

i-maritime News Service

December 13, 2006

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Mainline vessels keen on visiting Kochi port

The arrival of the second mainline vessel at Kochi in less than a week, shows the arrival of Kochi port in the international maritime map. The vessel, T.S. Dubai of T.S. Line of Taiwan, had berthed in the terminal for a 6-hour stop over. The rotation of the vessel will be Xingang, Shanghai, Ningbo, Hong Kong, Singapore, Port Kelang, Colombo, Kochi, Jawaharlal Nehru port, Jebel Ali, Damam etc. Advanced discussions are on with various lines for connecting Kochi directly with the US East Coast and Europe. Kochi will now be the ideal gateway for the South Indian markets such as Bangalore, Tirupur and Coimbatore with the increase in import of electronic goods, computer spares, fabric tiles etc, from China. Exporters from these locations will also have the benefit of fixed day direct weekly service to Jebel Ali, Damam and to the North China ports with excellent transit times.

Kakinada Shipyard

Larsen & Toubro plans to set up a shipyard at Kakinada and has applied to the Centre and the Andhra Pradesh Government for permissions. The shipyard is mainly for building vessels required for defence needs and also for L&T which is engaged in major construction and engineering projects. L&T also plans to build LNG carriers, survey ships, and offshore vessels at the proposed shipyard. The company requires more than 600 acres and it is also seeking SEZ status for the project, which would involve an investment of Rs 1000 crores.

Minor ports

The maritime states are keenly trying to develop the minor ports. The current Five-Year Plan envisages a significant change in the role of coastal shipping and provides for the establishment of a Coastal Vessel Traffic Service by the Director General of Lightships and Lighthouses. Some of the major projects for additional capacity at minor ports include 115.50 MTPA in Gujarat, 83.20 MTPA in Maharashtra, 30 MTPA in Tamil Nadu, 27.50 MTPA in Kerala, 25.20 MTPA in Orissa and 17 MTPA in Karnataka, which include greenfield projects, captive facilities and upgrading of existing ports. Gujarat has greenfield projects at Simar, Mithivirdi, Vansi Borsi and Maroli, and Bedi is in the pipeline. Andhra Pradesh, has

many projects including those under development in Machillipatnam, Nizampatna and Bhimunipatnam ports. Tamil Nadu plans to develop Cuddalore, Colachel, Nagapattinam and Rameshwaram ports. Maharashtra plans to develop Rewas-Aware, Dighi, Jalga and Vijaydurg, and Redi is on the anvil. Orissa plans to develop Gopalpur, Dhamra and Jatadhari. Karnataka is expanding Karwar, Tadri and Belekri ports and Kerala is focussing on Azhikal and Vizhinjam ports.

New system soon to integrate maritime activities

The proposed Port Community System will integrate all activities across the maritime transport chain, from cargo origin to destination. The system would link all members of the Indian port community, including exporters, importers, Custom House Agents, banks, shipping lines and ports. The PCS will facilitate exchange of vital information needed by each member from other members of the community to perform their functions effectively and to improve the overall efficiency of maritime trade and transportation cycle. The PCS will be a single-window concept and documents filed in a port can be sent to various stakeholders associated with any major port.

Panama canal capacity to be increased

The capacity of Panama Canal will be doubled in less than 10 years from now as per a national referendum endorsed by the Government of Panama. The cost of capacity expansion is estimated at \$5.25 billion. Third sets of locks will be constructed at either end of the canal, which, together with other improvements, will enable two-way traffic and potentially double its capacity. The current limiting dimensions are vessels of 32 m beam, 294 m length and 12 m depth. Panamax bulk carriers of this size typically have a displacement of 65,000 tonnes. When the canal is enlarged, it will be able to handle vessels 55 m wide, 366 m long and 15 m deep.

Mini-port at Cheyyur

The Tamil Nadu Government is considering setting up a mini-port near Cheyyur (near Chingleput) to facilitate establishment of a 2,000 MW coal-based power plant by NTPC.

NTPC has sought coal-handling facilities close to the power plant. The distance from Chennai or Cuddalore, which are the existing options, would be too great. Tamil Nadu would get half the power generated from the Rs 8,000-crore project.

Philippine port operator gets security nod

International Container Terminal Services Inc (ICTSI) of the Philippines has been given the security clearance for participating in the Rs 1,200-crore offshore container terminal project at Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT). ICTSI is the management contractor of engineering and construction major Larsen & Toubro (L&T) for the container terminal project. ICTSI has to now seek prior security clearance for the personnel deployed during the construction of the terminal if it wins the mandate from Mumbai Port.

US plans to extend container security to Indian ports

The US Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to extend its Container Security Initiative (CSI) to Indian ports and has sent a proposal to the Union Government in this regard. The CSI is to help increase security for containerised cargo shipped to the US from around the world. The CBP stations multidisciplinary teams of the US officers from both CBP and Immigration and Customs Enforcement to work together with host foreign government counterparts. Their mission is to target and pre-screen containers and to develop additional investigative leads related to the terrorist threat to cargo destined to the US.

Cochin Shipyard delivers tugs to Jeddah Port

Cochin Shipyard delivered the ninth fire-fighting tug for the Jeddah Port Authority as per schedule. The order for the tugs, at an approximate cost of Rs 150 crore, was secured by CSL against stiff international competition. These are seagoing tugs for duties of ship-handling, fire-fighting and oil pollution control. The total length of the last of the series of ships delivered was 32.46 m and width of 11.5 m and depth of 5.30 m with a design draft of 3.6 m. The speed of the ship is 12.50 knots with a bollard pull of 46 tonnes.

Juicy Bits

- Gateway Distriparks emerged as the top bidder for securing a 15-year operations and management contract of a Punjab government-owned container freight station (CFS).
- Shreyas Shipping has decided to raise funds worth Rs 150 crore for acquisitions by way of equity investment in Indian or foreign companies engaged in warehouse/ road transport/ logistics.
- The continuing softness in the tanker rates in the current quarter has caused a slide in the market capitalization of shipping companies
- Sethusamudram Corporation Ltd has accorded approval for making a contribution of Rs 32,15,000 towards execution of 12 schemes under its coastal community development programme in Tuticorin and Ramanathapuram districts .
- Varun Shipping has obtained shareholders' nod for its proposal to issue shares on preferential basis at Rs 75 each and to issue optionally convertible warrants (OFCW) to raise a total of around Rs 500 crore.
- Between April and November this year, Paradip port posted more than 13 per cent growth in traffic at 24.48 million tonnes (mt) as compared to 21.64 mt in the corresponding period of previous year. During the same period, the average growth of traffic in all the major ports taken together was eight per cent at 294.5 mt (272.7 mt).
- Chennai was ranked 99th in 2005 by World Port Development's International Journal for Port Management, an annual report on global ports published by the UK-based MCI Media Ltd.
- The volume of traffic moving along the Yangtze river in China is expected to reach nearly one billion

tonnes in 2006, 15.1 per cent over that in 2005, according to a report in the People's Daily.

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December 19, 2006

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Mundra port's expansion path

Mundra port's expansion plans set two years back, included addition of six new berths – both multipurpose terminals as well as container terminals. Of the four multipurpose terminals, two will be operational from the first quarter of 2007 and will have an initial draft of 12.5 metres that would be raised to 17.5 metres. Two berths have commenced operations from July and November 2006 with a draft of 17.5 metres. The two new container terminals to be operated by the port will be operational from July 2007. The port is also planning a second Single Point Mooring. Necessary permissions have been granted for its commissioning, to handle Very Large Crude Carriers. Open and warehoused backup area for storage of various commodities such as wheat, rice, sugar, deoiled cake, fertiliser and other dry non-perishable commodities measures 3,400 acres. This excludes backup area for containers. To facilitate improved handling of traffic, two intermediate stations are also being added on the existing railway track.

Visakhapatnam port gets connected

Visakhapatnam port has been now connected with National Highway 5. The Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP) had approved an interim arrangement for levy of user fee by the Visakhapatnam Port Road Company Ltd at two plazas. For cars/jeeps/vans, the fee will be Rs 10 at the main plaza and Rs 5 at the second one, for light commercial vehicles Rs 15 and Rs 10, for trucks and buses Rs 35 and Rs 20, and for multi-axle vehicles Rs 55 and Rs 30, respectively. For oversized vehicles (more than 7 axles), the fee will be Rs 65 and Rs 35, respectively, at the two plazas.

Gujarat develops three new ports

Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) has invited expression of interest (EOI) for the creation of a special purpose vehicle for joint dredging as a step towards the development of three new port sites — Khambhat (Cambay), Mahuva and Sutrapada — for an estimated investment of \$256 million (Rs 1,150 crore). Of the three, Sutrapada in Junagarh district would be the biggest with an estimated project cost of \$156 million (Rs 700 crore) with rail and road connectivity and the nearest broad-gauge line is at Somnath, at about 17 km, and the National

Highway is about eight km. This site has been planned to handle container and dry bulk cargo as a direct berthing container berth with all infrastructure facilities such as suitable back-up area, machineries, break-water dredging and reclamation. It would have four berths, each 350 metres long, and the dredging harbour area would get depth of 13 metres. It would also have a backwater length of 1,400 metres on the west side and 600 metres on the east.

Kandla port SEZ

The Kandla Port Trust (KPT) has invited expression of interest (EOI) applications for creating offshore berthing, single-point mooring and shipbuilding yard facilities at Tuna Port and Kandla Port Trust special economic zone, on public-private partnership model. The commerce ministry notified the list of activities, related to social infrastructure, permitted to be set up inside SEZs. Offshore berthing facilities at Tuna will work on a PPP Model and will be built on a on build, operate and transfer (BOT) model to build berthing facilities for four vessels of upto 1.5 lakh DWT (dead weight tonnage) and 17.50 metre draught and in 'T' shaped. Another facility being envisaged at KPTSEZ is the setting up of single point mooring (SPM) and allied facilities based on the PPP Model on BOT basis which will cater to vessels upto 3 lakh DWT. The proposed facility has been planned at two places considering the size of vessels, one for handling VLCCs upto 3 lakh DWT and one for handling Suez Max tankers of 1.4 lakh-1.6 lakh DWT which are at the water depth of 28.9 metres and 22 metres respectively.

Wheat handling at Kakinada

Kakinada port authorities have allowed the deepwater port to handle wheat imports, much to the annoyance of workers in the old anchorage port and the steel barge owners. The barge owners are seeking recourse to the law by filing a writ petition against Food Corporation of India to divert wheat imports from the anchorage to the new port on the plea that it was bulk cargo approved by the Union Government. According to them wheat was a traditional cargo meant and reserved for the old port.

Container trains see more takers

The retail players are looking at operating the container trains as a logical integration of their business. The Mukesh Ambani-controlled Reliance Industries, Transport Corporation of India, overseas shipping companies like Mitsui OSK Lines, Hyundai Merchant Marine and NYK Lines, and Kishore Biyani's Future group have all expressed interest in setting up private container train operations in response to the railway ministry's invitation for proposals for the second round of licences to companies wanting to run container trains. The routes offered to the private sector in the second round include Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust to Delhi, and Mundra Port to Delhi.

India-Pakistan's revised shipping protocol

India and Pakistan have signed a revised shipping protocol, which replaces the protocol on resumption of shipping services signed by India and Pakistan in 1975, which restricted lifting of cargo destined to the other country by the vessels belonging to India or Pakistan only. Also, the vessels of India or Pakistan could not lift the cargo destined to or from other countries from each other's ports. The revised protocol removes restrictions on lifting of third country cargo by Indian and Pakistani vessels from each other's ports. It also lifted the restriction that the cargo destined for the other country could be carried only by an Indian or Pakistani vessel.

Concor exporting to Bangladesh by sea route

Concor has started exporting to Bangladesh by sea route by bringing a consignment of four 22-ft containers loaded with cotton yarn to Kolkata Dock System (KDS) by train from Phillaur for shipment to Bangladesh. At KDS, the consignments were unloaded from the 22-ft containers and reloaded into two 40-ft containers and the loaded boxes were put on a Chittagong-bound, vessel operated by Seaways Shipping. Cargo traffic permitting, it should be possible to handle three rakes of shipment a month.

Bad scheduling of fertiliser imports

Fertiliser imports in November have cost Indian Potash Ltd (IPL) and MMTC, close to Rs 150-160 crore in additional demurrage and transshipment costs to the shipping lines

for the large capacity (50,000 tonnes) Panamax vessels that carried the fertiliser to the Mundra port because of delays in releasing the vessels as wheat shipments enjoyed priority. Close to another Rs 60 crore is likely to be paid for transferring the 1.2 million tonnes of imported urea on to smaller Handymax vessels (capacity 30,000 tonnes) that would carry them to the Kandla, Vizag, Tuticorin, Vizag and Mangalore ports.

China-US logistics tie-up

China and the US propose to strengthen cooperation in the field of logistics for mutual benefit. The bilateral co-operation between China America has not kept up with the growth in trade between the two countries. In order to boost the logistics aspect, US will provide the know-how in management, training and technology and China will repay in terms of access to its vast and fast growing market.

Sites on East Coast spotted for new shipyard

Ports of Tuticorin, Ennore and Kakinada have been identified as suitable sites on the east coast to set up shipyards of international standards. Ennore Port Ltd (EPL) will be the nodal agency for making a preliminary preparation, including inviting expression of interest, for the project. The project would involve developing the shipyard consisting of two big docks, and preferably three (two for building and one for repair), quay side length of at least 2.5 km with 12 metre water depth with various support facilities. This is to build and repair ships up to size of very large crude carriers (VLCC), which have carrying capacity of 3 lakh tonnes. The selected firm is expected to design, finance, engineer, construct, operate, market and maintain the shipyard of adequate capacity to build and repair merchant ships of up to VLCC/ULCC and all other ships within this range. The firm may also be required to develop a green field project at a suitable location on East coast exclusively for the shipyard, the Eol says.

Juicy Bits

- Cochin Port will not allow the labourers who are not registered with the Kerala Headload Workers Welfare Board to work at the port area from January 1, 2007.

- AIG group is buying DP World's US port business beating Carlyle Group, Morgan Stanley and others to the race.
- Union minister for shipping TR Baalu inaugurated dredging operations in Adam's bridge area off the coast, as part of the Sethusamudram Ship Channel project (SSCP).
- Members of the Karnataka Dock and General Workers' Union and the New Mangalore Port Staff Association staged a demonstration in front of the administrative office of the NMPT on Thursday, demanding wage revision.
- The Board of Directors of Sical Logistics Limited decided to issue equity shares to qualified institutional bidders for \$50 million
- Increased rice exports has made it possible for the possibility for anchorage (old) port at Kakinada to exceed the three-million-tonne mark this year.
- The port connectivity road project, linking the Visakhapatnam port to the National Highway 5, has been completed and the link road will be open to traffic from December 15, according to Mr K. Srinivasulu, Project Director of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

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December 25, 2006

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IWAI has added three more to National Waterways

IWAI has declared three rivers as National Waterways and these cover 2,700 km. These are the Ganga, between Allahabad and Haldia, a distance of 1620 km (National Waterways (NW) I), the Brahmaputra, on the Sadiya-Dhubri stretch of 891 km (NW II) and the the Kollam - Kottapuram stretch of West Coast Canal along with the Champakara and Udyogmandal Canals covering 205 km (NW III). Three more National Waterways are being surveyed and these would cover 1,800 km. These are stretches of the Godavari and Krishna rivers along with Kakinada-Pondicherry canals, the Bay of Bengal-linked East coast Canal along with Brahmani river and Mahanadi delta in West Bengal and Orissa, and the Barak river in Assam, requiring an estimated investment of Rs 2,110 crore.

Sea freight rates likely to drop

Ocean freights in all key routes such as India-Europe, India-US East Coast and India-Far East are likely to drop by about 10-15% on account of oversupply of container shipping services. The freight rates on the India-US East Coast sector has dropped from \$1,800 per TEU six months ago to \$1,350. The rates on the India-Europe routes have also dropped from \$750 per TEU six months ago to \$550. Emirates Shipping Lines, apart from its recently launched services, is also planning to start new services to Europe from India. Indian PSU firm Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) is also exploring options to start additional services to China. United Arab Shipping Company (UASC) has started a new service, called SINA, linking South East Asia and the US East Coast. Japanese company Mitsui OSK Lines (MOL) has also launched a container shuttle service between India and Singapore.

Nashik ICD

The inland container depot (ICD) at Nashik, being jointly set up by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and Container Corporation of India (Concor), will become operational by the second week of January 2007. The depot is coming up on 17.5 acres land owned by HAL near Mohadi village, six km from NH3, at a total project cost of estimated Rs 11.5 crore. The ICD will provide sea and air cargo facilities. Initially,

Concor will provide 50 to 100 TEU containers and the number of containers will be increased as per the demand. The loading capacity of a TEU container will be around 28 tonnes. The capacity of ICD will be 500 TEU containers at a time. The ICD includes two separate warehouses - air cargo warehouse with 16,000 sft area and sea cargo warehouse with 24,000 sft area. Besides, a cold storage with 6,000 sft area will be set up for perishable goods at an investment of Rs 4 crore, the capacity of which will be 400 tonnes.

Cargo Hub at Nagpur

Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC) and Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed an MoU for promoting the International Cargo and Passenger Hub Airport at Nagpur, which envisaged development of a Multi-model International Hub Airport (MIHAN), the first of its kind between Southeast Asia and Europe. According to the MoU, the Nagpur airport will be handed over to a new joint venture company in which MADC and AAI will have 51 and 49 per cent equity respectively.

Direct container service between Kochi, US East Coast

IDX Service would be starting a weekly container service from Kochi to the US East Coast. The port rotation would be Colombo-Tuticorin-Kochi-Nava Sheva-Mundra-Barcelona-New York-Norfolk and Charleston. The service with eight vessels of about 2,800 TEU capacity would be operated by the consortium consisting of Zim Line, SCI, Emirates Shipping, OOCL and Italia Marittima (Evergreen). Exporters from the hinterland such as Coimbatore, Tirupur, Karur, Salem and Bangalore who normally would have to truck their cargo to Tuticorin to connect this service, are likely to have the benefit of connecting the same vessel from Kochi, giving them the advantage of an extra day to connect the vessel at Kochi.

CMA CGM to launch new service between Europe, India, Pakistan

CMA CGM has announced its new EPIC II (Europe Pakistan India Consortium II) service between Europe, India and Pakistan to supplement its existing EPIC (Europe Pakistan India Consortium) service to meet the growing demand for containerised

services in the region. The new service, to be operated with the help of six vessels of 2475-TEU capacity each, is to provide wider coverage of Northern Europe by adding ports of Le Havre and Rotterdam on the route. It will provide a direct link between Northern Europe and Alexandria, shorten transit times between India and Benelux countries, Malta and the UK and thus operate the only direct service from Le Havre to India and Pakistan. The port rotation will be: Felixstowe-Rotterdam-Hamburg-Le Havre-Alexandria-Port Qasim-Mundra and Nhava Sheva International Container Terminal.

Investment boost to port sector

The port sector will witness an investment of Rs 1 lakh crore in the next 20 years, according to Union shipping minister TR Baalu. He said a major decision taken at the eighth meeting of the maritime states development council was to look at setting aside Rs 10 crore for training youth, from the fishermen communities to man vessels. Regarding investments in port sector, he said that by 2011 around Rs 60,000 crore would come into minor and major ports and by 2025 another Rs 40,000 crore would be invested. He added that there would be private-public participation with the former chipping in around 60% and the rest coming from government funds. From the present port capacity of 1,300 million tonne, it would be raised to 2000 tonne by 2016.

Orissa Government signs pact with Chennai co for all-weather port

The Orissa Government on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding with Creative Port Development Private Ltd, Chennai, to develop a deep-water all-weather port at Kirtania near Subarnarekha river mouth in Balasore district of Orissa on build, own, operate, share and transfer basis (BOOT). The revenue share to the Government will be at five per cent from first to fifth year; eight per cent from sixth to tenth year; 10 per cent from 11th to 15th year and 12 per cent for the remaining period of 15 years. The first phase of the port (to be commissioned by 2010), with a capacity to handle 10 million tonne per annum, will be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 2,000 crore. The port will increase its capacity to 50 MTPA by the 10th year.

Juicy Bits

- The Model Concession Agreement for private operators of container trains is ready.
- A Vadodara-based educational trust is showing interest in establishing an 'International Maritime Residential Academy' at an investment of Rs 10 crore.
- Essar Shipping will invest Rs 1,800 crore in acquiring 14 offshore and onshore oil drilling rigs.
- The mega tender for 30 offshore support vessels (OSVs) by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) will witness face-to-face competition from Great Eastern Shipping Company's (GE Shipping) subsidiary and its de-merged offshore entity Great Offshore (GOL).
- The Haldia dock authorities are to appeal to the coal linkage committee for a higher monthly linkage of 3.5 lakh tonnes of thermal coal for coastal shipments during the coming quarter (January - March 2007).
- A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court has directed the concerned authorities to examine the viability of the rail alignment connecting the proposed container transshipment terminal project at Vallarpadam before starting the work.
- Great Eastern Shipping Co Ltd has lined up a capital expenditure programme of \$500 million for the acquisition of the newly built nine product tankers, apart from offshore assets, such as rigs, for its offshore subsidiary
- The Baltic Exchange, the world's independent source of maritime market information for trading and settlement of physical and derivative, has opened an Asia-Pacific representative office in Singapore to focus on the development of Baltic freight market

information for the benefit of the growing number of Exchange members in the region.

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January 02, 2007

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Gateway Distriparks to operate Punjab Conware

Gateway Distriparks (GDL) will operate and manage Punjab Conware, Punjab Government's Container Freight Station (CFS) near Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) for the next 15 years. Besides a large container yard, the CFS also has covered storage area of 52,500 sq. meters, consisting of 4 warehouses. GDL will be required to pay one-time upfront fee of Rs 35 crore and an annual fee, which will be Rs 10 crore in the first year.

Garware Offshore plans global foray

Garware Offshore Services is planning to foray into international markets by tying up with a Norwegian company, Havilla Shipping, which has a huge fleet of offshore support vessels (OSVs) for a possible cross marketing arrangement. Garware Offshore, which has a fleet of six vessels (including 2 PSVs), is planning to acquire 10 more offshore support vessels. Garware Offshore is also planning to set up a offshore vessel design centre in India, in association with Norwegian shipyard Havyard Leirvik AS, a subsidiary of Havilla Shipping.

Shippers want integrated multi-modal ministry

The Bombay Chamber has mooted a single ministry to be called the 'Union ministry of intermodal cargo transport & logistics'. The former Chairman of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), Ravi Bushan Budhiraja, once attempted to set up a committee of various agencies involved in operations of the port as the operations at JNPT, which handles over 58 per cent container traffic of the country, was affected by six central government ministries and one state level organisation. The port is managed by Ministry of Shipping while container rail operations are under Ministry of Railways. The container freight stations at port are licensed by Ministry of Commerce, but operations approved by Ministry of Finance. State-run roads are managed by City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) and national highways by Surface Transport Ministry.

Aban Offshore to make open offer for Sinvest

Aban Offshore Ltd had through its subsidiary in Singapore, Aban Singapore Pte Ltd,

acquired a 40 per cent stake in Sinvest, a company engaged in providing drilling services to oil companies. The company has decided to make the mandatory open offer to the other shareholders of Sinvest. Aban Singapore Pte will raise \$150 million through an issue of convertible notes, convertible into 10.37 per cent of the company's equity. UTI Bank has agreed to provide \$100 million.

Kerala shipping board reconstituted

The Kerala Government has reconstituted the board of directors of Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation Ltd with the appointment of Rear Admiral B.R. Menon, former Chairman and Managing Director of Goa Shipyard and TELK, as the Chairman of the Corporation. Mr K.N. Satheesh will be the Managing Director. The other members are Mr Jiji Thomson, Principal Secretary (Transport), Ms P. Kumari Geetha, Under Secretary (Finance), and Capt. Paul M. Joseph, nominee of the Cochin Port Trust. The nominations from the State port and water transport department are yet to be made. Mr Menon will also advise the State Government on speedy development of inland waterways and modernisation of all minor ports in the State.

Diesel-powered outboard motors go on trial

For many years, fishermen in Kerala have used traditional boats powered by outboard motors (OBMs) that use kerosene as fuel. However, operating and maintaining kerosene-powered OBMs is an expensive process that most often imposes a severe financial burden on fishermen. Kerala State Cooperative Federation for Fisheries Development (Matsyafed) is working on a project to use diesel-powered OBMs on traditional fishing craft. Compared to OBMs that run on kerosene, the diesel-powered ones are energy efficient, less polluting and offer significant cost savings to fishermen. Diesel-powered OBMs also enjoy a longer life, are easier to repair and offer overall cost savings of almost 50 per cent compared to motors that use kerosene.

Kolkata's Majherhat ICD

The Container Corporation of India (Concor) is worried that the volume of domestic traffic moving between the Majherhat ICD (inland container depot) in Kolkata and various

North Indian ICDs this fiscal is likely to be less than that in 2005-06, largely due to the uncertainty over the availability of jute goods for movement on the route. Every year Concor transports large volumes of gunny bags on the route, picking up the bags from the jute mills, transporting them by road to the Majherhat ICD, carrying them in container trains to the North Indian ICDs and again delivering them at the designated warehouses. This year the gunny bags are being transported to the west coast ports.

Norms tightened for maritime institutes

The Government has ordered maritime training institutes to tie up with shipping companies for on-board training, ahead of launching maritime courses. Also, the institutes have been barred from levying fresh fees or a premium for offering sea-time training. In a recent circular, the Director-General of Shipping has set a June 2007 deadline for the institutes to finalise the tie-ups, failing which their licences will be scrapped. Currently most of the training is on-shore, while the Government order insists on mandatory off-shore or sea training.

Two new ICDs in Madhya Pradesh

ECU Line, the Indian subsidiary of ECU-Hold NV of Belgium, and Allcargo Global Logistics have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for setting up two inland container depots at Pithampur in Indore and Mandideep near Bhopal, both in Madhya Pradesh. The proposed ICDs, when commissioned, are expected to boost local industries engaged in exports and imports.

Shipping firms beefing up offshore biz

In a bid to tap the growing exploration and production (E&P) market in India, shipping companies, including Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), Varun Shipping, Great Offshore and Garware Offshore, have started to beef up their offshore business, by buying more offshore service vehicles (OSVs) and platform supply vessels (PSVs), and in some cases, even oil rigs. At present, companies like Aban, GOL, Jagson International, Noble, ENSCO, Sapiem, Pride Foramer, Transocean and Dolphin AS provide offshore jack-up and drill ships in the

oil blocks for Indian companies. ONGC too operates its own rigs for oil drilling.

Juicy Bits

- Gammon India-led consortium has emerged as leading bidder for the Rs 1,200 crore offshore container terminal at the Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT). Gammon India quoted a revenue sharing ratio of 35.064 per cent. Gammon India has tied up with Italian company Dragados SPL and Gammon Infrastructure Project.
- Varun Shipping will be the first Indian company for acquiring a very large gas carrier (VLGC) with a capacity of approximately 76,644 cbm.

Please send comments and suggestions to

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