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Journal for all the Mariners

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Photo courtesy: TOKOKAI



Japanese Lighthouses Watch over Ships and Seafarers

Ashizurimisaki Lighthouse

This lighthouse, located at the southernmost tip of Shikoku, was erected and first lit on April 1, 1914. A renovation in 1960 gave the lighthouse its present appearance and made it one of Japan's brightest, with an intensity of 460,000 candelas.

During the renovation, the local community requested a bold and innovative design, resulting in a distinctive "rocket" shape that departs from the traditional image of lighthouses. This design was inspired by the era's space race between the United States and the Soviet Union, in hope that the beam of light from Cape Ashizuri would carry a mes-

sage of peace to the world.

The area around the cape has a subtropical climate, with a warm average annual temperature of 18°C. Influenced by the Kuroshio Current, it is known as an excellent fishing ground. The cape itself is a typical coastal terrace, and the powerful waves of the Pacific Ocean have carved steep cliffs into the landscape, creating numerous popular spots for rock and offshore fishing that attract anglers from both within and outside the prefecture. Adjacent to the lighthouse stands Kongobukiji Temple, said to have been founded in 823 by the eminent monk Kūkai under a decree from Emperor Saga.

Location: 214-5 Ashizuri-yama, Cape Ashizuri, Tosashimizu City, Kochi Prefecture
First lit: April 1, 1914
Structure: Concrete
Tower height: 18 m
Illumination: Fl (3) W 30s (Group white flash every 30 seconds)
Range: 20.5 nautical miles (approx. 38 km)



World Maritime Day Theme for 2026-2027: 'From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence'

IMO

World Maritime Day, which reaches its peak with a celebration held on the last Thursday of September each year, will feature the theme “From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence” for both 2026 and 2027. This marks the first time the same theme will span two consecutive years, underscoring the IMO’s commitment to translating policy into practice through the provision of technical assistance, training, and other essential services. The 2026 parallel events will take place in Busan, South Korea, on October 26-27.

To promote the theme, the IMO is encouraging social media posts using the hashtags #WorldMaritimeDay and #MaritimePolicytoPractice. In the evening, the IMO headquarters building will be illuminated in blue, and the organization is calling on Member States, intergovernmental organizations cooperating with the IMO, and non-governmental organizations in consultative status to illuminate landmarks in support of the initiative.

Message from IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez

For nearly 80 years, IMO has built the framework for global shipping - more than 50 international conventions shape the everyday of maritime life.

However, we must be honest- experience shows that the true value of these instruments is realized only when they are effectively applied, delivering practical benefits on board ships, in ports and throughout the global maritime domain.

The real test and the real responsibility lie in implementation, how we transition “From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence.”

This theme reflects our mission: ensuring that the global regulatory framework we develop is not merely adopted in principle, but translated into concrete actions and real-world results that deliver tangible benefits for all.

When we talk about “practice,” we are talking about people. The seafarers on the ship; the people in the port; those managing ship operations, ship recycling workers, port State control officers and flag State administrators.

To make the maritime industry truly sustainable, we must ensure these high standards are felt in every port and on every deck—not selectively, not unevenly, but globally. IMO is committed to powering this transition through technical cooperation and direct support.

Let us move beyond the conference room and turn our collective decisions into real-world results that benefit everyone.

It is time to move decisively from policy to practice.

NSU Donates Engine Room Simulator to Vietnam Maritime University



Scenes from the Ceremony

NS United Kaiun Kaisha, Ltd (NSU) has donated a full mission engine room simulator to Vietnam Maritime University (VMU), reflecting its commitment to promoting the development of maritime professionals and enhancing Vietnam’s educational environment. This simulator is an advanced training system capable of replicating the engine room environment aboard an actual vessel. It will be used not only for practical training

of students aspiring to become marine engineers, but also to help active seafarers upgrade their knowledge and technical skills, thereby contributing to the development of a wide range of maritime personnel. During a ceremony at VMU to mark the donation, representatives of NSU and the university exchanged views on how to deepen cooperation on the development of maritime professionals in the future.

IMO WORLD MARITIME DAY THEME 2026-2027

FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

POWERING MARITIME EXCELLENCE

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & PRESERVATION

IMO instruments protect the ocean and reduce shipping's negative impact on the planet.

Combating plastic pollution at sea through Port State control training.

African Port State Control Officers come together at the Port of Ehoala, Madagascar, to strengthen their capacity to enforce IMO regulations on preventing garbage pollution. Rules under **MARPOL Annex V** minimize the amount of garbage entering the ocean from ships.

IMO POLICY IN ACTION

IMO WORLD MARITIME DAY THEME 2026-2027

FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

POWERING MARITIME EXCELLENCE

LIABILITY & COMPENSATION

Damage caused during maritime transportation, including oil pollution and wreck removal, is covered by IMO legal instruments and guidance.

Targeting better enforcement of IMO liability and compensation laws.

Here, officials from countries across Southeast Asia, Middle East, Africa and Black Sea region receive IMO legal expertise on measures that ensure victims of maritime incidents receive prompt and adequate compensation that is fully insured and guaranteed up to sufficiently high limits for shipowners.

The liability and compensation regime includes treaties on oil pollution, wreck removal, salvage, passengers, and hazardous & noxious substances.

IMO POLICY IN ACTION

Japan's 3 Major Shipping Lines Launch Relief Efforts After Mindanao Earthquake

Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK) Group has decided to donate US\$50,000 to support relief and reconstruction efforts in the areas affected by the earthquake that struck off the coast of Mindanao, Philippines, on June 8.

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL) will contribute US\$50,000 to the relief efforts, and its group executives and employees will organize a charity drive to raise additional funds.

Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd. (“K” Line) has decided to donate US\$20,000 through The Rayomar Outreach Foundation, Inc. (ROFI), a charitable organization established by the Rayomar

Group, its business partner in the Philippines, to support relief and recovery efforts in the affected areas. In coordination with ROFI, “K” Line assessed conditions in the disaster-stricken areas and found damage to school buildings at an elementary school in Sarangani Province, Mindanao, where the impact of the earthquake has been especially severe. The donation will be used to install temporary classrooms to help ensure a safe educational environment for children affected by the disaster.

Rope Holes—Or ‘Lubber’s Holes’ Classic Stories of the Sea

By Akinori Sugiura

The top of a ship’s mast is semicircular, or close to it, in shape. The shrouds that support lower masts run from both sides of the ship up to the masthead, which is positioned slightly above the top of the mast. For this reason, openings are provided where the shrouds pass through the top of the mast. These openings are known as rope holes.

Although the shrouds function as a rope ladder for climbing the mast, a sailor must use a separate, reverse-sloped rope

ladder installed below the top to reach it. Novice sailors, afraid of climbing while hanging outward, often attempt to squeeze themselves through the rope hole—even though it is obviously far too small for a person to pass through.

The term “lubber’s hole” literally means “the hole for the clumsy,” a nickname coined by seasoned mariners to tease new recruits. In the age of sail, inexperienced sailors were commonly referred to as “lubbers” or “land lubbers.”

MOL, IBM Japan Team up to Develop AI Platform to Enhance Onboard Decision-Making

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL) and IBM Japan, Ltd. have jointly developed an AI-powered platform that integrates a wide range of information related to vessel operations to enhance decision-making. Centered on MOL's Safety Operation Supporting Center (SOSC), which supports the safe operation of MOL-affiliated vessels around the world, the platform centrally manages information—such as weather and sea conditions, navigation status, and geopolitical developments—that was previously dispersed across multiple sources. By rapidly identifying critical information for vessels, the platform not only speeds up decision-making but also increases the quality of operational decisions.

Key Features of the platform

① Real-time Situational Awareness through Integration of Vessel-Related Information

A data management platform that integrates weather and sea condition data, vessel operation data, and geopolitical information in real time enables the system to monitor the environment surrounding vessels underway and visualize it in a centralized manner.

② Decision Support via AI Assistant

By utilizing generative AI that identifies and extracts risks faced by vessels in real time, based on historically accumulated vessel operation records and current operational information, the system supports monitoring of vessel movements, assessing situations, and prioritization of operational decisions.

③ Advanced Knowledge Utilization

The system leverages past accident information, response case studies, and insights gained in the field to enable organization-wide sharing and analysis.



MOL Safety Operation Supporting Center (SOSC)

These features help SOSC personnel quickly identify critical incidents from a vast volume of information, enabling more proactive and accurate decision-making than ever before. By combining AI-driven data analysis with the expertise of experienced captains, the platform fur-



ther enhances the quality of operational judgments.

'K' Line Hosts Media Tour of Car Carrier to Showcase Cargo Handling Operations for Cairo-bound Train Cars



Oceanus Highway and Cairo-bound Train Cars

On June 13, Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha ("K" Line) held a media event at Rokko Island in the Port of Kobe to demonstrate the loading operations for train cars destined for Phase 1 of the Cairo Metro Line 4 in Egypt. The cars, manu-

factured by Kinki Sharyo, are being delivered to the Egyptian Ministry of Transport by Mitsubishi Corporation and "K" Line. Of the 16 cars scheduled for shipment, 12 had already been loaded, and members of the press observed the remaining four be-

ing placed aboard the LNG-fueled car carrier *Oceanus Highway* and secured on deck.

During the event, the train cars were loaded individually onto rolling trailers known as "Murphys" and transported onto the vessel using a Tugmaster. The *Oceanus Highway* is a large-scale car carrier with a cargo capacity of approximately 6,900 standard passenger vehicles. It is also equipped with heavy-cargo ramps and height-adjustable decks, enabling the safe and efficient handling of oversized cargo such as railway rolling stock.

The Cairo Metro Line 4 project—progressing with support from a yen loan provided by the Japan International Coop-

eration Agency (JICA)—is designed to alleviate severe traffic congestion in the Cairo metropolitan area, home to more than 20 million people. Mitsubishi Corporation is overseeing the overall project, while Kinki Sharyo is supplying a total of 184 train cars. After departing Kobe, the vessel sailed via the Cape of Good Hope to the Port of Alexandria, with the voyage expected to take approximately two months. Leveraging its expertise in the transport of "High & Heavy" cargo, including railway rolling stock, "K" Line continues to contribute to the development of Egypt's urban transportation infrastructure through its car carrier operations.

International Maritime Organization Holds 137th Session: Council Reaffirms Commitment to Toll-free Navigation in Strait of Hormuz

At its 137th session, held from July 6-10, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted a resolution reaffirming the safeguarding of freedom of navigation on maritime routes, including international straits; the elimination of discriminatory measures; and full compliance with international law. The IMO Council also reiterated that passage through the Strait of Hormuz shall remain free of any tolls or fees in accordance with international law.

Many Member States emphasized that freedom of navigation is a fundamental principle of international maritime transport, that ensuring the safety of ships and seafarers is of vital importance, and that transit through the Strait of Hormuz should continue, as has traditionally been the case, without any additional charges.

They called on all concerned states to cooperate with the IMO to facilitate the safe evacuation of ships currently detained in the Persian Gulf and to support the subsequent resumption of stable navigation.

Based on these discussions, the Council adopted a resolution reaffirming the safeguarding of freedom of navigation; the elimination of discriminatory measures; and adherence to international law, including the principle that passage through the Strait of Hormuz remains free of any tolls or fees. Furthermore, the IMO Secretary-General stated that he would continue consultations with the relevant states to ensure the safe evacuation of vessels detained in the Persian Gulf and support the restoration of stable navigation.

JSA Chairman Nagasawa: 'Toward the Resumption of Free and Safe Transit Through the Strait of Hormuz'

On July 10, Japan Shipowners' Association Chairman Hitoshi Nagasawa issued a statement titled "Toward the Resumption of Free and Safe Transit Through the Strait of Hormuz." The statement reads as follows.



Following the outbreak of military conflict between the United States, Israel, and Iran on February 28, the Strait of Hormuz was effectively blockaded, leaving 45 Japanese-affiliated vessels and approximately 1,200 crewmembers stranded in the Persian Gulf for an extended period. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of the Japanese government and all relevant parties, all Japanese-affiliated vessels that were prepared to transit the Strait of Hormuz have now been able to leave the Persian Gulf. We express our heartfelt gratitude.

Intermittent hostilities continue in the

vicinity of the Strait of Hormuz, and mines are believed to be present in the traditional shipping lanes. As a result, it remains difficult to resume the transport of vital goods—such as energy resources—between Japan and the Middle East.

To restore free and safe maritime transport between Japan and the Middle East as soon as possible, and to enable Japan's shipping industry to continue contributing to the nation's economy and people's livelihoods, we respectfully request the continued support of the Japanese government and all relevant parties in the following two areas:

- The prompt and thorough removal of mines reportedly present in the traditional shipping lanes of the Strait of Hormuz
- The restoration of the Strait of Hormuz as a free and safe passage, without the imposition of tolls

Captain Jima's Fun Pilot Diary

36 Guiding the Passenger Ship *Nippon Maru* to Toba Port 211013-1492-1493-I-TOBA-ANCHOR

At 5:00 a.m., off the coast of Cape Irago, we boarded the passenger ship *Nippon Maru* amid 3-meter swells rolling in from the southeast. We transferred using a 20-meter pilot boat, but the vessel was pitching and rolling quite violently. Even for us pilots, who are accustomed to such conditions, the motion was enough to make us feel slightly queasy. It was the kind of rough sea that could make anyone seasick.

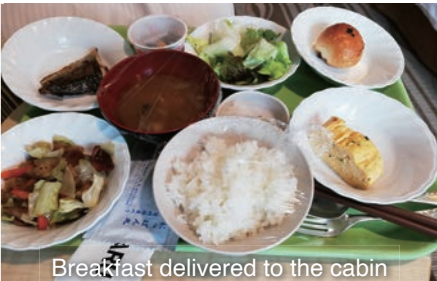
We passed through the Irago Channel while it was still dark. As a passenger ship, we needed to be careful not to heel the vessel too much while navigating the hairpin turns, but we handled the V-shaped bends smoothly and continued on toward Kamishima and then the Sugashima Channel. Once inside that channel, we had to pass through a section where the waterway narrows to only 300 meters at its tightest point.

On a vessel with a total length of about 170 meters, it certainly feels narrow. Fishing buoys for shrimp nets (called *bonden*) had been set up close to our route, so we proceeded cautiously, maneuvering around them until we reached the waters off Toba and were able to drop anchor at the scheduled anchorage.

I had guided this ship to the Toba anchorage once before the pandemic; at that time, I was free to walk around the vessel until our evening departure. However, on this occasion (October 2021), I was instructed, "Please refrain from moving anywhere other



The *Nippon Maru* at anchor off Toba Port



Breakfast delivered to the cabin

than the bridge and your assigned cabin." Although this was a disappointing effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was understandable. Breakfast and lunch were delivered via room service, and I thoroughly enjoyed the variety of dishes offered.

When I went up to the bridge before our evening departure, I found Captain N there, so I asked to take a photo to commemorate the three times we had met—twice when I served as pilot and once as a passenger.

That evening, we weighed anchor, and I piloted the ship to the east of Sugashima. Just before I disembarked, Captain N made an announcement over the PA system: "The pilot will now be disembarking on the starboard side. Since we weighed anchor, the pilot has been steering the ship in my place.



Capt. Masujima



My third encounter with Captain N



About to drop anchor off Toba Port

The waters off Irago are known for having some of the largest swells in Japan, making pilot boarding and disembarking extremely dangerous. Please take a moment to watch the pilot disembark—he'll be going down on the starboard side!"

After checking the pilot's rope ladder at the disembarkation point, I looked up to find more than a hundred passengers watching me. The P-boat was rising and falling by several meters. I climbed down the ladder, grabbed the two man ropes—hemp ropes about 30 millimeters in diameter—and, gauging the boat's vertical movement, stepped down quickly just as it rose slightly.

I moved smoothly to the handrail at the center of the bow, looked up, and waved. This was met with cheers of "Wow!" and ap-



plause, even though it was simply my usual disembarkation routine. It was a mix of joy and embarrassment.

NUMBER PLACE

Level: Easy

		8	9	6		5	4	
	4					5	6	
	5	2						
			6	5	8			
8			7	4		2	6	
							3	
7				8		3		9
				2	4		8	6
			1	7				2

This Month's 'Number Place' Puzzle

How to Play

"Number Place" is a puzzle where you fill empty cells with the numbers 1 through 9, ensuring that no number repeats in any row, column, or 3×3 block. Use the given hints to fill every cell consistently and complete the puzzle.

It's now August—the time of year when the heat feels especially intense. Strong sunlight pours down from early morning, and the days are marked by constant perspiration. It's also a season when summer fatigue tends to set in, so it's important to take things at a comfortable pace while keeping a

steady rhythm in your eating and sleeping habits. Taking a moment to relax in a cool place can help refresh both body and mind. Even during busy days, making good use of short breaks can help you get through the hot season. (The answers will appear in next month's issue.)

The answers to last month's (July Issue) puzzle are below

5	9	1	8	7	2	4	6	3
7	3	6	4	1	9	5	2	8
4	2	8	5	6	3	7	9	1
1	6	4	7	5	8	2	3	9
3	7	2	6	9	1	8	4	5
9	8	5	3	2	4	1	7	6
6	4	9	1	8	7	3	5	2
2	1	7	9	3	5	6	8	4
8	5	3	2	4	6	9	1	7

Try This Easy Standing Stretch! Loosen Up Your Shoulders with the Shoulder Blade Stretch

- (1) Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart. Bend both elbows and turn your palms upward.
- (2) Open your chest as you pull your elbows back and roll your shoulders backward.
- (3) Maintaining this position, extend both arms forward and push your shoulder blades outward as if rounding your upper back.
- (4) Continue breathing and repeat the movements from steps 1 through 3 slowly 5 to 10 times.

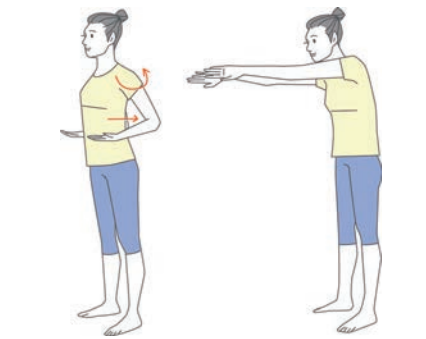


Illustration courtesy: illustAC

Today's Delicious Dish: Steamed Tofu Wrapped in Meat

Wrap thinly sliced meat around tofu to make this filling but low-calorie favorite. It's quick and effortless—just pop it into the microwave.

■ Ingredients (4 servings)

- Silken tofu — 1 block
- Thinly sliced pork belly — 200 g (about 12 slices)
- Bean sprouts — 1 bag (200g)
- Ponzu soy sauce — 4 tablespoons

- White *dashi* — 3 tablespoons
- Radish sprouts — to taste

■ How to Cook

1. Cut the tofu in half, then slice each half into six thin pieces. Wrap each piece with a slice of pork. Cut the radish sprouts into 2–3 cm lengths. Wash the bean sprouts and drain well.
2. Arrange the pork-wrapped tofu on a microwave-safe plate and heat in a 500-watt

- microwave for 5 minutes.
3. Rearrange the pork-wrapped tofu from Step 2 so that the lean part of the pork faces outward. Top with the bean sprouts, drizzle with white *dashi*, cover loosely with plastic wrap, and microwave for another 2–3 minutes until cooked through.
4. Transfer to a serving dish, sprinkle with the radish sprouts, drizzle with *ponzu* soy sauce, and serve.



Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries website (Recipe, perfectly matched for rice)
<https://www.maff.go.jp/j/seisan/kakou/me-zamasi/recipe/index.html>