

DP World signs MoU to develop logistics in India

UAE's DP World and India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to develop the logistics sector in India. The MOU follows an earlier visit by DP World group chairman and ceo Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem to India. At that time, DP World announced that it was seeking opportunities in India worth over \$1bn over the next few years. Potential opportunities include the development of port infrastructure of the Sagarmala project, creation of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, river transportation and cold chain storage, investing in port-led special economic zones, free trade zones, ICDS and cruise terminals. Bin Sulayem commented: "The NIIF plays a crucial role in financing India's infrastructure and we welcome their approach to encouraging development in the sector. "One of the key priorities of the Indian government is preventing the loss of agricultural produce. This can be managed through adequate marine and warehousing infrastructure including cold storage as well as development of inland waterways, reducing logistics costs at the same time."

PSA sees port growth in India and Middle East

Global port operator PSA International is increasing its involvement in the Middle East and Indian Subcontinent region. Its Chennai International Terminal facility registered an impressive 22% growth rate in 2016, achieving a full year throughout of 815,000 teu, on the back of new services from a number of lines, and larger vessels being deployed by customers. Its Bharat Kolkata Terminal achieved a 13.6% growth rate while its Tuticorin Container Terminal performed well to move over 540,000 teu during 2016. PSA's position in India will be strengthened further when Phase 1 of the Bharat Mumbai Container Terminal in JN Port becomes operational towards the end of 2017. PSA is now present in the Middle East through its Saudi Global Ports facility in Dammam. In its first full year of operations, it achieved a throughput of more than 410,000 teu, giving it already a significant market share within the Saudi Gulf port's container business.

Oman starts shipment of limestone from Duqm port

Port of Duqm has started the first shipment of limestone from the port's commercial quay. A vessel has been loaded with 55,000 metric tonnes of limestone and has sailed to India. The limestone is produced and exported by Desert Enterprises Trading and Contracting Company from a quarry located about 40 kilometres from the port and proven to have a reserve of over 200 million tonnes of product. Apart from limestone, Desert Enterprises also produces and exports laterite, kaolin clay and gypsum. Expectations are that the mine in Duqm will produce several hundreds of thousands of metric tonnes of product per month, of which a major chunk will be exported via the port. "One of the major markets that the port of Duqm is aiming for is the support of the mineral industry of Oman. This first shipment is another milestone towards the port of Duqm playing a significant role in the diversification of the Omani economy and the mineral industry in particular," Erwin Mortelmans, commercial director of the Port of Duqm, said.

DP World wins Dubai quality award

Global trade enabler DP World has won the Dubai Quality Award in recognition of sustained business excellence and best practice at an awards ceremony hosted by the Department of Economic Development (DED) at the Dubai World Trade Centre. The award employs a detailed framework requiring companies to benchmark performance against international standards, documenting their achievements as part of a model for organisational excellence. DP World's customer-focused global business strategy, service excellence and industry-leading processes and systems helped the company win the award. DP World's UAE Region has been participating in the Awards over the years, winning the premier Dubai Quality Award when it entered for the first time in 2002. DP World participated as a global company for the first time in 2016 and won it again.

Mega ships to benefit major US west coast ports: Beacon Economics

Despite the fact that California ports have lost market share to ports Houston, New Orleans, Charleston and Savannah, "this is partly a function of the increased location of manufacturing in southern states by global manufacturers", says Jock O'Connell, Beacon Economics' international trade advisor. "In the long-term, container volumes are going to continue to rise at California ports, especially with the arrival of the mega ships," he told the American Journal of Transportation. Houston, Mr O'Connell noted, has seen a major increase in container volumes as a result of increased manufacturing and the Panama Canal widening. Nevertheless, he warned that "ports are at the mercy of the ocean carriers", and "these ocean carrier have to utilise more of the 18,000+ TEU containerships that they have been ordering, then more and more of these ships are going to find themselves on the Asia to west coast trade". This view is shared by Alphaliner's Tan Hua Joo speaking at this year's Trans Pacific Maritime (TPM) conference in Long Beach.

Towards an Emirates marine environment protection association

The Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMPEA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a visiting delegation from the Dubai Council for Marine and Maritime Industries (DcmmiEmirates) on cooperation towards founding a non-profit marine conversation body equivalent to HELMPEA in the United Arab Emirates. Signing the document were chairmen George Gratsos of HELMPEA and Khamis Juma Buamim of DcmmiEmirates, within the framework of the 3rd Joint Cooperation Committee of Greece and the UAE taking place in Athens. HELMPEA was set up as a joint initiative of Greek shipowners and seafarers in 1982, and has since specialised in outreach campaigns to local communities, especially schoolchildren, on the importance of marine conservation, as well as volunteer beach clean-up efforts. It also carries out voluntary STCW refresher training for Greek seafarers in areas which can minimise risk to the marine environment.

Chinese private equity firm to go big on shipping

Chinese firm Kylin Capital, claiming to be the first mover of private equity (PE) in China for the shipping sector, is seeking opportunities during the market downturn and aiming to enlarge its shipping portfolio. Gordon Guo, managing director of Kylin Capital, said that while shipping has been thus far neglected by China-based PE, his company is interested in all segments of shipping as long as the conditions for the deals are right. "We are the first mover of PE in China as other major Chinese PE are not interested in shipping. The big Chinese PE are mainly interested in properties and even football clubs," Guo told delegates at Capital Link International Shipping Forum China held in Shanghai on Friday. "We will just focus on shipping and even offshore as well," he told Seatrade Maritime News at the sidelines of the conference. Guo however preferred to stay confidential on the present value of its portfolio. "The Chinese PE market for shipping is absolutely zero as the PE here do not understand shipping," he said.

Container lines tap Indian heavy cargo for growth

Container ship operators to and from India are increasingly tapping breakbulk or heavy cargo opportunities to make up for a prolonged slump in global container markets. Evidencing that trend, Nhava Sheva (India) Gateway Terminal at JNPT last week handled an oversize shipment weighing 79 metric tons, reportedly the heaviest-ever lift at the country's busiest public container harbor. The out-of-gauge cargo was loaded on the Maersk Guayaquil operating as part of the Danish carrier's Europe-Middle East (ME1) service, according to a trade announcement issued by DP World Nhava Sheva. NSIGT has achieved several operational milestones during the past year, the most notable of which was the berthing of the 13,000-TEU MSC Cristina, the largest container ship ever to have called Indian shores, on April 1 last year. To further shore up its productivity levels, the private terminal last month moved onto an optical character recognition technology-based gate processing system, another first at Indian ports.

US FMC rejects NYK, MOL and K Line container line merger

The US Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) has rejected the merger by NYK, K Line and Mitsui OSK Lines of their container shipping operations saying it does not have jurisdiction to approve it. The three Japanese ship-owners had filed a tripartite agreement with the US shipping regulatory body to approve the forming of a joint container service. "The Shipping Act does not provide the Federal Maritime Commission with authority to review and approve mergers. After careful consideration, the Commission determined that parties to the Tripartite Agreement were ultimately establishing a merged, new business entity and that action is among the type of agreements excluded from FMC review. The tripartite agreement would have allowed the three lines to share information from 8 May ahead of the proposed new entity – a joint venture container line – being formed next year. The tripartite agreement was rejected unanimously by the commissioners. "The Shipping Act does not provide the Federal Maritime Commission with authority to review and approve mergers. In order to receive the benefits of a merger, one needs to first merge.

India road, rail, port & air ministries unite for swift cargo transport

In a first ever initiative, the government on Thursday brought road, rail, aviation and port ministries on one platform to lay the roadmap for speeding up the movement of cargo, agriculture produce and manufactured goods seamlessly across the country. While highways and shipping minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said that the Goods and Services Tax backed by improved logistics movement will push economic growth, railway minister Suresh Prabhu mooted the proposal of setting up an unified entity with participation of both transport and railway ministries to deal with all issues relating to the logistics sector. Prabhu said the government should come out with an integrated policy on this issue, which has found special mention in this year's budget Inaugurating the India Integrated Transport Logistics Summit Gadkari said, high logistics costs in India are a result of various modes of transport growing and developing in silos, in an un-integrated manner.

Japan presents plans for container transit route through Kazakhstan to Europe

Representatives of Japanese economic organisations, companies and think tanks discussed Japan's plans to develop container transit from Japan to Europe through Kazakhstan and China with Kazakh, South Korean and Chinese delegates at a recent business forum in Tokyo. Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Japan Yerlan Baudarbek-Kozhatayev told the group it is beneficial to transport goods along the Japan-Europe route through Lianyungang port across the territory of Kazakhstan. He also noted opportunities for cooperation between the economic strategies of Abenomics in Japan and Nurly Zhol in Kazakhstan. Executive Director of KTZ Express Sergey Anashkin discussed Kazakhstan's model for the development of internal and external transport networks and logistics centres, including the cooperation of international partners, such as China, Russia, the Central Asian countries, Europe, the Caucasus and the Middle East.