

## Over 50 Indian companies eye expanding operations to RAKEZ in UAE

Over 50 Indian companies including DCM Shriram and LT Foods have shown interest in expanding their operations to Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ) in the UAE. RAKEZ is one of the seven emirates that comprise the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and one of the 45 free economic zones in the Gulf nation. "More than 50 high-profile Indian business leaders have discovered the advantages of expanding their operations to Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ)," according to a statement issued by RAKEZ at a press conference here. In this regard, several meetings are lined up with companies like DCM Shriram, MSN Lab and LT Foods, it said. Addressing the media, Ramey Jallad, group chief executive officer, RAKEZ, said, "India is very important for us. The bilateral ties between India and the UAE are excellent and out of the over 14,000 multinational companies present at RAKEZ, 22 per cent are Indian. We are looking for more from India and other countries." Ashok Leyland, Dabur and GK Technologies are already present in RAKEZ, he informed. There are finance facilities also available with certain conditions, if an investor commits to bear the 60 per cent cost of the new set-up, RAKEZ will help the rest 40 per cent, Jallad said.

## Dubai Ports World to own shares in Egypt's Suez Canal industrial zone

The Egyptian government yesterday announced an agreement between the country's Suez Canal Authority (SCA) and Dubai Ports (DP) World, under which the latter will acquire 49 per cent of the canal's economic zone projects. "DP World will sign a partnership agreement with SCA to acquire 49 per cent of the canal's economic zone development project," the Egyptian cabinet's spokesperson said. On Tuesday, the Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouli stated that DP will implement projects in the northwestern area of the Suez Gulf, as part of the company's current "extensive" investment in the region. SCA's chairman Mohab Mameish recently said that DP's investments were "an indication of the success of the Suez Canal development project." Experts say that the recent agreement comes in the framework of DP's efforts to control the ports of the African continent given its geopolitical importance and its role in dominating the movement of the global trade. DP's branch in Egypt's Ain Sokhna port – one of the largest and most important ports on the Red Sea – was established after a \$670 contract was signed in 2008. Under the contract terms, DP owns 90 per cent of the Sokhna Port Development company.

## New facility for ship repair opened at Dubai Maritime City

Albwardy Damen, a joint venture providing shipbuilding and ship repair services to the marine and oil and gas related industries in the Middle East, recently officially inaugurated its new facility at the Dubai Maritime City (DMC). Approximately 100 attendees were present at the event from both government and key industry makers such as Dubai Maritime City and Dubai Maritime City Authority. The new opening also comes at the time of their 40th anniversary celebrations in the UAE along with its 10th anniversary for a successful joint venture with the Dutch shipyards "Damen". Well-known as a leading shipbuilding and repair service provider for the Middle East Maritime Industry, Albwardy Damen operates in Dubai, Sharjah, and Fujairah; driven by its commitment to achieving excellence through abiding by technical and environmental standards. With an aim to increase its operations and foster strong relations with clients, the company has expanded to Dubai Maritime City (DMC) from Al Jadaf. The new facility became recently operational allowing it to deliver the same safety standards and quality services promised to customers. "The primary aim of the company has always been to offer its current and potential customers the ultimate best of service excellence.

## Greek shipowners call for EU to throw its weight behind shortsea shipping

Greece's shortsea shipowners went to Brussels this month and called on Euro MPs to throw their weight behind Europe's shortsea shipping sector as it faces challenges posed by the new regulatory environment. The Hellenic Shortsea Shipowners Association (HSSA) president, Charalampos Simantonis told a Brussels workshop, that measures and initiatives need to be adopted at the European level to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the European fleet. He said these initiatives should cover financing, the cutting of bureaucracy and the introduction of new ways of transporting commodities, adding that in the face of the new 2020 regulations motives need to be introduced that encourage the upgrading of the shortsea fleet in line with the requirements of the new regulations. Simantonis was speaking at a one-day workshop organised at the European parliament by the HSSA and Greek Euro MP, Miltiadis Kyrcos. Titled 'Short Sea Shipping: Defining trends-removing bottlenecks' the workshop's target was to highlight the key factors affecting the competitiveness of the Greek and the wider Mediterranean shortsea industry as well as discuss the trends that will prevail in view of the implementation of the new regulations in 2020.

## 'World's First' zero emission marine biofuel test successful

Netherlands-based supplier of sustainable low carbon marine fuels GoodFuels Marine in conjunction with bulker and tanker owner and operator NORDEN A/S, has successfully completed trials of the world's first zero emission, 'drop in' Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO)-equivalent marine biofuel – almost entirely reducing all carbon and sulphur emissions. The pioneer in sustainable marine fuels said that the culmination of three years extensive research and development with partners including Royal Dutch Boskalis and technology group Wärtsilä, GoodFuels' Bio-Fuel Oil (BFO) delivers near-zero carbon and Sulphur Oxide (SOx) emissions without any requirement for engine modifications. The trials – which saw hundreds of tonnes of 'drop in' BFO taken onboard in the Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Antwerp region – were conducted on the 37,000 dwt Handysize product tanker vessel NORD HIGHLANDER as she ran in typical commercial operation in the North and Baltic Seas. The successful operation effectively means that there is the capability to future-proof fuel requirements for shipowners and operators who are seeking an alternative to both distillates and Ultra Low Sulphur Fuel Oil (ULSFO) in order to comply with 2020 0.5% sulphur cap requirements, as well as impending IMO Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction requirements.

## Flagship vessel arrives to mark start of 2m Asia-Europe service at DP World London Gateway

The Maersk Mc-Kinney Moller arrived at DP World London Gateway today, the first vessel on the AE7/Condor service to call at the port. The flagship Maersk Line vessel, which is 399 metres long and able to hold 18,270 twenty-foot equivalent container units, berthed on the River Thames in the early hours of Thursday morning. 2M, the largest container shipping alliance in the world, announced earlier this month that this particular Asia-Europe service would begin calling at DP World London Gateway Port on a weekly basis. The AE7/Condor service is operated by Maersk Line and MSC, with Hamburg Sud and HMM taking slots on the service. It carries cargo between the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, North Africa and Northern Europe and on vessels which have capacity ranging between 17,500 and 19,500 TEU (twenty-foot equivalent units). In the past, the port has handled several of the vessels operating on this loop, including the 19,224 TEU vessel MSC Tina and the 18,270 TEU vessel Madison Maersk. The announcement that the service would begin calling at DP World London Gateway came as the port celebrated its fifth anniversary on Tuesday, November 6.

## China-Europe truck service gears up for January launch after successful pilot

China-Europe rail may be on the rise, but a new option is now open to shippers which could cut costs, or time, versus other modes. The first TIR truck travelled from the Chinese border town of Khorgos, through Kazakhstan and Russia to Europe in just 13 days. A joint initiative between Ceva Logistics, Alblas and Jet-rail, along with the IRU, the truck arrived in Poland on November 24, having experienced no disruption or Customs issues in Russia, Belarus or Kazakhstan. Ceva said it had customers waiting to use services on the route, which it intends to operate regularly from early January. The forwarder claims that shipping on this route by truck cuts costs by some 50%, compared with air freight. And with a 10-15 day transit time, it is some 30-50% faster than rail. However, over longer distances, trucks tend to be more expensive than rail, while emissions-wise, rail also would prevail – according to the World Bank, every ton/mile of freight moving by rail instead of truck reduces greenhouse gas emissions by two-thirds or more. Nevertheless, there are likely to be some benefits for certain shippers otherwise considering rail or air freight. The TIR international customs system was launched in China in May this year, and the route is part of China's Belt and Road initiative.

## PowerChina wins \$3bn construction project for Saudi mega-yard

State-owned Power Construction Corporation of China (PowerChina) has announced its has won the bid for the construction of marine facilities for the mega-shipyard King Salman International Complex. The total contract value is over \$3bn, which is the largest cash settlement project PowerChina has received. The overall marine project will see Saudi Arabia to become a top shipbuilder globally with the International Maritime Industries (IMI) joint venture owned by Saudi Aramco (50.1%) and its most important tonnage provider Bahri (19.9%), the remainder belonging to UAE-based rig builder Lamprell (20%) and shipbuilder Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) (10%) of Korea. The King Salman International Complex for Maritime Industries and Services is part of Saudi Arabian's National Industrial Strategy to focus on economic diversification. The complex locates at the Arabian Gulf coastal area of East Saudi Arabian, covering an area of 4.5km by 2.5km. The facility will be capable of building four offshore drilling platforms and 40 plus vessels annually, including three VLCCs. The project will be able to provide engineering, manufacture and repair services to drilling platform, commercial vessels and offshore engineering upon the completion.

## CN makes an offer for largest shipping terminal in Eastern Canada

Canadian National Railway Co. has put in a preliminary offer to buy the largest shipping terminal in Eastern Canada, in a bid to capture some of New York's container business. In an interview on Wednesday, chief executive officer Jean-Jacques Ruest said the ambition with the potential acquisition of the 30-hectare Halterm Container Terminal is to create a "Prince Rupert of the East." Halifax is the fourth-busiest port behind Vancouver, Montreal and Prince Rupert, B.C. CN provides the transcontinental rail service for the Fairview Container Terminal in Prince Rupert. Ruest said CN has a partner in its bid for the Halterm terminal, but didn't disclose who it is. The railway was once a part owner of the facility, back when the company was a Crown corporation. Halterm was sold to Australia's Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets, which bought the terminal in 2007 for \$173 million. CN provides the rail out of Halifax. Stevedores union ILA local 269 president Kevin Piper welcomed the CN bid and said, "we look forward to working with CN and its strategic partner and duplicating the success CN has had in Prince Rupert." Ruest said if CN is successful in its bid, it will make changes to the business model of the Halterm container and rail operation.

## Port Sohar's Terminal C crosses new milestone

A terminal at the Sohar Port and Freezone has handled more than three million Twenty-Foot Equivalent Unit (TEUs) containers since beginning operations in 2014. The news was announced by Hutchison Ports Sohar, which manages the container terminal otherwise known as Terminal C. TEU is used to measure a ship's cargo carrying capacity. The world's largest container ships can carry in excess of 14,000 TEUs. Hutchison Ports Sohar's Terminal C achieved the milestone accomplishment in just four years. The facility is an ultra-modern container-handling facility with a current handling capacity of the terminal is 1.4 TEU million per year. The success of Terminal C comes only weeks after the terminal was awarded for operational excellence at the Transport & Logistics Middle East Awards. The achievement coincided with a signing ceremony for the purchase of two new remote-controlled quay cranes from Shanghai Zhenhua Heavy Industry Co. (ZPMC), a leading Chinese heavy-duty equipment manufacturer. The new cranes will boost Terminal C's annual TEU capacity, driving it to 1.8 million a year. Following their delivery, Hutchison Ports Sohar will have a total of six remote-controlled super post-Panamax quay cranes and seven manually operated cranes for a total of 13 ship-to-shore cranes.

## Five top global shipping lines eye uniform tech standards

Five top global container shipping companies plan to set up association with the purpose of paving the way for digitalisation, standardisation and interoperability in the container shipping industry. A press release said the companies — A.P. Moller – Maersk, CMA CGM, Hapag-Lloyd, MSC and Ocean Network Express — plan to establish container shipping association. Speaking in an interview with the Shipping from Nigeria, Maersk Africa Communication Manager Augustine Fischer said talks are ongoing on the creation of the association. The release said IT executives from the five shipping companies are currently discussing the creation of common information technology standards which will be openly available and free of charge for all stakeholders of the wider container shipping industry. "It's in the customers' and all stakeholders' best interest, if container shipping companies operate with a common set of information technology standards," said André Simha, CIO of MSC and spokesperson of the group. "We are striving for less red tape and better transparency. The timing is right as emerging technologies create new customer-friendly opportunities. The five are among the 30 world global renowned shipping container lines with huge global presence.

## Call for new container terminal in Howrah, Kolkata

A prominent shipping industry player has sought a new container terminal on the Howrah side that will not only decongest Kolkata but also help lower its rising pollution levels. "There is a need for a container terminal on the west of city (Howrah) side which could avoid trucks coming to Kolkata," Tirupati Vessels director Rajiv Agarwal said. Tirupati Vessels has recently started RoRo (Roll-on/roll-off) service in the city. KoPT chairman Vinit Kumar told PTI that RoRo service addresses the issue and had been commenced to transfer the trucks to Howrah bypassing Kolkata roads and bridges for their onward journey. India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry president A M Ahmad said funding for the project will not be a problem from the private sector and even Bangladeshi investors who are keen on developing it if the government decides. Pollution in Kolkata has been rising alarmingly and the principal bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) had slapped a Rs 5 crore penalty on the state for its failure to control air quality in the city. State environment and transport minister had said commercial vehicles beyond 15 years coming from districts and other states were a cause of concern as they were contributing heavily to the high pollution.