

Transworld Group takes an initiative to ease water crisis in Chennai, India

The ongoing water crisis in Chennai has left people with access to very little to no water for consumption. The pressure on the city has increased, impacting residents, businesses, hospitals and schools. In this state of emergency, the Transworld Group has taken up the noble deed of contributing safe drinking water to tackle the crisis in Chennai by sending gallons of bottled water through its containers from Kandla to Chennai. On June 27, 2019, 1,561 cans (each of 20 litres), i.e. 31,220 litres of drinking water, in two containers on the vessel SCI Chennai, sailed from Deendayal Port in the morning hours for the city. As per a communiqué, there will be two containers every week taking water to Chennai through the coastal route on vessels, to be distributed to the most affected communities with the help of Red Cross volunteers. The Group is also procuring water through private lorries locally, to be distributed to communities facing the maximum scarcity. It is a call for action for businesses to join hands in this noble cause for humanity, the communiqué stressed. The Group has invited those interested to join it in this initiative in any way.

UAE Shipping Association flags up opportunities for international owners in offshore sector

The UAE Shipping Association (UAESA) is flagging up opportunities for international owners in the offshore sector from upcoming oil and gas projects. Tahir Lakhani, UAESA vice-chairman, said that while they were trying to promote the UAE as a shipping hub there was a lack of shipowners based there. "There is a lack of funding, and people do not understand ship finance in this part of the world. This is one of the reasons we're facing a problem attracting new shipowners, who can do their business in a way where funding is available." While local banks are not willing to take a risk on shipping it is hoped that financiers from overseas could be attracted to set up in the UAE. "There are many investors and banks in Norway and other European countries, and we would like to invite them here, where they can do business, and help them set up their offices," Lakhani said. A particular area of opportunity for international owners to set up in the UAE is the offshore sector. For example the \$1.36bn expansion of the Al Ghaf island and accompanying construction of 10 new artificial islands off Abu Dhabi, where reclaimed land will be used to drill for oil is one project that is noted.

DP World promotes High Bay Storage concept

The High Bay Storage (HBS) container terminal concept could not only make terminal operations easier but also help speed up hinterland supply chains, DP World director of global operations Patrick Bol told in Rotterdam this week. The HBS system employs high bay racking technology that is used in warehouses and distribution centres and was initially developed to solve capacity constraints at existing box terminals. DP World and German cargo handling technology firms Amova and SMS earlier this year unveiled plans for deployment of the first HBS system in a port terminal. Being marketed as BoxBay, the system will be installed at the new Terminal 4 of DP World's Jebel Ali Port, due to open ahead of Expo 2020 Dubai next year. Under the HBS concept each box is "suspended" on its own platform, which means the stacks can go up to 11-high – as opposed to the more normal five - and each container can be accessed independently wherever it is in the stack. Besides providing savings in space, the system could also help deal more efficiently with less-than-container load (LCL) shipments that are expected to grow dramatically – especially in regions such as Latin America and Africa, where it is very expensive to ship full-container loads (FCLs), Bol explained.

EGA, ADP welcome largest cargo ship to ever call at Khalifa Port

Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA), the largest industrial company in the United Arab Emirates outside oil and gas, on Monday announced the arrival of the first fully-laden Capesize vessel to call at any GCC port at its quay at Khalifa Port in Abu Dhabi, inaugurating the import of bauxite for EGA's new Al Taweelah alumina refinery using these huge bulk cargo vessels. EGA imports bauxite ore from the Republic of Guinea to supply Al Taweelah alumina refinery, and using Capesize vessels reduces shipping costs per tonne. Abu Dhabi Ports (ADP) has modified the approaches to Khalifa Port to accommodate Capesize vessels bound for EGA, making it the first port in the Gulf able to accommodate these fully-loaded ships. The approaches have been deepened from 16.5 metres to 18.5 metres draft and widened from 250 metres to 280 metres. With a draft of 18.2 metres fully-laden, Capesize vessels are amongst the largest bulk cargo ships in the world. The enhanced capability of Khalifa Port enables new trade opportunities, supporting other local industries and boosting Abu Dhabi as a regional maritime hub. Last month, the world's largest container ship MV Solar berthed at Khalifa Port for the first time.

Morocco's Tangier port to become Mediterranean's largest

Morocco will open new terminals at Tanger Med port on Thursday, allowing it to surpass the Mediterranean's largest ports Algeciras and Valencia in terms of container capacity, and drive more investment and manufacturing to the country, Reuters reports. Tanger Med, the biggest port in Africa with an annual volume of 3.5 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEU) in 2018, will add six million in capacity after its extension worth 1.3 billion euros, port director Rachid Houari said. Morocco hopes the port, which offers a platform for exports by local production plants of French car makers such as Renault SA and Peugeot SA, will reach volumes of 4.5 million TEU by this year's end like Algeciras in southern Spain. Authorities at the port on the western tip of the Mediterranean, just across from the Spanish coast, hope it can build on its role as a calling point for container shipping firms, especially between Asia, Africa and Europe. "I hope we will add one million TEU of containers every year," said Houari. He declined to estimate future volumes, saying only the original terminal had reached 3.5 million TEU in just six years. "Fingers crossed we will fill it up in six years," he said. Some 90% of container volumes passing through the ports are transiting to other destinations, he said.

Mohammad Bin Salman calls for protection of international shipping lanes

South Korean President Moon Jae-in met Wednesday with visiting Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman, who promised to help with possible fuel shortages in case of supply disruptions caused by tensions in the Middle East. Moon and the Saudi crown prince also called for international efforts to secure safety at the Strait of Hormuz, where the US has blamed Iran for mysterious explosions targeting oil tankers, Moon's office said after the meeting at Seoul's presidential Blue House. Tehran denied involvement in the attacks, which raised concerns among Asian countries of potential supply disruptions. South Korea gets more than 70 per cent of its crude oil from the Middle East and most of the supplies flow through the strait. South Korea and Saudi Arabia signed an \$8.3 billion economic co-operation pact and Moon's office said the countries also agreed to increase exchanges in various sectors including technology and industry. Moon also pledged South Korean support for Saudi Arabia's national drive to diversify its oil-dependent economy by developing sectors such as health, education and tourism. Most of the \$8.3 billion agreement is accounted for by a \$6 billion deal between oil giant Saudi Aramco and Korean firm S-Oil to build refinery and downstream facilities in South Korea.

PSA to conduct 5G trials in move toward smart port environment

Port operator PSA International has appointed Singapore telcos Singtel and M1 to conduct trials for the use of 5G in smart port management. A SGD40m (\$29.5m) national budget has been set aside that will be given out over one year for the development of this next-frontier 5G Trial Tech Call in port operations, where an operator can remotely control driverless cranes and trucks to load and unload containers, or remotely inspect machines using driverless drones. Through the 5G Trial Tech Call collaboration, PSA will provide a live testing ground to gain a deeper understanding around the potential of 5G technology and integration capabilities, before moving to a more widespread adoption phase of a Smart Port. The 5G trial will serve as a testbed for the development of 5G networks and capabilities. Maritime operations is one of six strategic clusters where 5G applications are expected to generate the most value for Singapore in global export, according to S. Iswaran, Singapore minister for communications and information. The other five clusters are urban mobility, smart estates management, smart manufacturing, and government and consumer applications. Trials are PSA are expected to start in the third quarter of this year.

Major shipping banks to incentivise shipping's decarbonisation

Eleven major shipping banks representing a bank loan portfolio to global shipping of around \$100bn have launched a new global framework to incentivise shipping's move toward decarbonisation. Named the Poseidon Principles, the framework will assess and disclose the climate alignment of financial institutions' shipping portfolios, integrating climate considerations into lending decisions. The founding 11 banks are Citi, Societe Generale, DNB, ABN AMRO, Amsterdam Trade Bank (ATB), Credit Agricole CIB, Danish Ship Finance, Danske Bank, DVB, ING, and Nordea, and they represent around 20% of the global ship finance portfolio. Additional banks are expected to join in the near future, including Asian banks. "As banks, we recognise that our role in the shipping industry enables us to promote responsible environmental stewardship throughout the global maritime value chain. The Poseidon Principles will not only serve our institutions to improve decision making at a strategic level but will also shape a better future for the shipping industry and our society," said Michael Parker, global industry head of shipping & logistics at Citi and chair of the Poseidon Principles drafting committee.

Afghanistan looks at Chabahar port to boost trade

Afghanistan is looking at the Chabahar port in Iran to tap overseas market to help boost its war-torn economy as the nearby Karachi port is out of bound for the landlocked nation. Chabahar is the only seaport Iran has in its energy-rich Sistan-Balochistan province by the Gulf of Oman and consists of two ports with five berths each. The port is a counter to Pakistan's Gwadar port which is being developed with the Chinese investment. The port, inaugurated in December 2017, has opened a new strategic route connecting Iran with India and Afghanistan bypassing Pakistan. In December 2017, India took over the operations of port and commissioned the second port this January, marking the country's maritime entry into a foreign land. "The opening up of the Chabahar port has helped us venture into overseas markets. But we are facing challenges in terms of higher cost," Afghanistan's deputy minister of industries and commerce Muqaddesa Yourish said. The major challenge is cost, as compared to the Karachi port, she said. Speaking on the sidelines of an event organised with the support of the USAID, she said, "US sanctions on Iran have hit our business as well."

Qatar-India trade volume rises to over Qr44bn

Bilateral trade and economic relations between India and Qatar is expect to see major growth in the coming years as both the countries are working very closely and aggressively to further expand and deepen the level of cooperation in several areas. India is already one of the leading trade partners of Qatar, and the bilateral trade volume has been witnessing sharp and steady growth over the last several years, which further got accelerated after the unjust blockade in early June 2017. The two-way trade exchange between Qatar and India jumped to QR44.13bn (\$12.12bn) in 2018 from QR31.06bn (\$8.53bn) in 2016, registering over 42 percent growth in just two years. When compared on yearly basis, the bilateral trade volume increased by nearly 24 percent last year against QR35.62bn (\$9.78bn) in 2017, data released by Qatar Chamber show. The trade balance (the difference between exports and imports) has been in favour of Qatar for the last several years. Qatar's trade surplus with India reached at QR 29.67bn (\$8.15bn) in 2018, registering a significant growth of nearly 21 percent (or QR5.53bn) compared to QR24.14bn (\$6.63bn) in 2017. India also imports several other products from Qatar, including chemicals, petrochemicals, petroleum gases, fertilizers, metal among others.

Sri Lankan container terminal crowned best in Asia for 3rd consecutive year

Colombo International Container Terminal (CICT), located at the Colombo Harbor, has been voted as the Best Container Terminal in Asia in the "Under 4 million TEUs category" at the Asian Freight, Logistics and Supply Chain (AFLAS) Awards, local media reported Friday. The CICT, which is the first and only deep water terminal in South Asia equipped with facilities to handle the largest vessels afloat, is managed by China Merchant Port Holdings (CMPort). This is the third consecutive year that CICT won this award, honoring organizations for demonstrating leadership as well as consistency in service quality, innovation, customer relationship management, and reliability. To win the award in its category, CICT had to compete with top eight shortlisted terminals nominated on the basis of criteria that were laid down by the publication and face a technical evaluation. Commenting on CICT winning the award for the third straight year, the company's CEO Jack Huang said the award is a testament to CICT's dedication to consistent delivery of high levels of service to the global shipping lines that use its terminal. Since its inception in 2014, CICT has incrementally grown the volume from 686,639 TEUs in 2014 to 1.56 million TEUs in 2015, 2 million TEUs in 2016, 2.38 million TEUs in 2017 and 2.68 million TEUs in 2018.

India Govt giving final touches to logistics policy; draft to reach Cabinet soon

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry & Railways, Piyush Goyal, reviewed the draft National Logistics Policy and the proposed action plan for implementation of the policy prepared by the Department of Logistics, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The draft National Logistics Policy has been prepared in consultation with the Ministries of Railways, Road Transport and Highways, Shipping and Civil Aviation. Forty-six Partnering Government Agencies (PGAs) inputs were analysed in detail for consideration in the Policy. Commerce and Industry Minister in his opening remarks urged that all the four Ministries and their departments must leverage existing infrastructure to support each other in the logistics chain. This will not only help in maximizing capacity utilization but also reduce costs he added. Piyush Goyal directed that all four Ministries must work in coordination with each other so that the 14% logistics cost of India's GDP may be brought down to 9%. In the meeting all aspects of logistics related to railways, civil aviation, shipping and inland waterways, road transport, rope-ways warehousing and cold chain were discussed in detail.