



INTERNATIONAL LAW
JOURNAL

**WHITE BLACK
LEGAL LAW
JOURNAL
ISSN: 2581-
8503**

Peer - Reviewed & Refereed Journal

The Law Journal strives to provide a platform for discussion of International as well as National Developments in the Field of Law.

WWW.WHITEBLACKLEGAL.CO.IN

DISCLAIMER

No part of this publication may be reproduced or copied in any form by any means without prior written permission of Editor-in-chief of White Black Legal – The Law Journal. The Editorial Team of White Black Legal holds the copyright to all articles contributed to this publication. The views expressed in this publication are purely personal opinions of the authors and do not reflect the views of the Editorial Team of White Black Legal. Though all efforts are made to ensure the accuracy and correctness of the information published, White Black Legal shall not be responsible for any errors caused due to oversight or otherwise.

WHITE BLACK
LEGAL

EDITORIAL **TEAM**

Raju Narayana Swamy (IAS) Indian Administrative Service **officer**



Dr. Raju Narayana Swamy popularly known as Kerala's Anti-Corruption Crusader is the All India Topper of the 1991 batch of the IAS and is currently posted as Principal Secretary to the Government of Kerala. He has earned many accolades as he hit against the political-bureaucrat corruption nexus in India. Dr Swamy holds a B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering from the IIT Madras and a Ph. D. in Cyber Law from Gujarat National Law University. He also has an LLM (Pro) (with specialization in IPR) as well as three PG Diplomas from the National Law University, Delhi- one in Urban Environmental Management and Law, another in Environmental Law and Policy and a third one in Tourism and Environmental Law. He also holds a post-graduate diploma in IPR from the National Law School, Bengaluru and diploma in Public

a professional Procurement from the World Bank.

Dr. R. K. Upadhyay

Dr. R. K. Upadhyay is Registrar, University of Kota (Raj.), Dr Upadhyay obtained LLB , LLM degrees from Banaras Hindu University & Phd from university of Kota.He has succesfully completed UGC sponsored M.R.P for the work in the ares of the various prisoners reforms in the state of the Rajasthan.



Senior Editor

Dr. Neha Mishra



Dr. Neha Mishra is Associate Professor & Associate Dean (Scholarships) in Jindal Global Law School, OP Jindal Global University. She was awarded both her PhD degree and Associate Professor & Associate Dean M.A.; LL.B. (University of Delhi); LL.M.; Ph.D. (NLSIU, Bangalore) LLM from National Law School of India University, Bengaluru; she did her LL.B. from Faculty of Law, Delhi University as well as M.A. and B.A. from Hindu College and DCAC from DU respectively. Neha has been a Visiting Fellow, School of Social Work, Michigan State University, 2016 and invited speaker Panelist at Global Conference, Whitney R. Harris World Law Institute, Washington University in St.Louis, 2015.

Ms. Sumiti Ahuja

Ms. Sumiti Ahuja, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi,

Ms. Sumiti Ahuja completed her LL.M. from the Indian Law Institute with specialization in Criminal Law and Corporate Law, and has over nine years of teaching experience. She has done her LL.B. from the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. She is currently pursuing Ph.D. in the area of Forensics and Law. Prior to joining the teaching profession, she has worked as Research Assistant for projects funded by different agencies of Govt. of India. She has developed various audio-video teaching modules under UGC e-PG Pathshala programme in the area of Criminology, under the aegis of an MHRD Project. Her areas of interest are Criminal Law, Law of Evidence, Interpretation of Statutes, and Clinical Legal Education.



Dr. Navtika Singh Nautiyal

Dr. Navtika Singh Nautiyal presently working as an Assistant Professor in School of law, Forensic Justice and Policy studies at National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. She has 9 years of Teaching and Research Experience. She has completed her Philosophy of Doctorate in 'Intercountry adoption laws from Uttranchal University, Dehradun' and LLM from Indian Law Institute, New Delhi.



Dr. Rinu Saraswat

Associate Professor at School of Law, Apex University, Jaipur, M.A, LL.M, Ph.D,

Dr. Rinu have 5 yrs of teaching experience in renowned institutions like Jagannath University and Apex University. Participated in more than 20 national and international seminars and conferences and 5 workshops and training programmes.

Dr. Nitesh Saraswat

E.MBA, LL.M, Ph.D, PGDSAPM

Currently working as Assistant Professor at Law Centre II, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Dr. Nitesh have 14 years of Teaching, Administrative and research experience in Renowned Institutions like Amity University, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Jai Narain Vyas University Jodhpur, Jagannath University and Nirma University.

More than 25 Publications in renowned National and International Journals and has authored a Text book on Cr.P.C and Juvenile Delinquency law.



Subhrajit Chanda

BBA. LL.B. (Hons.) (Amity University, Rajasthan); LL. M. (UPES, Dehradun) (Nottingham Trent University, UK); Ph.D. Candidate (G.D. Goenka University)

Subhrajit did his LL.M. in Sports Law, from Nottingham Trent University of United Kingdoms, with international scholarship provided by university; he has also completed another LL.M. in Energy Law from University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, India. He did his B.B.A.LL.B. (Hons.) focussing on International Trade Law.

ABOUT US

WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal provided dedicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

"THEY ARE THE INVISIBLE ENGINE OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY, YET OFTEN LIVE DISCONNECTED FROM THE WORLD THEY SUSTAIN."

AUTHORED BY - ER. ABIN JOSE RAJA GOPALAN

Introduction

The global economy floats — quite literally — on the shoulders of seafarers. These men and women brave vast oceans not for fame or recognition, but to keep the pulse of global trade alive. In a world that praises speed, convenience, and connectivity, it is easy to forget that over 90% of global trade still moves across oceans on ships crewed by seafarers. Yet, these key workers remain largely invisible — isolated, underappreciated, and often without basic human rights.

There are more than 1.9 million seafarers worldwide who operate approximately 100,000 commercial ships. They deliver essential goods including food, fuel, medical supplies, electronics, clothing, and construction materials. Every economy — from the smallest island nation to the largest industrial powerhouse — depends on them. If even for a day seafarers stopped working, the consequences would be catastrophic.

The Lifeblood of Global Trade

According to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), maritime transport is the backbone of international trade and the global economy. In fact, ships transport nearly 11 billion tons of goods annually. Without seafarers, this would come to a standstill.

From the fuel that powers your vehicles to the raw materials that build your cities, seafarers touch nearly every part of modern life. They make globalization possible. Yet their contribution remains under the radar, overshadowed by the systems they serve.

A Profession of Peril and Sacrifice

Seafaring is one of the most dangerous professions on Earth. Seafarers face:
Extreme weather conditions including hurricanes and high seas

Piracy and armed robbery in hotspots like the Gulf of Guinea and the Strait of Malacca

Mechanical failures and onboard accidents that can turn deadly in seconds

Mental and physical fatigue due to long hours and limited crew

Despite advanced training and strict regulations, seafarers are constantly exposed to risks that most shore-based workers can scarcely imagine. Emergencies onboard — such as fires, engine breakdowns, or toxic leaks — must be dealt with immediately, often in isolation and without external help.

Life Without Internet: A Digital Desert

In a hyperconnected world, internet access is almost considered a human right. Yet many seafarers still live without reliable onboard internet. This disconnect is more than an inconvenience — it is a mental and emotional burden. Being unable to speak to family during long contracts of 6–9 months leads to:

Severe homesickness and isolation

Increased risk of depression and anxiety

Breakdown of family relationships

A 2023 report by the Seafarers' Happiness Index confirmed that lack of communication is one of the top factors affecting seafarers' morale. Some vessels restrict internet use to a few minutes per week. Others have no connection at all.

How can we expect modern maritime professionals to thrive under such conditions?

Mental Health at Sea: The Hidden Storm

Long-term isolation, high-pressure environments, sleep deprivation, and fear of job loss create a dangerous mental health landscape.

According to the International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN), 25% of seafarers report severe mental health issues, yet less than 10% receive support.

Suicidal ideation is a growing concern, particularly among junior officers and ratings who feel trapped by circumstance.

Unlike other workers, seafarers cannot walk away from their job when things go wrong. They are confined to a floating steel structure, often in international waters, far from help.

The COVID-19 Crisis: A Humanitarian Disaster

The pandemic laid bare the vulnerability of seafarers.

At its peak, more than 400,000 seafarers were stranded at sea, some working 15–17 months without relief — far beyond the legal limit set by the Maritime Labour Convention.

Others were stuck ashore, jobless, unable to return to vessels due to travel bans and embassy closures.

These frontline heroes delivered masks, vaccines, and essentials across continents, yet were denied basic rights like shore leave or medical treatment. Their suffering was largely ignored by the world.

Demanding Dignity: What Must Change

Seafarers ask for very little. Yet, the global shipping industry owes them a great deal. Some key actions include:

Universal internet access onboard to allow contact with families and access to mental health resources.

Fair and transparent contracts with limits on work hours and mandatory rest.

Recognition of seafarers as key workers in all nations, with fast-track visa and port clearance systems.

Mandatory mental health training and support services for crew members and officers.

Stronger legal protections and proper investigation of labor abuses, under international maritime law.

Conclusion: The World Runs on Seafarers

The next time you open a delivery package, fuel your vehicle, or use a smartphone — remember a seafarer made it possible. They are not just workers; they are guardians of the global supply chain.

Without them, commerce halts. Industry freezes. Economies collapse.

It's time to bring them from the shadows to the spotlight. It's time to not only thank them, but also stand up for them.

