



DP World reports 1.9% increase in third-quarter shipping container volumes

Dubai-based global port operator DP World said it is set to deliver a "relatively stable" financial performance in 2020 after reporting a 1.9 per cent increase in third-quarter gross container volumes led by Europe, Middle East and Africa. The company handled 18.3 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) across its global portfolio of container terminals in the three months ending September, up from 17.7m TEUs in the same quarter a year ago, DP World said in a statement. The company's third-quarter gross container volumes grew 3.1 per cent on a reported basis, which follows a contraction in the first and second quarters of the year and compares to a 2.2 per cent decline for the industry, according to Drewry estimates. The decline in economic activity as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic has amplified domestic disruptions around the world and led to a contraction in global trade. Global trade is now set to shrink 10.4 per cent this year, compared with last year's growth of 1 per cent, due to weak demand, the collapse of the tourism industry and supply disruptions related to shutdowns, according to the International Monetary Fund. It is projected to expand by 8.3 per cent next year.

Shipping liners introduce new services on SE Asian trade route as demand picks up

Major container shipping liners including Ocean Network Express, or ONE, Wan Hai Lines and CMA CGM have introduced new services on the South East Asia trade route indicating a revival of demand in the region. Singapore-based ONE will launch a new weekly China-Indonesia-Malaysia, or CIM service, starting Nov 14, the company said in a statement on Oct 23. Port rotation for the newly launched CIM service will include Hong Kong-Nansha-Shekou-Surabaya-Semarang-Jakarta-Port Kelang-Hong Kong. French container liner CMA CGM's sole Intra-Asia short sea carrier, CNC, will launch a new weekly service connecting the ports of Hong Kong, China, Indonesia and Malaysia starting Nov 14, the company said in a statement Oct 23. Port rotation for the newly launched service will include Hong Kong-Nansha-Shekou-Surabaya-Semarang-Jakarta-Port Klang (North)-Port Klang (West)-Hong Kong. Taiwan-based container shipping liner Wan Hai Lines announced launch of a new weekly service connecting South China, Indonesia and Malaysia starting Nov 14, the company said in a statement Oct 23. The new service rotation will include Hong Kong-Nansha-Shekou-Surabaya-Semarang-Jakarta-Port Kelang-Hong Kong.

Fujairah port's throughput returns to 'normal' after COVID-19 hit

Throughput at the UAE's Fujairah has bounced back to levels before COVID-19 slammed business in April, after hitting a record high in February, according to Martijn Heijboer, the port's business development manager. May volume picked up after a 25%-30% plunge in April and by August and September throughput was "back at our normal levels, where we left it basically in Q1," Heijboer said. "That shows Fujairah is well positioned and provides the right services to cater for this and come back online quickly after such a crisis." The pandemic had "very little" impact on bunkering at the port, he said, though it is not growing at the moment, he said. He did not provide figures. Fujairah is developing an oil and trading hub, with national oil companies Saudi Aramco already based there and Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. trading derivatives and developing Murban crude futures. The port has capacity to store 40 million barrels of oil products and about 20 million barrels of crude oil. "There is a lot more potential for crude storage in Fujairah," Yusr Sultan Al Junaidy, managing director of ENOC's Horizon Terminals, said in the interview. "Production is steady and demand has fallen. That is something Fujairah can build on."

CIS-Guangzhou-Southeast Asia cargo route launched

A multimodal service that transports containers from Central Asia to Indonesia was launched on 6 October. A container was railed from Uzbekistan to Nansha, a sub-port of Guangzhou, for the first time and loaded onto a ship bound for Indonesia. The service launched the CIS-Guangzhou-Southeast Asia shipping route. The service is another symbol of the Belt and Road initiative, of which the Maritime Silk Road forms the shipping aspect. Nansha has been designated as a hub port of the Maritime Silk Road, while Uzbekistan is the heart of the ancient Silk Route. The cargo comprised of 1,113 tonnes of potassium fertiliser that was transported for a price of US\$128,000. Guangzhou Port Group authorities said that Nansha can expand international logistics channels through a multimodal transportation combination that takes advantage of China Rail's transcontinental trains, facilitating transitional logistics to countries and regions along the Belt and Road. Meanwhile, Guangzhou Customs has enacted 15 regulations to promote air and sea freight between China and Europe. These regulations cover customs clearance, reduction of customs declaration costs and development of multimodal transportation services.

Priority in chartering to be given to ships built, flagged in India and owned by Indians: Govt

In a major boost to shipbuilding in India, the government has amended existing norms and now the first priority in chartering of vessels will be given to ships built and flagged in India as well as owned by Indians, Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Thursday last week. The move in alignment with the Aatmanirbhar Bharat mission will promote 'Make in India' initiatives and give a strategic boost to domestic shipbuilding industries and generate employment, the minister said. "To boost shipbuilding activities in India, the Ministry of Shipping has amended Right of First Refusal (ROFR) licensing conditions. Now, it has been decided that for any kind of charter of a vessel undertaken through a tender process, the first priority for ROFR would be given to Indian built, Indian flagged and Indian owned vessels," Shipping Minister Mandaviya told PTI. The second priority will be given to foreign built, Indian flagged and Indian-owned vessels while the third priority will be given to Indian built, foreign flagged and foreign-owned ships, he said and termed the policy change a "bold step" in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to promote the domestic industry.

APM Terminals signs agreement to develop bulk facility in Georgia

APM Terminals and Poti New Terminals Corporation (PNTC) have signed an agreement for the joint development of a new bulk cargo facility on the northern side of the Poti Sea Port in Georgia. The agreement comes after APM Terminals presented its plans for the development of a deepwater port at Poti to the government of Georgia in February. Under the agreement, APMT will invest in building a new dry bulk cargo facility including yard area and rail connection in Poti. The new facility will be built during the first phase of the port construction project and will generate additional capacity of approximately 10m tons. "It is an important milestone towards reaching our ambition to develop the best-in-class logistics solution in Poti Sea Port which entails a modern dry bulk cargo facility capable to accommodate panamax vessels and handle various cargo types on 25 hectares of the customised area. This infrastructure will make the supply chain more efficient and effective for local and regional cargo owners," said Keld Mosgaard Christensen, managing director of APM Terminals Poti.

Empty boxes backlog in Australia intensifies due to congestion

Recent industrial action has caused a massive backlog of empty containers in Sydney and to a lesser extent in other capital city ports in Australia, according to Shipping Australia Limited (SAL). Ocean shipping companies lose money and revenue-earning opportunities if empty boxes are uselessly hanging about in the country and SAL said in its announcement that one way to tackle the backlog is the use of "sweeper" vessels, boxships to pick up and take away empty boxes. But the ongoing container disruption in Sydney due to industrial action has resulted in availability issues on additional berth slots, which shipping companies need to bring in the sweeper ships. "Currently we are aware that some terminals are providing scheduled vessels with some limited extra time alongside to embark additional empty containers," said SAL. There is no point demanding sweeper vessels call in Sydney in the current environment, according to SAL, which explained, "Because it is next to impossible to berth sweepers at Sydney because of congestion. Congestion will have to be worked through before sweepers can call. It's just as simple as that. On a positive note, there are some signs that this may change in the next month at one terminal at least."