**India: Correspondent Crowe Boda Update 5 May 2021**

There is (as yet) no nationwide lockdown in India declared by the central government in New Delhi. Any lockdowns are being declared by the respective states or by the local district level administration. However there is speculation that if the Covid numbers do not shortly show clear signs of plateauing or decreasing. then the Central Govt would have no option but to announce a nationwide ‘hard’ lockdown, as was done in March last year.

Port Operations and Surveys:

* There is no adverse effect reported yet of the current lockdown conditions on vessel movements and/or cargo operations. Port activities are essential services and exempt from lockdown restrictions. There are no port circulars yet with respect to any change to vessel or cargo operations due to the current COVID spike. No ports have declared Force Majeure. Standard Operating Procedures for vessel operations including pilotage and quarantine requirements remain unchanged.
* There is expected to be slow movement of personnel and equipment due to local lockdowns, however surveyors can access ports and vessels in their respective ports, following SOP’s which have been in place since last year. Movement of surveyors across state lines or for surveys inland (e.g., at inland container freight stations) away from their respective ports also may be subject to considerable delays.

Courts:

Bhatt & Saldanha advise that due to lockdown restrictions and spread of covid cases in various courts in India, the courts are presently hearing only urgent applications online. Physical hearings are not taking place and the cases are simply being adjourned to a date when it will be possible hear the matters.

Crew Movements:

* Crew sign on and sign off (Indian and foreign seafarers) is allowed in Indian ports as per the SOP’s in place since April 2020. The SOP required an ‘e-pass’ to be obtained by vessels owners or registered crew managers from the DG Shipping website to permit movement of seafarers to and from ports. The requirement for the ‘e-pass’ was discontinued in February 2021, but has been reinstated from 28-04-2021.
* Several countries have recently suspended direct flights from India and have imposed restrictions to entry of persons who have travelled to India, therefore the club’s members should consider the availability of flights and home country travel restrictions prior to arranging repatriation of foreign crew from Indian ports.
* Parts of India are currently facing severe shortage of ICU beds, medical oxygen and ventilators, which may affect treatment of crew in Indian ports infected with COVID.