

Nirmala Salve of Nagpur whose parents had been deeply involved in the freedom struggle, and who had been imprisoned several times. Nirmalaji herself was a political activist, had spent time in Gandhi's ashram and came from the then prevailing cultural milieu of personal sacrifice and service to the nation. On Nirmalaji's advice, he chose to remain in India and opted for the Indian Administrative Service, a decision he has never regretted.

The first 12 years of his career followed a pattern similar to that of any IAS officer today with assignments in New

tries who needed the assistance of the organisation to build up their maritime capability. I urged them to leave political issues to the UN security council and general assembly. The specialised agencies of the UN (IMO is one of them) are independent inter-governmental organisations, not automatically bound by the decisions of the general assembly. I promoted the idea that once a political issue was resolved by the general assembly of the UN, the IMO should voluntarily follow that decision and abide by it. When the question of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation's (PLO) participation in the IMO was raised by Arab states, the matter was settled without any fuss or loss of time. On my advice, member states of the IMO agreed that the PLO should participate in the IMO on the same basis as it participated in the UN, in its capacity as a liberation movement recognised by the League of Arab states.

The problem between Cyprus and Turkey came up several times but was resolved on all such occa-

Delhi and his home state in UP. His seniors soon discovered his exceptional capabilities and in early 1961, he was appointed as the then youngest ever managing director of a public sector company, the fledgling Shipping Corporation of India. With his customary zeal, Srivastava set about creating the foundation of India's largest ship-



Dr Srivastava with his wife, Nirmalaji, his inspiration.

sions, the method of doing so being supported by both countries. The Iran-Iraq hostilities did not lead to any upheaval in the IMO as both countries agreed to raise no issues in the IMO. There are many other examples of the same kind.

My third task was to promote the development of global rules and regulations for maritime safety and pollution on the basis of consensus among all member states, developed and developing. This was not easy in view of the diversity of interests and widely varying levels of technology and management skills available in different countries. At the same time, it was clear to all that the benefits of new and advancing technology had to be made available to international shipping in order to ensure greater safety of life and ships, the same concern as in the case of civil avia-

tion. The developed countries naturally wanted high standards. The developing countries did not oppose high standards but they were deeply concerned that they might be left behind because of the paucity of expertise. My role was to bring the two together. I convinced the developing countries that the 'highest practicable' standards, as required by the IMO charter, had to be adopted because lives of seafarers of all countries, developed and developing, were invaluable and had to be protected by the best available means. By working together, member states could listen to different points of view and reach a consensus on what was the 'highest practicable' standard at that point of time. This could be done by mutual goodwill and trust. I promoted the idea of an IMO family of nations imbued with 'IMO spirit' of goodwill and cooperation. The sincerity of this approach was recognised and indeed applauded by all member states. I am very pleased to be able to say that nearly always decisions in the

company and after three years in this assignment, he was summoned to Delhi for an interview with Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.

Shastriji was immediately impressed by this tall, articulate, young officer who came with such a formidable reputation of integrity and capability and designated him as joint secretary in the PM's Office.

If any one official enjoyed the complete trust and confidence of Shastriji in all matters connected with the running of the government while he was prime minister, it was Srivastava, who accompanied him everywhere and was

with him when he breathed his last. Although a quarter of a century has elapsed since then, those who were in daily touch with Prime Minister Shastri still recall with admiration Srivastava's dedicated service to Shastriji at a very crucial period of Indian history.

I had the opportunity to elicit Dr Srivastava's recollections about his time in the PMO. ".....Shastriji was one of the great men of our time. He was truly Indian. He really knew the pulse of the country and he was one of the gentlest and most humane persons that I have ever come across.What I learnt over the two years of being close to him has been invaluable to me in all other assignments that I have taken up in this country and outside."

I ventured to ask him whether his being a workaholic was not

harsh on Nirmalaji and their two daughters. His response was clear. The inspiration to devote oneself to the service of the country came in reality from his wife, "Nirmala has a great vision about the future of our country. There is something unique in her which gave me tremendous strength and encouragement. It was her spirituality, her transparent purity and her patriotism which provided the foundation for my work."

Nirmalaji, a true spiritual teacher, known as 'Mataji' to her tens of thousands of followers all over the world, says this about her husband's achievements "It is not important how much time one spends together with the family, but now deeply one enjoys each other's company. After independence, I could not contribute to the national achievements of my dream

and it was highly gratifying that my husband was very dedicated and sincere about his national duty. I was so proud of his work that I enjoyed treating all his colleagues and subordinates as my own family and gave him a helping hand whenever required." An enviable understanding between husband and wife!

After Shastriji's untimely passing away, Srivastava reassumed the reins of the SCI in 1967. It then had a very small fleet and he worked on the development of Indian shipping and despite financial constraints, catapulted the organisation, mostly from internal resources, into India's largest shipping company. When he left the SCI in 1973, it was the proud owner of a fleet aggregating two million tons with another two million tons on order!

IMO, even on the most complex and difficult issues were taken, without a division and without voting. The 'IMO spirit' truly worked. This was specially commended by a team of UN inspectors who studied the working of the IMO and described it as a model agency.

On the basis of a common agreement, as many as 20 new diplomatic treaties incorporating global standards for maritime safety and pollution prevention were developed, adopted and brought into force during the 16 years when I was the secretary-general. They constitute a well-coordinated regime of international maritime law applicable to all shipping engaged in international trade. This was regarded as a great achievement. My next task was to conceive, plan and implement a pragmatic approach to training maritime personnel for the operation and management of shipping industry.

My experience in shipping as chairman and managing director of the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) proved very useful. While in India, I had found that the most serious handicap for developing countries was the shortage of specially trained mar-

itime personnel for the operation and management of today's highly advanced and complex shipping industry. I had, therefore, given full attention not only to the development of shipping tonnage but also the rating of personnel. Although the tonnage of the SCI was increasing rapidly, every ship was being manned by Indians only. When I began in the SCI, it was a very small enterprise. When I left, it was one of the world's largest. With the preceding background, I conceived a programme of intensive maritime training based on high quality global standards, for the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, with the financial help of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and donor countries in the world. Maritime training experts were appointed, institutions were helped to modernise their syllabi and to build up their training equipment, programmes were developed for training teachers. About 80 institutes in different parts of the world were helped in this way. Some of them were regional institutions such as the Arab Maritime Transport Academy in Alexandria, Egypt and sub-regional academies in Ghana

and Cote de Ivoire.

But this was not enough. The developing countries could train their shipboard personnel at the national/regional institutions referred to above. They were still very deficient in senior technical personnel such as nautical and engineer surveyors, maritime teachers, technical managers of shipping companies, general managers of ports etc. Ministries of shipping in many countries were short of maritime administrators. A number of countries were relying on foreign experts but they were expensive and they did not provide any long-term solution to the problem of developing countries. This was a serious handicap. The problem needed to be solved if the developing countries were to become self-reliant.

Something new had to be attempted. I mustered all courage and proposed the establishment of a new global institution - the World Maritime University, for the training of senior maritime personnel of developing countries. The IMO assembly approved of the proposal unanimously but gave me no money. The assembly authorised me to collect money from the UNDP and developed

The Padma Bhushan from the President of India in 1972 while at the SCI was the first of many national and international honours that followed.

In 1973, India proposed his name for secretary-general of the International Maritime Organisation, then elected by acclamation of the assembly.

In the years to follow, the IMO adopted and implemented 20 major conventions, a record for any UN agency. During the same period, the membership grew from 86 to 134. At each stage of its growth, Srivastava worked towards making the IMO truly a world body, ensuring the growth of shipping in the

country donors as well as all others such as shipowners, seafarers wanting to help.

This was a challenging task and I set about it with determination. The government of Sweden was the first to offer help by agreeing to cover one-third of the budget of the university. The city of Malmo in Sweden agreed to provide premises for the university, free of cost. Formal agreements were negotiated in a matter of weeks. The final approval from the Swedish side was given by the Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr Olaf Palme, at a meeting in Stockholm when I presented the proposal. Without his visionary approach and the magnanimity of the Swedish government and the City of Malmo, there would have been no World Maritime University.

Then I went to the UNDP and addressed its governing council. There was some opposition but eventually approval came through. The then UNDP administrator, Bradford Morse, gave full support. Without Morse there would have been no World Maritime University.

Financial support was secured

developing countries. Harmony, trust, commitment to the ideal of one world, goodwill tempered by realism are what constituted and came to be known as the 'IMO spirit'. Every four years, Srivastava was unanimously elected and re-elected



Dr Srivastava with his wife and (in front) his two daughters.

from other sources as well and the university was formally inaugurated on July 4, 1983, within less than two years of approval of the proposal by the IMO assembly. The university has received global support and is a glorious example of the goodwill of all nations. The developed nations are providing the money and the expertise voluntarily.

More than 500 senior specialists of about 100 developing countries have been given advanced high quality training for two years. They have been given 'on the job' training as well in the maritime institutions and administrations of developed countries. These newly trained specialists are now occupying key policy-making, administrative and managerial positions around the developing maritime world. They are experts in their professions

by all the member states to lead the IMO. He was the seniormost of the secretary-generals of the UN when he retired and it would be difficult to find any other in the UN family who served four successive terms unchallenged.

One of the most successful projects of the UN is the World Maritime University at Malmo, Sweden, conceived and established under the auspices of the IMO by Srivastava who is still its chancellor. Here students from more than 100 countries are shaping their destinies.

In order to understand the depth of feeling that the members of the IMO have towards their former secretary-general, it is best to

and also in global cooperation. They have infused a new sense of urgency and efficiency. Shipowners and seafarers round the world are very happy with this new development. The developing countries are now much more self-reliant.

The World Maritime University of which I am the founder chancellor, is a success story of the United Nations system. It is a glorious example of 170 spirits of global goodwill and co-operation. The developed world is helping the developing world to build up its own maritime expertise in the vital international shipping sector, knowing fully well that the experts will enable developing countries to enhance their role and participation in international shipping. This is resulting in a restructuring of world shipping, not by confrontation but by cooperation.

My biggest satisfaction is that I was able, for four successive terms and a total period of 16 years, to manage the affairs of the IMO, UN's specialised agency for maritime affairs with the full support and goodwill of all member states of the organisation. The

quote a few phrases from the resolution adopted by the IMO's general assembly on his retirement:

".....Throughout his tenure, comprising four successive terms and lasting 16 years, Srivastava has rendered exceptionally meritorious services to the organisation with total commitment to its ideals and objectives."

".....Recognising his leadership, integrity, dedicated endeavour and initiative, the assembly expresses its deep appreciation and immense gratitude to Chandrika Prasad Srivastava, for his wife, prudent and efficient management of the International Maritime Organisation, for his invaluable and lasting contribution to the development of the organisation, for his laudable

secret of success for the head of any specialised agency of UN lies in his ability to win the trust and respect of every member state, large or small, developed or developing. The member states must have complete confidence in his sincerity, impartiality, sagacity and dedication. Through their delegation and permanent representatives, they maintain a record of the work of each secretary-general and then make an appraisal. As one delegation told me some years ago, the confidence and respect of a member state must be won by performance. There is no free gift.

I worked incessantly to maintain contacts with all member states to understand their problems, to ascertain their requirements, to take follow-up actions as speedily as possible within the limits of available resources and to keep them well informed of developments. I promoted strongly the idea of all member states functioning together as one family. And I strongly opposed the system of member states dividing themselves into 'groups' of developing countries, developed coun-

tries and socialist countries because in my view groupism among member states leads to avoidable friction and hampers progress. It was most gratifying that all member states accepted my ideas and implemented them.

I am not suggesting that there were no problems or differences among members states. In any world organisation, problems are bound to arise but they can be resolved if the member states are pragmatic and reasonable, willing to accept the best possible compromises. I recall several inter-governmental conferences at which serious and seemingly



'The living legend.'

insoluble problems arose and the conferences were in danger of failure. In such situations, it was my duty to intervene and I did.

Member states have stated repeatedly at 170 meetings that they consider this organisation to be one of the best run UN agency. Generously, they have given me a great deal of credit for the IMO's good performance and so many of them have bestowed upon me their highest national awards. I am profoundly grateful to them.

The truth, however, is that member states make an organisation what it is. If the IMO is a good organisation, the credit must go primarily to member states.

I must acknowledge the gratitude which I owe to my country India for proposing my candidature for the position of secretary-general and for giving me every possible support throughout my tenure. On my part, I always endeavoured to function as a true Indian, promoting goodwill and cooperation among all nations of the world.

given to him by nations of the world and every achievement and recognition attributed to him is an honour for his country.

It is my privilege to have come to know a person like Dr Srivastava. Here is an ideal administrator, an ideal chief executive who made his organisations grow rapidly, profitably; an ideal internationalist with innate Indian wisdom who succeeded in demonstrating that nations of the world, despite their sharp political differences, can cooperate with one another on specific multilateral issues for the greater good of mankind.

The British secretary of state for transport chose the most apt words when he described Dr C P Srivastava as - "a living legend". G

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