



26 JANUARY 2021

"You need a strong Ox for a large harvest."

*Biblical proverb*



## AS STRONG AS AN OX?

February 12<sup>th</sup> marks the beginning of the Year of the Ox. Official dates are 11<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> February however most of Chinese people will be on holidays from 9<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> February.

Each Lunar New Year is characterized by one of 12 animals which appear in the Chinese zodiac. The Ox is the second of all zodiac animals. According to Chinese mythology, the Jade Emperor said the final order would be decided by the order in which they arrived to his party (in the so-called Great Race). The Ox was about to be the first to arrive, but the Rat tricked the good natured Ox into giving him a ride on its back. Then, just as they arrived, the Rat ungratefully jumped down and landed ahead of the Ox crossing first the finish line. Thus, Ox became the second animal. **Unfortunately the Rat has tricked everyone last year by bringing plague to people and markets all over the world.** The Coronavirus pandemic has sent shockwaves through global maritime transport by disrupting supply chains, shipping networks and ports leading to global maritime trade decline. So, after a year of stress and anxiety, what can we expect from the year of the Ox in 2021?

In Chinese culture, the Ox (牛 *niu*) is a very valued animal. Because of its major role in agriculture, it denotes hard work, positivity, stability and harvest, **and that will be manifested in shipping markets in the coming 12 months.** In terms of the Yin and Yang theory, Oxen are yang which symbolizes strength, masculinity, spring and prosperity **so a good year for Shipping with strong & prosperous charter market is anticipated.** Especially, in South China, the ox which is traditionally worshiped is the water buffalo (*shui niu*). The ox and water are often linked in Chinese culture. After all, a water buffalo was a common sight in the water-filled rice fields, **so "water" related industries like Shipping will be favoured.** According to the Chinese Five Elements (Metal, Water, Wood, Fire and Earth), this year's element is Metal (**Metal Ox**) which favours metal industries and steel construction, hence **Shipbuilding and Ship-Recycling industries are expected to have a positive year.** As per the Chinese horoscope, the Metal Ox faces obstacles early on in order not to have financial worries after, **so shipping market maybe hard the first months of this year but will have a strong finish.**

In conclusion and according to maritime astrologers, **this year will be auspicious, as the Ox will work extra hard for Shipping to reap a rich harvest.**

Regardless of what the future holds, we wish our readers to be healthy and as strong as an Ox this year - Gong Xi Fa Cai 新年快乐!



Should you have any comments or questions about the content of our report or require our services, please contact:

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