

Abu Dhabi Ports exploring further partnerships with Chinese investors in free zone

Abu Dhabi Ports is in discussions with Chinese investors with the aim of attracting further investment from the country to the Khalifa Port Free Trade Zone, in line with the emirate's economic diversification plans. The ports operator, which runs the capital's US\$7 billion Khalifa Port, is courting Chinese investors after signing a 50-year agreement in July with Chinese Jiangsu Provincial Overseas Cooperation and Investment Company, which will bring in investments of Dh1.1bn to the zone. "Jiangsu is the beginning," said Captain Mohamed Al Shamsi, Abu Dhabi Ports' chief executive. "We are also looking at other opportunities with other provinces in China," he said, declining to give additional details. Abu Dhabi Ports, which also operates Khalifa Industrial Zone Abu Dhabi (Kizad), is expanding its operations in the UAE as part of efforts by the country to diversify the economy away from oil. China, the UAE's second largest trade partner after India, is also boosting investments in Abu Dhabi emirate. China's Cosco Shipping, the world's third-largest largest container shipper, signed a concession agreement with Abu Dhabi Ports in September 2016 to build and operate a \$738 million shipping terminal in Khalifa Port.

Fujairah National Shipping Eyes Greater Market Share

United Arab Emirates-based maritime services company Fujairah National Shipping (FNS) announced plans to increase its market share in the region. As disclosed, the company wants to become the first 'one-stop-shop' maritime services company in the region and further add to its portfolio of services. Announcing its ambitious growth plans FNS said it wanted to "challenge network rivals in the Gulf by aiming to become one of the top three maritime services companies in the region by the end of 2018." The company said that in order to meet its objectives it has brought in a new management team, headed by Chief Executive Officer, Sanjeev Sarin, invested in new physical assets within the port, and launched a new technology platform. These are said to include the acquisition of ships, including bunker barges, and oil storage facilities. "Fujairah National Shipping is perfectly positioned to capitalize on the growing market opportunity at the Port of Fujairah and throughout the Gulf Region. The company's strong core offering plays a central role in meeting the exacting demands of its ship owner and operator clients," Sheikh Sultan bin Saleh Al Sharqi, Vice-Chairman of Fujairah National Group, said.

Oman Shipping Company eyes bulk cargo transport business

Oman's state-owned shipping company plans to capture a sizable share of the transport market for aggregates, which is a promising area in the country. Bulk cargo is an area that is likely to grow, thanks to a phenomenal growth in aggregate exports from the Sultanate, Tarik Mohammed Al Junaidi, chief executive officer of Oman Shipping Company, told the Times of Oman in an exclusive interview. "That is an area we want to capture. We are now exporting small cargoes and that is not enough. We want to get into a bigger scale," he said, adding that Oman Shipping Company (OSC) might need anywhere between two to 10 bulk carriers for transporting loose cargoes. However, the number of vessels will depend on how much business the shipping line can capture. Referring to the emerging business opportunities from Duqm Refinery, Al Junaidi said OSC is discussing the subject with its counterparts in Kuwait. As per an understanding between Kuwait and Oman, the proposed refinery will get 65 per cent of its crude oil from Kuwait and 35 per cent from the Sultanate. It is believed that the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) will be the shipping partner for transporting crude from Kuwait.

Digital revolution is coming to Middle East Maritime

Digitalisation was one of the key subjects that vessel owners, port operators and shipyard owners discussed during an exhibition and conference in the United Arab Emirates last week. Abu Dhabi Ports kicked off the subject matter when its chief executive Capt Mohamed Juma Al Shamisi explained that digital technologies will be adopted in the capital port of the UAE. We hear that a digital system for optimising port operations is soon to be introduced. Capt Al Shamisi urged the nation's vessel operators, ship repairers and builders to "take advantage of technology growth and spend money on research and development to start the process of digitalisation". He said this would result in operational efficiencies, improved business and better recruitment of future generations of seafarers and shipyard workers in the Middle East. Abu Dhabi Shipbuilding said it was already investing in digital technology, while Abu Dhabi tug operator Safeen said it was investing in technology to improve operations and help with crew recruitment.

Abu Dhabi Ports orders three tugboats from Sanmar and Damen

Abu Dhabi Ports announced it would acquiring three tugboats from Sanmar and Damen last week. Abu Dhabi Marine Services (SAFEEN), a subsidiary of Abu Dhabi Ports, ordered two 30 tonnes bollard pull tugs from Sanmar Shipyards and is acquiring another from Damen Shipyards following a public tender. As part of our ambitious journey, in the past year we have made strong strides to expand our world leading service portfolio," Maktoum Al Houqani, chief marine services officer at SAFEEN. "We are entering a phase of expansion in our fleet capacity and capability to better cater to the growth of our ports and its customers. The new tug boats will support our ambition to be the preferred service provider at the centre of the maritime industry." Abu Dhabi Ports ceo, Mohamed Juma Al Shamisi, said "The past years have been challenging for the industry but we must look at the future with trust and optimism. Today's announcement is the perfect reflection of our strategy for growth, which was built on continued investment in state-of-the art infrastructure, technology and skills development,".

Freeport launches weekly service to Brazil and Argentina

Importing and exporting goods from Argentina and Brazil is set to become a more straightforward affair, with Malta Freeport Terminals launching a weekly link to the two Latin American nations. The Sirius Service will call at six Brazilian ports as well as Buenos Aires in Argentina, with eight vessels operated by container ship giants CMA CGM, Maersk Line and Hamburg Sud operating the service. CMA CGM vessel *Magdalena* called at the Freeport yesterday, marking the first arrival on the Malta leg of the service. Live refrigerated containers will be available on the service from early December. Food importers stand to gain enormously from the service, said Malta Freeport CEO Alex Montebello. "We are investing heavily to increase the number of refrigerated container slots available at our terminals to 1,800 in view of the higher volume we expect to handle," he said. The CMA CGM *Magdalena* was the first vessel to operate on the new service. Malta Freeport already provides weekly services to Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, with those services forming part of the Freeport's network links to 127 ports worldwide.

Abu Dhabi Terminals achieves key safety milestone

Abu Dhabi Terminals, the operator and manager of the Khalifa Port Container Terminal (KPCT), said it has achieved a major safety milestone by clocking 3 million hours without LTI (Lost Time Injury). This feat showcases ADT's continued commitment to the health and safety of its employees and operating environment, according to a statement from the company. Maintaining a zero-accident work environment, with a high number of no-LTI man-hours, is uncommon in the industry. This landmark could not have been achieved without a strong leadership emphasis on the importance of health and safety within the organization. This value, along with a progressive HSE policy, regular audits, and safety briefings for all employees, ensures that the highest levels of safety and vigilance are ingrained in the daily work routine at Khalifa Port. This not only benefits ADT employees, but also our international clients, in maintaining a seamless supply chain network, said the statement.

India's JNPT volume rises despite disruptions

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) reported a 6.3 percent year-over-year increase in container volume in the first half of the fiscal year, despite operational disruptions resulting from the cyber attack of Maersk Group in June and adverse weather in July and September. The provisional port statistics collected by JOC.com show four terminals in India's largest public harbor cumulatively racked up 2.4 million TEU, compared with 2.26 million TEU in the April-to-September period of 2016. APM Terminals (APMT)-operated Gateway Terminals India and DP World's new facility, Nhava Sheva (India) Gateway Terminal (NSIGT), led the growth. APMT Mumbai had an 11.6 percent rise, with first-half volume reaching 990,463 TEU, compared with 887,266 TEU a year earlier, whereas NSIGT reported a 43.5 percent jump, handling 296,767 TEU, compared with 206,864 TEU in the same period last year. Port-owned Jawaharlal Nehru Container Terminal handled 787,695 TEU, which was relatively flat year over year, whereas throughput at DP World's flagship Nhava Sheva International Container Terminal fell 15.2 percent to 328,294 TEU from 387,153 TEU in the corresponding six months of 2016.

Mundra port hits new productivity milestone

The Adani Group-owned Mundra Port has hit a new productivity milestone, ramping up competition with its public rival Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) as it prepares to open a fourth mega-terminal. Adani International Container Terminal (AICTPL), a joint venture between Adani Group and Mediterranean Shipping Co., loaded and discharged a total of 10,254 TEU — touted as the largest-ever lift on a single sailing at an Indian port — when it serviced the MSC Bruxelles last week. The 337-meter (1,106-foot) Bruxelles has been deployed in MSC's newly launched and independent 'INGWE' service connecting Asia, the Gulf, and Africa. The weekly service calls Ningbo, Shanghai and Shekou, China; Singapore; Colombo, Sri Lanka; Port Louis, Mauritius; Durban and Coega, South Africa; Salalah, Oman; Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates; Karachi, Pakistan; Mundra, Nhava Sheva (JNPT) and Hazira, India; Colombo; and back to Ningbo. The new milestone broke the previous high of 8,703 TEU achieved on the MSC Fillippa that called AICTPL in September last year, according to a company statement. MSC has been steadily upsizing its tonnage in Indian trades with larger vessels, and the 9,200-TEU Bruxelles call builds on that trend.

Adani plans Rs 1500 cr international airport in Mundra

Port-to-power behemoth Adani Group is set to enter the airport business with an international airport at Mundra, Gujarat. The group has firmed up plans to upgrade the existing airstrip at Mundra to a full-fledged commercial airport with integrated cargo and aerospace operations. The conglomerate, which has received environmental clearance for the project, plans to invest around Rs 1,500 crore in it. In 2008, the government allowed fully owned private airports without any equity participation from the Airports Authority of India (AAI). However, central agencies will oversee functions like navigation, security, customs, and immigration in such airports. The Adani Group, through its subsidiary Mundra International Airport Private Ltd (MIAPL), will operate the airport to cash in on the corporate traffic in Mundra, which is fast developing into a business hub. According to documents filed with the environment ministry, the group plans to upgrade the airstrip to a runway capable of handling large passenger aircraft like Boeing 747 and Airbus A350. A passenger terminal building with a capacity of 300 passengers, to be increased in the future, will also be constructed.