises, sharing and role-plays.

Their newly acquired knowledge onboard were evaluated and put to the test progressively through weekly assessments and a final exam.

The trainers observed that while many of the trainees had the prerequisite skills as cooks, they needed confidence in speaking the English language and widen their work exposure in a different environment.

"The trainees have shown tremendous progress in their English proficiency. Their attitude was good and they worked hard at improving themselves. They're all skilled and competent ships cooks now and displayed good understanding of the job functions. They will do well in this job," said one of the trainers.



I have increased my vocabulary of food items such as vegetables, seafood, poultry, drink, tableware and others from the Provision Order for cooks. The pronunciation guide provided in our training material is helpful for self-practice. Trainers took the lead in class to help trainees begin conversation in English. We are now more confident to converse in English and able to express ourselves better.

*- Mr Li Jia Tao, 33 years old*



I have gained more maritime related knowledge, for example I am more aware of international regulations. I also understand the importance of taking personal responsibility of good hygiene and garbage management.

*- Mr Hu Yong, 38 years old*



## BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH GOLF IR NETWORK GOLF TOURNAMENT 2014



In just about anything where interpersonal relationships matter, golf can be an effective networking tool. Simply put, a golf course is a great place to build camaraderie, renew friendships and strengthen relationships. It is in that spirit that the union held the SOS IR Networking Golf 2014 from 17 to 20 July 2014.

SOS couldn't have picked a more spectacular golf course at Spring City Golf & Lake Resort. Spring City is a premier integrated golf resort in Kunming, China. It comprises two championship golf courses as well as luxury resort homes set amidst lush landscapes against the backdrop of Yang Zonghai Lake. Consistently voted one of the best golf courses in China, Spring City boasts award-winning golf courses such as the Mountain Course which overlooks the breathtaking Yang Zonghai Lake.



Twenty-four guests from shipping companies, unions and the Seacare Group of Companies took time off to join the event. These golfers strengthened their camaraderie and relationships on the course as they got together to share views on the latest trends and happenings in the global maritime industry.

At the prize presentation ceremony, SOS General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat thanked all the guests for taking the time off to attend the event. He noted that events such as these helped foster relationships and build bridges in a relaxed environment and that the gatherings provided opportunities for sharing ideas and information on the maritime industry.





## SOS FAMILY'S SHOPPING AND FEASTING BLISS



The trip started as early as 6.30am, when the enthusiastic trippers set off for Kuala Lumpur. First on the itinerary was a Durian and Fruit Lunch at Batu Pahat Farm. Having pre-knowledge of the programme, many members skipped breakfast so that they could devour as much durians and fruits.

The journey continued through Putrajaya, where there was time for some sight-seeing and photo opportunities. The group checked into Berjaya Times Square after dinner. Having the accommodation right in the heart of Kuala Lumpur, ensured that members were conveniently located where all the shopping and sights are.

**S**OS Family Shopping cum Durian Trip 2014 could well be remembered as three days of shopping and feasting bliss.

When 185 participants including SOS members and their spouses signed up for this trip, they knew they were in for an itinerary packed with the sights, sounds and smells of Malaysia.



On the second day, the entourage were taken to a few places of interest in Kuala Lumpur. Among the highlights included a visit to the Kuala Lumpur Art City Gallery and chocolate outlet where members emotions went on a happy-high as they indulged in the happiness inducing snack. There were photo stops at the King’s Palace or Istana Negara and the 88-storey twin structure, Kuala Lumpur’s crown jewel, Petronas Twin Towers. During the trip, SOS also took the opportunity to celebrate the birthdays of 16 participants who are born in June.

After taking in the sights and sounds of Kuala Lumpur, the entourage made their way home but not before first shopping at AEON Jusco Mall Kulaijaya, Johor. Everyone returned home satisfied with shopping bags filled with good buys and a whole load of good memories.





## AN IDEAL AIDILFITRI SOS HARI RAYA CELEBRATION 2014



**H**ari Raya is a time for family, friendship, giving and celebration. The SOS Hari Raya Celebration 2014 combined all these elements into a wonderful lunch. Held on the 2 August 2014 at the Furama Riverfront Singapore, 340 guests including SOS staff, members and their families - as well as seacare staff and directors - gathered for the occasion.

Guest-of-Honour Mr Zulkifli Mohammed, Advisor for SOS commended SOS for successfully launching the Seafaring Cook Place and Train Programme – a collaboration with e2i SHATEC, WDA and shipping companies – under the Seacare Maritime Training Scheme. “The programme promotes employment opportunities for local seafarers and allows them to earn a relatively decent livelihood. It also provides training allowance during the entire programme. Most importantly, it



trains Singaporeans to become competent cooks onboard vessels” he said. SOS Vice President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar also announced details of the fully subsidised five-nights stay at the Citin Seacare Hotel in Kuala Lumpur under the Seacare Sailors Home Scheme for eligible members.

In the spirit of giving, SOS invited 60 guests from three welfare Homes, namely the Darul Ihsan Orphanage, Ramakrishna Mission Boys’ Home and AWWA Community Home for Senior Citizens to celebrate the occasion. In typical Hari Raya fashion, the guests were presented with green packets.

Top notch entertainment was provided by singers – Sarah Aqilah, winner of Anugerah 2009, Rudy Djoharnaen Winner of Anugerah Suria and Comedian Zaleha Hamid. It also included dance performances from the Sri Warisan Performing Arts. Pre-event activities included Batik Painting by well-known Batik Artist, Sujak Rahman and an Instant Photography Booth.

Food was a scrumptious affair with a delicious buffet spread for everyone to enjoy – from the all-time favourites such as *satay*, *longtong*, *gado-gado*, *beef rendang with ketupat* and *lemang*, to desserts such as *chendol*, *bubur pulut hitam* and *kueh lapis*.

SOS members had fun with the scavenger hunt, driving game, trivia questions and singing led by the emcee AB Shaik from Medicorp Radio 94.2FM. No celebration would have been complete without the lucky draw prizes. The lucky winner walked away with the top prize, Phillips 42 inch Smart TV. Other prizes included Samsung Galaxy tablet; Sanyo full HD dual camcorder and Capitaland Mall shopping vouchers worth \$80 each.

With all the fun and feasting floating around, the Hari Raya celebration was an all-time high!



## REACHING OUT IN TIMES OF NEED

**S**OS always does its best to assist members and their families.

Last year, SOS received the sad news of the passing of one of its Filipino members - the late Mr Pablo Ireneo Padua, a Bosun who worked with Neptune Shipmanagement Services (Pte) Ltd (NSSPL).

Mr Pablo was involved in an accident in Balanga City, Bataan, Philippines on 13 December 2013, when he collided with a motorcyclist and sustained a traumatic brain injury. Unfortunately, Mr Pablo passed away at the hospital.

Upon receiving the news, SOS, together with NSSPL worked promptly to assist Mr Pablo's family speed up the filing and processing of the SOS-procured National Trade Union Congress (NTUC) Income Gift insurance.

As Mr Pablo's wife - his next-of-kin and beneficiary - was not medically fit to travel, their eldest daughter, Ms Marie Jane, received the cheque on her behalf.

The prompt action by the union and NTUC had helped speed up the paperwork.

On 13 June 2014, Ms Marie Jane, met SOS General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat; Vice President Mr Mohamad

Abu Bakar; and Treasurer Mr David Sim to receive a S\$20,000 cheque from NTUC Income Gift.

The cheque presentation at the Seacare International (Phils) Inc. office in Manila was witnessed by Ms Cristine Bernaldez, a representative of Reiner Pacific International Shipping Inc - the authorized manning agency of NSSPL.

Thankful for the financial assistance, the family was also touched by SOS's sincerity and prompt assistance during their moment of bereavement.

SOS works closely with the NTUC to provide affordable insurance coverage (including accidents and death) for union members, in addition to the insurance provided by the member's employers. Such payout would help the members' family tide over the difficult period.



# TRACKING OUR STAFF

They have worked hard and proven that they are up to greater tasks. Hence they have been promoted to take up roles, which allows them to contribute more to the effectiveness and growth of SOS - To better serve our members.

We would like to congratulate:

**Ms Shirley Lai Shek Lee**, who has been promoted from Assistant Manager to Manager of Schemes Administration;

**Ms Halimahtul Saa'diah Mohamed**, who has been promoted from Senior Executive to Assistant Manager of Membership & Welfare Services;

**Mr Chen Chuanyi**, who has been promoted from Executive to Senior Executive of External & Industrial Relations.

▼ **Ms Evelyn Yeo Kea Yea** has been transferred from Schemes Administration to Membership & Welfare Services. Evelyn is now located at #05-00 and her direct line is (65) 6379 5672.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Seafarers' Provident Fund Operations Team and my fellow colleagues who have helped me in my work.

- *Ms Shirley Lai*

Shirley's main job scope involves handling administrative matters for the Seafarers' Provident Fund Scheme, Seacare Maritime Training Scheme, Certified Cook's Training Course & Seafaring Cooks Programme, such as processing enquiries, application requests, billing and coordinating courses. She also assists in the preparation of documents for SPF Administrative Committee meetings.

In her two years with SOS, she had the opportunity to meet people from different organisations and other parts of the world. Despite language barriers, she always tries her best to assist foreigners. Like all customer service providers, she will occasionally face difficult members, but she has endeavoured to focus on helping people solve their problems.

Halimah handles a variety of administrative matters such as enquiries and applications for membership benefits such as chalet booking, training and hospitalisation grants; as well as processing membership subscriptions for foreign seafarers, prepare Membership Reports for ExCo meetings and organising local and foreign SOS events such as the annual Study Grants and Family Day.

Like Shirley, Halimah also had interesting experiences with all kinds of members – from the cheerful and friendly ones to the more demanding. Nevertheless, she treats these experiences as valuable lessons and as feedback to fine-tune her communication approaches to different personas.



▲ I am grateful that my colleagues are constantly encouraging and supportive thus enabling me to execute my duties well.

– Ms Halimahtul Saa’diah

I’m very fortunate to be involved in the SOS’s Youth Charter, which is part of the Young NTUC Committee. As a member of the committee, I get to interact with young unionists from various industries. It is interesting to hear them share their experiences and knowledge on current affairs; how certain issues affect Singaporeans. My participation has definitely broadened my knowledge and widened my social circle.

– Mr Chen Chuanyi ▼

Handling Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) and attending to seafarers’ grievance cases are, all in a day’s work for Chuanyi. Due to the nature of the industry, it is a challenge when dealing with companies as each one have their unique modus operandi. Chuanyi admits that there were times when difficult decisions had to be made. Through guidance from his IR colleagues, he learnt to make better decisions while improving on his listening, negotiation and communication skills. He had the opportunity to interact and foster strong working relationships with foreign unions. Through his interactions, he learnt about the different methods they engage for similar issues as well as the diverse perspectives from different cultures.





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# SEACARE SEAFARERS' CLUB 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Since its inception in 2010, Seacare Seafarers' Club (SSC), which was founded by Seacare Co-operative Ltd, has been promoting the social, cultural and recreational wellbeing and welfare of its members.

At the SSC's 4th Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 26 June 2014, at the Seacare Maritime Hall, members convened to adopt the minutes from the 3<sup>rd</sup> AGM held on a year ago and to receive its progress report.

According to SSC Chairman Mr David Sim Hor Pheng, membership as of 5 June 2014, had increased by 1,881 members since 2013 to a strength of 24,737 members.



This year saw an increase in surplus, thanks to the support of members, friends and patrons.

## Club@52

Mr Sim reported that SSC will continue to appoint Seacare i-Connecz Pte Ltd as the managing agent to run the operations of Club@52. The Club@52 has provided karaoke, reading corner, pool table and Wii console for its members.

## Jackpot Room

SSC has successfully renewed the fruit machines permit for one year with Police Licensing Division commencing on 26 August 2013. The Jackpot room which has been operating with 10 Fruit machines since Nov 2013, are enhanced with additions of five new machine games such as The Incas, Towers of the Temple, 5 Dragons, Electric Nights and Imperial House.





In its marketing efforts to encourage patronage to the Jackpot room, SSC has conducted ad-hoc Jackpot events such as SSC Night 2013 to create awareness among members. SSC also developed membership referral programme, membership benefits scheme and Jackpot loyalty programme.

The SSC Management Committee, Honorary Auditors and Trustees will continue to serve their term until 2014.





## SEACARE CO-OPERATORS ‘COME TOGETHER AS ONE’ IN SENTOSA

Seacare co-operators and their family members joined over 1000 fellow co-operators at the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) ‘Come Together As One’ celebration in Sentosa on 15 June 2014.

The mega annual event, which comprised an evening family fun walk, family activities and entertainment, celebrated the ideals of “Family togetherness” through family bonding and quality family time together.

Some 200 youth from tertiary institutions also joined in the fun in Sentosa and took part in SNCF’s inaugural SCOOP Trail – a Co-operative amazing race around the Co-operatives in Singapore.

‘Come Together As One’ started with a Family Fun Walk, flagged off by SNCF’s Chairman Mr Chan Tee Seng and CEO Ms Dolly Goh at 5.30pm. The coastal scenic 2.5km walk was organised by Runninghour Co-operative.

The walk ended at Palawan Beach, where a range of entertainment and food greeted the participants. Seacare participants actively joined the mass cool down activity, before delving into more fun at the various activity stations. There were three mass participation activities – Pledge Wall, Sand of Time and Photo Mosaic.

‘Come Together As One’ climaxed with pyrotechnics of fireworks display. A grand finale to an event that celebrates “Family Togetherness”.



# SMMC OFFERS

## OFFSHORE AND INTERNATIONAL MARITIME MEDICAL CHECKUP



The Seacare Maritime Medical Centre (SMMC) is accredited by

- **Oil & Gas UK (OGUK)**, a leading representative body for the UK offshore oil and gas industry
- **Petronas Offshore Medical**, endorsed by Approved Malaysian Examiner

to conduct medical checkup for offshore personnel and

- **American P&I Club**
- **UK P&I Club**

to conduct reciprocal medical checkup for their members.

Our healthcare services stand up to the broad demands of the oil and gas sector.



*If you require health care services when you call at Singapore, your nearest Oil & Gas UK (OGUK) registered doctor is available right here, right now!*

### Seacare Maritime Medical Centre Pte Ltd

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