Report on the Inspection of Blue Lady Ship beached at Alang-Sosiya Ship Recycling Yard

Introduction:

M V Blue Lady ship, which was beached on August 16, 2006 is under sub-judice for her breaking because of the litigation filed in the Hon'ble Supreme Court by one advocate. In view of this, and in the light of the content of the affidavit filed by the said petitioner, Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB), Gandhinagar requested the Chairman, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), Mumbai to inspect the said ship for the detection of presence of any radioactive material in the ship. AERB deputed Mr R K Singh, Scientific Officer (E), AERB, for the inspection of the ship along with the BARC trained personnel from GMB. The personnel from GMB are 1) Mr M M Parmar, Safety Supervisor, RSO - I, GMB, Alang and 2) Miss Dina Patel-Environment Cell, GMB, RSO-I, Gandhinagar.

About the Blue Lady

Blue Lady was a passenger ship constructed in 1952 and initially originated from France and the last origin was from Norway and her earlier name was SS NORWAY. The Ship has about 291mt length and 34mt width and 45886 MT capacity. The above information were gathered from the ship breaker

The ship also has 16 numbers of decks (floors). The top floor (16th deck) is the terrace and the 15th deck has one basketball ground. There are two swimming pools and one open restaurant on the 14th floor. The ship has more than 1401 cabins (rooms) for passenger accommodation and some fully furnished and well-decorated VVIP rooms. In addition to the above, the ship has also one in-house restaurant, one mini-theatre, one spacious heath club and one duty free shopping complex. Up to 6th floor of the ship, it was mainly for use by the passengers and the engine decks start from bottom and are upto 5th floor.

Inspection:

The team comprising of personnel from AERB and GMB arrived at the premise of M/s Priya Blue Industries Pvt Ltd, Plot No. V-1, Sosiya Ship Recycling Yard (the present owner of the ship) at around 14:30 hrs on 14th August 2007. The team had to wait for about one hour for tide, so they can reach to the ship (away about 3500 ft from the shore) for the inspection. While we were waiting for the tide, we discussed about the ship with the ship breaker company officials and gathered some prime information about the ship. The Govt officials were accompanied by one official from the ship breaker. It was a cloudy and light rainy day and the sea was also rough and choppy. However, looking at the limited time available for the inspection due to tide time, we started the boat ride at 15:15 hrs and reached at the ship at around 16:00 hrs. It was not an easy exercise for all of us to get into the ship using that rope-ladder hanging from the

ship at a height above 25 feet and one end of the ladder attached to the boat swinging due to the strong sea current. We reached, first, at fifth floor and started inspection from the terrace (16th floor) downwards. Each floor has two passages (Gangways) and rooms are on both side of each gangway. Each cabin (room) is fitted with atleast two nos of smoke detectors and smoke detectors are also fitted along the passages. However, these smoke detectors are all optical based (Photo -electric) detectors. But, we could locate some ionisation smoke detectors fitted in high voltage rooms, storage rooms, mechanical workshop room and system control (air-conditioning, cooling, oil and water pipelines) rooms. All those ionisation-based smoke detectors located were removed by us and verified that all these detectors had Am - 241 sources of 0.9 μCi each. We could collect 12 nos of such smoke detectors and handed over to the breaker for keeping safely and securely pending their safe disposal at BARC through AERB, Mumbai. When we inspected the bottom of the ship (part of engine room areas), we found a particular area earmarked as EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICE. We could find there INSTRUCTIONS written on the board to be followed during emergency response for the hazardous materials present in the ship. However, we could not find any instructions for emergency response related with radioactive material. Also we could not find any radioactive warning symbol in any part of the ship except in the ionisation-based smoke detectors. In addition to this, the inventory of the hazardous material issued by the Master of the ship does not mention anything about the radioactive material. With this, we completed the inspection of the ship at around 20:00 hrs and returned backed to the shore at 21:00 hrs.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings obtained during the inspection of the ship carried out by the officials of AERB, Mumbai and GMB, it is concluded that the ship M V Blue Lady presently beached in Plot No. V-1, Sosiya Ship Recycling Yard, now, does not contain any radioactive material on board the ship.

15/08/07
(R K Singh)

15/8/07
(M M Parmar)

15/08/2007
(Dina P Patel)