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China Arctic service container ship returns to Asia via Suez

Chinese carrier Sea Legend announced eight weekly sailings between China and Europe via the Russian Arctic starting from August

The *Dubai Tower* the first container ship on Sea Legend's weekly Arctic service between [China](#) and Europe is returning to Asia via the [Suez](#) Canal rather than the Northern Sea Route (NSR). The first of eight weekly voyages between China and Europe scheduled by Chinese carrier Sea Legend the transits between Ningbo – Zhoushan and the UK created considerable media and market interest.

The ability to utilise the NSR via the Russian Arctic during the summer ice season offers considerable potential savings in terms of transit times, in particular over a Cape of Good Hope routing which has been the norm over much of the last three years. It also offered an alternative to security concerns in the Red Sea due to conflict in the region, however, this is exactly the route that the *Dubai Tower* now appears to be taking on its return leg.

Rather than returning from calls at UK and North European ports via the Arctic route which it took to sail to Europe the *Dubai Tower* sailed to the Mediterranean and at the time of writing is currently transiting the Suez Canal according to ship tracking services. The Liberian-registered 1,740 teu *Dubai Tower* midway through a southbound transit of the Suez Canal in the early hours of 5 October according to data from Pole Star Global.

The *Dubai Tower* departed Ningbo on 15 August and was scheduled to arrive in [Felixstowe](#), UK on 5 September following a transit via the Northern Sea Route. However, the vessel arrived in UK later than scheduled and its first port of call was 9 September at a multipurpose terminal in Teesport in the North of England. It then headed to Felixstowe before calling ports in North Europe and the Baltic, and then onwards to the Med rather than returning to Asia via the Arctic. (**Source: Sea Trade Maritime News**)



Indian Shipping Industry



Great Eastern Shipping Acquires 157,000 DWT Suezmax Newbuild



Indian shipowner Great Eastern Shipping recently announced the acquisition of a newbuild 157,000 DWT Suezmax tanker. The vessel is being built by a shipyard in the Far East and is scheduled for delivery between October 2028 and March 2029.

Great Eastern Shipping has not disclosed the purchase price, propulsion system specifications, or the name of the shipyard, stating only that the acquisition is being funded through internal resources. This transaction marks the company's first acquisition of a newbuild vessel under its current fleet renewal program, which had previously relied on the purchase of secondhand vessels. According to shipbroking reports, the vessel was originally ordered by Zodiac Maritime—controlled by Israeli shipping magnate Eyal Ofer—from Samsung Heavy Industries' shipyard in Vietnam. That initial order was for a 157,000 DWT Suezmax tanker priced at approximately \$85 million, with a planned delivery date in 2029.

Great Eastern Shipping currently operates a fleet of 40 vessels with a total deadweight tonnage of approximately 3.24 million tonnes, comprising 21 tankers, 15 bulk carriers, and 4 LPG carriers. In addition to this latest newbuild resale contract, the company also has two Kamsarmax bulk carriers on order, scheduled for delivery in the fourth quarter of 2026 (Source: I Marine-China)



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Persian Gulf War Shifts Ship-to-Ship Oil Transfers to Western Coast of India



The growing congestion of oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz and the exhausted capacity for ship-to-ship (STS) transfers off Oman and the UAE have forced energy companies to move Gulf crude transshipments to waters off India's western coast. According to a Bloomberg report citing ship-tracking data and insights from analytics firm Vortexa, the Gulf of Kutch in India's Gujarat state has emerged as a primary alternative hub for transferring Persian Gulf oil cargoes.

Two Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) recently transferred their loads to two larger vessels in the region, which are now en route to East Asia. At least two additional tankers are currently undergoing similar operations.

Bloomberg noted that this marks the first time since the outbreak of the war involving Iran that Gulf crude bound for East Asian markets has been transferred between vessels in waters adjacent to India.

Vortexa further reported that the volume of tankers conducting STS transfers off Oman and the UAE after exiting the Strait of Hormuz has surged to such an extent that regional capacity is nearly fully saturated.

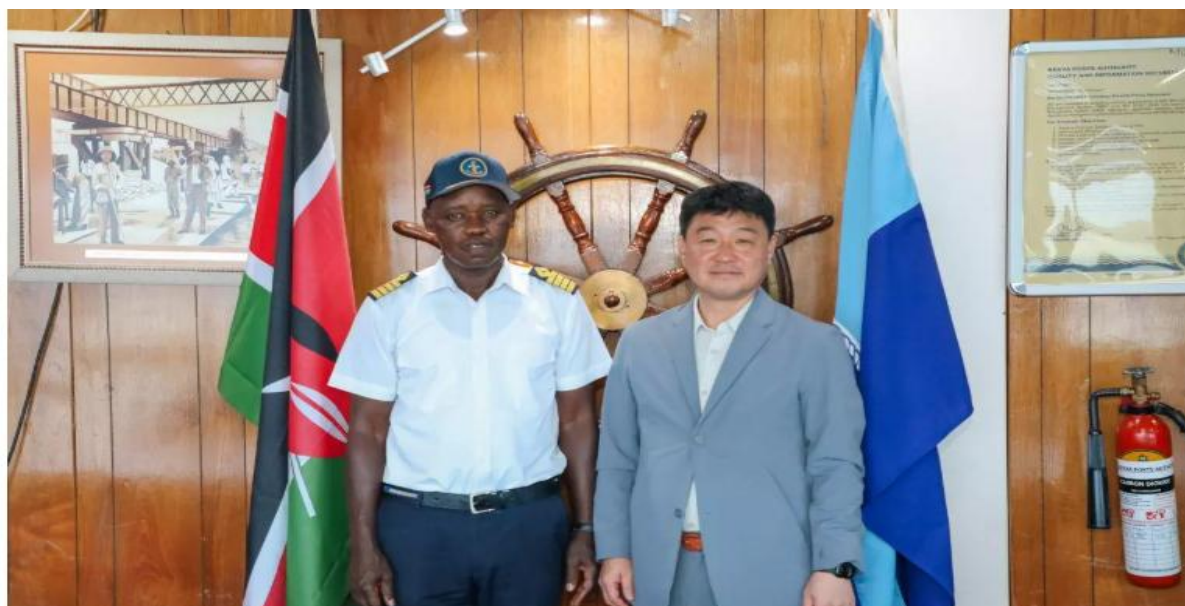
Fully transferring the cargo of one VLCC to another now takes between five and six days. This bottleneck has become a primary driver of export delays for Gulf producers, forcing maritime and energy firms to execute operations at a greater distance from the Hormuz chokepoint.

Conducting transshipments near the Indian coast not only relieves chokepoint congestion but also mitigates the risk of tankers being caught in sporadic military engagements surrounding the Strait of Hormuz.

IranWire previously reported that daily STS transfers in the Gulf of Oman rose from 1.4 million barrels per day (bpd) in August to approximately 2.5 million bpd in September, representing nearly 40% of all oil passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

The accumulation of vessels, lengthened transit routes, and extended transfer timelines have driven maritime freight costs to record levels. The daily charter rate for a VLCC navigating Hormuz, typically between \$30,000 and \$50,000 prior to the war, surpassed \$1 million in September. This surge has elevated transport costs to roughly \$26 to \$30 per barrel of crude. **(Source: Iranwire)**

JNPA-Mombosa HMM new service to strengthen India–Kenya trade link



A new maritime service between Nhava Sheva and Mombasa is set to enhance India–East Africa connectivity, offering weekly sailings with an initial capacity of 2,500 TEUs.

South Korean shipping line Hyundai Merchant Marine (HMM) is set to enter the Kenyan market with the launch of a new service connecting the Port of Mombasa with India's Nhava Sheva port.

The service is scheduled to commence next month with a weekly vessel offering an initial capacity of 2,500 TEUs. The operation will be run as a consortium with six slot partners: HMM, Pacific International Lines (PIL), China COSCO Shipping Corporation (COSCO), Ocean Network Express (ONE), Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL) and Inchcape Shipping. HMM's entry comes as the Port of Mombasa continues to strengthen its role as a key maritime gateway for Kenya and the wider East African region.

The Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) has been investing in the expansion and modernisation of port infrastructure to support growing regional and international trade

KPA Managing Director William Ruto welcomed the new service, noting that HMM's entry further reinforces Mombasa's growing profile as a regional maritime hub. Jang Wonjun, Senior Vice President and Head of the Container Logistics Management Office at HMM's headquarters in Korea, said the company's decision to enter the Kenyan market was driven by the strategic position of the Port of Mombasa as a gateway and hub for the wider region.

HMM also expressed its appreciation to the Kenya Ports Authority and said it looked forward to a successful maiden voyage and the development of future services through Mombasa.

HMM is a global integrated logistics company delivering comprehensive services through a fleet of more than 100 vessels, an extensive network connecting markets worldwide, and a team of experienced professionals. As a trusted partner, we remain committed to strengthening our global presence and advancing our position as a leading shipping

(Source: Indian Transport & Logistics News)

Berg Propulsion opens dedicated Mumbai office to support shipbuilding



Berg Propulsion is to open its own office in Mumbai, to further support its growing participation in shipbuilding projects across India. Scheduled to open on 1st January 2027, the new office will offer a central point of contact for Berg's activities in India as it builds on its relationships with leading yards, such as Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and Chowgule Shipyard.

The new office will be led by Amrita Singh, who will take up the post of General Manager. "Our focus will be on identifying and supporting projects where Berg solutions add value, enhance efficiency and reduce emissions," she comments. "Working closely with customers and our yard partners, we look forward to matching our systems, service and support with the opportunities available in this growing market."

Berg is in particular looking to expand its business footprint in India across the tug, dredger and offshore support vessel newbuilding segments. The plan is also to create a network of trained service agents in Mumbai, Kochi and Visakhapatnam, where most of its customers' vessels operate. According to Singh, "We will recruit skilled local talent and put training programmes in place, building long-term expertise to better serve customers throughout India."

Scope also exists for the new Mumbai office to support customers in other South Asian countries, such as Sri Lanka, she adds.

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Assam river port comes alive after 70 years as methanol-laden barge sails for Dhaka



GUWAHATI: A barge carrying 540 metric tons of methanol left the Bogibeel terminal in Dibrugarh for Dhaka in Bangladesh on Monday, marking the first such international voyage from this upper Assam town since 1956.

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal flagged off the vessel DLB Patkai. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma joined the ceremony virtually.

The methanol, produced by state-owned Assam Petro-Chemicals Ltd. at Namrup, is bound for Pangaon Port in Dhaka. The vessel will travel about 768 km down National Waterway-2 on the Brahmaputra River in India to the India-Bangladesh border and then, continue along the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route, covering a total distance of 1,300 km.

The voyage is being observed as a test of whether the Brahmaputra can serve as a commercially viable freight corridor linking the Northeast to overseas markets. The shipment became possible after customs and immigration complexes were set up at Bogibeel and Dhubri recently.

"Our grandparents grew up hearing the steamer whistle at Dibrugarh Ghat. For 70 years, that whistle fell silent and the ships stopped coming. Today, a ship leaves Dibrugarh for the world again. The river never failed us. What it lacked for decades was the will to revive it," Sonowal said.

He asked the youth of Assam to dream with this river. He said under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dibrugarh, the Tea Capital of India, was reclaiming its past glory as a great river port. "We are building it with world-class infrastructure while honouring its heritage," he further said.

Sarma called it a proud day for Assam. "Assam's own product is now traveling to an international market on Assam's own river. The Northeast is no longer a frontier. It is India's gateway to the East," the Chief Minister said.

Odisha Clears ₹21,500 Crore Bahuda Satellite Port Project



Odisha has given in-principle approval for the development of the Bahuda Satellite Major Port in Ganjam, a greenfield deep-sea port proposed at an estimated investment of ₹21,500 crore.

The [Paradip Port Authority \(PPA\)](#) initiated onsite work for the ₹21,500 crore [Bahuda Satellite Port](#) in Ganjam, Odisha, in March 2026. As a major greenfield project, it is designed to handle large cargo vessels to reduce congestion at existing ports and boost regional industrial growth and global trade.

Key Aspects of the Bahuda Satellite Port Project:

- **Location:** The port is being developed at Chikiti in Ganjam, Odisha.
- **Capacity & Design:** The port is designed to handle 150 million tonnes annually, catering to large dry bulk carriers (40,000 to 150,000 DWT) and container ships up to 6,000 TEUs.
- **Objective:** To enhance [PPA's cargo-handling capacity](#) and act as a supporting, specialized hub to ease pressure on the main Paradip Port.
- **Development Progress:** The project kicked off with site inspection by PPA officials in March 2026, following the MOU signed in September 2025. The next steps involve technical studies and statutory clearances.
- **Economic Impact:** The project is part of a larger [₹46,200 crore investment in maritime infrastructure in Odisha](#), aiming to transform the region into a major maritime hub.
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Direct box service from Chennai to Vietnam, Malaysia, and China



The inauguration of HAIAN CVI could boost containerised trade and improve Chennai Port's access to important Asian trade markets. | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

The first call of the service began onboard the vessel, *M.V. Haian Beta*, and the route was Chennai-Port Klang West-Haiphong-Nansha, according to a press release.

With this new service, one more regular maritime connectivity has commenced between Chennai and Vietnam

In a boost to containerised trade and Chennai Port's access to important Asian trade markets, HAIAN CVI, a new monthly container service, has begun from Chennai to Haiphong (Vietnam), Port Klang West (Malaysia), and Nansha (China).

The first call of the service began onboard the vessel, *M.V. Haian Beta*, and the route was Chennai-Port Klang West-Haiphong-Nansha, according to a press release.(Hindu)



India's Foreign Trade

India became dangerously addicted to Chinese imports



Take a walk into an Indian toy shop and as well as picking up a new favourite plaything for a child, you might just get an insight into how the nation is battling for a better economic relationship with its all-powerful neighbour China.

Six years ago, in an attempt to push local manufacturing and keep substandard toys out of its market, India raised tariffs on imported toys from 20% to 60% and eventually to 70%. Retailers were up in arms and said that domestic firms could never match the foreign-made stuff. But the combination of higher customs duties and quality control standards worked.

Indian imports of toys fell by a third from nearly \$300m (£227m) in 2020 to \$100m this year, while exports rose from around \$129m to \$200m in the same period. Moreover, the country was able to drastically reduce its dependence on China, which held a 70% share of the local toy market.

The sector stands out as a rare exception in India's otherwise unsuccessful attempts to rebalance an increasingly lopsided trading relationship with its larger neighbour, which some experts say, is now among the most asymmetric in the world.

Even as diplomatic ties between the two countries completely broke down following the Galwan Valley [clashes](#) in 2020 and Delhi announced a slew of anti-dumping duties and a ban on Chinese apps such as Tik Tok, its trade deficit with Beijing has only ballooned - from \$44bn in 2020 to an eye-popping \$112bn this year.

"India's economic dependence on China continued to deepen while political, security, and investment ties were at their lowest point," Kevin Zongzhe Li, a Washington-based Fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute's Centre for China Analysis, told the BBC. More worryingly, exports to China remained below pre-pandemic level even as imports doubled in this period.

"China now supplies over 30% of India's industrial imports, and India depends on it for more than 100 critical products. And the imbalance is worsening," says Ajay Srivastava of the Delhi-based Global Trade and Research Initiative (GTRI).

If the rapid pace of imports continues, bilateral deficit could jump to \$134bn, giving Beijing even more leverage over Indian industry, according to Srivastava.

On the sidelines of the Brics summit in Delhi in September, amid a deepening thaw between the Asian giants, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping vowed to [address](#) these "structural trade imbalances and supply chain issues".

But given how deeply entrenched Chinese imports have become to India's industrial economy, this will be a formidable task for Delhi, experts told the BBC. That's primarily because India depends on China to not merely consume end-products, but increasingly to produce industrial goods.

To be true, India has reduced its reliance on imports of finished goods such as smartphones and solar equipment, and now produces more than a quarter of the world's iPhones."Yet, production remains largely assembly-based and depends heavily on imported components, particularly from China," says Srivastava. It's the same story with industrial machinery, battery inputs, chemicals, solar cells, and manufacturing equipment.

Electrical machinery and electronics alone account for 36% of imports, followed by machinery and mechanical appliances at 21.7%, while organic chemicals and plastics also have a significant share, according to the Observer Research Foundation think tank. "Their interruption would not merely affect consumption; it would disrupt production itself," according to Soumya Bhowmik, a Fellow at ORF's Centre for New Economic Diplomacy, who argues that this reflects India's difficulty in substituting Chinese inputs with local production.



Besides a growing reliance on inputs and raw material, Chinese imports to India are also being propelled by other macroeconomic trends. China has huge excess capacity in sectors from steel to solar panels and electric vehicles, while its slowing economy cannot absorb the output.

Manufacturers are therefore increasingly turning to overseas markets, selling goods cheaply. China's trade surplus is expected to top \$1tn for a second straight year.

A lot of these goods are coming to Indian shores because it is rapidly expanding manufacturing across segments of the economy, but also as "Western markets impose tariffs and other restrictions", says Srivastava. (Source: AOL)

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