

## Dubai Port Operator with Interest in Bulgarian Ports

One of the largest port operators in the world - Dubai Port World - has shown interest in investing in Bulgarian ports and in creating high-tech logistics centers in different cities in the country. This was announced by the Bulgarian President Rumen Radev on Wednesday after a meeting with Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Dubai Port World CEO. The meeting between the two came after the participation of the Bulgarian president at the Petersburg Economic Forum, where Radev invited business representatives to invest in Bulgaria. Radev and Sulayem discussed the prospects for Bulgaria's recognition as a regional logistics center for the transport of goods from Asia to Europe. The representative of Dubai Port World, which owns 78 logistics terminals in different parts of the world, has pointed out that the use of Bulgarian ports along the Danube provides quick access to other European countries. The head of state, in turn, stated that the strategic location of our country between Europe and Asia and the highly qualified staff in Bulgaria create excellent preconditions for the choice of Bulgaria as a regional logistics center.

## Gulftainer unit signs deal to run fourth Saudi port

Gulf Stevedoring Contracting Company (GSCCO), part of the Gulftainer group of companies, has signed an agreement with Red Sea Marine Services Company Limited to manage and operate King Fahad Industrial Port in Yanbu. The deal takes GSCCO's portfolio of terminals in Saudi Arabia up to four, a statement said. GSCCO said it will handle all types of cargo at KFIP, including containers, breakbulk cargo, vehicles and bulk cargo. adding that the company will invest in new equipment. The decision to award the operation of the port to GSCCO, which also operates the Northern Container Terminal in Jeddah and Jubail Commercial Port, was taken by Saudi Ports Authority (Mawani). Richard James, managing director of GSCCO, said: "We are delighted at the well-earned trust that Mawani continues to place in GSCCO, and are truly excited at the potential to develop KFIP in Yanbu into another industry-leading port. "In line with the strong commitment to the maritime and logistics industry expressed in the Saudi Vision 2030, we look forward to providing best-in-class services to the communities and markets around Yanbu and throughout the Northwest of the country." The current infrastructure at KIFP enables the handling of container vessels with up to 8,000 TEU capacity.

## U.S. and Gulf allies face task protecting oil shipping lanes

The United States and its allies may need to start escorting commercial vessels to prevent further attacks in Gulf oil shipping lanes, Gulf sources and experts said. Even then, the conventional naval and air capabilities of Western and Gulf powers tasked with policing vital commercial waters may be of limited use against the asymmetric warfare tactics suspected in recent operations, including naval mines. Six tankers have been hit in the past month in two attacks near the Strait of Hormuz, through which almost a fifth of the world's oil passes, and Washington and Riyadh have accused Iran of being behind them, which Tehran denies. Two senior U.S. officials said on Thursday that the United States is discussing with its allies a variety of options on how to protect international shipping in the Gulf of Oman after two tankers, bearing Norwegian and Japanese flags, were crippled. "We don't think this is over," one of the officials said of the possibility of more attacks. Three sources in the Gulf said few options exist: Gradually introduce the escort system used during the Iran-Iraq "Tanker War" in the 1980s and more recent Somali pirate attacks, adopt new rules of engagement, and conduct mine-sweeping operations.

## Egypt opens new multipurpose terminal at Damietta Port

Egypt's Damietta Port Authority has inaugurated a new multipurpose terminal at an investment cost of EGP 1.36 billion (USD 81.3 million). The terminal includes a 630-meter-long, 17-meter-deep berth and is equipped with a backyard area of 50,000 square meters with anticipated capacity of about 4 million tons per year. It has been established under the supervision of the Armed Forces Engineering Authority (AFEA) and implemented by a number of Egyptian national companies. The completion of the works at the new terminal in Damietta Port were revealed by the country's Minister of Transport, Engineer Kamel Al-Wazir. Al-Wazir highlighted a number of project advantages such as being equipped with all necessary facilities to serve ships and cargoes including seawater firefighting pumps, rainwater drainage, facilities for feeding ships with fresh water and supplying ships with electricity within OPS technique as well as oil and waste reception facility from ships. "This terminal will contribute to reduce vessel waiting time outside the port, increase cargo handling volumes, encourage further ship with bigger sizes and types, and buttress storage capacity inside port area," Al-Wazir said.

## China COSCO, Russian majors ink arctic shipping deal

Russian shipping major Sovcomflot, along with compatriot gas producer Novatek and Silk Road Fund have signed an agreement with China COSCO Shipping related to transportation of hydrocarbons from Russia's Arctic zone. Under the deal, signed on June 7 in respect of the Maritime Arctic Transport LLC (MArT), the parties would establish a long-term partnership providing for the joint development, financing and implementing year-round logistics arrangements for cargo shipping from the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation to the Asia-Pacific region. The companies would also organize transit cargo traffic along the Northern Sea Route between Asia and Western Europe. "The Agreement represents an important milestone in developing the transportation of LNG produced by our Arctic projects along the Northern Sea Route," Leonid Mikhelson, NOVATEK's Chairman of the Management Board, said. "The development of MArT will facilitate the rapid transformation of the Northern Sea Route into a global and commercially effective transportation corridor between the Pacific and Atlantic basins, as well as in the implementation of the decision made by the leadership of the Russian Federation to increase Northern Sea Route annual cargo traffic to 80 million tons in 2024".

## Shell ships long-awaited first LNG cargo from Prelude

The long-awaited first cargo of liquefied natural gas was shipped from Shell's Prelude floating LNG facility off northwest Australia on June 10. The Spain-flagged LNG tanker Valencia Knutsen loaded the cargo from the FLNG, located 475 km North East of Broome in Western Australia. "Today's first shipment of LNG departed from Prelude FLNG, safely," Maarten Wetselaar, Integrated Gas and New Energies Director, said. The shipment aboard the 173,400 cbm tanker is headed to customers in Asia, where it is scheduled to arrive in late June, according to data provided by Marine Traffic. Prelude's first cargo had been scheduled for 2018, however, it was delayed amid a number of teething problems the company experienced with the 490-metre long FLNG. "The first cargo was more than eight years after FID and nearly two years after the facility arrived in Australia," Daniel Toleman, Wood Mackenzie senior analyst, said. "How fast Prelude delivers its second and third cargo, and ramps up to plateau output will be a key indicator of success." The latest development marks the end of a USD 200 billion LNG boom in Australia over the past decade, during which eight LNG plants were built on the country's eastern and northwestern coasts, Reuters informed.

## Port Tampa Bay welcomes its largest container ship ever

Port Tampa Bay is marking a major milestone and partnership today with CMA CGM as Port customers, local officials, and business leaders gather to celebrate the inaugural call of the CMA CGM DALILA at 4 pm today at The Ports America Terminal. CMA CGM Group, a world leader in shipping and logistics, begin their weekly direct ocean carrier service between Asia and Port Tampa Bay today. CMA CGM's excellent transit times will significantly improve the competitiveness of the region's importers and exporters, transforming Tampa Bay's economic landscape. With a capacity of 8,500 to 9,500 TEUs (container units) per vessel, these are also the largest container ships ever to call at the Port. The key to Port Tampa Bay's success in attracting this new service resulted from the Port's acquisition of new post-Panamax container gantry cranes in the summer of 2016, which coincided with the expansion of the Panama Canal. As a result, this expansion allows for larger ships to serve ports in the Tampa's Gulf region. CMA CGM will provide an invaluable new route, linking critical Asian markets to Florida's fastest growing region and largest consumer market: the I-4 corridor. The DALILA's inaugural call will also be the first ever direct connection between the booming Vietnam market and Central Florida.

## Dubai welcomes 'Karnika', India's first premium cruise ship

Dubai has welcomed India's first premium cruise liner, 'Karnika' by Jalesh Cruises, to Mina Rashid as its home port for the season. Karnika is Jalesh Cruises's first liner to home port in the region, marking a significant milestone for both the Indian domestic and international cruise industry. Tourists from India and also from Gulf countries especially from UAE and Muscat are now able to avail themselves of short cruise tours on Karnika. In celebration of this significant occasion, a traditional 'Plaques and Keys Exchange' ceremony was hosted on board in the presence of the ship's captain and key industry stakeholders from the Dubai Cruise Committee. The vessel will commence the operation of regular Arabian Gulf itineraries from June to mid-September 2019, entertaining both residents and visitors of Dubai. Cruise aficionados can choose from two itineraries a week with Dubai as the home port; the Friday itinerary is set to cover Abu Dhabi and Bahrain while the Monday itinerary will include Muscat and Khasab. For as low as Dh2091 per person, you could go on a luxury cruise starting from Dubai, going through Muscat in Oman, ending up on Mumbai's shores in India. There are also shorter tours that feature key sites to visit in the various ports.

## India restricts seafarers from working in Gulf of Guinea

The government of India has issued a restriction banning all Indian seafarers from working on vessels in the Gulf of Guinea. In a circular sent to ship owners and shipping companies, India's Directorate General of Shipping in Mumbai informed that the move comes on the back of an increasing rate of piracy and hijacking of crew for ransom in Nigerian waters. "Piracy and armed robbery attacks in the Gulf of Guinea are becoming more violent with a greater tendency to attack, hijack and rob vessels as well as. kidnap crew, in the waters of Gulf of Guinea," the statement said. The attacks were reported up to 170 nautical miles from the coast and many included vessel hijacking, ransacking and theft. Additionally, the latest incidents resulted in crewmembers being injured, kidnapped and in certain occasions taken ashore for ransom. The total number of incidents in West Africa, as reported to IMO in the 10-year period from January 2009 to December 2018, was 555. Furthermore, the government said that, based on the two recent incidents, "it has come to the attention of this Directorate that foreign nationals, especially Indian seafarers, are being selectively targeted during such piracy/armed robbery incidents."

## New European rail freight services announced

Green Cargo and the Rail Cargo Group have announced a direct route connecting Malmö/Trelleborg, Sweden, with Vienna, Austria, three times a week with a transit time of 25 hours between Rostock in Northern Germany and Vienna. CLIP Group and CFL Multimodal announced plans for a "rail motorway train" between Swaraz dz, Poland, and Bettembourg Dudelange, Luxembourg, on June 5, with the service expected to be operating by end of 2019. The service will start with four roundtrips per week and will be able to transport containers, craneable semi-trailers and non-craneable semi-trailers. Each train, which will cover more than 1000km, will have capacity to transport 37 intermodal units. Port of Trieste and CFL multimodal also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on June 5 to promote multimodal logistics on the Trieste - Bettembourg Dudelange corridor connecting Italy and Luxembourg. The MOU is aimed at developing and optimising intermodal connections between the two hubs.

## Chinese firms to pump \$4bln into giant UAE logistics parks

It's boom time for the UAE logistics industry with more and more Chinese companies set to invest over \$4 billion in development of giant logistics parks in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, said a top official of National Association of Freight and Logistics (NAFL). Founded in Dubai in 1992, NAFL is the first national association of freight forwarders to be established in the Arabian Gulf to bring together the increasing number of freight and logistics service providers in the UAE. "Logistics business is in for a boom. Many projects are being built for Expo 2020 and Chinese investors are coming to Abu Dhabi and Dubai," remarked Nadia Abdul Aziz, president, NAFL and vice president, Global Extended Board, the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA). She was addressing NAFL members during its annual general meeting at Armani Hotel, Burj Khalifa. "There will be large logistics parks in Jebel Ali and one near the Expo venue. One is for food processing and the other is for manufacturing and exporting. There will be \$4 billion investment by Chinese companies," she stated. Abu Dhabi will also have a huge logistics project that will boost the trading sector in the UAE, she added. According to her, NAFL's strategy was to encourage young students to join this growing sector.

## Maersk explores Arctic shipping route with Russia

Shipping group A.P. Moller-Maersk said, it is in talks with Russia's state-owned icebreaker operator to send more goods via the Arctic, which is becoming more accessible as climate change reduces the sea ice. Russia has made developing the so-called northern sea route (NSR) - which requires new ports and heavy icebreakers to move goods - a priority, with supporters dubbing the route the northern Suez Canal. Last summer, Maersk carried out what it said was a one-off trial, becoming the first to send a container ship - loaded with Russian fish and South Korean electronics - on the route. At the time it denied that the route could be commercially viable, partly because it is only accessible for around three months of the year due to ice. However, Maersk is now exploring the possibility of offering a service in cooperation with Russia's nuclear-powered icebreaker company Rosatomflot, High North News reported. "We have experienced growing demand for transport of goods from the Far East to West Russia, which we are currently exploring the possibilities of offering together with Atomflot," Maersk, the world's biggest container shipping group, confirmed said in a statement.