

Embezzled 4.3million US\$ from Welfare Funds by JSU President (All Japan Seamen's Union)

〈Japan TV/News papers delivered〉

Tokyo Regional Tax Bureau – Undeclared Tax Liability of 600 million yen

Yasumi Morita, 57, a former president of All Japan Seamen's Union (hereafter "JSU"), had been pointed out undeclared tax liability of total 600 million yen (\$4.3 million) over the six years to 2020 by Tokyo Regional Tax Bureau, the source said on 20th June. It was reported that Morita diverted union related funds for his private use, but failed to report to tax authority. The penalty tax is believed to be more than 200 million yen (\$1.4 million), including heavy tax penalty and undeclaration tax penalty.

According to the sources, Morita purchased jewelry and luxury watches by using part of union related funds such as JSU Welfare Fund for foreign seafarer's training and others which shall be managed by union related incorporated foundation. Tokyo Regional Tax Bureau had allegedly considered them as virtual salary.

The funds have been contributed from union members of foreign seafarers on board the ship which have agreement with JSU. It is said that inadequate management has been continued for many years as the duty of report for the detail of the use of the funds is not stipulated in the internal regulation.

It was also found out in tax investigation that Morita received rebates from the local dealers into his personal overseas bank account when building accommodation facilities for seafarers in the Philippine where JSU representative office is located. Tokyo Regional Tax Bureau had allegedly judged it to be malicious concealing income.

Morita had been employed as a full-time staff in JSU in 1993, then he had assumed the post of the president in 2014 after the assignment of a representative in the Manila office and a vice-president. Morita resigned for "health reasons" in November 2021 right after starting tax investigation. The person in charge of JSU commented nothing to report.

JSU is organized by individual members who are seafarer engaged in foreign and domestic trade, fisheries and maritime workers. As of 2022, the membership of JSU is approximate 80,000. It is known as one of leading member of Japanese Trade Union Confederation- RENGU, and twenty-four branch offices are in major port such as Ehime in Japan in addition to overseas office.

Unclear management of JSU

In All Japan Seamen's Union that a large amount of private diversion from JSU related funds by former president was revealed, the voice which insists the problem of untransparent management structure has been raised internally. Person concerned points out the structural issue that most of JSU members are foreign seafarers onboard the ship.

Japanese seafarers have been reduced due to staff reduction by modernization and long working hours. In line with it, "Non-domiciled Special Members" which are foreign seafarers onboard Japanese owner's ship have been occupied around 70 percent in JSU.

However, according to JSU regulation, eligibility right and voting right for executive board members election has not been given to "Non-domiciled Special Members". It is said that JSU ~~union~~ members who

are not interested with union activity has been increased of as most of them are ~~were~~ working onboard the ship.

Many Illegal Acts for President Election by JSU

On the other hands, the internal conflicts has continued for many years. The incidents that opposing candidates for the presidential election were forcibly removed from the list, were occurred from 2008 to 2013.

Lawsuits seeking invalidation of presidential election were filed to Tokyo Regional Court one after another. As a result, the illegal acts by JSU were recognized in all cases, judgements for the compensation were ordered to JSU.

Refused to Report the Use of Funds

Yasumi Morita who were pointed out undeclaration of income for 600 million yen were re-elected as president by vote of confidence after being inaugurated in 2014. He allegedly refused to report the use of the funds even union member requested in his tenure.

One of active JSU member resented "It is unforgivable to line his own pocket from the funds for foreign seafarers who works onboard the ship at risk of own life".

Flowchart of tax investigation against Morita & JSU

