

## Duqm SEZ: India's gateway port to Middle East and Africa

India should use SEZ Duqm project in Oman as a hub and gateway to reach out to not only to the Gulf nation but also the rest of the Middle East including Africa in an effort to explore and intensify business and economic trade for mutual gains, says the government. Being India's oldest defence partner in West Asia and with access the port of Duqm, India can use it for military purpose and logistical support as it will also allow India to expand its footprints in the Indian Ocean Region. "The investment opportunities provided through Duqm will prove to be an important milestone to further strengthening and cementing bilateral trade and economic relationship between India and Oman," said Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, CR Chaudhary. In his address at an event on Investment Opportunities in the SEZ at Duqm, jointly organised by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in New Delhi, the minister pointed out that the mega projects in SEZ Duqm offer great opportunities for the Indian companies in all the sectors of economy. "India needs to engage with Oman and take initiatives to utilize opportunities arising out of the Duqm port industrial city," Chaudhary added.

## Removal of trade barriers crucial for Africa's economy: DP World

The removal of trade barriers is key to improving economic development in Africa, according to DP World, which has reaffirmed its commitment to infrastructure investments in Africa. Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, group chairman and ceo of DP World, told an audience at the Africa Emergence Conference 2019 in Dakar, Senegal that DP World remains committed to supporting the economic growth of Senegal and developing Dakar into a major logistics hub and gateway for West Africa. In a panel together with Senegal president Macky Sall and Malaysia prime minister Mahatir Mohamad, Bin Sulayem explained how economic emergence is dependent on increasing inter African trade and infrastructure development. "The removal of trade barriers is very important. In Africa tariffs are 50% higher in than in Latin America and Asia," Bin Sulayem said. "Intra-regional trade in Africa is only 12% while in Europe, Asia and Latin America is over 50%, we need to improve this to prosper," he noted. He said that during DP World's investment in Senegal it saw efficiency and volumes improved by 135% in 10 years. He also highlighted the importance of developing a logistics infrastructure reflecting DP World's activities in Rwanda and Mali.

## King Abdullah Port 36% jump in container volumes in 2018

Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah Port continued its strong growth in the container sector last year with a 36% increase in volumes over 2017. The port handled 2.3m teu in 2018 keeping up a strong growth trajectory having achieved a record 50% container throughput growth in the first half of the year. Transshipment was a major component of King Abdullah Port's volumes accounting for 1.85m teu of the total volume for 2018, and up some 44% on the previous year. The port saw 911 vessel calls in 2018 up 12% from 820 in the previous year. King Abdullah Port ceo Rayan Qutub, said: We achieved a record 50% increase in container handling in the first half of 2018, and we are moving forward with our development plans to provide best practices in the fields of port development and operation as well as supporting logistical services. "This will increase the Kingdom's competitive advantage on the logistics services index, and in turn effectively contribute to achieving the logistical objectives of the Kingdom's Vision 2030." Eight of the largest shipping lines operate at the port to offer integrated services to importers and exporters from the port, which is the second largest in Saudi Arabia in terms of container handling.

## Saudi Maritime Congress to present investment opportunities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's maritime and logistics sector is set to provide a host of fresh investment opportunities that will enable the Kingdom's integration into the regional and global economies as a hub connecting three continents – Asia, Europe and Africa, and positioning the country as a global logistics hub. In fact, the country is on an aggressive growth and diversification path, seeking completely to transform its economy and reduce dependency on oil exports in line with 'Vision 2030'. This growth and diversification will be achieved through a range of measures and an integral part of the plan is to seek greater contribution from the private sector to the national economy and to attract foreign direct investment opportunities. The 2nd Saudi Maritime Congress held on March 11th and 12th at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, will bring together leading figures from the shipping industry to discuss the effect the ambitious Vision 2030 programme will have on the Saudi economy and how shipping and logistics sectors will contribute to this project. Abdullah Aldubaikhi, CEO of Bahri, said: "Bahri is proud to be working in partnership with the 2nd Saudi Maritime Congress – a strategic meeting point of the region's leading logistics and shipping industry decision-makers and experts.

## Iran receives first China cargo shipment via Kazakhstan

This is the first time China exported its commodities via land to Iran Kazakhstan to be later sent by sea, Trend reports citing IRNA. The first cargo shipment sent from the far-eastern China has made its way to Iran through Kazakhstan. The cargo that includes bicycle and industrial machinery parts, wallpaper, brake pads, among other items, was sent from the Ningbo Port in the East China Sea on December 18. It was put on freight trains towards the Khorgos on the border with Kazakhstan. The shipment continued its journey through the Kazakh territory via railroad to Port of Aktau on the eastern bank of the Caspian Sea. From there, it was loaded into 42 containers on Diba bulk carrier heading for the Caspian Port in Anzali Free Zone. This is the first cargo that arrives in from the eastern-most part of China through the Kazakhstan corridor. Previous shipments used to be sent via the Indian Ocean arriving at the southern Iranian Port of Bandar Abbas in the Persian Gulf. Ningbo is a city in the northeast of Jijiang Province of China, 25 kilometers east of the Sea of China as one of the most important industrial and commercial ports of the country. It is considered as a small sample of Shanghai in the Chinese economy and its port has been ranked second in terms of operational capability in commercial shipments.

## Singapore developing standards for seamless digitalisation of shipping trade documents

Singapore is aiming to move forward with the digitalisation of shipping trade documentaton such as Bills of Lading (BLs) by developing standards inter-operability of different solutions that use technology such as block chain. The last year has seen the successful trial electronic BLs based on block chain by two consortiums in Singapore one by APL and the other by Pacific International Lines (PIL) and IBM. Speaking at the Singapore Shipping Association (SSA) annual Lunar New Year cocktail reception Lam Pin Min, Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Transport and Health said: "These are significant milestones in the development of digital solutions for the sector." As different solutions develop for the digitalisation of shipping trade documentaton the ability for these systems to be able to work together is becoming a key issue. Lam said in his speech it had been highlighted to him that: "We must find a way for all these digital solutions and eco-systems to work together, only then can we achieve seamless digitisation of trade documentaton across the board." "This framework will guide the development of legal and technical standards as well interoperable digital infrastructure that can be applied internationally," Minister Lam said.

## Denmark nets maritime agreement with India

PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen is in India this week as part of a Danish business delegation looking to capitalise on thawing relations between Denmark and India. And already an agreement has been reached regarding a new maritime deal that aims to boost co-operation between the two countries. "India is a fast-emerging economy that plays a key role in the global maritime sector. And that makes India an important partner for Denmark and the entire Danish maritime industry," said the business minister, Rasmus Jarlov. Among other things, the agreement will focus on increased dialogue and further co-operation regarding state dock control, digitalisation, green technology and maritime competencies with a view to promoting quality shipping. To seal the agreement, Rasmussen met with Indian PM Narendra Modi at Vibrant Gujarat, an investment conference. With exports of over 8.5 billion kroner in 2017, India is Denmark's fourth-largest shipping market. "The agreement will no doubt strengthen the good relations between Denmark and India – politically as well as commercially. India is an important market for the Danish shipping companies, so we are naturally happy that Denmark officially strengthens bonds with India in the maritime sector," said Anne H Steffensen, head of Danish Shipping advocacy group.

## Amazon steps up ocean freight shipping from China to the U.S.

Amazon has been quietly shipping thousands of ocean freight containers out of China and to the West Coast, in another sign of its increasing logistics ambitions and an entire supply chain play, according to a report. In the past year Amazon Logistics and its Chinese subsidiary, Beijing Century Joyo Courier Service Co., has shipped 4.7 million cartons of consumer goods, or 5,300 shipping containers, from ports in China to Long Beach and Seattle, according to research from Ocean Audit. For some shippers it also then moves the goods from the port to an Amazon fulfillment center. While the flow through Amazon Logistics is relatively small compared to the massive volume of trans-ocean freight – 1.81 million twenty-foot equivalents (TEU) of retail shipments in November alone, according to NRF's Port Tracker – it's significant that it's being increased and that the company is able to control the entire supply chain for some of its retail customers. "This makes them the only ecommerce company that is able to do the whole transaction from end-to-end," Steve Ferreira, CEO of Ocean Audit. "Amazon now has a closed ecosystem." The Amazon ocean freight program had only been available to Chinese sellers and manufacturers, but was opened up to U.S. merchants in the fourth quarter of 2018.

## JNPT becomes India's only port to be ranked among world's top 30

The government Tuesday said the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) has become India's only port to get listed among the top 30 global container ports. "The JNPT, India's premiere container port got listed amongst the top 30 container ports globally, as per the latest Lloyds Report. JNPT notched up five spots, to be 28th on the list, compared to its previous ranking," the shipping ministry said in a statement. This is a validation of all the efforts and strategic initiatives being implemented at JNPT in order to enhance overall port efficiency, it said. Various new processes activated under the 'ease of doing business' initiative have not only helped in overall growth of the port business, but also allowed the EXIM (Export–Import) trade to save time and cost which in turn have accentuated the growth story, it said. Various new processes activated under the 'ease of doing business' initiative have not only helped in overall growth of the port business, but also allowed the EXIM (Export–Import) trade to save time and cost which in turn have accentuated the growth story, it said. The JNPT also launched their App service to facilitate better tracking of consignment and ease the trade process for their EXIM partners.

## Port of Fujairah to ban open-loop scrubbers in its waters

The Port of Fujairah, the only multi-purpose port on the East Coast of the UAE, and a major bunkering and energy hub, has decided to ban the use of open-loop scrubbers in its waters. "Ships will have to use compliant fuel once the IMO 2020 sulphur cap comes into force," according to the Port of Fujairah Notice to Mariners. The port joins another major bunkering hub in initiatives targeting the use of open-loop scrubbers. Namely, the Port of Singapore plans to prohibit the discharge of wash water from open-loop exhaust gas scrubbers in its waters as of January 1, 2020. The move has been attributed to the port's efforts aimed at protecting marine environment and ensuring port waters are clean. The measure is linked to the fears that the contents of the released wash water include heavy metals and poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, potentially posing a risk to marine life. As a result, ships fitted with open-loop scrubbers calling at Singapore will be required to use compliant fuel, while ships fitted with hybrid scrubbers will be required to switch to the closed-loop mode of operation. Separately, Irish Port of Waterford announced that as of the start of January 2019, the discharge of exhaust gas scrubber wash water is prohibited within the limits of the Port of Waterford Company.

## Shipping rates slump in latest sign of economic slowdown

Freight rates for dry-bulk and container ships, carriers of most of the world's raw materials and finished goods, have plunged over the last six months in the latest sign the global economy is slowing significantly. The Baltic Dry Index, measure of ship transport costs for materials like iron ore and coal, has fallen by 47% since mid-2018, when a trade dispute between the United States and China resulted in the world's two biggest economies slapping import tariffs on each other's goods. Dry-bulk commodities are taken as a leading economic indicator, because they are used in core industrial sectors like steelmaking and power generation, and analysts say the recent declines in activity point to a serious economic slowdown. "Signs that the U.S. and China remain well apart in trade talks continued to weigh on sentiment in commodity markets," ANZ bank said in a note recently. This was after U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said on Thursday the United States and China were "miles and miles" from resolving their issues. "The global economy and dry-bulk shipping market are showing us very real signs of distress," said Jeffrey Landsberg, managing director of commodity consultancy Commodore Research.

## Port of Oakland completes TraPac terminal

Port of Oakland's container terminal operator, TraPac, concluded a USD 67 million waterfront expansion in January 2019 as it opened a new vessel berth to arriving container ships. The milestone signals completion of a two-year project at Oakland's second-largest terminal that has nearly doubled TraPac's footprint from 66 to 123 acres; boosted its fleet of ship-to-shore cranes from four to seven; and added a third 1,400-foot-long dock for berthing mega containerships. "We are grateful to dockworkers, truckers, carriers, cargo owners and all of our stakeholders for working with us during this buildout," said TraPac Operations Vice President Brian Bauer. "We forecast continued cargo growth in Oakland and we are ready for it." TraPac officially began its new era in Oakland this month when the container vessel Bay Bridge tied up at Berth 25. Fittingly, the ship moored in Oakland's Outer Harbor near the San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge. TraPac's expansion is the latest in a series of significant investments at the Port of Oakland. Last November, Lineage Logistics and Dreisbach Enterprises opened Cool Port Oakland, a \$90 million refrigerated distribution center.