



## Omani ports witness surge in operational and commercial business

Despite the impact of COVID-19 on the global trade and economy, Oman's strategically located and well-equipped ports, offering end-to-end comprehensive logistics solutions, have witnessed a surge in their operational and commercial business. Working in close co-operation with government agencies, ASYAD Group endeavored to facilitate cross-regional trade and secure local market requirements for commodities and goods from their country of origin, through linking Omani ports with 86 regional and global counterparts. The resilient and prompt response of Omani ports to the repercussions of the global pandemic is a testament to the effectiveness of their operations, leadership and the integrated model and collaborative efforts amongst the logistics sector in Oman. An upward momentum in volume of handling and cargo operations featured the annual performance of Omani ports in 2020 at a time direct imports from global and regional destinations also saw a boost, thanks to tremendous efforts exerted by ASYAD Group, which linked the Sultanate's ports with 86 regional counterparts.

## Sri Lanka's West Container Terminal to be developed under joint venture

The government has proposed a project involving a joint venture to develop the West Container Terminal (WCT) of the Colombo. This was after suspending an investment project surrounding the East Container Terminal (ECT). A proposal had been put forward before the cabinet to develop and operate the WCT under a public-private-partnership for 35 years involving the Sri Lanka Ports Authority and two entities named by India and Japan. According to the cabinet proposal submitted by ports and shipping minister Rohitha Abeygunawardana on the 31st of January, the ECT and the WCT must be operating parallelly by 2023 to generate revenue for the Colombo Port in line with the national policy surrounding ports. Accordingly, the WCT is expected to be developed across a land area of 64 hectares. Under the long-term plan of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority, another special project is due to take place near the WCT. The proposed project involves the installation of two mounted LNG storage facilities on the WCT. The basic policies for the future promotion of Liquefied Natural Gas as a fuel in the country have already been formulated in the country. Accordingly, the supply of LNG may create profit-generating opportunities in the country.

## New commercial shipping line directly connects Port of Oakland to Asia

A new commercial shipping service linking the Port of Oakland to Asian markets kicked off Friday when the container vessel Africa Four motored into the Bay. The roughly 750-foot-long ship is part of a fleet of about six vessels belonging to French logistics company CMA CGM that will carry goods between the ports of Shanghai and Yantian in China, Kaohsiung City in Taiwan and Oakland. It's the first time in 10 years that ships from Asia will sail directly to Oakland, having typically docked in other ports like Los Angeles and Long Beach first, according to Port of Oakland officials. "What's driving this is the customer demand, with the increase of e-commerce companies in Northern California and traditional retail companies moving to the e-commerce platform," said Port of Oakland's Maritime Director Bryan Brandes. Port officials believe the growth of online shopping caused in part by the COVID-19 pandemic is a permanent feature of the economy and anticipate additional similar shipping lines coming to Oakland from Asia in the future. In addition to changing consumer behavior, the new shipping service – dubbed the Golden Gate Bridge service – is also partly in response to backups at Southern California ports, Brandes said.

## The ports of Antwerp and Zeebrugge joining forces

The City of Antwerp and the City of Bruges in Belgium have reached an agreement to merge their respective ports. The agreement marks the start of a unification process that is expected to take a year to finalise. Once completed, the ports will operate under the name 'Port of Antwerp-Bruges'. The ports see the merger as an opportunity to strengthen their position within the global supply chain especially as they transition towards a low-carbon economy. The ambition is for Port of Antwerp-Bruges to become the world's first port to reconcile economy, people and climate. The merged port will have a total throughput of 278 million tonnes per year, handling 157 million tonnes/year of container cargo, while remaining a hub for breakbulk, vehicles cargo, natural gas, chemical cargo, and the cruise industry in Europe. As part of a joint plan, the two ports have defined three strategic priorities – sustainable growth, resilience and leadership in the energy and digital transition. In order to maximise the added value of a unified port, Port of Antwerp-Bruges will seek to develop and make optimum use of the interconnectivity between the two ports.

## India: Major Ports Authorities Bill 2020 would encourage good competition: Shipping Minister

Union Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Wednesday said that Major Ports Authorities Bill 2020, which has been passed from both the Houses of Parliament, will encourage good competition between major and private ports. "Major Ports Authorities Bill will encourage good competition between major and private ports. It will boost port land usage and amplify competition in port tariffs. India's major ports will be able to survive while competing with non-major and private ports," Mandaviya told. While presenting the Bill in Rajya Sabha, the Minister said that the bill was not intended towards privatising major ports. "It would rather boost their decision-making powers so that they can compete with world-class ports," he said. The bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. The Lok Sabha had cleared it in September last year. It seeks to repeal the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 and replace it with the new legislation. The Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020 seeks to provide for the regulation, operation and planning of major ports in India and to vest the administration, control and management of such ports upon the boards of Major Port Authorities. The bill seeks to constitute an Adjudicatory Board for adjudication of disputes among major ports, public-private partnership concessionaires and captive users.



## ZIM in billion dollar LNG-powered containerships charter deal with Seaspan

The Israeli shipping line said it was chartering 10 LNG dual-fuelled 15,000 teu containerships from Seaspan to be built at Samsung Heavy Industries. According to ZIM the long-term charter deal is worth "in excess" of a billion dollars and the vessels will be deployed on the Asia – US East Coast trade. Eli Glickman, ZIM president & ceo, said: "These top of the line advanced vessels will allow us to meet growing market demand on the Asia - US East Coast trade and provide top-level, reliable service to our customers on this important trade lane." The shipping company said that according to PIERS it has a 9% share of the Asia – US East Coast trade. The move also sees ZIM joining a growing number of owners and operators in container shipping and other sectors opting for LNG as marine fuel to reduce emissions. The vessels are expected to be delivered between February 2023 and January 2024.

## NYK contracts China Merchants to build revolutionary car carriers

Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK) has eschewed local yards in Japan for its latest ship orders – a series of revolutionary car carriers. Japan's second largest shipowner has chosen China Merchants Jinling Shipyard in Nanjing to build four LNG-fuelled car carriers. These four vessels will be delivered from 2022 to 2023 and are planned to be assigned to transport vehicles mainly to/from Europe and/or to the Middle East. On these vessels, WinGD's X-DF2.0 iCER main engine will be utilised for the first time in the world. This engine consumes less gas and reduces GHG by cutting methane emissions from exhaust gas by approximately 50%, NYK claims. iCER stands for Intelligent Control by Exhaust Recycling and is the first technology upgrade of WinGD's X-DF2.0 engine. iCER delivers enhanced combustion control through the use of inert gas. Further, the vessels will be equipped with battery hybrid technology, which will improve fuel efficiency by mitigating main engine and electrical generator load fluctuations through the support of batteries. The ships are 199.9 m long and capable of carrying 7,000 units. No price has been revealed for the quartet.