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DP World launches 'India-UAE Bridge' initiative

DP World, UAE Region has launched 'The India-UAE Bridge', a major initiative that will attract Indian trade and investments to its flagship Jebel Ali Port and Jafza by offering end-to-end solutions to companies and entrepreneurs. A collaboration between DP World UAE Region, Jafza and the Indian Business and Professional Council (IBPC), the solutions delivered under the initiative will support investors through value propositions such as the integration of DP World's assets in both countries, enhancing access to markets beyond the company's network connectivity and global portfolio. Following the recent DP World Indian Traders' Incubation Centre launch at Jafza One, one of the primary purposes of the initiative is to serve as a platform for talented Indians looking to share their ideas and businesses to markets in the Middle East and beyond. The announcement was made at an event attended by Navdeep Suri, Ambassador of India to UAE, Mohammad Al Muallem, CEO and Managing Director, DP World, UAE Region and CEO of Jafza and Nimish Makvana, President of the Executive Committee, IBPC. Other DP World officials and Indian business leaders and decision-makers were also in attendance.

COSCO Abu Dhabi a gateway for 'Belt and Road' trade, investment

The CSP Abu Dhabi Port Container Terminal, COSCO, has gained great strides, since the lunch of its trial operations in April this year, in its bid to drive investment growth and economic diversification aligned with Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030. The trade and investment journey began on September 2016, when China's COSCO Shipping Ports Ltd entered into a 35-year concession agreement with Abu Dhabi Ports. Construction works started on CSP Abu Dhabi Terminal in November 2017 at Khalifa Port, with a design capacity of 2.6 million TEU (twenty-foot equivalent unit) and an initial handling capacity of 1.5 million TEU. The semi-automated container terminal includes the largest Container Freight Station in the Middle East, spanning 275,000 square metres, and a depth of 18.5 metres to accommodate mega-vessels, connecting the Emirate of Abu Dhabi to the global maritime trade map. The state-of-the-art facility at Khalifa Port recently received the world's two largest mega-vessels. The COSCO Shipping Solar is the largest ship ever to call at Khalifa Port, with a capacity of 21,000 TEU. At present, the terminal has 1,200 metres of quay, however, expansion plans will soon see the facility expand to 1,800 metres of quay, increasing the capacity to 3.6 million TEU.

DP World's BoxBay high bay storage system for shipping containers

The new high bay storage system being developed by DP World for Terminal 4 in Jebel Ali Port is a rare example of an innovation that is truly game-changing. "We've launched our new international joint venture with SMS Group, which will change the way containers are handled in ports," DP World says of the system. "'BOXBAY' represents a new and intelligent High Bay Storage (HBS) system that will be ready in time for the Dubai Expo 2020 with a pilot project scheduled at Jebel Ali Terminal 4." The design and rack structure of the system creates unique advantages with containers stored up to eleven stories high, delivering the capacity of a conventional terminal in a third of the surface area. DP World Group Chairman and CEO, Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, said: "We continue to explore new technologies that push boundaries, disrupt and add value for our operations and customers. We are excited by the prospects for BOXBAY as handling speed and efficiencies are key aspects of the ports and terminals business and the system is a major development for the sector around the world. We look forward to the technology being installed especially in readiness for Expo 2020."

Three Chinese container terminals to merge

Three Chinese container shipping terminals at Tianjin have entered into a consolidation agreement designed to reduce operating costs. Tianjin Port Container Terminal will remain as the surviving entity of the merger, absorbing Tianjin Five Continents International Container Terminal and Tianjin Orient International Container Terminal. The shareholders will hold equity interest in the new Tianjin Port Container company. COSCO Shipping Ports is a substantial shareholder of Tianjin Orient and Tianjin Five Continents, while China Shipping Terminal and China Merchants are substantial shareholders of Tianjin Five Continents. Upon completion of the merger, the group will hold a 76.68 percent equity interest in the new Tianjin Port Container entity. The group anticipates reduced the operating costs, coordinated operational resources, unification of the service standard and enhanced the usage efficiency of terminals and depots. In June, Tianjin Five Continents International Container Terminal automated its 31 rail mounted gantry cranes using the Navis N4 system. The terminal was designed with an initial capacity of 1.5 million TEU. With the rise of megaships, the terminal is now operating at its maximum capacity and often well beyond it.

UAE to overhaul maritime laws to protect sailors and allow foreign ownership

The UAE will introduce tough rules to protect abandoned seafarers, clamp down on ghost ships in its waters and allow 100 per cent foreign ownership of maritime companies. The new measures, revealed on Sunday, are part of the UAE's draft maritime law, which is set to come into force by early next year. It will also allow people to register vessels under the Emirati flag and establish a new dispute mechanism to relieve pressure on the courts, while a new maritime development fund aims to support citizens who wish to invest in the sector. A "maritime navigation chamber" to represent the interests of the private sector will also be formed. Full foreign ownership of companies will apply only in certain cases, however, and will be subject to the UAE Cabinet's regulations set out last week. That stipulated that a final decision on the percentage of foreign ownership rests with each emirate. Speaking on Sunday, Abdullah Al Nuaimi, Minister of Infrastructure Development, said more details about the law would be revealed in the coming months and that it has been in the works for the past two years. The "new maritime bill" will completely overhaul the 1981 law, which he said was sorely in need of updating.

Sri Lanka keen on enhancing connectivity with Indian ports

The Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) is keen on enhancing connectivity with Indian ports using ferry services to facilitate easier trade and tourism, its chairman Kavan Ratnayaka said. "If the two countries can set up a ferry service connecting Kankesanthurai port (KKS) in Jaffna with Karaikal near Puducherry, and similarly between Colombo and Tuticorin in south India, there is scope for increased trade activity and tourism," he told. The ferry connection, he said, would primarily facilitate tourism and small-scale trade both ways. "It will help especially with Buddhist tourism from the south of the island, and by extension people-to-people connections," he said. Further, the KKS Port will facilitate increased trade opportunities for communities living in proximity to the port and reduce the cost of road and rail transport for bulk items such as cement. In 2011, India and Sri Lanka launched a ferry service between Tuticorin and Colombo, but it was soon terminated after private operators running it said it was not commercially viable. The proposals, according to the chairman, fit into the SLPA's broader vision of developing Sri Lanka into a global logistics hub, given its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, in close proximity to key, international sea routes.

India: Maharashtra Cabinet clears sops for port operators

The Maharashtra government has paved the way for sops to private port operators months before the Assembly elections. The Cabinet on Tuesday cleared changes to the Maharashtra Port Policy -- 2016, allowing major concessions in wharfage charges (reducing them to half from three times), extending benefits to 'greenfield' ports and multimodal jetties up to 50 years from 35 years, and extending the period of concessions for shipyards to 30 years from 10 years. The changes were made based on the representation made by the Indian National Shipowners Association, Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India (AMTOI) and other stakeholders last month, officials said. The Hindu had reported last week that several concessions were in the offing for around 500 private and pubic ports across the State, including an assurance from the government to recommend to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council a cut in levy to 5% from the existing 12% for "multimodal" transport operators in Maharashtra. The Cabinet also cleared the use of the jetties of the Maharashtra Maritime Board for a proposed Ro-Ro service, tourism and other training purposes.

Transshipment hub planned in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands Administration plans to develop a container transshipment terminal with the Free Trade Warehousing Zone in South Bay, Great Nicobar Island, to provide Indian shippers an alternative to the Colombo, Singapore and Port Klang (Malaysia) transshipment ports. The Port Management Board, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, has called for an Expression of Interest (EoI) from global players to participate in the terminal development under the private-public-partnership mode. The developers need to design, finance, construct, operate and maintain the container terminal for 30 years. An official of a leading container terminal said that it would cost over $1 billion to build a transshipment terminal. The Great Nicobar Island has a natural depth of over 20 m to handle large ships. The proposed terminal could distribute cargo to the region, including the East coast of India and neighbouring countries; provide services for repositioning of empty containers, handle local cargo; and operate as a logistics hub. Indian ports do not have adequate infrastructure to attract large 'mother' container vessels of over 15,000 TEUs capacity. The transshipment terminal at Great Nicobar could be critical for India's trade, especially in the South.

Freight charges to go up for India's exporters/importers

India's exporters and importers will have to pay more on freight as global container lines start levying a war risk surcharge ranging between $36 and $42 for shipping cargo containers to and from the Arabian Gulf transiting through the Strait of Hormuz in the wake of escalating tensions in the region. French container line CMA CGM has started charging an Extra Risk Coverage Surcharge of $36 per twenty-foot equivalent unit or TEU from July 5 for shipments to/from Oman, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia (Dammam + Jubail), Kuwait and Iraq. The Extra Risk Coverage Surcharge follows "the recent incidents in the Strait of Hormuz and the related significantly increasing insurance costs in the Middle East Gulf region" and is payable by the freight paying entity, the Marseille, France-based line said. Mediterranean Shipping Company said it will start collecting a War Risk Surcharge of $40 per TEU from July 8 for all cargoes moving to/from the Arabian Gulf (Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia (Gulf Area: Dammam, Jubail) and UAE. As a result of recent maritime incidents that took place in the Strait of Hormuz, operating costs for our services in the Middle East Gulf region have increased. Hapag-Lloyd will therefore implement a Vessel Risk Surcharge (VRS) of $42 per TEU from July 15,".

JSW Infra set to win container terminal project at New Mangalore port

JSW Infrastructure Ltd is set to win the rights to run its first container terminal project at a Central Government-owned port. It has quoted the highest per-container royalty to operate a facility at New Mangalore Port Trust (NMPT). JSW Infrastructure quoted a royalty of INR 951 per TEU for a 500,000 TEU capacity terminal to be run from Berth No 14 at NMPT on a 30-year contract, multiple government sources told. The company confirmed it had emerged the highest bidder for the project. JSW's winning bid was almost double the rate quoted by Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd (APSEZ), India's biggest private port operator. It is expected to be cleared by the board of trustees of NMPT at its next meeting, which will clear the decks for the issue of a letter of intent (LoI) to the firm. The mechanisation of Berth No 14 on a PPP mode at NMPT for handling containers and other clean cargo with an investment of more than INR 300 crore will be the first to utilise the revised model concession agreement (MCA) for PPP projects at major ports approved by the Cabinet in January 2018. JSW Infrastructure currently runs ports/terminals at Jaigarh and Dharamtar in Maharashtra, and Mormugao in Goa that are used mostly for handling the steel-maker's cargo.

India: Bhutan -Bangladesh cargo vessel flagged off

The Minister of State for Shipping (Independent Charge), India, Mansukh Mandaviya will flag off an inland waterways vessel containing cargo from Bhutan to Bangladesh via Brahmaputra river and the Indo-Bangla Protocol Route today (July 12). "This is a first of its kind movement where an Indian inland waterway is being used for connecting two countries - landlocked Bhutan and Bangladesh,"said a press note from the shipping ministry of India. 1000 Metric Ton of crushed stone aggregates will sail on Inland Waterways Authority of India's (IWAI) vessel MV AAI from Dhubri port in Assam to Narayanganj in Bangladesh through India's NW2 and Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route. The stone aggregates were transported by trucks from Phuentsholing in Bhutan which is 160 KMs from IWAI's Dhubri jetty in Asaam. Bhutan has been exporting significant quantity of stone aggregates through the land route for different construction projects in Bangladesh. The exports through Inland Waterways mode will serve as an alternate mode of transportation which is cheaper and more environment friendly. It also offers larger shipment size as compared to road, avoiding congestion on land routes.

Abu Dhabi, Mauritius pact on Indian Ocean

Abu Dhabi Ports and the Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA) have signed an agreement to pool their combined expertise to enhance the maritime sector across the Indian Ocean, from port infrastructure and security to protecting the environment and driving the cruise industry. Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Abu Dhabi Ports and MPA will explore areas of collaboration between the public and private sectors, as well as how to ensure the safety and security of passengers, crew members, vessels and port facilities. The MoU will see the two ports research the most effective use of tugboats, as well as training initiatives for deck and engine officers. The two organizations will also work together on the cruise industry sector by helping Port Louis Harbour to position itself in the Indian Ocean Circuit and to tap into potential cruise visitors from the Arabian Peninsula. Additionally, the two parties aim to attract more cruise lines to the region and explore new routes such as UAE - Indian Ocean and Southern and Eastern Africa. Ramalingum Maistry, Chairman, Mauritius Ports Authority, said: "Global economic investment in Africa continues to grow reflecting both the increasing business opportunities and strategic location."

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