



UAE shipping chief says initial trade with Israel could be worth over \$5 billion

Initial bilateral trade between Israel and the United Arab Emirates could be worth \$5 billion, an Emirati shipping leader said Monday at an event with Israeli businesspeople in Dubai. Ports in Israel will be valuable as a link for shipping between the Middle East and Europe, said Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, chairman of DP World, one of the largest international port operators. The firm is in talks to jointly take over Haifa port with an Israeli company and has inked a deal with one of Israel's leading banks. "We estimate at least \$5 billion of trade will happen between our countries in the beginning and this will grow," bin Sulayem said at the inaugural UAE-Israel Future Digital Technology Summit, part of this week's Gitex technology conference in Dubai. "The port facilities [in Israel] will allow us to link our ports in Europe to the Middle East," he said. The Abraham Accords, signed by Israel, the UAE and Bahrain on September 15, normalized relations between the countries, opening up commercial ties. The state-owned DP World, based in Dubai, operates the kingdom's Jebel Ali Port, the largest and busiest port in the Middle East. An Israeli delegation attended the Gitex summit this week in Dubai for the first time.

Congestion in Chinese ports causes cargo ships to divert to Hong Kong

The Chinese port authorities have once again implemented strict measures to stop the spread of Covid-19. Many Chinese ports are congested as a result of this decision. Cargo ships with import products, especially those carrying perishable products such as fruit, therefore divert to Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Sea Port Alliance (HKSPA) stated that Hong Kong is the main beneficiary of the bottleneck in Chinese ports. Hong Kong port offers unobstructed access to refrigerated shipping container terminals. The HKSPA works closely together with shipping companies to offload the shipping containers and help shipping companies maintain their schedule. According to the HKSPA, fruit trade in Hong Kong port increased by 5% in the first half of 2020, but the trade in dried fruit declined by 3%. The volume of fresh fruit and vegetables that passes through Hong Kong port on an annual basis is worth nearly 3 billion USD. Almost 60% of that trade volume is transhipped to mainland China. The HKSPA has installed more than 7,800 terminals for refrigerated shipping containers. That is twice the size of Huanan port. The Hong Kong port facilities help speed up transportation and guarantee that import fruit is quickly on its way to the destination market.

Maersk and MSC take part in IMO Just-In-Time trials

Both Maersk and MSC have been involved in the International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s latest just-in-time (JIT) desktop trials, which look to streamline port operations, saving fuel and preventing unnecessary pollution. The latest trials, conducted between 2-9 December, followed the initial trials held in July which were deemed a success reducing fuel consumption, and therefore reducing emissions, in a voyage between Bremerhaven and Rotterdam by 23%. Members of the IMO-led Global Industry Alliance to Support Low Carbon Shipping (Low Carbon GIA) who analysed port calls at a terminal in Rotterdam Port. "For the calculations, 26 vessels which called at one particular terminal in the Port of Rotterdam were analyzed (one month of data). Firstly, real fuel consumption and emissions figures were calculated for each ship (using a reference vessel fuel model) for the last 24 hours of the voyage prior to arrival at the port," said an IMO statement. Two JIT scenarios were considered, with the 26 ships being sent arrival times, at the pilot boarding place either 24 hours ahead of arrival or 12 hours ahead of the scheduled arrival time, the ships would then adjust their speed to arrive at the optimum time.

Lulu group to set up food processing centre in India's Jammu & Kashmir

The UAE-based Lulu Group International has announced a plan to set up a food processing centre in Srinagar for sourcing a wide range of agri products from Jammu and Kashmir. The announcement was made by Lulu group chairman Yusuffali MA on Thursday during a meeting with a delegation from Jammu and Kashmir headed by its Principal Secretary (Agriculture Production and Horticulture) Navin Kumar Choudhary on the sidelines of the UAE India Food Security Summit 2020. As per the commitment made during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to UAE in 2019, Lulu Group is fully focused on sourcing a wide range of agri products from J&K," Yusuffali MA said. Currently, Lulu imports apples and saffron from Kashmir and imports will significantly increase in the coming years. The group imported more than 400 tons of Kashmiri apples till date, despite several challenges in the recent past due to the coronavirus pandemic, according to an official statement. Yusuffali said Lulu group is one of the leading importers of food and non-food products from India and setting up of a new food processing and logistics centre will further boost export of Kashmiri products to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and other countries.

India: Cochin Port Trust takes advantage of ongoing congestion at Colombo Port

Taking advantage of the ongoing congestion at Colombo Port, the efforts of Cochin Port Trust in wooing mainline vessels seem to have started yielding results. This is evident from the anchoring of Maersk Edinburgh with 366.5-metre length on Sunday, the largest ship ever to enter the inner harbour of Cochin Port Trust. The mainline vessel of 2M Alliance is also the first vessel to berth at International Container Transshipment Terminal at Vallarpadam under the US East Coast Service. The 13568 TEU container capacity vessels are among the largest class of ships call at Indian ports, the port officials said. The ship has interchanged 1723 TEUS, and the arrival of such mainline is going to benefit the trade not only in terms of the lower logistics cost but also in terms of lower transit time of their cargo given the ongoing congestion at Colombo Port, hitherto the principal transshipment hub of Indian cargo, the officials added. The officials, quoting received information, said that the situation in Colombo has not been improved so far and more mainline vessels are expected to call at Kochi shortly. The ship is scheduled to sail later tonight after completion of cargo operations, they said.

Maldives State Shipping commences delivery of cargo from India to Addu, Huvadhu atoll

Maldives State Shipping (MSS) has commenced the delivery of cargo from India to Maldives via the sea route. A special ceremony was held at Hithadhoo Port in southernmost Addu city on Friday to mark the beginning of the new endeavour of the national shipping agency. Managing Director of the State Trading Organization (STO) Hussain Amru, Managing Director of MALdives Ports Limited Shahid Ali, and Mayor of Addu City, Abdulla Sadiq attended the ceremony. Goods will be transported from India to Addu City as well as Huvadhu atoll under the arrangement. Speaking at the ceremony, Managing Director of MSS, Abdulla Saeed said the delivery of goods from India directly to the two atolls will ease several challenges faced by local businesses. The arrangement will allow both the businesses and customers to acquire goods at better prices, he added. The first vessel from MSS' fleet that sailed to the Maldives from Tuticorin, India carried 2,713.34 metric tonnes of goods. Most of the goods include perishables such as fruits and vegetables, and construction material.

DP World aims to link Europe, Mideast ports via Israel

Europe's ports can be linked with those in the Middle East via Israel, the chairman of Dubai state-owned DP World, one of the world's largest port operators said. Israel is "a logical, strategic link" and Israeli port facilities will allow DP World to link its ports in Europe to the Middle East, said Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, speaking at the inaugural UAE-Israel Future Digital Economy Summit as part of the 2020 Gitex Technology Week at the Dubai World Trade Center. Bin Sulayem said the initial trade volume between Israel and the United Arab Emirates could reach \$5 billion. DP World is a multinational logistics company that operates facilities and shipment services around the world, including ports in Europe and the UK. In September, it signed a cooperation agreement with the Israeli group Dovertower on shipping activities between Dubai and Israel's Red Sea port of Eilat in addition to submitting a joint bid on the privatization of Israel's Haifa Port with Israel Shipyards Ltd. Following the signing of the normalization deal between the UAE and Israel, dozens of agreements were signed by the two countries in various fields. On Sept. 15 this year, the UAE and Bahrain signed separate agreements for full normalization of relations with Israel in a move that sparked anger among Palestinians, who say the accords ignore their rights and do not serve the Palestinian cause.