

## Indigenous shipowners seek enforcement of Cabotage law

The Secretary of the Nigerian Ship owners Association (NISA), Capt. Niyi Labinjo, has urged the Federal Government to enforce the Cabotage law, otherwise known as the Coastal and Inland Shipping Act.

Labinjo told newsmen in Lagos that the enforcement of cabotage law would enable domestic ship owners to effectively participate in the coastal trade and commerce.

According to him, the implementation of the laws would enhance the capacity of indigenous ship owners to grow and dominate coastal business in the country.

"Enforcement of the Cabotage law can be better; we must continue to appreciate the fact that the Cabotage Act is meant for Nigerians. We must not be afraid as maritime administrators in ensuring that our domestic trade is reserved for only our people and that is the essence of the law," Labinjo said.

He also urged the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) to assist in ensuring that the Cabotage laws "function effectively in Nigeria".

Reports say that the Cabotage law enacted in 2003 was patterned after the United States of America's Jones Act of 1938, which had helped develop the country's indigenous capacity in shipping.

The law was also designed to enable indigenous shipping companies acquire adequate tonnage to enable them participate in the coastal trade. In all, the Cabotage Act primarily is meant to stimulate the development of indigenous capacity in the Nigerian Maritime industry.



Capt. Niyi Labinjo

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