

Unifeeder expands global footprint with takeover of shortsea rival Feedertech

Unifeeder has expanded its global reach and closed the gap on market leader X-Press with its acquisition of a majority stake in Singapore-based feeder and shortsea operator Feedertech Group. DP World-owned Unifeeder will buy a 77% stake in Feedertech, with the Singapore registered company's chairman, Ali Maghami, retaining the remaining 23%. Founded in 2003, Feedertech operates liner and ad hoc feeder services under that name and a regional shortsea network under the Perma banner. Its network covers 50 ports and generates revenue of nearly \$200m from over 600,000 teu carried annually. It has a head count of 290 employees in 23 countries. According to Alphaliner data, Feedertech operates eight handy feeder and panamax ships with a combined capacity of 28,839 teu, of which seven are chartered in with one 5,042 teu 14-year-old vessel owned by the company. A network of five weekly Asia-Middle East-Indian subcontinent feeder connections are offered in partnership with ocean carriers, including Evergreen, together with an extensive range of other relay options. Unifeeder currently operates 53 chartered-in vessels for a capacity of 55,646 teu across a network of feeder and domestic services in the North Sea, the Baltic and Iberia.

ICTSI announces \$100m investment plan to double Congo port capacity

International Container Terminal Services (ICTSI) has revealed a plan to invest \$100m for the second phase expansion of its Matadi Gateway Terminal (MGT) in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). ICTSI said that the investment at MGT will double the terminal's yearly throughput capacity to 400,000 twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU). According to the expansion plan, ICTSI will extend the quay from 375m to 500m, expand the terminal yard area to 10.5ha and deploy new equipment. The expansion is scheduled to begin next year. According to a public-private partnership, ICTSI will dredge the Congo River to a depth of 12.5m. The Philippines-based port operator noted that the expansion of MGT forms part of its plans to strengthen Matadi's position as the most efficient port gateway to serve DRC capital Kinshasa. To achieve this, Société Congolaise des Transports et des Ports (SCTP) will integrate new rolling equipment onto the rail system between Matadi and Kinshasa. ICTSI Europe, the Middle East and Africa senior vice-president Hans Ole Madsen said: "The expansion of MGT is aligned with actual and projected container growth rates for the DRC and corresponds with cargo owner and shipping line requirements for the medium term."

Azerbaijani, Kazakh ports to help expand potential of Caspian region

Azerbaijan's Baku International Sea Trade Port, Kazakhstan's Kuryk and Aktau ports, as well as the reconstruction of highways and rail networks in both countries will increase the transit potential of the region, Azerbaijan's Minister of Transport, Communications and High Technologies Ramin Guluzade said, Trend reports. He made the statement at the event held in Baku on the occasion of 28th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence on Dec. 4, organized by Kazakh embassy in Azerbaijan. According to the minister, there is a great potential for further development of the cooperation between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan in the fields of transport and transit transportation, information and communication technologies, energy, industry and agriculture. "Both countries are implementing large-scale infrastructure projects to benefit from location of our countries on shortest route passing through the East-West International Corridor. At the same time, joint efforts are implemented in order to widely apply multimodal transportation in the Caspian basin," Guluzade said. The relations between two countries are also developing at a high level in the multilateral format, he said.

PSA acquires 50% stake in Indian logistics hub from CMA CGM

PSA India Intermodal Pte Ltd, a unit of Singapore-based port operator PSA International Pte Ltd, has acquired a 50 percent stake for \$93 million in an Indian logistics hub from French shipping group CMA CGM. "PSA Intermodal Pte Ltd has signed an agreement to acquire CMA CGM's stake in Ameya Logistics Pvt Ltd," a spokesperson for PSA India told BusinessLine. The investment is subject to the fulfillment of conditions precedent. A CMA CGM official said it was selling the 50 percent stake it held in the Indian logistics hub for \$93 million (of which \$85 million is at closing and \$8 million of earn-out) and the deal is expected to be closed in the first quarter of 2020. Marseille-based CMA CGM, the world's fourth largest container shipping company held the 50 percent stake in Ameya Logistics Pvt Ltd, the entity that runs a container freight station (CFS) near Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), India's busiest container gateway. Ameya Logistics, in turn, held a 51 percent stake in CMA CGM Logistics Park Dadri, located in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh with Container Corporation of India Limited (Concor) holding the balance stake. Ameya Logistics also held a 55 percent stake in Honeycomb Logistics Pvt Ltd, which runs a CFS at Mundra in Gujarat.

Qingdao Port Buys 33.3 Pct Stake in COSCO Shipping Ports (Abu Dhabi)

Chinese container terminal operator COSCO Shipping Ports Limited has entered into a deal to sell 33.3 percent of equity in its subsidiary COSCO Shipping Ports (Abu Dhabi) Limited to Qingdao Port International Development (Hong Kong) for USD 59.2 million. Abu Dhabi Terminal in Khalifa Port was the first terminal in which COSCO Shipping Ports held a controlling stake in the Middle East. "Disposal is expected to further improve the operational efficiency of Abu Dhabi Terminal, increase the terminal's competitiveness in the Middle East and provide highly-efficient and better ports services to shipping companies. Furthermore, the company believes that the disposal would be beneficial to the two parties in maximizing their respective advantages, expanding terminal-extended business and deepening strategic cooperation in terminal business in the long run," COSCO said in a filing to Hong Kong exchange. Upon completion of the sale, Abu Dhabi Terminal will be indirectly held as to approximately 60% by COSCO Shipping Ports and 30% by QPI Development respectively through CSP (Abu Dhabi), with Abu Dhabi Ports holding the remaining 10 percent in the company. Abu Dhabi Ports and COSCO Shipping Ports Limited opened CSP Abu Dhabi Container Terminal on December 20, 2018.

New container terminal extension added due to rise in freight tonnages

The Port of Tyne has completed a multi-million pound container terminal extension. Completed in just under 6 months, growth of 25% in container volumes in the past five years has seen the port invest substantially to extend its 20 acre container terminal. The Port of Tyne's container terminal originally opened in 1991 to service the needs of the North of England's supply chain. Almost 30 years on the terminal handles everything from manufacturing parts for Nissan, Komatsu and Hitachi to 30% of the UK's tea, wine, clothing, and consumer goods, to furniture, machinery and recovered materials. The port says that the increase in container tonnages in recent years has seen investment of £2 million in extending its container terminal, reconfiguring the layout, repositioning the weighbridge and extending its capacity by 40% to almost 70,000 square metres. Matt Beeton, Port of Tyne Chief Executive Officer, said: "This marks a new era in transformation for the Port of Tyne, helping global shippers to transport cargo more efficiently to their destination and ensuring we continue to service a growing customer base in the North East, North West and Scotland."

India to use Bangladesh seaports without transit, customs fees

There will be no transit charges and custom duties but administrative fees for India as it eyes trial run from January of transshipping cargos through Chattogram and Mongla seaports from its landlocked northern states and vice-versa. The decisions were taken at a meeting of the inter-governmental committee of Bangladesh and India on shipping in the capital recently. The committee meeting was held on the second and concluding day of the two-day secretary-level talks between the shipping ministries of the two countries. Shipping secretary Abdus Samad of Bangladesh and his Indian counterpart Gopal Krishna briefed the reporters about the outcomes of the talks at a press briefing. Abdus Samad said that there would be no customs duties and transshipment charges on the Indian cargos in line with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Only administrative fees in addition to road charges will be taken for allowing transshipment of their goods, he said. Replying to a question, he said that there was not yet any concrete 'calculation about the administrative fees' to be taken from them for using the country's two main sea ports. He said that the administrative fees would be known during the trial run scheduled to take place through the Chattogram sea port in January.

Global Vessel Owners Association welcomes Indian decision on Ship Breaking Convention

It is ten years to the day since most of the media published an article deploring the terrible practices employed by ship breakers on third world beaches such as Alang in India, and over twelve years since the Indian Supreme Court made an order regarding how the problems of this deadly trade could be controlled. Now it seems someone may actually be taking notice. Last week the Indian government ratified the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships (HKC) a decision welcomed by many, including the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS). Adopted in May 2009, the Convention will ensure that ships are recycled in a safe, environmentally friendly and transparent manner, providing global oversight to an economically and environmentally essential industry. India is a major ship recycling nation, and in 2018, India received more than 250 vessels of almost five million gross tonnes, amounting to between 25-35% of the world's recycling tonnage. The decision therefore by the Government of India to begin steps towards ratifying the HKC is a significant one. The ICS comprises the world's national ship owners associations from Asia, Europe, the Americas and Africa.