World’s First Facial Biometric Seafarer Identity Document

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India has become the first country in the world to issue **Biometric Seafarer Identity Document (BSID),** capturing the facial biometric data of seafarers.

- The project has been launched by the **Ministry of Shipping.**
- The new card is in confirmation of the **Convention No. 185 of the International Labour Organisation on BSID.**
- India ratified the Convention in October 2015.

Background

- Development of BSID is very significant against the backdrop of the increase in seafaring activities.
- BSID will provide a foolproof identification to seafarers which will facilitate:
    - Seafarer's movement,
    - Ease of getting jobs,
    - Identification of seafarers from any location in the world.
- The shipping sector is seeing major developments in the areas of coastal shipping, inland waterways and other maritime activities.
- These major developments will increase the number of Indian seafarers in the international shipping industry.
- The total number of Indian seafarers who were employed on Indian or foreign flag vessels increased by 35% from 2017 to 2019.

Biometric Seafarer Identity Document

- It will have a biometric chip embedded in it.
- The card has two optical security features:
    - **Micro prints/micro texts**
    - **Unique Guilloche pattern.**
- A software has been developed for capturing the facial biometrics and its

authentication through the **public key infrastructure.**

- A record of each Seafarer Identity Document (SID) issued will be maintained in a **national database and its related information will be internationally accessible.**

Convention No. 185 of the International Labour Organisation on BSID.

The convention promotes:

- Security against potential threats of **International Terrorism.**
- Introduces **modern security features** of the BSID.
- Requiring a record of each BSID issued to be maintained in a national database, with the related information to be internationally accessible.
- Ensures the **reliability** of the identification of the holder of the BSID, while protecting the holder's **dignity and privacy.**

Source: PIB