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Samudra
International & Industrial Relations

Membership & Welfare

Seacare Focus

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SOS/Seacare’s Hong Bao presentation cum Lunar New Year Celebration was no short on festive revelry as it celebrated the Lunar New Year with 1,030 guests comprising members, staff, associates, shipping communities, and residents of three welfare homes.

Held on 27 January 2012 at Suntec Singapore, 284 retired seamen and 70 home residents from the Asian Women’s Welfare Association (AWWA) Community Home for Senior Citizens, the Sree Narayana Mission Home for the Aged Sick and the Jamiyah Home for the Aged (Darul Takrim) received red packets from Guest-of-Honour Ms Grace Fu, Senior Minister of State for Ministry of the Environment & Water Resources and Ministry of Information, Communications & the Arts. Apart from the red packets, each retired seaman and home resident also received a bag of festive goodies.
Apart from the lunch and entertainment, guests were treated to a spectacular illuminated dragon dance, song and dance items, a god of fortune segment and given special Dragon Year coin sets and oranges. Festive hampers were also given away to members and their spouse in a lucky draw.
“Although the outlook is bleak and the industry is going through many challenges, this is indeed a year of the water dragon. So I’m sure that SOS and Seacare, together with the industry, will ride out this tough year like a water dragon.”

- Ms Grace Fu, Senior Minister of State for Ministry of the Environment & Water Resources and Ministry of Information, Communications & the Arts
This year, 44 recipients – two from the 15-years LMA category and 42 recipients from the 30-years LMA category received SOS Long Membership Awards (LMA) in appreciation of their long support to the union.

LMA recipients Mr Mahmod B Hj Mohalas and Mr Lee Lye Huat represented their respective 15 and 30-year categories, receiving the awards on behalf of their fellow recipients from Guest-of-Honour Ms Grace Fu, Senior Minister of State for Ministry of the Environment & Water Resources and Ministry of Information, Communications & the Arts.

They were acknowledged at the SOS/Seacare Hong Bao Presentation cum Lunar New Year Celebration 2012 held on 27 January at Suntec Singapore, Ballrooms 1 – 3.

“When I was doing my training stint in 1997/8, SOS came forward. They encourage and keep me updated of skills upgrading in maritime-related courses, programmes and activities for my family, and bursaries for my children’s education. I’m very happy to be a part of SOS and am proud to be honoured here today.”
- Mr Mahmod B Haji Mohalas, 46, Asst Port Captain and 15-Year LMA recipient

“I would like to thank SOS for giving me this award and for the support and welfare rendered throughout the years especially their industrial relations and career placement. I don’t sail anymore, but thanks to SOS and Seacare, I now have a job delivering food and snacks to hotels.”
- Mr Lee Lye Huat, 64, Deliveryman and 30-Year LMA recipient
### 30 Year Long Membership Award

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<td>42</td>
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<td>LEE LYE HUAT</td>
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### 15 Year Long Membership Award

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<td>2</td>
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Eleven delegates and observers from the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) participated in NTUC National Delegates’ Conference (NDC) held from 6 to 8 December 2011 at Downtown East.

The NDC called for delegates’ support on the implementation of proposed key initiatives which would enable the Labour Movement to discharge its vision over the next five years (LM2015) in order to create “Better Jobs for All, Labour Movement for All, and Tripartism for All”.

NTUC Secretary General Lim Swee Say reported on these three aspects which were aptly also the topics for the workshops conducted over the duration of the conference.

**Better Jobs For All**

A key consideration for the Labour Movement, SG Lim says that broad based real wage increase must be translated to broad based growth – a demographic which has slowed over the past five years.

SG Lim in recommending raising productivity and productivity gains sharing as the best way to realise real wage increase, also warned against growth at all costs and the repercussions of slowed or no growth – citing internal and external factors as important factors for consideration.

**Labour Movement For All**

The LM is aiming to achieve 850,000 members by 2013 and 1 million by 2015 through targeting more PMEs (Professionals, Managers, Executives), middle management and ground staff of unionised organisations. The LM intends to also work closely with tripartite partners to allow unions to become “all collar unions” and thus be able to represent a certain percentage of the workforce regardless of their title.

**Tripartism For All**

A greater cohesion and a more pervasive tripartism is needed to create enough growth, jobs, and productivity gains to achieve broad based real wage increase for all workers.
Election of New NTUC Central Committee Members for 2011 – 2015

Close to 400 delegates from 60 NTUC affiliated unions elected by secret ballot their new 21-member NTUC CC for 2011-2015.

The change in leadership sees Immediate Past President John De Payva flowing on and being conferred the title of "President Emeritus" in recognition of his long standing contributions to the Labour Movement and NTUC’s presence on the international stage; while HSEU General Secretary Ms Diana Chia takes over the helm of NTUC President.

SOS would like to heartily congratulate all 21 elected members of NTUC’s CC on their recent appointments and wishes them every success in the years ahead.

NTUC Committees
The Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) has also made several nominations in the following committees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport &amp; Logistics Services Cluster</th>
<th>Daniel Tan Keng Hui</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Mohamad B Abu Bakar</td>
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<td>See Boon Kwang</td>
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<td>Kam Soon Huat</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Membership (Member)</td>
<td>David Shoo Weng Leong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership (Alternate Member)</td>
<td>David Sim Hor Pheng</td>
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<td>Young NTUC (1st Member)</td>
<td>Tan Kok Heng</td>
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<td>Young NTUC (2nd Member)</td>
<td>Clarissa Lim Cui Ling</td>
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<td>Women’s (1st Member)</td>
<td>Shena Foo Jee Hwee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s (2nd Member)</td>
<td>Sharon Li Yingying</td>
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<tr>
<td>Care and Share (Member)</td>
<td>Mohamed Idris B Mohamed Ibrahim</td>
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<td>Care and Share (Alternate Member)</td>
<td>Halimahtul Saa’diah Binte Mohamed Sadon</td>
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<td>Employment and Employability (Member)</td>
<td>Mariana Binte Amad</td>
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<td>Loh Suan Him</td>
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<td>Workplace Health And Safety (Member)</td>
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<td>International Relations (Member)</td>
<td>Kam Soon Huat</td>
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<td>Daniel Tan Keng Hui</td>
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Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat and Singapore Maritime Employers Federation (SMEF) Chairman Capt Joseph Francis signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) witnessed by SOS President Mr Mohd Idris Bin Mohd Ibrahim and SMEF ExCo Member Capt Anthony Khoo on 31 January 2012 at Seacare Building.

More than one hundred guests comprising SOS ExCo and Standing Committee Members, Seacare Directors, SMEF members, and SOS and Seacare staff were also on-hand to witness the momentous signing which recognised the need for competent and well-trained seafarers.

The MOU aims to promote cooperation for training and employment of seafarers, enhance seafarers’ competitiveness, as well as identify and develop maritime training programmes while strengthening bipartite relations between the SOS and SMEF.

It also serves to strengthen and fulfil seafarer training and welfare objectives, enabling SOS to tap on the maritime experience and resources of SMEF members in addition to furthering the development of training syllabuses and facilities. Both parties will also benefit collectively from the pooling of their training resources.
Cheap registration fees, low or no taxes and retaining the freedom to employ cheap labour are some motivating factors behind a Flag of Convenience.

For more than 50 years, the International Transport Workers’ Federation’s (ITF) Flags of Convenience (FOC) Campaign has worked towards establishing a regulatory framework for the shipping industry by eliminating the FOC system. In addition to this, the ITF uses all political, industrial and legal means at their disposal to attack sub-standard shipping and protect the rights of maritime workers.

In solidarity of the campaign, ITF affiliated unions in South East Asia recently launched an ITF FOC week of action from 9 to 13 January 2012.

Port and seafarer unions from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand pitched in a concerted week-long campaign which saw two ITF agreements signed with substantial gains accrued to the ships’ crews. More than 60 vessels were inspected as a result of action taken by the FOC campaign teams.

In Singapore, officials from the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) and Singapore Maritime Officers’ Union (SMOU) visited 20 vessels over five days; of which 11 ships were found lacking the requisite ITF approved crew agreements. The Masters of two vessels refused to provide crew lists and ship’s particulars, while another refused entry to the officials at the gangway.

In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the ITF with the help of SOS and SMOU officials, employed necessary and appropriate action with companies of vessels found to be flouting vessel-ownership legislations.
S$550,000 in Wages Recovered

This was the amount owed as at 30 December 2011 as 23 crew members aboard the MT Chem Orchid were unwitting victims of negligent employers.

Some of the ship’s crew, which consisted of Korean, Filipino, and Burmese nationalities went as far as three months without being paid their salaries and with little to eat.

With the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) and Singapore Maritime Officers’ Union (SMOU) called in to help the crew members recover their wages, law firm Gurbani and Co was appointed to act on their behalf as the court ruled for the motor tanker to be sold in order to repatriate its crew members and pay their unpaid salaries.

SOS was represented by IROs Mohamad B Abu Bakar and Tan Kok Heng.

No Place to Hide

With four months or more in owed wages, time was running out for the management of the M/T Khorfakkan.

Mr Keith McCorrison (ITF Inspector, Fremantle) requested that the SOS and SMOU be present onboard the vessel on 16 November 2011 to witness the payment of wages due to 25 crew members.

Wages, cash advances and airfare costs amounting to US$112,000 were recovered with SOS President Mohamed Idris B Mohamed Ibrahim, SOS IRO Mohamad B Abu Bakar and SMOU officials witnessing the payouts and signing of relevant documents.
Visitors to the Seacare Drop-in Centre for International Seafarers at Pasir Panjang Terminal on 23 December 2011 were in for a pleasant surprise when gifts and Christmas goodies greeted them at the drop-in centre; while Christmas log-cakes and roll cakes were presented to 13 vessels during the yuletide season in the months of December and January.
SOS reaches out in appreciation of its Filipino members in an evening organised for families.

Two hundred and fifty participants comprising manning agent representatives, seafarers and their families, business associates, and SOS ExCo and staff gathered under the open night sky at the Patio Victoria in Intramuros, Manila for an evening of relaxed banter, networking, and family bonding on 25 November 2011.

Officiated by Mr Marianito Z Aguisanda, Director of Seacare International Philippines Inc, the fiesta, which also featured separate segments for children and adults was the first-ever Philippine year-end reception to be held outdoors.

The children were thrilled with unlimited photo-taking opportunities complete with props, a chocolate fondue fountain, a bubble-making performance, and magic and puppet shows;
while the adults were entertained by song & dance, a live band belting soulful ballads, and an exciting lucky draw with fabulous prizes.

Apart from a sumptuous buffet spread and free flow of refreshments, attractive door gifts catering to family and educational needs such as lunch boxes and stationery sets were distributed to members and their families.

Thirty lucky draw prizes were given away at various segments throughout the evening while the grand prize winner walked home with a coveted Apple iPad 2.
Learning visit for SOS ExCo, committee members and staff was organised on 29 November 2011 to the Port Officers’ Union (POU) and PSA International Pte Ltd’s port areas as part of a development work plan for union leaders.

Tying in closely with the SOS Training & Skills and Leadership Development (TSLD) Committee’s resolve to co-operate closely with other organisations on training, skills and leadership development matters; a total of 26 participants were updated on the changing industrial trends in technology and practices and their effects on the job market.

A tour of Pasir Panjang Terminal’s modern port facilities included an elaborate introduction to the terminal’s automated container handling equipment and technology, and a video montage presented by the terminal’s hospitable staff.

In a visit to the Port Control room, participants observed firsthand how container operations were managed. Visitors were also presented the rare opportunity of enjoying a panoramic view of the port from the 40th storey of the PSA building.
SOS Vice-President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar presents a token of appreciation to POU General Secretary Mr Benjamin Tang

A staff of Pasir Panjang Terminal orientates visitors on the location of various port terminals in Singapore

Mr Abdul Rahim B Mohamed, Chairman of the SOS Women & Youth Committee poses a question
As part of the Union's training work plan which involves providing members with information on training programmes, a briefing on the Workfare Skills Up (WSU) Programme was jointly organised by SOS and the Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (UCCW) for SOS members.

To encourage SOS members to register for the WSU programme, a briefing was conducted on 19 November 2011 at NTUC’s Employment and Employability Institute (e2i) on the programme’s key features and objectives.

During the final Q&A segment, sound advice was dispensed with UCCW staff remaining on-hand to assist SOS members in registering for the programme.

What is WSU?

A structured training programme, the WSU provides workers with a stronger foundation in Basic English literacy through reading, listening, and speaking good English based on the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualification System’s (WSQ) Employability Skills (ES) framework.

The programme begins with a one-day briefing and profiling, followed by a two-day employability camp, a half-day pre-CAT (Computer-Aided Test), a 45-minute Workplace Literacy test, and a half-day post-CAT.

The CAT certifies participants’ level of English proficiency, while the two-day employability camp teaches them soft skills in job applications such as interview etiquette, resume-writing, form-filling, and grooming.

Participants also learn the importance of staying resilient and open to change by continuous learning, building confidence in managing change, and cultivating positive attitudes and mindsets towards training and resilience. In enabling workers to continue with their workplace skills training, the course also enhances their ability to take on better jobs.

With fully subsidised course fees and benefits such as training allowances, and commitment and milestone awards, participants receive greater encouragement to persevere in their training.

Background on UCCW

The Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (UCCW) was established in June 2006 by the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) to enhance the lives of low wage and vulnerable contract and casual workers.

It accomplishes this by encouraging older low-wage workers to work and train through the Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) and Workfare Training Scheme (WTS).
It all began with a groundbreaking ceremony on 20 May 2010. Nineteen months on, Seacare Co-operative Ltd and Seacare Properties Pte Ltd stuck another feather in its hotel development cap with a Topping Up Ceremony on the roof of The Seacare Hotel on 20 January 2012.

The first-ever Seacare and co-operative-owned hotel in Singapore, The Seacare Hotel will feature comfortable, well-furnished rooms, fitness facilities, a Japanese restaurant and sky garden.

Centrally located in Chin Swee Road near Chinatown, the 16-storey 103-room establishment aims to add value to Singapore’s connectivity to neighbouring countries and sea ports through a greater supply of rooms which seeks to further enhance Singapore’s position as an International Maritime Centre.
Guest-of-Honour, Seacare Properties Pte Ltd Chairman and Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd Director Mr Raymond Chia officiated with a ceremonious shovelling of cement to mark the completion of the hotel’s first phase of construction. Mr Chia hailed the hotel as an astute business decision made by Seacare’s management.

According to Seacare Co-operative Ltd Executive Chairman Mr Leow Ching Chuan, Seacare’s flagship Singapore Hotel is slated for completion in the middle of this year before its operational commencement and grand opening in late 2012.
Launched on 31 January 2012, the much awaited Seacare Seafarers’ Club (SSC) Jackpot Room and new Club@52 are a prelude of a wider range of bigger and better recreational facilities, benefits and services which the SSC and SOS have lined up for its members and growing membership.
Commencing in rousing and resplendent Lunar New Year fashion by a lion dance troupe, the ceremony was officiated by Chairman of Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd Mr Kong Mun Kwong in the company of the Chairmen, Directors and Managers of SSC, SOS and the Seacare Group of Companies.

Guests were treated to a tour of the new facilities, before concluding the ceremony in a dramatic climax with a “Cai Qing” (Picking the Green) performance by the lion dance troupe – a symbolic act signifying blessings and abundance in the New Year.
A LONG-TERM TRADITION

SOS-SEACARE LNY LUNCHEON FOR JALAN KUKOHO Seniors

When SOS and Seacare held their first joint LNY lunch gathering with senior citizens of Jalan Kukoh in 2002, Seacare Co-operative Ltd Executive Chairman Mr Leow Ching Chuan intended to make this gathering the start of a new tradition as part of their service to the community.

And indeed it has been, as elderly residents from the Jalan Kukoh Resident’s Committee and Kreta Ayer Seniors Activity Centre together with staff of SOS and Seacare gathered on 3 February 2012 for their 11th Lunar New Year luncheon and second at Red Star restaurant.

The luncheon was held at Red Star restaurant in Chin Swee Road due to the ongoing construction of Seacare Hotel and the increase in the number of guests – from 160 in 2011 to 380 this year.

Organising Committee Chairperson, Ms Shena Foo expressed her sincere gratitude to Chairperson of the Jalan Kukoh Residents’ Committee Mdm Yeo Gek Ngai, as well as Vice Chairman of the Kreta Ayer Senior’s Activity Centre Mr Lee Wai Ying, for helping in the organising of the senior citizens to the event; while Special Guest, Director of Seacare Medical Holdings Pte Ltd Mr Peter Boo distributed of red packets to all 260 elderly residents.
The Seacare Hotel Appoints General Manager

With a career in hospitality management beginning since 1979, Mr Francis Choo possesses a wealth of specialised knowledge in his area of expertise.

Having played instrumental roles in the pre-opening of the Golden Landmark Hotel in 1988, Grand Plaza Hotel, St Gregory Spa in 1997, and Saigon Grand Plaza in Vietnam in 1998, Mr Choo has worked in various sales and marketing capacities in The Mandarin Hotel, Peninsula Hotel, Golden Landmark Hotel, Plaza Hotel, New Park Central, the Regalia Hotel, Quality Hotel and V Hotel.

The hospitality thespian and former Director of Sales and Marketing shares his thoughts on The Seacare Hotel and his appointment as its General Manager.

“I feel fortunate to be given the opportunity to be included in the Seacare group of companies and to be able to harness and channel my twenty over years of knowledge and experience into the set up of Seacare’s first hotel here in Singapore. It’s a very exciting prospect.”

“Be it on operational aspects, the generation of revenue or staff training and grooming, my plan is to create a cozy and comfortable environment; a home away from home – complete with personalised services for all our corporate guests and groups.”

Key Features of The Seacare Hotel

“We are looking at attaining a 3-4 star rating. The hotel will feature amenities like a Japanese restaurant, gym, games room and sky garden.”

“The owner of the Japanese Restaurant was a Sumo wrestler! He will serve very authentic, traditional fresh Japanese cuisine such as Tsukune, Fugu, Uni and daily American breakfast.”

“In terms of location, The Seacare Hotel is strategically positioned and close to key attractions like Boat Quay, Chinatown, and Orchard Road.”

“In terms of productivity, we are exploring the integration of passport, IC scanners, hi-tech check in systems and communications as well as personalised services. These will help shorten check-in times, regulate traffic, and make sure that every stay in The Seacare Hotel is a pleasant and pleasurable one.”
FIRST RATE MEDICAL CARE AT A NEW LOCATION

In January 2012, Seacare Maritime Medical Centre (SMMC) unveiled its new clinic located in The Amara Corporate Tower.

Refreshed and refurbished, SMMC now offers the best of first rate medical care and facilities with great convenience and affordability.

With patients in mind, SMMC’s friendly and efficient reception staff coupled with a comfortable waiting area continues to offer the same great service in a refreshed ambience.

Enhanced capabilities such as radiological, treatment, and biophysics rooms add to the host of available maritime healthcare services which include:

- Office Consultation and Ship Call Consultation
- Medical Referral and Crew
- Hospitalisation Management
- Digital Imaging Facilities including X-ray and Ultrasounds
- Pre-employment Medical Examination for Seamen
- Vaccination and Travel Advisories
- Medical Evacuation of sick crew from ship to shore
- Medical repatriation of crew to home country
- Dental services
- Medical specialist services

With advanced medical amenities situated within the heart of Tanjong Pagar, first-rate medical care is only a stone’s throw away.

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Email: seacare@pacific.net.sg
Initially a human resource agency for maritime and non-maritime personnel, Seacare Manpower Service Pte Ltd has now evolved into a leading staffing and HR service provider in the education industry sector.

With an impressive 15-year track record in the education industry sector, it provides highly competent workers catering to the HR needs of clients whilst offering numerous employment opportunities to satisfy jobseekers’ requirements.

In view of the increased demand for Infocomm Technology (ICT) executives and support staff, Seacare Manpower has acquired the services of Mr Paul Cheong to helm the organisation’s new ICT division for schools as its Senior Manager.

With over 15 years of dealings with the educational sector, Mr Cheong brings with him a wealth of experience imperative to addressing the staffing needs of schools in terms of ICT professionals.
Samudra: What convinced you to join Seacare Manpower?

PC: It was pure coincidence. I was looking for a company to help expand my business in terms of manpower and capital when I chanced upon Seacare Manpower through some people I knew who recommended me for an induction. After that I sat and passed MOM’s requirement to join an employment agency in December 2011.

Although I had to leave my company to join Seacare, I felt that I could hone my management skills with Seacare’s excellent admin & financial support, and larger capital investments. Coupled with my 15 years of experience dealing with the education sector, I am convinced that we have formed a formidable combination.

Samudra: What are some of Seacare Manpower’s plans for expansion?

PC: For the next few months I will be looking at strengthening Seacare’s foothold in the ICT/AVA executive manpower supply to MOE, while providing IT related services such as Mobile App support and conducting essential training courses to schools.

These initiatives are part of a 3-year plan to gain a major foothold in the schools’ IT needs and services in order to create a household name for Seacare in the Government sector.

Samudra: How do you see yourself helping to fulfil these plans in your current role?

PC: Much initial ground work needs to be done. Building relationships is imminent to success. Seacare’s active participation in MOE events and its reliably efficient services will be key to making ‘Seacare’ a household name. I see myself being able to contribute my expertise in these areas due to past contacts and familiarity with events management, ICT and the educational sector.
Everything You Need, Minus the Hassle

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Tel 63795642

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