

Japan's leading maritime newspaper. Information and communication for seamen. Published on the 1st of every month. The new style issue of "KAIJO-NO-TOMO"

# Journal for all the Mariners

No. 151

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Photo courtesy: TOKOKAI



## Japanese Lighthouses Watch over Ships and Seafarers

# Kinkasan Lighthouse

**K**inkasan is a sacred island on which the lighthouse stands, 1 km off the Oshika Peninsula in Miyagi Prefecture. This island, immortalized in a poem\* of the *Manyoshu*, the oldest existing collection of Japanese *waka* poetry, is one of the three most sacred places in the Mutsu region and is visited by many worshippers every year.

The island, 26 km in circumference and 445 m above sea level, is entirely composed of granite and dotted with strange rock formations, and the rough waves of the Pacific Ocean break in the magnificent scenery. The virgin forest is also home to wild monkeys and deer, which are carefully protected as “messengers of God.”

No one lives on the island except for the lighthouse and shrine staff.

This stone lighthouse, first lit on No-

vember 1, 1876, has been illuminating the pitch-black sea for more than 140 years without a moment's respite, despite the enormous loss of life and damage to the facility caused by the war.

When ships on the North American route return to Japan, the light from this lighthouse is the first sign that they have arrived in Japan, and brings a great sense of relief.

Deer and their fawns often graze peacefully on the lighthouse grounds, and a troop of monkeys is also seen from time to time.

\* “*Sumeroki no miyosaka emuto azuma naru michinokuyama ni kugane hanasaku*” (Vol.18-4097; When the Emperor's reign would flourish, gold appeared like a blooming flower on the mountain north of Tohoku region)

Location: Ishimaki-shi, Miyagi Prefecture (Kinkasan)

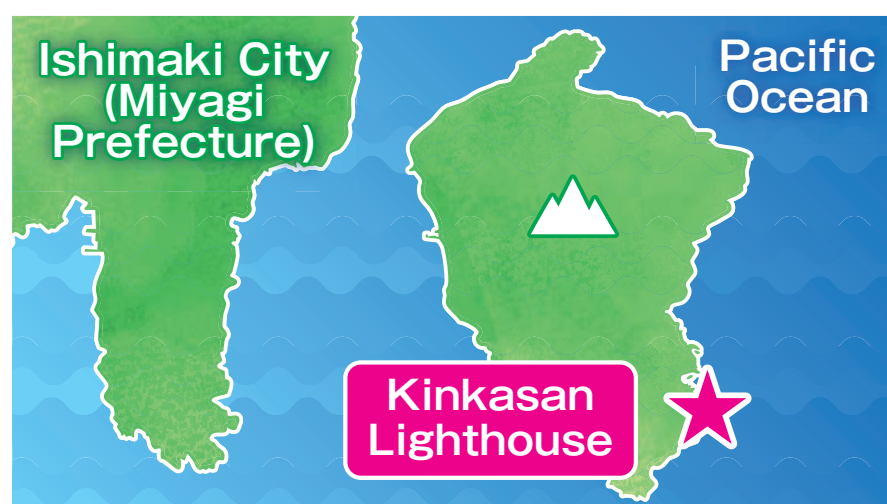
Start of operation: November 1, 1876

Structure: Stone

Height: 13m

Illumination: Fl WR 20s (single white and red light flashing once every 20 seconds)

Range: White light 20.0 nautical miles (about 37 km);  
Red light 17.5 nautical miles (about 32 km)





# MOL Magsaysay Maritime Academy in Philippines Holds Commencement Ceremony

On February 18, MOL Magsaysay Maritime Academy Inc (MMA), a merchant marine academy jointly operated by MOL and Magsaysay Maritime Corporation (MMC) in the Philippines, held its second commencement ceremony.

The event was held at the school in Dasmariñas City, a suburb of Manila, with about 530 people on hand, including special guests former Senator Manny Pacquiao and Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Endo Kazuya, as well as Doris Magsaysay Ho, president and CEO of MMC's shareholding company, A. Magsaysay, Inc., and MOL Executive Vice President Toshiaki Tanaka. The ceremony celebrated the achievements of MMA's second graduating class of students who completed the entire curriculum, including shipboard training, and students who were unable to attend last year's graduation ceremony. MOL Exec-



At the Commencement Exercises Ceremony

utive Vice President Tanaka expressed his deep appreciation to the school community and the families of the graduates for their support. He told the graduates, "Make the most of the knowledge and experience you have gained while in the academy and play an active role in your vessel's safe operation." He added, "By pursuing safe operations, I hope you will

protect the lives of people around the world as the topmost priority and also ensure the safety of cargo and the environment, and contribute to global development."

Tanaka also planted mango trees on the campus grounds to pray for the further growth and development of the academy and all its stakeholders, as well as the

preservation of the natural environment.

About half of the graduates will work onboard MOL Group-operated vessels as third officers and third engineers after obtaining their maritime licenses, working their way up to captain and chief engineer.



The NYK/YL booth

## NYK, Yusen Logistics Jointly Exhibit at GSTCE Space Exhibition in Singapore

Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha (NYK) and Yusen Logistics Co., Ltd. (YL) jointly exhibited at the Global Space Technology Convention & Exhibition (GSTCE) 2025, an exhibition for space and satellite operators. The NYK Group is the first logistics company to participate since the event began in 2008. GSTCE is an international exhibition

showcasing space industry professionals, companies, and cutting-edge technologies worldwide. The event took place from February 26-27 and drew visitors from 45 countries and regions around the world.

Under the NYK Group's theme of "Space × Shipping and Logistics," YL's logistics services for the aerospace indus-

try and NYK's business concept of combining ships and space were explained to space industry experts, researchers, companies, and policymakers.

In 2023, NYK entered the space-related business and is developing a platform for launching and recovering rockets at sea, as well as promoting the use of satellite data.

# LNG-fueled Car Carrier *Oceanus Highway* Delivered; Boasts 6,900-vehicle Capacity

A car carrier with a capacity of 6,900 vehicles was delivered to Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd. ("K" LINE) on February 27.

The vessel is mainly fueled by liquefied natural gas (LNG) and was constructed by Shin Kurushima Toyohashi Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. A naming ceremony was held on the day of the delivery, and the vessel was named the *Oceanus Highway* by Mazda Motor Corporation Managing Executive Officer Kazuhiko Sumi.

The use of LNG fuel is expected to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a greenhouse gas (GHG), by 25% to 30% and emissions of sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), which cause air pollution, by almost 100%.

The vessel uses the framework of the Zero-Emission Accelerating Ship Finance program, which is jointly operated by the Development Bank of Japan (DBJ) and Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK), with the aim of supporting the maritime shipping industry's transition toward decarbonization. The program is based on a comprehensive scoring model jointly developed by DBJ and ClassNK that evaluates ships from the perspectives of decarbonization, environmentally friendly performance, and innovation. DBJ provides investment and loans based on these evaluations. This is the first time "K" LINE has utilized this program for financing.

The vessel has received an A rating

from ClassNK as a "ship with high decarbonization, environmentally friendly performance, and innovativeness," recognizing the effectiveness of the environment-related investments.



Oceanus Highway

## MOL and Fujitsu Leverage AI for More Efficient Crew Replacement Planning

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL) and Fujitsu Limited have launched the operational application phase of an AI-powered optimization system for crew replacement planning. Full-scale operation is scheduled to begin as a trial in Japan in May 2025 and beyond.

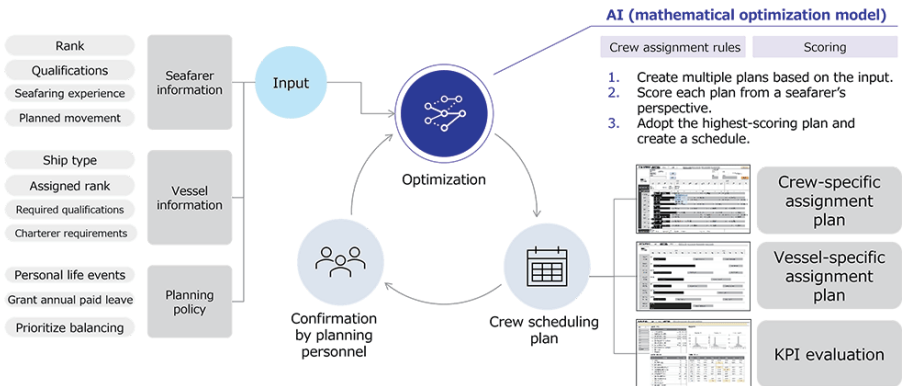
Shipping companies create crew replacement plans by combining various conditions, including seafarer rank, qualifications, onboard and vacation periods, ship type, and schedule.

MOL previously relied on its crew planning personnel to extract conditions from individually managed databases to create these plans. This resulted in significant time being spent on adjusting crew

schedules and vacation periods and on planning.

The new system, which was developed by Fujitsu AI consultants, utilizes mathematical optimization techniques to support crew replacement planning by considering various complex factors. The system offers the following three key features:

1. Meets customer needs:  
Plans crew assignments that meet the needs of each customer.
2. Balances onboard and vacation periods:  
Ensures crew assignments that even out seafarers' onboard and vacation periods throughout the year.
3. Considers seafarers' personal life events:  
Plans crew assignments to make it easy for seafarers to take leave during important life events such as weddings and births. The implementation of this system optimizes crew replacement planning, direct-



AI-powered optimization system for crew replacement planning diagram

ly improving seafarers' work-life balance through shorter consecutive onboard periods and sufficient vacation time. Furthermore, the system is projected to drastically improve efficiency by reducing the time required to create schedules by approximately 70%.





Courtesy of IMO

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) Sub-committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping was held its 11<sup>th</sup> session (HTW11) at IMO Headquarters in London from February 10-14. A comprehensive review of the STCW Convention, which defines requirements for seafarer training and certification of qualifications, has progressed, and the committee will now begin to review drafts of specific revisions.

Following is a summary of the session.

**1. Comprehensive review of STCW Convention and Code**

- (1) Regarding the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code, on which deliberations began in 2023, the session discussed items that should be reviewed in the convention. About 500 items were selected for review, including simulator training for certification of qualifications and competency standards required for handling ballast water treatment systems, and it was agreed to proceed with specific revisions of these items in the future.
- (2) As the first step of the review, each country was requested to submit to the next meeting (HTW 12) specific amendments to Chapter 2 (requirements for qualifications regarding masters and deck departments) and Chapter 3 (requirements for qualifications regarding engine departments) of the STCW Convention Annex in accordance with the items selected for review.
- (3) Furthermore, a new roadmap was agreed upon with the aim of adopting a proposed amendment to the Convention and Code in 2031 or 2032, based on the current progress of the work, and so on.

**2. Establishing guidelines for crews of ships using alternative fuels and new technologies**

- (1) In the shipping industry, ships using ammonia fuel and other alternatives to heavy oil and new technologies such as fuel cells are being developed in Japan and other countries around the world with the aim of reducing

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The committee began developing guidelines for crews of these ships, agreeing to consider both common guidelines for all alternative fuels and technologies, and guidelines to establish requirements for each individual fuel and technology.

- (2) Following these deliberations, the committee finalized draft common guidelines for crews encompassing all alternative fuels and new technologies. The draft guidelines will be submitted to the upper committee, the 110th Maritime Safety Committee (scheduled to meet in June) for approval procedures.

The finalized common guidelines are outlined below.

**Overview of common guidelines for crews of ships using alternative fuels and new technologies**

▽ The purpose of these guidelines is to summarize common training requirements for crews of ships using alternative fuels and new technologies.

▽ All crews shall be familiar with all layouts, facilities, equipment, procedures, and characteristics of the ship related to their specific duties and those of the ship in normal or emergency situations before being assigned a duty on board a ship, as defined in the STCW Convention Annex I/14 provisions.

▽ Crews shall take appropriate training on the relevant risks and emergency procedures. Those responsible for specific safety duties regarding the management and use of the ship's fuel and equipment or emergency responses shall take basic training primarily in the following competencies.

- Contribute to the safe operation of ships
- Take measures to prevent hazards
- Apply occupational health and safety measures and policies
- Conduct onboard firefighting operations
- Respond to emergencies
- Take measures to prevent environmental pollution caused by oil spills on ships

▽ The master, engine department offi-



Meeting (Courtesy of IMO)

cers, and other crewmembers with direct responsibility for the management and use of fuel and equipment shall take advanced training primarily in the following competencies

- Be familiar with the physical and chemical properties of fuel and on-board equipment
- Perform control operations for fuel and equipment related to the ship's propulsion plant, engine systems and operations, and safety equipment
- Be able to safely perform and monitor all work related to the fuel and equipment used on board
- Plan and monitor safe bunkering,

storage, and maintenance on board the ship

- Take measures to prevent environmental pollution
- Monitor and manage compliance with legal requirements
- Take measures to prevent hazards
- Apply occupational health and safety measures and countermeasures on board the ship
- Understand shipboard fire protection, fire control, extinguishing, and suppression systems

▽ Conduct periodic drills for emergencies related to fuel and equipment.

*Rites of Passage at Sea*  
**Classic Stories of the Sea**  
*By Akinori Sugiura*

When the Phoenicians were leaving the Mediterranean Sea to enter the Atlantic Ocean, they offered sacrifices before the pillar of Hercules to appease the gods. The Vikings offered a living sacrifice at each new latitude they reached to pray for safe voyages. Later sailors adopted the custom of horseplay by performing some kind of ceremony to mark a newcomer's passage through the Equator, the Tropic of Cancer, the International Date Line, the South Pole, the North

Pole, and other designated boundaries or points. These rituals have been passed down through the ages, expressing the fear of God. Every rite of passage has a patron god, with the sea god Neptune appearing at the Equatorial Festival, preceded by the sea demon Davy Jones, and the dragon at the Date Line. In the North Pole, their appearances vary, with Santa Claus as the emissary and the Northern Lights as the main deity.



## Learn How to Use Radio Medical Consultation



Through radio medical consultation, you can receive medical advice 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, via e-mail, phone, or fax, free of charge (except for communication fees) to all ships at sea. An introductory video (12:34 min.) for all seafarers including ship health supervisors is now available on the YouTube@Seafarers Insurance Channel.

This video includes interviews with seafarers who have actually requested a radio medical consultation. It introduces the structure, procedures, and benefits of the consultation to encourage more seafarers to make use of this potentially life-saving service.



## We Want to Hear Your Ideas for 2025 Seafarer Occupational Safety and Health Monthly Campaign

The Association for Promoting Safety and Sanitation for Seafarers (Sensaibo) is calling for opinions, experiences, and slogans (in Japanese and English) to promote seafarers' safety, sanitation, and health during the Seafarer Occupational Safety and Health Monthly Campaign from September 1-30. Based on your input, the association will produce posters and other materials for distribution throughout Japan. Applications will be accepted until Friday, May 23

### Application Guidelines

(1) Opinions/Experiences ▽ Opinions on specific cases and proposals for solutions, etc. ▽ The format is a Microsoft Word document, A4 size, horizontally

written, about 2,000 words. The winner of the Excellence award (one entry) will receive 30,000 yen, and the winner of the Merit award will receive a QUO card worth 6,000 yen.

(2) Photos ▽ "Seafarer's Perspective" or "Family Perspective," etc. ▽ Two photos will be selected for the poster. ▽ JPEG format (about 300dpi) ▽ A slogan appropriate for the photos is also called for at the same time. Please submit a slogan along with your photo. A 30,000-yen prize will be awarded for the poster, and a 3,000-yen QUO card will be awarded for the photo selected as the cover of the association's magazine.

(3) Slogan ▽ "Seafarer's Perspective" or

"Family Perspective," etc. ▽ Japanese text is limited to about 25 characters and English text is limited to about 10 words. List one entry per line in Excel spreadsheet software. The Excellence award winner(s) will receive a 10,000-yen prize and Merit award winner(s) will receive a QUO card worth 3,000 yen.

### How to apply

Each entry must be sent as an attachment to [hptanto@sensaibo.or.jp](mailto:hptanto@sensaibo.or.jp) with the subject line "69th Monthly Opinion Experience/Photo/Motto Application" and your name, address, telephone number, and email address.

Entries can also be submitted through the website of the association, which also provides application guidelines.



## Brain Teaser Let's find out! Who's out of Your League?

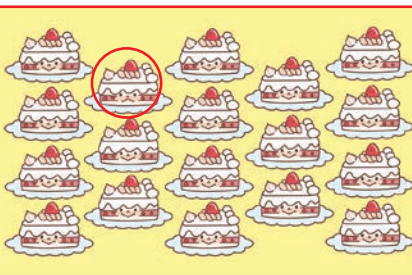


Illustration courtesy: illustAC

April has arrived. This month's "Brain Teaser" comes from an illustration showing a bouquet of flowers. Bouquets originated in Europe, which has a long custom of giving flowers as gifts. In Japan, on the other hand, the practice of sending flowers among ordinary people dates back only to the postwar period, when Western culture became a part of daily life. In modern Japan, many people visit florists during the graduation and company entrance ceremony season, for example. People generally avoid including white flowers in their bouquets, as Japanese associate them with death. Japanese are also careful to select flowers that do not have negative connotations in the language of flowers, or bouquets with an unlucky number of flowers. In Japan, beyond gifting flowers for occasions like congratulations or condolences, it's become common to purchase flowers for personal enjoyment, decorating homes with them daily. Stylish and trendy flower shops are widespread throughout the country.

So... if you look closely, you will see that one bouquet is different from the others. Which one is it? (The answer will be in next month's issue.)

### Here is the answer to last month's (March) Brain Teaser.



The expressions on the strawberry shortcake illustrations were different.

## Use the Wall for This Easy Stretch! Reset Those Tired Thighs!

- (1) Stand straight facing the wall, feet together, toes facing forward. Place your right hand on the wall and lower your left hand to the side of your body.
- (2) Hold your left foot with your left hand and pull it up. As you pull up your left leg, exert downward force against your left hand. Feel the stretch on the front of your thigh.
- (3) Release your left hand and lower your left foot to the floor. Stand straight with your right hand on the wall, both feet together, toes facing forward.
- (4) Bend your left knee and hold your left leg with your left hand and pull it up. Relax the left leg and feel the stretch in the front of your left thigh. Repeat steps (1) to (4) on the other side.

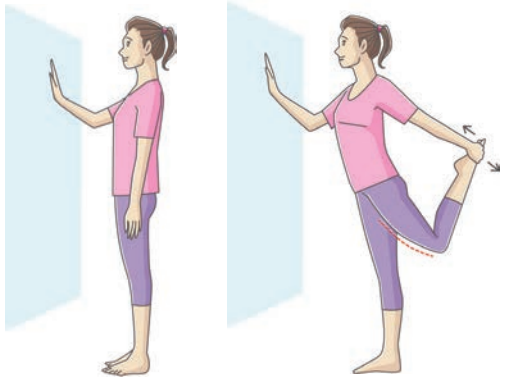


Illustration courtesy: illustAC

## Today's Delicious Dish: Vegetable Roll Ups with Beef

The juicy meat and crunchy vegetables create a delightful balance. You can substitute seasonal vegetables as desired.

### ■ Ingredients (4 servings)

Thinly sliced beef thigh meat  
12 mini asparagus stalks  
1/2 carrot  
1 tablespoon salad oil  
A pinch of salt and pepper  
[Sauce]  
1.5 tablespoons soy sauce

1 tablespoon sugar  
100cc soup stock  
1.5 tablespoons *sake*

### ■ How to cook

1. Peel carrots and cut into 4 to 5 cm lengths. Place them in a heatproof container, sprinkle with a pinch of salt, cover with plastic wrap, and microwave for one minute.
2. Add the mini asparagus, with the roots slightly trimmed, to the container (1) above, and cook for another 30 seconds.

3. Spread out the beef slices and season lightly with salt and pepper. Let the carrots and asparagus cool slightly, then place some of each at the edge of each slice and roll them up.
4. Heat a frying pan, add vegetable oil, and brown the rolled beef. When the entire surface is browned, add all the sauce ingredients and cook over medium heat for a few minutes.



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>