

Shreyas Shipping acquires its tenth container ship

Indian container feeder operator Shreyas Shipping & Logistics has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for acquisition of a container vessel of 2,500 TEUs. Delivery is expected by the end of this month, and the vessel will be used for Indian coastal trade. Once the acquisition is complete, Shreyas will own a fleet of 10 vessels ranging in capacity from 569 TEUs to 2,959 TEUs. Shreyas Shipping & Logistics is a part of Dubai headquartered conglomerate Transworld Group. Shreyas Shipping and Logistics was formed primarily to own and operate vessels for feeding of containers between Indian Ports and internationally renowned container transshipment ports.

Tilbury's £1bn drive to build a global trading port on Thames

With the UK Parliament voting for Britain's exit from the European Union, a re-configuration of the country's trade dynamics is already taking shape. Tilbury, UK's third-largest container terminal, is investing £1bn to increase the size of its site from 850 to 1,100 acres and build a deep-sea jetty to welcome more ships from Europe but also make space for larger ships from Africa, India and the Far East. About 60 per cent of the port's traffic is currently with Europe but Tilbury is also where Jaguar Land Rover ships cars to South America.

DP World Posts 3.2% Volume Growth in 2016

DP World Limited said it handled 63.7 million twenty-foot equivalent units or TEUs across its global portfolio of container terminals in the full year of 2016, with gross container volumes growing by 3.2% year-on-year on a reported basis, and 2.2% on a like-for-like basis. In the fourth quarter of 2016, UAE handled 3.7 million TEUs, down marginally by 0.7% year-on-year. The Americas and Australia region delivered a broadly stable volume performance during this period. At a consolidated level, the terminals handled 29.2 million TEUs during 2016, a 0.4% improvement in performance on a reported basis and down 1.6% year-on-year on a like-for-like basis.

GCC countries focus on future strategies

Well before oil prices tumbled to their recent historic lows, oil economies in the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC, region had already turned to economic diversification programs to develop non-oil sectors. Retail, logistics, tourism and infrastructure all featured heavily in plans to lessen the degree of dependence on hydrocarbon revenues. Of those, concentration on logistics was a shrewd move: the Middle East Gulf nations' geographical location puts them neatly at the meeting point of the Middle East, Europe and Africa, connecting more than half of the world's population. As the natural next step, efforts are afoot to develop the region as a major transshipment hub for all kinds of goods, including project cargo.

No Limitations for Liners Returning to Iran

In an effort to attract major shipping companies, Iran said that it would impose no limitations for liners to revisit the country's waters as a bilateral relation. The move follows the Danish shipping giant Maersk Line's return to Iran on commercial grounds in the second half of 2016 after a five-year absence from this Middle Eastern country. A total of 27 international liner companies that used to call Iranian ports were forced to halt visiting this country under economical straits. The Managing Director of the Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) Mohammad Saeed Nejad said that major shipping companies are returning to Iran, "with 17 already visiting Iranian ports without any limitations, and load or discharge cargos."

Don't pay India import tax, says Forwarder Group

Global freight forwarding association FIATA has urged its members not to pay India's new tax on imports to shipping lines, branding the government ruling "unreasonable" and requiring further clarification. India's Ministry of Finance introduced a 22 January amendment to its service tax rules, withdrawing a tax exemption for prepaid freight shipments for all cargo discharged at Indian ports. Such shipments are now subject to a service tax of 4.5 percent. Carriers have implemented the tax charge on all India inbound prepaid freight shipments. However, forwarders are concerned over foreign entities outside the Indian tax regime collecting taxes.

Green Signal for Faster Development: India's New Freight Corridor

The Indian Railways is building two world-class freight corridors that will transform the way goods are transported along India's busiest routes and help increase the share of rail transportation in the country. The dedicated freight-only lines are being built along the four key transportation routes – known as the Golden Quadrilateral – which connect Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. These corridors carry the country's heaviest rail traffic and are highly congested. The World Bank is financing about 1,200 km of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (Ludhiana - Kolkata) through a series of three projects.

JNPT seeks uniform fees for scheme speeding imports

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, India's busiest public container handler, wants to make uniform charges for its direct port delivery (DPD) program to speed imports through the port. Extra handling charges and other demands by private operators have dampened shipper interest in the program and as a result the port has approached the Tariff Authority for Major Ports to charge Rs. 1,600 (about \$24) per 20-foot container and Rs. 2,300 per 40-foot container for all DPD shipments. DPD means import containers are delivered directly to pre-approved clients instead of waiting in a container freight station for clearance, which reduces cargo dwell times and inland costs for shippers.

Qatar Airways Cargo introduces additional Pharma Express flights originating from Basel & Brussels

Qatar Airways Cargo has announced the launch of additional Pharma Express flights from the pharmaceutical hubs of Basel and Brussels to Doha, providing a unique and dedicated air service to the growing pharmaceutical industry. Basel and Brussels are both home to the headquarters of major pharmaceutical companies, while Swiss chemical exports are largely shipped out of Basel. Qatar Airways Cargo has added an additional weekly frequency, operating on Fridays, from Basel to Doha starting February 3, 2017 whilst two additional Airbus A330 freighter services from Brussels to Doha on Wednesdays and Saturdays will commence on February 15.

Port of Antwerp opens new training centre in India

Indian port professionals who follow courses given in Mumbai by APEC, the port of Antwerp training centre, can now benefit from a purpose-built training facility. The new facility was officially opened last week during the annual Port of Antwerp Mission to India. Port professionals in India have been able to follow APEC courses since 2015 when the Antwerp training institute signed a five-year agreement with the JNPT, the largest container port in India.

Multi-modal logistic park ready: Concor chief

The maritime business is moving towards multi-modal logistics parks (MMLP) and setting up of such parks close to ports and in the hinterland will bring down the logistics cost and also promote containerisation, said Container Corporation of India (Concor) chairman V. Kalyanarama. According to Mr. Kalyanarama, the Visakhapatnam MMLP built on 100 acres is ready for operation, with warehouses and other facilities including a railway line. "We have spent to the tune of Rs. 450 crore on building the MMLP. Further, we are taking up such parks at Kakinada and Krishnapatnam ports also. We have acquired the land and we will begin the work soon," he said.