

27th Nov 25

Mumbai-India

Global Maritime Trade & Transport

Japan's big three lines back homegrown ship design push



Japan's three major shipping lines — Nippon Yusen Kaisha, Mitsui OSK Lines, and Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha — are joining forces with the country's top shipyards in a push to reinvigorate domestic shipbuilding. According to Nikkei Asia, the trio will invest in MILES, a Tokyo-based design company jointly owned by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (51%) and Imabari Shipbuilding (49%).

The move aims to standardise bulk carriers and revive domestic LNG carrier construction, which has largely moved overseas. Observers note parallels with China's SDARI system, where centralised, government-backed ship design accelerates standardisation and efficiency.

The investment dovetails with a wider government-led plan to modernise Japanese shipyards. Among many stimulus measures announced last week, the new government led by Sanae Takaichi is calling for a 10-year, roughly Y1trn (\$6.4bn) public-private fund to build capacity, with a goal of doubling shipbuilding volume by 2035 compared with 2024.

For decades, Japan led global shipbuilding, peaking at 50% of output in the 1990s. Today, its share has slid to roughly 10%, dwarfed by China (70%) and South Korea.

COSCO Shipping launched 3 services linking Asia, the Middle East and Europe.



A bi-weekly Southeast Asia Heavy Lift liner service will call at key ports including Laem Chabang and Singapore, targeting wind power equipment, construction machinery and other oversized cargo.

Its Persian Gulf liner service will provide at least two fixed sailings per month under a one-port loading, one-port unloading model. It will connect China with Dammam and Jebel Ali in roughly 20 days. The service is aimed at new energy and industrial project shipments.

The Northwest Europe liner service opens a two-way corridor between the Far East and ports such as Antwerp and Rotterdam. Transit times, according to **COSCO Shipping**, will be around 35 days. Southbound voyages will move steel and new energy vehicles, while northbound legs focus on bulk commodities including pulp and grain.



Asian Maritime Industry

Asia leads the way in new survey for top container ports



A new report has introduced the top container port ranking worldwide. The top five rankings across all categories are heavily dominated by ports in Asia.

Singapore is named the world's leading container port in the first edition of the *Leading Container Ports of the World (LCP)* report, an independent global analysis published by class society DNV and Menon Economics.

Shanghai and Ningbo-Zhoushan follow in second and third place, with Rotterdam and Busan completing the global top five.

The report compares leading practices of 160 ports against 35 indicators grouped into five pillars: enablers, connectivity and customer value, productivity, sustainability, and overall impact.

According to DNV, these indicators are based on objective data, such as throughput volumes, berth productivity, emissions per Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU), and alternative fuel availability, and are complemented by expert assessments from shipping stakeholders.

Singapore achieved the highest overall score, leading in all five pillars of the ranking, followed by Shanghai (China). These two were followed by Ningbo-Zhoushan (China) in third, Busan (South Korea) in fourth, and Rotterdam (Europe) in fifth place.

In addition to the global ranking, the LCP report features regional rankings, with New York & New Jersey, Hamburg, Tanger Med, Jebel Ali and Sydney recognized as leaders in their respective regions.

"Container ports quietly underpin much of the global economy," commented Knut Ørbeck-Nilssen, chief executive officer maritime at DNV. "Every year, they move more than 930 million TEUs, supporting the flow of goods that keep businesses running and communities supplied. As global trade patterns shift and the industry faces new pressures, ports that are able to adapt, communicate clear strategies, and invest in future-proofing their operations will continue to lead and set the pace for the sector's evolution."

(Source: [Shipping Telegraph](#))

Hai Phong Port welcomes new service -Gulf of Tonkin shipping line: connecting Guangxi - Hai Phong – America



The ceremony was attended by nearly 80 delegates from the two countries. On the Vietnamese side, there were Mr. Hoang Minh Cuong, Vice Chairman of Hai Phong City People's Committee; Mr. Do Nam Trung, Director of Northeast Asia Department (Ministry of Foreign Affairs); Ms. Nguyen Thi Hong, Consul General of Vietnam in Nanning, and representatives of departments, branches and sectors of Hai Phong City.

On the Chinese side, there were Mr. Wei Thao, Chairman of the People's Government of Guangxi Autonomous Region; Mr. Zhong Dezhi, Secretary of the Guangxi Autonomous Region; Mr. He Wei, Chinese Ambassador to Vietnam, and representatives of leaders of departments, branches and sectors of Guangxi Autonomous Region.

Representing the enterprise were Mr. Le Quang Trung, Deputy General Director of Vietnam National Shipping Lines; Mr. Nguyen Tuong Anh, General Director of [Hai Phong](#) Port Joint Stock Company; Mr. Ma Chinh Quoc, Vice Chairman and General Director of Bac Bo Gulf Port Group and Mr. Mac No, General Director of Beibu Port Company.

The event not only marked a new development step in Vietnam-China trade and maritime transport cooperation, but also demonstrated the long-term commitment between Guangxi province and Hai Phong city.

This is also a new milestone of cooperation between the Gulf of Tonkin Port Group – [VIMC](#) – Hai Phong Port in developing strategic maritime service routes, a step forward in logistics and maritime transport cooperation between Guangxi – Beibu – VIMC – Hai Phong Port.

After the inaugural route in early 2025, this is the second service route of the Gulf of Tonkin Port Group connecting to Hai Phong Port. The route has the route Guangxi - Hai Phong - America, in which: Gulf of Tonkin Port is in charge of collecting fireworks exported from Guangxi, Hai Phong Port is the transit point and gateway connecting long-distance routes to Europe and America.

According to the plan, after the first test train, the parties will evaluate the operational efficiency and market demand, thereby promoting the official opening of a regular route.

Chinese cruise ship to Japan diverts to South Korea amid spat,




Chinese cruise operators are looking to avoid Japanese ports amid rising tensions, which is expected to spur tourism demand for South Korea

Chinese cruise operators are scrambling to avoid Japanese ports as Beijing and Tokyo engage in a diplomatic dispute, which is expected to spur demand for tourism in South Korea, according to sources and cruise schedules.

Tour and port agents said tensions, sparked by [recent remarks from Japan's new prime minister](#), Sanae Takaichi, could cause Chinese tourists to be redirected to South Korea from Japan. Earlier this month, Takaichi told Japanese lawmakers that a Chinese attack on Taiwan threatening Japan's survival could trigger a military response.

Adora Magic City, a Chinese cruise ship that travels to South Korea's touristy Jeju Island as well as Japan, has changed its schedule for December to avoid stopping at the Japanese ports of Fukuoka, Sasebo and Nagasaki as planned, according to a notice posted on the government website of South Korea's Jeju province.

The cruise ship will instead spend 31 to 57 hours in Jeju, longer than its usual schedule of nine hours, the notice said. An official from Jeju province said the cruise operator requested a change in schedule without providing a reason. **(Source: South China Morning Post)**

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Yang Ming announces new North China–Indonesia service



The CIM service will be jointly operated by Yang Ming, Evergreen Marine Corporation, and Wan Hai Lines Ltd. A total of five vessels, each with capacities ranging from 2,400 to 3,000 TEU, will be deployed on the route.

Yang Ming Marine Transport Corporation has announced the launch of a new North China–Indonesia–Malaysia service (CIM), further strengthening its presence in the fast-growing intra-Asia shipping market. The new service, scheduled to begin on October 31, 2025, is designed to meet the rising trade demand between China and Southeast Asia, particularly the rapidly expanding Indonesian market.

The CIM service will be jointly operated by Yang Ming, Evergreen Marine Corporation, and Wan Hai Lines Ltd. A total of five vessels, each with capacities ranging from 2,400 to 3,000 TEU, will be deployed on the route. The service will run on a weekly schedule with a 35-day round-trip rotation.

CIM Port Rotation: **Dalian – Xingang – Qingdao – Ningbo – Surabaya – Jakarta – Singapore – Port Klang – Kaohsiung – Dalian.**

The introduction of the CIM service will complement Yang Ming's existing CTI route, which connects Central China to Indonesia. With the addition of direct links from North China, the carrier will significantly enhance its China–Indonesia network, offering broader service coverage and improved transit options for regional customers.

Yang Ming stated that the expanded service portfolio is aimed at providing shippers with more flexible, reliable, and comprehensive logistics solutions in response to accelerating trade flows across Asia. **(Source: Maritime Gateway)**



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MSC's MEDLOG secures key inland terminal in Bangladesh



MEDLOG, the global logistics operator within the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) Group, has signed a major concession agreement to operate the Pangaon Inland Container Terminal (PICT).

The project is set to strengthen **inland supply chain connectivity**, **ease cargo flows**, and support both local communities and Bangladesh's wider industrial development.

Soren Toft, MSC CEO, said: "As a world leader in container shipping, serving over **500 ports** and investing in more than **100 terminals** globally as well as operating a significant number of inland terminals through MEDLOG, the MSC Group brings with it a unique understanding of how **cargo ecosystems** evolve and thrive.

"Our investment in the Pangaon Inland Container Terminal reflects our belief that Bangladesh has the potential to become one of South Asia's major gateways for regional and global trade."

The PICT, located near Dhaka on the Buriganga River and close to the Dhaka–Mawa–Bhanga Expressway, occupies a strategic position.

Its development will help shift cargo flows from congested road networks to **lower-emission inland waterways**, improving **trade resilience** and transport efficiency.

Under the new concession, MEDLOG will assume responsibility for operations, supply and automation at PICT, deploying global expertise and advanced technology to optimise inland logistics.

MEDLOG will also expand terminal capacity to support increasing **trade demand**, targeting an annual throughput of **160,000 TEU**.

To reinforce multimodal connectivity, the company will charter inland barges linking Pangaon with other river terminals and seaports.

Salvatore Prudente, Executive Director of MEDLOG, stated: "At MEDLOG, we firmly believe that inland container traffic plays a pivotal role in building efficient, sustainable supply chains.

"By investing in dedicated river terminals, barge links and multimodal infrastructure, we are committed to shifting cargo from congested roads to waterways, reducing carbon emissions, easing urban congestion and supporting our customers' growth. Our aim is clear: deliver reliable inland connectivity that benefits trade, the environment and local communities."

(Source: Port Technology)

Asian Logistics Sector

Vietnam eyes top Asia logistics hub with digital, green transformation



Vietnam has the potential to become a top logistics hub in Asia, driven by digital transformation, green development, and strategic partnerships, experts say.

At the panel discussion 'Smart Logistics and Seaports Linked to Dual-Transformation Goals', held during the 2025 Autumn Economic Forum in Ho Chi Minh City on November 26, business leaders and policymakers highlighted how careful planning and modern technologies could position Vietnam at the forefront of regional logistics.

According to Benoit de Quillacq, CEO of MSC Vietnam, part of the MSC Group, a major global shipping and logistics company, reducing carbon emissions and digitising operations are crucial. "Our company is also developing new, greener fleets. These transformations aim to enhance competitiveness and build resilience in trade," he said. "If you put yourself in the shoes of a customer or a global shipping company, you want your container to depart and arrive in Vietnam directly and on time. That requires strong connectivity from deepwater ports and logistics hubs."

In the South, the Cai Mep area currently connects to Ho Chi Minh City's inland container depots via inland waterways. However, the transit time from Cai Mep to the city centre can be as long as the transit time from Singapore to Cai Mep. This is a key issue Vietnam must address.

"It is essential to ensure that barges operate on schedule for smooth cargo flow. Domestic connectivity is as important as offshore connectivity; if the domestic network is congested, the entire supply chain collapses," de Quillacq noted.

Vietnam is competing with major Asian ports such as Shanghai and Singapore. At present, only two container ports in Vietnam can receive ultra-large vessels. This is positive, but still insufficient, given the continued market growth and increasing vessel size.

"We want to bring even larger vessels to Vietnam, and to achieve that, ports must have adequate capabilities and capacity. Vietnam need not be just a transshipment port, it can be a direct port of call delivering goods straight to customers," de Quillacq added.

However, hosting mega vessels requires ports designed with efficient connectivity for feeder vessels and barges.

Benjamin Lim, senior director of Strategy at YCH Group, a Singapore-based supply chain and logistics company, also believes Vietnam has the potential and opportunity to become a major connectivity hub. "YCH Group has shifted its strategy towards developing 'super ports.' We established an office in Hanoi because we clearly see Vietnam's potential," he said.

Lim explained that a super port must integrate multimodal transport. Relying solely on road transport is insufficient. To achieve this, infrastructure must support seamless intermodal connectivity.

Regarding workers, YCH helps Vietnam enhance capacity through specialised training systems. The company recruits Vietnamese students from universities and trains them in Singapore for nine months in fields such as warehouse management, knowledge that is not fully taught in university classrooms, before bringing them back to work in Vietnam's logistics industry.

Bui Xuan Cuong, vice chairman of the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee, believes with global digital and green transformation accelerating, logistics and seaports play a crucial role in enhancing national competitiveness, ensuring smooth supply chains, and fostering sustainable development.

"As the country's largest economic hub, Ho Chi Minh City plays a significant role in the regional logistics network. It is also the largest maritime and trade gateway connecting Vietnam with the world," he said.

The city is focusing on developing a modern, smart, and green logistics ecosystem linked to key port clusters such as Cai Mep, Cat Lai, and Hiep Phuoc (Thi Vai area). A highlight is the Can Gio International Transshipment Port, a strategic undertaking expected to be a major breakthrough in the city's marine economy.

The city is also synchronising logistics infrastructure planning, applying digital and AI technologies, and cutting carbon emissions to meet "green port" standards. At the same time, it is boosting regional connectivity and public-private partnerships to develop regional logistics centres effectively linked with seaports and industrial zones across the city and surrounding areas.

"From today's ideas, we can work together to form concrete projects, practical initiatives, and long-term cooperation schemes. These will help Vietnam and Ho Chi Minh City become a green, smart, and digitally connected logistics centre for the entire region," said Cuong.

Dang Minh Phuong, chairwoman of the Ho Chi Minh City Logistics and Port Association, noted that Vietnam's logistics sector has grown rapidly, contributing about 4–5 per cent to GDP. The sector has maintained an annual growth rate of 14–16 per cent from 2007 to 2023.

"The seaport economy is currently valued at around \$52 billion in 2025 and is expected to reach \$72 billion by 2030, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.6 per cent," she said. In the Logistics Performance Index, Vietnam ranks 43rd among 139 countries and fifth in ASEAN. By 2030, Vietnam's logistics and freight sector is expected to grow at a CAGR of 6.7 per cent.

Overall, although progress has been uneven, the sector continues to develop. "We are improving efficiency and aligning more closely with international standards, achieving stronger competitiveness," said Phuong.

Phuong noted that green logistics and digitalisation align well with Vietnam's national policies. Vietnam has the opportunity to make significant leaps by adopting smart port technologies and green infrastructure to enhance competitiveness.

These opportunities reflect Vietnam's rapid rise on the global trade map and its readiness to move into a higher stage of development. However, infrastructure capacity and chronic traffic congestion remain major bottlenecks. Many key routes still suffer persistent congestion.

"Therefore, with a vision towards 2030–2035 to build a more modern, greener, and more competitive port and logistics system, three foundational pillars must be emphasised: world-class infrastructure and connectivity; green and sustainable development; and a smart, digital ecosystem," Phuong said.

Phuong added that these three pillars will shape Vietnam's logistics system to become greener and smarter by 2030. "To realise this vision, port planning must align with port development strategies, logistics corridors, and industrial expansion to reduce congestion and improve efficiency," she added.

She also stressed the need to promote public-private partnerships and engage private investment. Vietnam needs greater investment in logistics and regional infrastructure, and private-sector participation is essential.

Cambodia to build inland port to expand trade links with Vietnam

A Cambodian company plans to develop the country's first inland port in Prey Veng Province with an investment of more than USD 20 million to strengthen trade with Vietnam.

According to the Cambodian Development Council, SSR Company has submitted an investment plan for a 10-hectare inland port in Kamchay Mear District, Prey Veng. The project is considered key provincial infrastructure to promote cross-border trade, particularly through the Meun Chey/Tan Nam International Border Gate linking Prey Veng and Tay Ninh Province in Vietnam.

An inland port, or dry port, is a logistics hub connected to seaports by road or rail and offers cargo classification, storage and customs clearance for imports and exports. Located strategically, these ports help ease congestion at seaports, facilitate goods movement and reduce transport costs.

The Cambodian Investment Committee has organised a multi-agency field inspection to assess the project's feasibility.

Chea Vuthy, secretary-general of the committee, said the inland port will support cargo flows through the Meun Chey/Tan Nam border gate and create local jobs.

Project components include office and commercial buildings, cargo trading areas and container warehouses, which will directly enhance logistics connectivity between Cambodia and Vietnam as both countries pursue a bilateral trade target of USD 20 billion.

Cambodian data shows bilateral trade reached more than USD 10 billion in 2024, up 17.5 per cent from 2023. From January to October 2025, trade totalled USD 6.5 billion, with Cambodia exporting USD 3.1 billion to Vietnam.

Vietnam currently has around 215 active investment projects in Cambodia in sectors including agriculture, telecommunications, banking, financial services, food processing, mining, aviation and tourism, with total registered capital of USD 2.94 billion, making it one of Cambodia's four largest foreign investors.

Asian Trade

South Korea expects US\$137 million in kimchi exports

South Korea's kimchi exports are expected to reach a record level this year, supported by continued global demand for Korean food. Data from the Korea Customs Service show that overseas shipments of kimchi totalled US\$137.39 million from January to October 2025. This is a 2 per cent increase compared with US\$134.67 million during the same period in 2024.



Kimchi imports rose 3.1 per cent year-on-year, increasing from US\$154.59 million to US\$159.46 million over the same 10-month period.

If current trends continue, full-year kimchi exports are projected to exceed the previous annual record of US\$163.57 million set in 2024.

Japan remained the top destination for South Korean kimchi, importing US\$47.55 million from January to October, an increase of 4.4 per cent on the year. Exports to the United States declined 5.8 per cent to US\$36.01 million. Shipments to the Netherlands decreased 3.3 per cent to US\$7.97 million.

The data reflect stable demand across key import markets and continued movement of processed vegetable products within South Korea's export portfolio.

Source: [Korea JoongAng Daily](#)

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27th Nov 25