

## “Shipping industry is unpredictable, inconsistent but witnessing growth”



T. Venkataraman  
Managing Director, Goodrich Maritime  
Private Limited

### What motivated you to be a part of the shipping industry? How has the journey been so far?

Shipping has always been in my blood as my late father was part of a premier Indian shipping company from the year 1936, so it was very natural for me to join the shipping

Shipping has always been in my blood,” avows T. Venkataraman, Managing Director, Goodrich Maritime Pvt Ltd, who has been associated with the shipping industry for over 30 years. The veteran, who is well-aware of the ins and outs of the shipping industry talks to Ritika Bhola about his journey, current scenario, investments being done to improve technology and infrastructure and value addition services that his company offers to the customers

industry in the same company, Scinida Steam Navigation, a pioneer Indian shipping company. This company was not only very much steeped in the Indian Merchant Marine but in the Indian political history also, as they were integral to India’s freedom struggle. So, you can say that the commencement of my journey in shipping was a very rich one although the further journey due to the high amount of volatility in the shipping



Shipping industry is unpredictable, cyclical and lacks consistency not only in terms of returns from the business venture for entrepreneurs but also in terms of careers for shipping professionals. I am currently towards the end of my fourth decade in the industry and I found that consistency has always been lacking but growth there has been plenty especially in India.

industry made not only the industry’s progress rocky but my own journey faced challenges too.

### Please share an account of the ups and downs you have faced while being in the industry?

My ups and downs in the shipping career was synonymous with that of the industry as the sagging fortunes of the industry also made it



## INTERVIEW



bereft of opportunity for youngsters to further their careers. Right from the commencement of 1980s, the industry was battling, especially Indian liner shipping as containerisation, which was by then established in the west, was posing challenges to the break bulk liner which was traditional with the Indian shipping companies.

This was further aggravated with the big chasm that existed between the supply and the demand. The import centric trade of India further depleted availability of marketing openings in the industry. However, with the onset of liberalisation the industry and along with it careers became brighter. Youngsters with the professional outlook and with appropriate leadership skill could find a niche for themselves.

**What's your take on the present shipping industry? Where do you see the graph moving in the coming decade?**

By now everybody in the industry has to either accept or learn to accept that this industry is very unpredictable, very cyclical and lacks consistency not only in terms of returns

of my fourth decade in the shipping industry and I found that consistency has always been lacking but there has been plenty of growth especially in India.

In the last two decades containerisation has taken India by storm. Container throughputs have increased multifold. Gone are the traditional bastions like Mumbai, Chennai, Kandla, multiple container terminals in Nhavasheva, Mundhra, Chennai, Cochin and in a similar way places such as Vizag, Tuticorin, Pipava have registered year on year growth. With comparatively a steadier economy India continues to rule the roost.

**Since it's a competitive world, what are the value addition services that you offer to hold on to the customers?**

Like in any other industry especially where services are concerned unbridled efforts to ensure customer satisfaction is the key to sustainability in the Indian shipping and logistics industry. These can be achieved by highly trained and motivated personnel, state-of-the-art technology and multiple

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**Please tell us about the investments being done to improve the infrastructure, technology and expertise?**

Whopping amount of money is being pumped by the industry towards improvement of the infrastructure you can specifically notice this from the mushrooming number of terminals, Inland Container Depots (ICDs), Container Freight Stations (CFS), warehouses, rail connections, roads, liquid storage tanks etc. All of these are intrinsically connected with the shipping and logistics industry. We at Goodrich Maritime are active in many of these areas. Very recently we have got awards like the 'Most Versatile Logistics Company' and 'Fastest Growing Logistics Company.' With such awards our commitment but natural has to become stronger.

**With the Industry going green, experts are switching to the electronic means of communication and paperwork is being minimised. What's your take on this?**

In this sphere of information technology, as I have earlier said, business houses cannot afford to stay away from making investments.