

CONTENTS

INDUSTRY AIDS VICTIMS OF JAPAN QUAKE AND TSUNAMI DISASTER. For the past few weeks, while the world witnessed the dreadful aftermath of the Japan earthquake and tsunami disaster, hope continues to flourish as numbers of civil society groups and governments mobilized themselves to assist the nation and people of Japan. In the same vein, and perhaps with more fervour considering its close ties with Japanese partners, the Philippine maritime industry initiated an industry-wide campaign to provide possible assistance to the victims of the disaster. [Read more >>>](#)

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MIDDLE EAST UNRESTS DENT PHILIPPINE LABOR MARKET. The series of civil unrest that swiftly swept from Africa to the Middle East has caused a series of dents to the stability of the overseas labor market. [Read more >>>](#)

JMG PARTICIPATES IN PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH AT MALACAÑANG PALACE. Several industries constituting the economic sector of the country showed their support to President ‘Noynoy’ Aquino’s 22-point agenda on labor and employment with their attendance at the ceremonial launching of Public-Private Partnership in Labor Governance last 21 March 2011 at the Malacañang. [Read more >>>](#)

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INDUSTRY ASSISTS VICTIMS OF JAPAN QUAKE AND TSUNAMI

For the past few weeks, while the world witnessed the dreadful aftermath of the Japan earthquake and tsunami disaster, hope continues to flourish as a number of civil society groups and governments mobilized themselves to assist the nation and people of Japan. In the same vein, and perhaps with more fervour considering its close ties with Japanese partners, the Philippine maritime industry initiated an industry-wide campaign to provide possible assistance to the victims of the disaster.

11 March 2011 – A massive earthquake recorded at 9.0 on the moment magnitude scale, fifth of the strongest earthquake recorded worldwide, hit the country of Japan with epicentre located 81 miles off the east coast of the Oshika Peninsula of Tōhoku near Sendai. Tsunami waves followed the quake in less than an hour with the highest wave recorded reaching up to 33 ft. The waves slammed across Japan's Pacific coasts and travelled inlands reaching, at the farthest, a distance of six miles.

The devastation that followed was quite appalling. Death toll rose to more than 13,000, recorded number of injured reached 4,916; and about 14,175 people were missing.* Buildings and infrastructures were wrecked to rubble. With a catastrophe such as this, the World Bank estimated that the damage could range from \$122-135 billion.

With these recent developments, on March 15, 2011, the industry began the campaign to raise financial contributions for the victims of the disaster. The campaign has been dubbed as

"Philippine-Japan Friendship Cooperation Fund" which the maritime industry set up.

The Joint Manning Group (JMG) encouraged manning agencies to extend voluntary financial contributions. From the labor sector's end, the Associated Marine Officers and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP-PTWGO-ITF) likewise encouraged its member-Filipino seafarers to voluntarily contribute to the fund.

The "Philippine-Japan Friendship Cooperation Fund" is handled by the Philippine-Japan Manning Consultative Council, Inc (PJMCC) – a JMG-member association that has the closest ties/partnership with maritime associations of Japan such as the Japanese Shipowners' Association (JSA) and the International Mariners Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ).

Source: JMG, PJMCC, *[NATIONAL POLICE AGENCY OF JAPAN](#)

EXCERPT FROM DFA STATEMENT ON JAPAN QUAKE/TSUNAMI

"We are urging Filipinos who are within the 20-kilometer radius of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power to evacuate immediately, if they have not done so, and those within the 21 to 30 kilometer radius of the plant to stay indoors, as ordered by Japanese authorities.

Those within or near the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant should also observe the 10-kilometer exclusion zone imposed by Japanese authorities.

Filipino nationals who cannot get in touch with the Fukushima Prefectural Government may contact the Embassy so that it can inform Japanese authorities of their location.

In a briefing for the diplomatic corps, Japanese authorities said that people residing outside the exclusion zones can remain and continue with their normal activities. However, those who are concerned about ongoing developments may wish to voluntarily relocate to areas further away.

Japanese authorities said that they have evacuated those within the exclusion zones, and are constantly monitoring radiation levels. The MOFA highlighted that expert-led operations on the ground are systematic and measured, cooling measures are continuing and have a "good safety allowance", and the amount of radioactivity leak is under control.

The Philippine Government, through the DFA, the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo, its Consulate General in Osaka and the Honorary Consulates in Sapporo, Morioka, Nagoya and Naha, have reached out to Filipino community leaders and members, as well as quickly responding to requests for assistance or information.

Most of our Filipino nationals are in the Tokyo metropolitan region, and the capital city is about 250 kilometers away from the said nuclear power plants.

Two teams are now in the Sendai area and are assisting our nationals, as well as providing relief goods such as food and water for the Filipino community. They have touched base with the Filipino communities in the area.

We expect that we will get more information in the coming days, as Japanese authorities go to the affected areas, assess the damages caused by the earthquake and tsunami and do search and rescue missions.

Again, we ask our nationals to heed the advisories of the Japanese authorities and our Embassy on evacuation and safety instructions. Thank you."

Note: The above is a portion taken from '(Updated) Statement of DFA Undersecretary Rafael E. Seguis Press Briefing on Bahrain Unrest and Japan Quake/Tsunami 15 March 2011, 2 p.m.'

Source: [DFA](#)

JSA WRITES TO ALLAY FEARS OF RADIATION EFFECT TO SHIPS, PORTS

On 21 March 2011, an official correspondence from the Japanese Shipowners Association (JSA) was circulated among JMG members in view of answering to industry qualm on Nuke radiation. The letter reads:

18th March, 2011-04-01

To Philippine – Japan Manning Consultative Council, Inc.

For the kind of attention of Mr. Eduardo U. Manese, President

Dear Sirs and Mesdames,

We are afraid that you have been in receipt of many inquiries from your members and colleagues about the influence of the extraordinary devastating earthquake and tsunami, which assaulted North East region of Japan on 11th March. We presume their biggest and basic concern may be "Whether it is safe to call at Japanese ports?", because a nuclear power plant in Fukushima prefecture (TEPCO Fukushima No. 1 Plant) has been suffered from fewer waters for the cooling down systems of reactors and spent nuclear fuel rods.

In reply to such fears and questions, we would like to forward news by Japan's government.

On 15th March, Japan Coast Guard promulgated the a Local Navigational Warning as below;

-qt-

Dangerous Area Designated
2nd RCG Headquarters Local Warning
No.13

Promulgation TIME 161420 JST MAR.
HONSHU, E-COAST, FUKUSHIMA PREF
COAST, WITHIN 30 KILOMETERES OF
FUKUSHIMA NA1NUCLEAR ELECTRIC
POWER.37-25.5N, 141-0.2E. VESSELS ARE
ADVISED KEEP MORE THAN 30 KM FROM
THE PLANT.

-uqt-

Today, Japan's Ministry of Land,
Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
(MLIT) updated its homepage as below;

-qt-

Currently, the level of radiation in Tokyo City
and Yokohama City were as shown in the
attachment at very safe level to health.

-uqt-

For your further information, the nuclear
plant is located more than 200 kilometres
north apart from Tokyo Bay, while people
living 20 kilometre radius of the plant have
been evacuated and people living
between 20 and 30 kilometres from the
plant have been ordered to stay indoors at
this moment.

We believe the aforementioned facts and
attachments are fair and bona fide
evidences, and are eloquent enough to
eliminate any irresponsible groundless
rumours about Japanese ports and her
coastal navigations. And we are afraid
that, if we leave prevailing of such
rumours, it will disturb the early recovery
of normal lives for the survivors, who are
desperately in need for the hearty aiding
materials from all over the world. Such
situation should never be allowed from
humane view points. The rumours will also
eventually bring irrecoverable serious
adverse economical results, which may
include jeopardizing of seafarers' stable
employment.

Therefore, I would be most grateful if you
could appropriately forward the
aforementioned "precise and correct
news" and swiftly cooperate with us to
shoot out any irresponsible rumours about
them.

Last but not least, we hope we can
struggle out this national crisis as soon as
possible with your kind cooperation and
generous help, and that we come back to
the normal situation at an earliest date, so
that employment and benefits of all
maritime related sectors will be protected.

Yours most sincerely,
Koji Miyahara,
President
The Japanese Shipowners' Association

SOURCE: PJMCC

TSUNAMI DESTROYS SHIPS, PORTS IN JAPAN

TWO days after a dreadful earthquake and
tsunami hit the country of Japan last **11**
March 2011, major Japanese shipping lines
confirmed certain damages to several vessels
and major ports were announced closed due
to ruin.

K-Line, Mitsui-OSK Line, and NYK Line are
three major shipping lines that reported
damages to their ships. K-line said that five of
their bulk carriers have ran aground or have
floated off ports including the capesize China
Steel Integrity. Mitsui-OSK Lines have reported
handysize bulk carrier CS Victory to have sunk
at the shallow harbor of Ishinomaki in the
Miyagi Prefecture. NYK Line had three bulk
carriers damaged including Shiramizu,
Shirouma, and Coral Ring – all are Panamaxes.
All three lines have reported no casualties on
crewmembers. No incidents of fuel leakages
were accounted for K-Line and MOL, while
NYK Line was unable to confirm.

Sixteen ports also suffered severe destruction;
most of them handling dry cargo including the
ports of Kashima, Hitachinaka, Hitachi,
Onahama, Soma, Sendai, Shioyama,

Ishinomaki, Kesenuma, Ofunato, Kamashi, Miyako, and Hachinohe. Three ports handling oil were also destroyed including Sendai, Onahama, and Kashima. These ports will be closed for several months and even years according to reports by Inchcape Shipping Services (ISS).

Port damages are expected to hamper and reduce supply of iron and ore imports to Japan despite the great demand for these products due to the destruction of several of Japan's oil refineries. BIMCO has also reported that container ships might skip Japanese ports.

SOURCE: [Fairplay Daily News](#) (Article Citations: 'BIMCO: Box ships could skip Japan;' '16 Japanese ports closed;' 'Ports wrecked but Japan restarts mills;' 'Japanese ships aground, Counting the costs')

INDUSTRY UPDATES

MIDDLE EAST UNRESTS DENT PHILIPPINE LABOR MARKET

The series of civil unrest that swiftly swept from Africa to the Middle East has caused a series of dents to the stability of the overseas labor market.

In the Philippines, it has been over a month already that the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) have been alternately issuing deferment of OFW deployments to countries like Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen.

After the February 22 deferment of deployment of OFWs to Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen; POEA resumed deployment to Bahrain on March 09 following DFA issuance of lowered

alert level in Bahrain to Alert Level 1 or Observation Stage. Come March 15, travel advisory to Bahrain was again raised to Alert Level 2.

On March 09, POEA issued guidelines on the Alert Levels issued by DFA which are interpreted as follows:

1. For **ALERT LEVEL 1** (Observation Stage), a travel advisory will allow the deployment of overseas Filipino workers with new job contracts (new hires) and returning workers (vacationing or rehires) with valid visas/resident permits.
2. For **ALERT LEVEL 2** (Caution Stage), a travel advisory would have already been in place and a partial deployment ban will be issue. Under this alert level, only returning workers will be allowed to travel back to Bahrain. Returning workers, however must execute an affidavit that he is well aware of the security risk, but voluntary proceeds to Bahrain.
3. For **ALERT LEVEL 3** (Warning Stage) and **ALERT LEVEL 4** (Repatriation), a total deployment ban will be implemented.

SOURCE: DFA, POEA

JMG PARTICIPATES IN PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH AT MALACAÑANG PALACE

Several industries constituting the economic sector of the country showed their support to President 'Noynoy' Aquino's 22-point agenda on labor and employment with their attendance at the ceremonial launching of Public-Private Partnership in Labor Governance last 21 March 2011 at the Malacañang.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), lead agency for the event, assembled representatives from the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce; the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry; the Maritime Industry Tripartite Council; and several regional tripartite councils including the Labor Tripartite Council in Education (Region VII), Tripartite Council for Hotel/Restaurant and Tourism Industry (Region VII), Tripartite Council for BPO/Call Center and IT Industry (Region VII), Banana Industry Tripartite Council (Region XI), and Mining Industry Tripartite Council (CARAGA Region).

The event was a venue for councils and chambers to hand over their memorandum of agreements, expressions of interests and voluntary codes of good practices to the President as a symbol of their cooperation to P-noys' Labor and Employment Agenda. Oath taking were ceremonies also held for the reconstituted National Tripartite Industrial Peace Council (TIPC), and for DOLE regional directors who are serving as chairpersons for Regional Tripartite Industrial Peace Councils.

The launching marked the strong will of the current administration to boost 'tripartism' a form of social partnership made between employers, labour/unions, and the state which promotes cooperation, consultation, negotiation, and compromise among these entities for the creation of sound economic policy.

SOURCE: DOLE

MITC 2011 ACTION AGENDA TOP-RANKS RATIFICATION OF ILO-C185

Since its creation in late January 2011, the Maritime Industry Tripartite Council (MITC)

has already convened two plenary sessions to map-out its action agenda for 2011. At the top of the agenda is the creation of a council resolution recommending the ratification of ILO Convention 185 or the Seafarers' Identity Document Convention.

It can be recalled that in early December 2010, the industry was faced with a crisis in Brazil when some ports, particularly Recife and Suape, imposed a fine of \$500 for every crewmember of vessel berthing these ports whose seaman's book is issued by countries who have not ratified ILO Convention 185. Later in the second half of January this year, the collection of fines was suspended by immigration authorities, most particularly in Recife.

Although the suspension of fines remedied the exigency, industry leaders strongly feel that lasting solutions are more appropriate, which is to ratify the convention.

The Maritime Industry Tripartite Council has targeted to produce the aforementioned resolution next month.

Following the above priority agenda, other items included in the councils 2011 Action Agenda are as follows: (arranged according to priority)

2. Ratification of ILO- MLC, 2006
3. Amendments to the Labor Code
 - 3.a Magna Carta for Seafarers
 - 3.b Review of the Dispute Settlement System for Seafarers and Port Workers
 - 3.c Review of all pending Maritime Bills before the House of Representatives and the Senate
4. Rules and Regulations Implementing the Labor Code
 - 4.a Rules and Regulations Governing the Employment and Working Conditions of Domestic Seafarers

5. Formulation of the Voluntary Maritime Industry Code of Best Practices

The Maritime Industry Tripartite Council is a body constituted by 24 representatives: 8 from the Labor Sector; 9 from the Employer Sector; and 7 from the Government Sector. Its 2011 Action Agenda was approved last 11 March 2011 during its 1st Plenary Session, and the Roadmap for said Action Agenda was approved last 23 March 2011 during the council's 2nd plenary session.

SOURCE: MITC

DOH WORKS ON RA10022 IRR

The Department of Health (DOH), one of the implementing agencies of the RA 10022 or Amended Migrant Workers' Act, has started working on its IRR for the AMWA last 27 January 2011. The TWG, working to refine the draft IRR, as against several issues posed by both land-based and sea-based employment sector, has had four meetings to date and had come-up with fairly promising results.

The TWG is composed of 14 personalities with Atty. Nicolas B. Lutero III, DOH Director, as Chair. The body is composed of seven members from the private sector including JMG; and six other DOH-BHFS personnel.

The TWG is working to achieve the following results from the IRR:

- Standardized method and quality of medical testing/examinations
- Standardized medical examination fees
- two-year moratorium for all medical clinics to upgrade facilities with the use of digital devices to meet international standards

- Basic PEME or PEME A as the standard minimum PEME package which will include the following tests:

- a. Audiometry
- b. Chest Xray
- c. Color Perception (Ishihara Test for seafarers)
- d. Complete Blood Count (CBC)
- e. Blood Typing
- f. Dental Examination
- g. ECG
- h. Hepa B Screening
- i. HIV (optional)
- j. Psycho Exam
- k. Routine Stool Exam
- l. Routine Urinalysis
- m. RPR
- Visual Acuity

- Mechanics on the following items in relation to the *Liability of Medical Clinic or Health Facility* as stated in the Draft IRR:

- Validity of medical certificates
- Repatriation guidelines for OFWs
- Cost of repatriation
- DOH as appeals court
-

SOURCE: DOH

MSAP 2011 RESULTS

Last February 11-12, the Philippine Japan Manning Consultative Council, Inc (PJMCC) led the Maritime Schools Assessment Program or MSAP 2011. According to the post-event reports of PJMCC, the following results were shown:

- 1) A total of 85 schools participated in the MSAP 2011.
- 2) Between the years 2007-2009, a steady increase in the number of schools participating in the MSAP can be observed.

- 3) A total of 16,719 students participate which is equivalent to 75.7% overall student participation rate.
- 4) A steady increase in the number of students participating in the MSAP can also be observed from MSAP 2007 to 2011. The total number of takers for this year's MSAP grew 42% from last year.
- 5) A total of 3,822 students passed the assessment out of 16,719 actual exam takers. This represents a passing percentage of almost 23%. However, comparatively with last year's results, the passing rate for this year has declined by 7.2%.

Source: PJMCC

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