

East Africa's first inland dry port located in Rwanda is open for business and has officially commenced operations

The inland dry port located some 20 kilometers from the capital city Kigali, Rwanda aims to improve the country's import and export fortunes from main ports in Tanzania and Kenya. The Dubai-based global port operator DP world and the Rwandan government who participated in the opening ceremony, said the US \$80m facility will make Rwanda, despite being a landlocked country, a regional hub for intra-African trade. Rwanda's imports have increased year after year as companies invest more on capital, energy, lubricants and intermediary goods. According to the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda quarterly Gross Domestic Product (GDP) report, Rwanda's imports have increased to US \$215m as of August and exports have increased to US \$93m as of August 2018. Averagely, Rwanda's imports runs at US \$270m from 1998 to 2018. The 13 hectares facility features an Inland Container Terminal with modern warehousing capacity, a container yard and administrative and services buildings. The cargo holding capacity greatly improves efficiency and by embracing use of modern machinery, it reduces logistics. The size and capacity of the port will make it possible for trucks to easily deposit their containers rather than waiting for their assets to be cleared.

Chabahar Port development exempted from US sanctions

The United States has excluded the development of the Chabahar Port in Iran from the "maximum-pressure" sanctions against Tehran reimposed on November 5. The sanctions are targeting Iran's energy, shipbuilding, shipping, and banking sectors to exert pressure on the country to abandon its nuclear program, development of ballistic missiles and other "malign activities." The U.S. Secretary Mike Pompeo granted the exception to the port development and the construction of an associated railway for the shipment of non-sanctionable goods through the port for Afghanistan's use, as well as Afghanistan's continued imports of Iranian petroleum products, a spokesperson for the State Department said in a statement. The move is aimed at supporting "Afghanistan's economic growth and development as well as our close partnership with India," the statement reads. India and Iran entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop the Chabahar Port, located outside the Persian Gulf, in May 2016. Under the deal, India is to equip and operate two berths in Chabahar Port Phase-I with a capital investment of USD 85.21 million and annual revenue expenditure of USD 22.95 million on a 10-year lease. The port was inaugurated in late 2017.

Liner giants to form new association for digitalisation and standardisation

AP Moller-Maersk, CMA CGM, Ocean Network Express (ONE), Hapag-Lloyd and MSC have joined hands to form a new container shipping association to pave the way for digitalisation, standardisation and interoperability in the container shipping industry. The world's five major lines have nominated their IT executives to discuss the creation of common information technology standards which will be openly available and free of charge for all stakeholders of the container shipping segment. Andre Simha, cio of MSC, said it is in the best interest of customers and all stakeholders if container shipping companies operate with a common set of information technology standards. "We are striving for less red tape and better transparency. The timing is right, as emerging technologies create new customer friendly opportunities. Together, we gain traction in delivering technological breakthroughs and services to our customers compared to working in our closed silos," Simha commented. The five lines identified a need for a neutral, non-profit body for ocean carriers. The association will not discuss any commercial or operational matters, and has no intent of developing or operating any digital platform. It only aims to ensure interoperability through standardisation.

China to build port in Myanmar, third in India's neighbourhood

China will develop a multi-billion-dollar deep sea port in Myanmar's Kyaukpyu town along the Bay of Bengal, a development that will concern India which already has two Chinese-built ports around it. Under China's Belt and Road project, the deal between Beijing and Nay Pyi Taw was signed on Thursday after years of stalled talks over the financing of the project. China is building the Gwadar port in Pakistan and has a 99-year lease of strategic Hambantota port in Sri Lanka. Besides, it is also funding one at Chittagong in Bangladesh. India sees Chinese developing ports in the neighbourhood a strategy to encircle it in the Indian Ocean. According to a report in the Global Times, China will fund 70 per cent of the project and the remaining 30 per cent will be taken up by Myanmar. "The signing of the framework agreement marks a significant step for the port project, which has been stalled since 2015, and for the continued implementation of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which has come under increased scrutiny because of cases such as the Kyaukpyu port project," the report said. "Prolonged negotiations fuelled criticism of the BRI, which some foreign critics said could add to local debts and even threaten other countries' sovereignty."

APM Terminals Pipavav bets big on LPG, Auto cargo for growth

Private ports operator, APM Terminals Pipavav looks to capitalise its strength in the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and automobile cargo for a faster growth of its port operations at Pipavav port in Gujarat. The port operator has reported sustained growth in the container cargo volumes at 238,000 TEUs, which was recorded at 1,95,000 TEUs in first quarter of the fiscal 2018-19. The company attributed growth to new service additions of Coastal and Transshipment volumes. Keld Pedersen, Managing Director, believes that growth in port's operations will be driven by the rise in LPG and automobile cargo businesses. "We are very keen on seeing exports grow. Car manufacturing in India, goes hand-in-hand with our port operations. We are preferred port for many of the auto OEMs. The outlook for automobile exports is bright and we are optimistic for sustained growth in this segment," said Pedersen. "We have achieved a record of roughly 200,000 TEUs of container business in the last two quarters. Going forward automobile and LPG will drive the growth," Pedersen told. He further added that LPG cargo has about 70 per cent share in the overall liquid cargo volumes of 1 million tonnes recorded last year.

Sagarmala invests INR 1.25 bn in Krishnapatnam Rail Freight Corridor

Krishnapatnam Railway Company Ltd (KRCL) said Tuesday it has received an investment of INR 125 crore from Sagarmala Development Company for the development of a rail corridor connecting Obulavaripalli and Krishnapatnam Port. KRCL is a special purpose vehicle joint venture by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited for connecting 114 kms Obulavaripalli (Kadapa district) and Krishnapatnam (Nellore) in Andhra Pradesh at a total estimated project cost of INR 1,850 crore. "The initiative will connect Krishnapatnam Port on the east coast with the network of Indian Railways at Venkatchalam at one point and Obulavaripalli on the other," KRCL said in a statement. A 21 km Section of the project line from Krishnapatnam to Venkatchalam is fully operation since July, 2009 in single line and was converted to double line since March 2014. Commenting on the development Anil Yendluri, Managing Director, KRCL said, "This is an extremely exciting project for KRCL. The new rail corridor connecting Kadapa city with Krishnapatnam Port will help optimise costs, accelerate growth whilst enhancing the city's EXIM competitiveness. This would result in huge savings both in freight costs and time to help develop Kadapa into a discrete trading cluster through multi-modal logistics solutions".

Tug owners should take a lead in cutting port emissions

Tug operators need to work together to encourage the whole port and shipping industry to invest in greener harbour vessels. They should take the lead in encouraging regulators to set emissions levels and port authorities to recognise greener operators through financial incentives. Only then will tug owners be able to make the capital investments needed for tugboats with lower emissions. This was the overall view of panelists and delegates at the European Tugowners Association (ETA) conference in London this week. During the first session, tug designers, shipbuilders and engine manufacturers discussed how the tug sector should work together to reduce emissions of sulphur, nitrogen, carbon gases and of particulate matter. Introducing tugboats with LNG fuel or hybrid propulsion would achieve these goals, and European tug owners need to become world leaders in these investments. However, owners face challenging market conditions and high competition in Europe, which leaves little cash to invest in clean technologies. Robert Allan manager of project development Jim Hyslop said legislators need to drive the tug industry towards greener operations by setting emissions levels, because "there is not an economic case for reducing emissions".

Avana Logistek carry FCI's rice consignment to Kochi

Cochin Port's bid to promote coastal shipping has started to yield results. The other day, a consignment of 4,732 tonnes of rice from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) arrived in 182 containers at the ICTT at Vallarpadam here. The consignment of rice – which is for public distribution in Kerala – arrived at the Vallarpadam terminal in a container ship 'SSL Kochi' from Kakinada Port via Krishnapatnam (both in Andhra Pradesh). Cochin Port chairperson M Beena IAS thanked FCI and the carrier Avana Logistek Ltd for making it happen. "Efforts are on to bring wheat on the FCI account from Punjab/Haryana to Kerala using coastal shipping, which, besides giving additional volume to the port, will be cost effective for FCI," she said. Until recently, FCI brought the rice to Kerala mostly via trains. This is a modal shift to coastal shipping as it proved cost-effective for FCI. It is expected 10,000 tonnes of rice will be brought every month from Andhra Pradesh to Kerala in the days to come. The marketing team under the Traffic Department of Cochin Port has been promoting coastal shipping via Sagarmala, the flagship programme of the Ministry of Shipping aimed at promoting coastal shipping by harnessing India's 7,500 km long coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and ports.

MSC announces container train between Trieste and Giengen

Global container shipping lines MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) has announced the launch of a new dedicated train set-up between Giengen (a.d. Brenz) and Trieste, starting mid of November 2018. This stand-alone solution finally offers an A-B connection between metropolitan area of Ulm and the Adriatic, as the fastest gateway to/from Asia and the Mediterranean. The terminal in Giengen is operated by the leading European home appliance manufacturer BSH Hausgeräte GmbH. BSH has identified the huge potential and benefits to their supply chain and has become shareholder and largest single customer on this product. In times of heavily congested inland terminals and scarcity of truck capacities, the terminal in Giengen and its on-site container depot offers unobstructed operations and as such a reliable planning for first/last mile door deliveries. Complementing MSC's outstanding global port coverage, with over 200 sea-freight services worldwide, MSC's intermodal services deliver top connectivity with inland commercial centers. With two roundtrips per week, harmonized towards the ocean services of MSC, the new connection completes the intermodal portfolio and further strengthens MSC carriers' haulage products in Southern Germany.

DP World celebrates sukuk and bonds listings totaling USD 3.3 Bn

Port and terminal operator DP World rang the market-opening bell today to celebrate the multi-currency listing on Nasdaq Dubai of four debt listings. As informed, they comprise a 10-year USD 1 billion Sukuk and three conventional bonds of 30 years USD 1 billion, 8 years EUR 750 million, and 12 years GBP 350 million respectively. The four listings together amount to a value of about USD 3.3 billion. The deal sets new benchmarks for Middle East issuers. Amongst other highlights, this deal marks the largest bonds issue from the Middle East since 2014 and is the first triple currency offering from a Middle East issuer in the past 12 years, according to DP World. "We are delighted with the outcome of this funding exercise. The transaction was well received in the market with strong demand as evidenced in the attractive pricing. Furthermore, this multi-currency multi-tenor issue was a first for this region and importantly it has allowed us to capture new investors across different formats and currencies," Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, said. DP World's latest Sukuk listing underlines Dubai's role as the largest global centre for Sukuk listings by nominal value, currently totaling USD 60.4 billion.

Port of Hamburg plans Hyperloop container transport

Containers that rush with almost 1,200 kilometers per hour through a tube system in the port of Hamburg - with electricity from solar plants. It is only a vision, as reported by the Hamburger Abendblatt's Thursday edition, though negotiations are currently under way between the Port of Hamburg and Logistik AG (HHLA) and the Californian company Hyperloop Transportation Technologies. Accordingly, a letter of intent has already been signed. Construction could begin over the next two to three years. The so-called Hyperloop consists of a tube system, in which there is almost a vacuum - thus there is virtually no air resistance. Up to 4,100 containers per day could reach Hamburg's hinterland within seconds and would only have to be loaded onto trucks there. A large part of the truck journeys to the port of Hamburg would become superfluous. The Hyperloop is a creation of Elon Musk, the founder of the electric car manufacturer Tesla. Musk's main aim is to revolutionize passenger transport. Prior to HHLA, Lufthansa had already shown interest in the Hyperloop. Apparently, there are considerations to replace inner-German routes through the tube system. A first prototype of the Hyperloop is currently being built in Toulouse.

Tripura starts exporting pineapples to Dubai

Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb today flagged off the first consignment of pineapples from the state to be exported to Dubai. Speaking at the function, Deb said more consignments of pineapples of the state would be exported to foreign countries. The chief minister said "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has a dream of doubling farmers income in the country by 2022. The dream has become a reality here today with export of pineapples." Deb urged the farmers in the state to plant pineapples and bamboo in land lying unused. "We have long monsoon here and bamboo grows in abundance. Farmers should plant pineapples, bamboo in any land which is lying unused. We shall issue a notification shortly to plant bamboo in unused private land," he said. Tripura Agriculture minister, Pranajit Singha Roy said the first consignment of 'Queen' variety of pineapples would reach Dubai on Tuesday. The state government had on May 18 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a Kolkata-based export-import firm, to market Tripuras pineapple in Dubai and other foreign countries. Singha Roy said Israel, Bahrain and some other countries have asked the state government for 'queen' variety of pineapple.