

Cyber attack fallout: Shipping to ports worldwide heavily impacted

Following the Petya ransomware cyber attack, Reuters reported that it is one of the biggest disruptions to hit the global shipping industry, affecting numerous ports and delaying and confusing shipments of goods of vital import. Maersk, the world's biggest container shipping line and operator of 76 ports, told Reuters that a number of its IT systems were still shut down and that it could not say when normal business operations would be resumed. Several of Maersk's port terminals in the United States, India, Spain and the Netherlands are still recovering from massive disruption caused by the Petya cyber attack. In the U.S., the South Florida Container Terminal reported dry cargo could not be delivered and no container would be received. In Tacoma, Wash., shipment unloading greatly slowed as workers had to switch to manual — paper — operations, said Dean McGrath, president of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 23.

Watch out, China: India is building a 'New Silk Road' of its own

As China encircles India with its Belt and Road initiative (BRI) - the 2013 rebranding of a longer-standing project to put China at the heart of a new pan-Eurasian economic order - India has a continent-crossing plan of its own. It's called the North-South Transport Corridor (NSTC), and it aims to better link India in with Iran, Russia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. At its root, the NSTC is a 7,200-kilometer multimodal trade corridor that extends from India to Russia, linking the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea. Goods travel by sea from Jawaharlal Nehru and Kandla ports in western India to the port of Bandar Abbas in Iran, then go by road and rail north through Baku to Moscow and St. Petersburg beyond. A prospective second route goes along the eastern side of the Caspian Sea, hitting up the new Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway and integrating with the North-South Transnational Corridor. India conspicuously views its relatively low volume of trade with Russia - amounting to a mere \$1.6 billion in exports in 2015 - as incongruent, given the size of the economies involved.

DAMAC to develop \$1 billion tourist waterfront in Oman

Hussain Sajwani, chairman of DAMAC Properties, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with government officials to redevelop Port Sultan Qaboos into a tourist destination. Omran, the Oman Tourism Development Company, will supervise the development. The port, which was originally built in 1975 and was used for commercial shipping, will have hotels, residences, shops and restaurants. Port Sohar will be used as a commercial port in its place. "As part of its commitment to the project, DAMAC will contribute to the local road infrastructure, improving opportunities for local SMEs and Omani nationals, as well as enhancing the economic and social standing of the community as a whole," Sajwani said in a press release. Dr. Ali Al Sunaidy, the deputy chairman of the Supreme Council for Planning, noted in the press release that the \$1 billion project is part of a larger plan to diversify the country's economy from oil and to boost investments in tourism, real estate and leisure in the area.

DP World sees opportunities in inland ports

DP World, the Nasdaq Dubai-listed ports operator, said it sees "great opportunities" in inland ports, logistics hubs, and industrial zones with added services as the company works on diversifying away from core business. Sultan Bin Sulayem, DP World group chairman and chief executive officer, said the company in 2017 also plans to focus on growing its operations in emerging markets as well as positioning itself on the New Silk Road. "We are diversifying to complement our core business of ports and terminals, developing logistics, industrial parks and zones, and marine services to complement what we do across the supply chain. Our positioning on the New Silk Way from our existing operations in China through Europe will also feature in our ongoing plans," he said. In an interview with Gulf News via email, Bin Sulayem said DP World will continue to play to its key area of maritime container ports, but that it sees opportunities in inland ports such as Kigali in Rwanda and in Kazakhstan. "Inland transport, logistics hubs, and industrial zones with added complementary or related services will be very important for future growth in world trade," he said.

DP World and Masdar to explore clean energy solutions for DP's ports and free zones

Global trade enables DP World and Masdar, Abu Dhabi's renewable energy company, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore areas of collaboration on clean energy solutions for DP World's portfolio of ports and free zones in the Middle East and Africa. Masdar will work with DP World to address challenges related to the delivery of sustainable, reliable and cost-effective power generation, with a particular focus on areas that are remote or off-grid. Masdar will provide specialist project management services, from concept to implementation, including community projects to support DP World's operations. The first collaborative activity will be to review DP World's operations at the Port of Berbera in Somaliland, focussing on hybrid solar photovoltaic (PV) - diesel plants, water treatment and other technical advisory services for power generation. The agreement will also look at increasing energy efficiency across the company's ports and terminals in the region.

UAE cruise ports achieve double-digit growth

Both Dubai and Abu Dhabi have recorded strong growth in their cruise business in the 2016-17 season just ended. Dubai's record-breaking year officially concluded with the departure of the season's final ship, C.S. Sea Princess, from Port Rashid. After a stopover in Dubai, the luxury ship's only port of call in the GCC, the C.S. Sea Princess continued its voyage to Aqaba as part of a 104-night round trip around the world. This marked the end of a successful season for Dubai Cruise Tourism, which saw over 625,000 cruise tourists visit the city on a total of 157 ship calls, reflecting an increase of 15 per cent and 18 per cent respectively when compared to the 2015/2016 season. The season also saw Thomson Cruises become the first UK-based cruise line to home port in the region, in addition to inaugural visits from TUI's Mein Schiff 1, Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Star and MSC's MSC Fantasia, among eight other maiden ship calls.

DP World wins prestigious awards for global sustainability and education programmes

DP World's commitment to sustainability was recognised at the International CSR Excellence Awards in London recently, winning Gold for Employee Engagement in recognition of its Global Education initiative and being named Sustainability Champion for its 'Our World, Our Future' global sustainability programme. 'Our World, Our Future' was launched in February 2016 to unite DP World's wide-ranging sustainability efforts and ensure maximum impact. Over the past year, it has reached all of DP World's 36,500 employees across six continents, establishing it as a leading responsible business. The innovative Global Education Programme is being implemented across the world following a pilot study in early 2016. It involves employees delivering lessons in local schools to increase the knowledge of the industry in young people. The modules encourage children to consider a career in the maritime and trade industry, helping develop a pipeline of future talent for a crucial sector.

Pentagon asked to work closely with India in maritime domain

GA key Senate panel has asked the Pentagon to reassess its approach to partner with India and cooperate with it in anti-submarine warfare, amid China's increased naval presence in the Indian Ocean. An amendment in this regard to the National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA)-2018, moved by Senator Ted Cruz, was passed by the Senate Armed Services Committee early this week. It is a part of Senator Cruz's effort to further implement the designation of India as a 'Major Defence Partner'. "Few partnerships in the 21st century carry more strategic significance than United States' partnership with India, the world's largest democracy," Ted Cruz's office said. "Even so, Senator Cruz believes that the current bilateral cooperation and joint development need to be more closely aligned with the shared interests of maritime domain awareness and anti-submarine warfare," it said.

Cruise policy next month, India to attract 700 vessels: Nitin Gadkari

A cruise tourism policy is in the making and will be announced next month, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said on Tuesday, with an aim to tap India's vast potential on this front and attract more vessels. The country draws nearly 70 cruise vessels a year, which is expected to go up to 700 with this initiative. "Cruise tourism can be India's economic growth engine as there is a vast untapped potential. In a month, the policy will be ready as a joint working group comprising shipping and tourism secretaries is working on it," Shipping, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said. Speaking to reporters in New Delhi after chairing a workshop on development of cruise tourism, Gadkari said the action plan will be finalised in the next three months that includes key steps on par with international standards, simplification of procedures, easy immigration and ways to make India a global hotspot. Union Tourism Minister Mahesh Sharma was present.

India: Cargo traffic at 12 major ports up 6% to 114 mt in April-May

India's top 12 major ports saw their cargo traffic go up by 5.56 per cent to 113.63 million tonnes (mt) in April-May of 2017-18, riding on the back of surge in demand. These top ports, under the administrative control of the Centre, had handled 107.65 mt cargo in April-May 2016. Increased demand from sectors like iron ore and fertilisers and coking coal traffic led to higher movement of cargo during the last two months, according to the Indian Ports Association. Iron ore traffic volumes moved up 33.28 per cent to 9.96 mt during April-May as against 7.47 mt in the same period a year ago while those of coking coal rose 12.67 per cent to 9.30 mt. Fertiliser traffic went up 20.09 per cent to 1 mt. The Kandla port handled the highest traffic volume at 18.86 mt during April-May this year, followed by the Paradip port at 16.19 mt, the JNPT 11.23 mt, Mumbai 10.99 mt and Visakhapatnam 9.98 mt, data showed.