

No. 25022 /24/ 2020-Imm
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs
Foreigners Division
(Immigration Section)

MDCNS, India Gate, New Delhi
dated 17th July, 2020

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

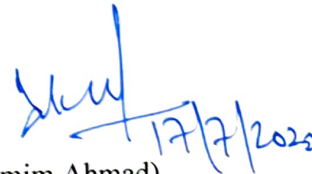
Subject : Standard Operating Protocol for repatriation of foreign seafarers from Indian Ports during COVID -19 Pandemic- reg.

The undersigned is directed to refer to the O.M. No. ST-16011/18/2020-MA dated 29th June, 2020 from the Ministry of Shipping enclosing a copy of their O.M. of even number dated 03.06.2020 on the above mentioned subject and to say that the Ministry of Home Affairs has no objection to the proposal of the Ministry of Shipping to allow sign-off of foreign seafarers working on vessels other than cruise vessels at Indian ports and to allow these seafarers to go abroad on Vande Bharat flights or non-scheduled commercial flights or chartered flights. It has also been decided to permit, as a special case, grant of TLP for up to one month by the Immigration Officer concerned to such foreign seafarers who have expired Indian visas subject to their having valid passport and valid seaman's Identity document (CDC).

2. As regards the SOP for sign-off of foreign seafarers at Indian ports forwarded by the Ministry of Shipping, the matter has been examined in consultation with the Bureau of Immigration. The MHA has no objection to the provisions of SOP in any paras except para 6 point 2 & para 6 point 3. Comments in this regard are enclosed for necessary action.

3. This permission pertains only to Immigration process. In respect of quarantine and all other health/ COVID-19 related matters, guidelines of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare shall be adhered to.

4. This issues with the approval of the competent authority.


17/7/2020

(Shamim Ahmad)

Under Secretary (Immigration)

Tel-01123077502

Encl. As above

To

Ministry of Shipping
[Shri Satinder Pal Singh, Joint Secretary]
Transport Bhawan
New Delhi

Copy to:

- (i) Additional Director [Shri Rajeev Ranjan Verma], Bureau of Immigration
- (ii) Joint Secretary (DM) [Shri Sanjeev Kumar Jindal], MHA

Comments of Ministry of Home Affairs on the draft SOP for for sign-off of foreign seafarers at Indian ports

Para 6 – Point no.2

MHA is in agreement. However, instances have come to notice that the ship-owner/ Recruitment and Processing Services (RPS) would not be in a position to ensure the validity of the travel documents and visa of the crew on board in respect of the vessels which are already in the sea. Hence, possibilities of crew arriving on the strength of expired passports and visas cannot be ruled out.

The crew already on board without a visa cannot obtain a sticker visa from Indian Mission and therefore, the other option is to issue them e-visa online. Issue of e-visas is currently kept in abeyance. However, they would be issued with TLP for one month on the basis of valid passport facilitating their travel outside India.

Para 6 – Point no. 3

TLP with validity of up to 1 (one) month and a one time fee of USD 40 may be given by Immigration Officer, keeping in view the requirement of the seafarer.

As per the Visa Manual, a seafarer on board of a merchant vessel can be signed off on the strength of gratis TLP for a maximum of seven days or till the return journey of the crew member to his home state, whichever is less.

A special provision has been made to issue them TLPs for up to 1 (one) month after payment of one-time fees of USD 40.
