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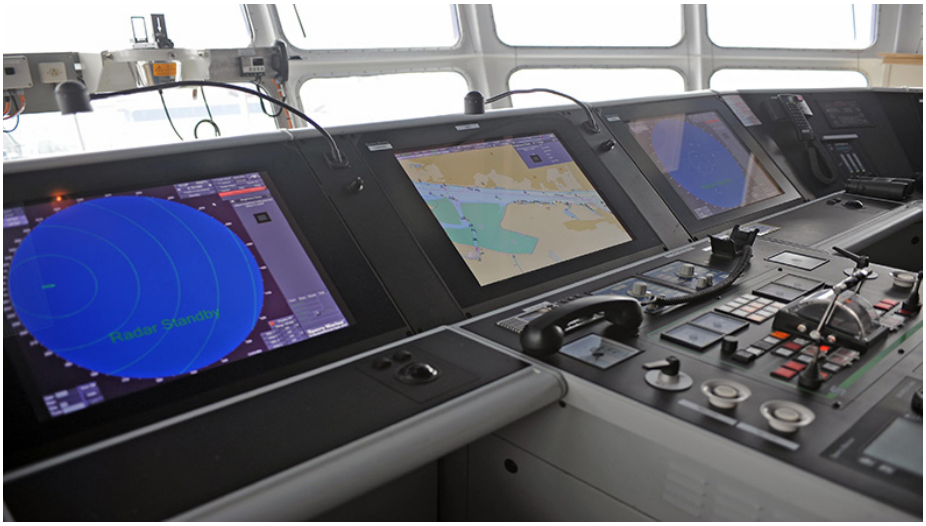
AIS transmission gaps seen in sanctioned tankers linked to Venezuela



ALL FOUR TANKERS placed under US sanctions earlier this week due to links with Venezuelan oil shipments had irregular AIS transmission or trading patterns during the past two months — signalling the Trump administration is following up on threats to punish those owners and operators engaged in shipping practices it labels as deceptive.

The Office of Foreign Assets and Control blacklisted four Greek-managed tankers; the 2007-built aframax *Athens Voyager*, suezmax tanker *Chios I* and two very large crude carriers, *Seahero* and *Voyager I*.

The Bahamas-flagged *Seahero*'s technical, ISM manager and commercial operator is Thenamaris Ships Management, according to the Lloyd's List Intelligence database.

The Malta-flagged, 2017-built *Chios I* lists Dynacom Tankers Management as both technical and ISM manager, while the Marshall Islands-flagged VLCC *Voyager I* is commercially operated by NGM Energy, linked to the Nicolas Moundreas Group of Companies.

The Panama-flagged *Athens Voyager* is commercially operated by Chemnav Shipmanagement Ltd, linked to the Coronis family.

The Marshall Islands registry has already signalled it will begin to deregister the 2003-built *Voyager I*.

Vessel-tracking analysis from Lloyd's List Intelligence shows the tankers all had gaps in their Automatic Identification System, which transmits the location and identify of the tanker.

The collision-avoidance tool must be on at all times under international conventions except when the vessel needs to switch it off for safety reasons.

Chios I, entered with Standard Steamship P&I, transmitted no AIS signal between February 4 and March 10, with its trajectory showing it was on track to call at Venezuela in mid-February.

When the vessel reappeared, signalling it was laden, it then sailed through the Singapore Strait and headed to Indonesian waters off Balikpapen. Its AIS transmission was off for a further three-day period from April 15, with its draft afterwards transmitted at a level that it had discharged its cargo, likely as a ship-to-ship transfer during that gap.

Voyager I had AIS gaps while it shipped Venezuelan crude to offshore Lome, in West Africa, a known storage and STS transfer area for marketing the South American country's crude.

The vessel is now laden and offshore at anchor off Malaysia's western coast, where other tankers with unsold Venezuelan crude have been tracked for STS transfers during the past 12 months.

Voyager I and *Seahero* also were tracked briefly deviating to Trinidad & Tobago waters, either before or after calling at Venezuela. Other tankers have deviated here since unilateral US sanctions were placed on Venezuela's oil and shipping industry in February 2019 with false bills of lading issued to obfuscate cargo origin.

Seahero appeared to have loaded at the US Virgin Islands on May 29 based on its vessel tracking history. The vessel has been engaged in shipping Venezuelan crude to Singapore or Malaysia and back since at least February 2020. AIS is not available beyond this date.

There is no suggestion that any of the tankers sanctioned by Ofac were engaged in deceptive or illicit shipping practices to evade sanctions.

AIS gaps or "going dark", as well as false cargo and vessel documentation, irregular voyages and STS transfers were listed in administration guidance issued on May 14 as signs that service providers should detect and investigate.

Shipowners, operators, flag registries, charterers and banks were all targeted in the advisory, issued by the State Department, Treasury Department and US Coast Guard.

Ofac's latest move is the first sign that the US will more aggressively target international shipping of Venezuelan crude, placing flag states, marine insurers and others connected with sanctioned vessels on notice.

North P&I, in which *Voyager I* and *Seahero* are entered, said in a statement that "in conjunction with our advisers we are assessing the implications of these designations".

Liabilities that arose out of voyages that breached applicable sanctions were excluded from cover by clubs that were members of the International Group of P&I clubs, the statement said.

The Standard Club and London P&I, which have *Chios I* and *Athens Voyager* respectively entered with them, did not respond for emailed requests for comment.

The actions of the Bahamas, Malta and Panama flag administrations will be closely watched to see whether they will match the Marshall Islands registry's response and deregister the tankers.

Panama pledged earlier this week in a marine circular it would fine vessels up to $10,000 or deregister those that deliberately tampered with AIS or Long Range Identification and Tracking equipment.

Bahamas and Malta flag administration did not respond to emailed requests for comment.

The Greek owners and operators did also not responded to call requesting a response or comment.

Greek owners dominate loadings of Venezuelan crude even as US sanctions have paralysed export trade and slashed volumes to one-fifth of levels seen two years ago.

Some 161 tankers have been tracked loading Venezuela crude over the past 12 months according to Lloyd's List Intelligence. Of these a total of 126 have Greek companies listed as their beneficial owners, data shows. Last October several oil companies added clauses to charters saying they would not hire tankers that had called at Venezuela in the previous 12 months.

Tanker owners and insurers cautious over US sanctions guidance

THE marine insurance and tanker sectors have reacted cautiously to new guidance issued by the US administration to help the global maritime sector identify deceptive and illicit shipping to evade sanctions.

However, independent tanker operators remain concerned that shipping is being used to enforce US sanctions.

The May 14 guidance covered 35 pages and was focused on US or United Nations sanctions against Iran, Syria and North Korea, but its first application was on Venezuelan shipments made by four Greek tanker owners.

It was jointly issued by the US State Department, US Coast Guard and US Treasury after more than six months' consultation with the global maritime sector, including marine insurers and shipping associations.

"It is perhaps inevitable that a document of such breadth and ambition will give rise to questions. In its current form however it should though be seen for what it is; a genuine attempt on the part of the US government to provide guidance as what constitutes best practice in the field of Iran, Syria and DPRK sanctions compliance," said Mike Salthouse, global director of claims for North of England P&I Club and chairman of the International Group of P&I Clubs sanctions subcommittee.

"The US made a genuine attempt to reach out to the maritime industry and listened to the concerns expressed over earlier drafts," he said in a statement.

"The guidance, while detailed and undoubtedly operationally onerous nevertheless provides real insight into what is expected and any part of the maritime industry which in the past had been prepared to ignore compliance for the sake of profit can now be in no doubt of the standards to which it will be held to account."

The IG Group covers 13 clubs that provide marine liability cover for 90% of the world's international trading fleet.

Seven deceptive shipping practices were outlined, including the disablement of the Automatic Identification System on vessels, falsifying cargo and vessel documents, ship-to-ship transfers, and flag-hopping.

An annex provided guidance for flag registries, port state control, brokers and charterers, as well as shipping industry associations, promoting the sharing of information where legally possible.

AIS is used for collision avoidance and can only be turned off for safety issues under international conventions. There are concerns that the guidance over-relies on AIS to detect deceptive shipping practices, which can generate misleading data because missing gaps are sometimes the result of technical or other issues.

Industry group Intertanko, which represents independent tanker operators, said AIS should not be used in isolation and seamless monitoring could not be error-free. The group, which represents many of the Greek shipowners who transport Venezuelan crude and were targeted in sanctions yesterday, made the comments before the four owners were blacklisted.

Michele White, general counsel and company secretary said: "Whilst the sanctions advisory is promoted by Office of Foreign Assets Control as guidance rather than as a legal requirement, the recommendations will almost certainly be used as the new expected standard.

"All maritime players have been enlisted to police both individual vessel ownership and trade. This is asking private marine sector entities effectively to do the enforcers' job, whilst at the same time opening itself up to potential sanctions breach."

Greek shipowners most exposed to US Venezuela sanctions

GREEK shipowners accounted for 78% of tankers transporting Venezuelan crude during the past 12 months, leaving them disproportionately exposed to tougher, US sanctions now punishing ships identified in so-called deceptive shipping practices.

Some 126 of the 161 crude tankers loading Venezuelan cargos over the past 12 months were beneficially owned by Greek companies, data from Lloyd's List Intelligence shows. Greek owners account for more than 30% of the world crude tanker fleet by deadweight, according to the Union of Greek Shipowners.

Venezuelan crude exports have dwindled to a quarter of levels seen two years ago as US sanctions imposed early in 2019 on national oil company PDVSA and Russian oil trader and the marketer Rosneft in April 2020 weigh on shipments.

Some of the biggest Greek shipping families have continued shipping crude from Venezuela, with fleets of tankers beneficially owned by the Constantinos Martinos, Diamantis Diamantidis, Nicolas Moundreas and Prokopiou families, as well as the Economou and Angelecoussis groups.

Sanctions prohibits US citizens from doing business with the government of Venezuela and its national companies, extending to the petroleum sector and therefore shipping. However, they do not wield the same expansiveness as secondary sanctions on Iran, which has allowed tankers to continue trading so far without falling foul of the US Department of the Treasury.

Four Greek-owned tankers were blacklisted yesterday by the Office of Foreign Assets Control just weeks after the Trump administration issued long-awaited fresh guidance for the international shipping industry to identify deceptive or illicit shipping practices used to evade sanctions.

Greek shipowners have yet to comment on the controversial move, said to have unnerved the tanker market, now waiting to see charterers' willingness to consider other vessels in the fleet owned by the Greek families targeted in yesterday's action.

The four maritime entities were "supporting the illegitimate Maduro regime" the Treasury Department said in a release and were operating in the oil sector of Venezuela. The vessel-owning shelf companies were linked to beneficial owners from Thenamaris Ship Management from the Constantinos Martinos family, as well as Dynacom Tankers Management (Prokopiou family) and NGM Energy (Nicolas Moundreas Group of Companies).

The new Ofac guidance is heavily focused on identifying ships' gaps in Automatic Identification System signals to detect any attempt to evade sanction, as well as tracking ship-to-ship transfers. All four tankers had gaps in AIS transmission and had used ship-to-ship transfers, but there is no suggestion the activity was deceptive or illicit.

Ofac sanctions can spook the tanker market, with a spike last October briefly pushing very large crude carrier rates above $250,000 daily after a tanker unit of China's Cosco Shipping was blacklisted.

Some 225,000 barrels per day of 664,000 bpd of Venezuelan exports tracked so far in 2020 are shipped to Malaysia where they are then sold and transferred to other tankers, with China the biggest buyer, data show.

The Angelcoussis Group is the single biggest Greek owner involved in the Venezuela trades over the past 12 months, with 16%, or 4.7m dwt, of all tankers tracked beneficially owned by the group. The Diamantis Diamantidis group is next with just over 4m dwt, and the Prokopiou family with 3.5m dwt. Many of the tankers made repeat voyages.

WHAT TO WATCH

Seadrill restructuring sees 1,400 job losses

TROUBLED rig operator Seadrill has announced plans to reduce its workforce by more than 30% to preserve cash ahead of an attempted restructuring.

The company, which has also announced it is to delist from the New York Stock Exchange, is reviewing operations after a $1.56bn first quarter of the year loss and amid a challenging market

It said it aimed to save $130m through cost cuts over the next 18 months after conceding that "substantial doubt remains over the ability to continue as a going concern".

Details of the job losses were given by chief financial officer Stuart Jackson during a conference call after the publication of 2020 first-quarter losses.

He said that because of "reduced activity levels" the company would reduce its total onshore and offshore headcount from the current 4,500 to 3,100.

A major reason for the $1.56bn loss was a $1.2bn impairment charge caused by sinking oil prices, which forced a re-evaluation of Seadrill's assets.

Mr Jackson said that Seadrill expected assets to be cold stacked for longer, which in turn would mean higher reactivation costs. If they were to be reactivated, the investment return on these assets would also be lower because of both higher costs and lower oil price expectations.

The result is that the company is now more likely to scrap assets. "With respect to retiring assets, there are up to 10 rigs which may be scrapped. And over the coming months, we will be looking to prioritise these activities," Mr Jackson said.

Seadrill will continue trading on the Oslo Stock Exchange. Mr Jackson said the company would support arrangements for US-held shares to trade in the over-the-counter market.

ANALYSIS

Newbuilding prices under strain amid order slump

NEWBUILDING prices are under stress as demand has plunged in the sector, according to shipbrokers' reports.

The trend is especially palpable for dry bulkers — whose freight market is bearing the brunt of the coronavirus-led recession — whereas the tanker segment has displayed a time of resilience.

"The expected softening of prices is beginning to show up in reported deals, especially for relatively prompt berths," Braemar said in its latest weekly briefing.

"As berth space [for] 2022 opens up, this loosening trend of price erosion is set to continue," the broker added.

The monthly China Newbuilding Price Index, which tracks ship prices at domestic yards based on inputs from 21 broking houses, dropped to 789 points at the end of May from 793 a month ago.

Indicative price for a China-built 180,000 dwt capesize and 82,000 dwt kamsarmax bulker both slid 0.6% to $47.4m and $26.3m. Price for a new 63,500 dwt ultramax fell nearly 1% to $24.7m.

While April has seen a rebound in reported orders, most of the deals were actually struck before the Chinese New Year, but revealed only recently, said CNPI in a report this week.

The lack of contracting was partly because of a big gap between the expectations of owners and yards on newbuilding prices, the report added.

"But with the ordering drought, the weakening of price is just a matter of time," it said. "Even a 5% drop within one month should come as no surprise."

Allied Shipping Research noted a two-tier market. It said while the appetite for newbuilding dry bulkers is likely to remain dulled with only one ship added to the global orderbook last week, investment in fresh tanker tonnage appears at a much healthier level.

"Last week, we saw 10 new units being ordered, with the majority of them being suezmaxes, which is reflecting the buying preference for this size class in the year so far. Interest here is expected to remain robust for the time being," the brokerage said in a report.

Suezmax was priced at $54m by CNPI at Chinese yards — slightly costlier than what was reported in two recent deals.

Greece-based Pantheon Tankers and Norwegian owner Viken Shipping were reported by brokers to have ordered two 158,000 dwt tankers each at China's New Times Shipbuilding for $52m each.

By comparison, price for the type of oil tanker at South Korean yards still enjoyed a 10% premium as shown in the Sonangol deal with Hyundai Heavy Industries — though still relatively low in absolute value compared with previous orders. The owner was said to have ordered two 157,000 dwt tankers with the builder for more than $57m, with an option for two more.

Although shipbuilders' finances are stretched by the lowering ship prices, the reduced costs will help them alleviate the pressure, said Braemar.

"The decreases are not hitting yards' bottom lines as much as one would initially think as pricing of steel, energy, mechanical components and exchange rates are all helping to ease the burden."

Shipping learns the value of collaboration

SHARING expertise in infection risk management is a critical step in getting cruise shipping active again. DNV GL Business Assurance chief executive Luca Crisciotti believes collaboration is an essential part in this — collaboration between company divisions, between companies within the maritime sector and between the sectors themselves.

In the world of food and beverage, a world Mr Crisciotti knows well, the focus on food safety is fundamental. He recalls a dinner at which he was sitting next to the chief executive of one of the world's largest food businesses. It had been revealed the day before that one of his main competitors had been hit by a case of food poisoning.

"I was expecting him to say he would gain competitive advantage and raise market share. But instead he was sad. He said: I'm not happy at all because what is happening to this company could happen to me the day after.

"That's why it is important to get together. You can to compete on price or the taste of a product or innovation. However, on food safety we have to share as much as we can."

The spirit that pulls the food and beverage industry together is the same spirit he finds in the maritime industry.

Luca Crisciotti graduated with a masters in economics at La Sapienza university in Rome. He took a succession of sales roles before joining Det Norske Veritas in 2001, promoted to market manager for central and south Europe, and market manager for Japan. Staying in the Asia-Pacific region, he stepped up to director of operations for Asia and Australia at DNV's Business Assurance division.

Promoted to chief executive of Business Assurance at DNV (2012–13) and at DNV GL, he is now in lockdown in London.

He picks out the cross-fertilisation of knowledge between DNV GL's business teams as "probably the most important asset" of the company. There is a strong sense of collaboration, with the experience gained in remote auditing now common across all the divisions.

"We have all learnt from each other," he says of the infection risk management experience. "We have shared what different industries have asked for with our maritime and oil and gas colleagues, and they have done the same with us.

"There are medical doctors who don't know anything about a ship: they sit with maritime colleagues. This wouldn't be possible if the culture and the language spoken in the company is not the same."

The interaction between DNV GL's healthcare and maritime teams to come up with a risk management solution for passenger shipping has shown what can be achieved through collaboration.

"We have agreed that Genting [Cruise Line] will start the process to get the CIP-M (Certification in Infection Prevention – Maritime) accreditation. This will take several weeks and combines sharing with us all the documents and procedures to meet the certification requirements with a physical assessment to make sure they have applied the system.

"It's a traditional certification process with two steps. Once the certificate has been delivered, there's a periodical audit about every six months, depending on the complexity of the project, to see if they are compliant with the certification scheme," he explains.

For cruise lines, regaining a reputation for infection management is vital. Genting's Explorer Dream is the first cruiseship DNV GL is serving, although other cruise lines have expressed interest.

"We have already started this service with hotel chains, restaurant chains, manufacturing companies, car makers and real estate companies, so we have already reviewed hundreds of companies on this journey."

The hospitality sector has many similarities to a cruise line, so Mr Crisciotti's team can anticipate some of the difficulties a floating hotel would have in applying the requirements of this standard. With all cruise lines anxious to return to sailing as soon as possible, there is real concern to meet the necessary requirements "because it won't be possible for them to do that without this measure".

He stresses CIP-M is not just applying what has been successful in a hospital or hotel to a cruiseship. Healthcare and maritime colleagues have put in a huge effort to highlight all the practical differences.

"For example, when doctors on board are going to reuse any devices or instruments for treating patients, the level of sanitisation is different from the current standard. In the ship's restaurants, we will be using our experience in restaurant chains on shore: how crew should observe social distancing when serving people, and how knives and forks should be sanitised."

The training of the crew is possibly the most important element in the process, Mr Crisciotti says. Extensive training programmes make sure the crew understand what's essential.

"The element of collaboration is common to every pilot project. We are learning a lot from working on many projects. This is why the decision was taken to start with one ship, gather all the information from this experience, refine it a little, then go ahead with other ships."

He says Explorer Dream was selected by maritime colleagues. "I guess it gives us a chance to see most of the issues."

Because of his work with automotive, aerospace, food and beverage, and real estate Luca Crisciotti is part of several industry associations. He believes the only difference between maritime and any of these sectors is that maritime is "a smaller world". Even so, the need to talk, stay together and share challenges is exactly the same.

"As a company, we support our maritime customers step by step. We know the environment we are working in very well; we know it isn't be possible to keep asking customers to invest in new technology. We understand the challenges," he acknowledges. "While we are pushing innovation, we will not go beyond certain limits because it we know it may have the opposite effect: our customer will say no to everything.

"We have to follow market trends, but if I look back at what DNV GL has been doing in recent years, we should be very proud of the innovation we have brought to the industry."

Looking into the post-coronavirus world, Luca Crisciotti sees real changes to the way the global supply chain is organised. It is likely there will be more local businesses.

"Everyone now knows that paracetamol is only produced in two countries, and that any form of interruption can cut the supply chain, with the effect that supermarket shelves are empty. It is the same for surgical masks and personal protective equipment.

"I see a lot of local companies will seize the opportunity to do something on a small scale, something they were unable to do before now because of the cheap prices coming from India and China. That's one trend I see happening. Most governments will focus on those supply chains that are most critical to their people: what they need to be sure an interruption doesn't happen again.

DNV GL's core elements of sustainability and innovation remain key to the company's success, Mr Crisciotti insists, although the element of collaboration has become the third pillar of future growth.

MARKETS

Rise in Canada-China activity supports capesize market

CAPESIZE earnings have increased marginally over the week as activity from Canada to China gained traction leading to a more positive tone in the Atlantic.

"The longest capesize route, eastern Canada to China, has shown itself to be increasingly busy with charterers being heard to have booked a multitude of vessels," Baltic Exchange said in its daily report.

"The long tonne-mile route is a welcome sight in the current market as Brazilian spot cargoes to the Far East are still proving sporadic."

The bulker segment has been facing worsening trading conditions since early February, as crowded tonnage in both the Pacific and Atlantic basins amid slow activity puts downward pressure on spot rates.

The weighted time charter average was assessed by the Baltic Exchange at $4,213 per day on Monday, up 2% from last week, significantly below the operating cost of vessels.

The Baltic Capesize Index fell to 147 points on Monday from the level of 167 seen a week ago.

The C3 Brazil–China rate for shipping iron ore was at a low of $8.5 per tonne, but that is still a 2% improvement compared with the rate seen a week ago because of limited cargo from the region that has been affected by the coronavirus outbreak.

Meanwhile, the bauxite trade from Guinea to China continues to be one of the most bullish in dry bulk, with an average of 31 capesize shipments a month so far this year. The longhaul trade has supported tonne-mile demand.

"We recorded 32 capesize shipments of bauxite from Guinea during May, as China continues to stock up on the raw aluminium ore," Braemar ACM said. "More recently, we have begun to see more very large ore carriers being used in this trade, including some of the ex-very large crude carrier conversions."

The shipbrokers remained confident on the long-term growth prospects of this trade, though in the short term it expects shipments to dip over the third quarter of the year during the West Africa rainy season.

In other positive news, Drewry noted that the development of the Simandou blocks in Guinea will increase the country's iron ore exports, which will prompt Chinese importers to shift some iron ore imports away from Australia to Guinea, likely to add to dry bulk shipping demand.

Kamsarmax becomes the carrier of choice in bulk trades

KAMSARMAXES have overtaken panamaxes as the most commonly used class of carriers to transport grain between the world's top exporting and importing countries.

This is one landmark shift in global commodity trade flows that energy and commodity pricing agency S&P Global Platts seeks to address by rolling out a new index dedicated to kamsarmax carriers of between 81,000 and 82,000 dwt.

Pradeep Rajan, head of Asia Pacific shipping and freight at Platts, told Lloyd's List that kamsarmaxes were being used to transport about 65% of global grain trade, clearly displacing the 74,000 dwt panamaxes.

He deemed the expansion of ports at Brazil to accommodate larger ships over the past five years as one factor that had contributed to the growing relevance of kamsarmaxes.

Brazil, as the world's top grain exporter, has also been quick to pick up the slack from where the US left off following its multi-year trade spat with China.

Soya bean exports from the Latin American country jumped 45% on year in May, hitting 15.5 m tonnes, its second-highest monthly tally yet, Platts reported. It added that 74% of this volume was bound for China.

Trade expansion between Brazil and China would clearly have backed up what Mr Rajan described as "tremendous growth" in kamsarmax bulker fleet size seen in the last three to four years.

By his estimate, kamsarmaxes now number about 900 strong, claiming a 10% share of bulk carriers globally.

In rolling out the KMAX 9 index, Platts took the view that there is a latent need for a benchmark to guide fixtures on this fast-rising class of bulk carriers.

The index, which was launched on May 1, draws on assessments of shipments on nine trade routes linking key grain or coal exporters — the US, Brazil, Canada, Indonesia, South Africa, Canada, Australia — with three top importing countries or regions; China, India and Europe.

Trades between Santos in Brazil and Qingdao in China have been assigned collectively the highest weight of 34.25%, contrasting with just 8.75% for those between New Orleans in the US and Qingdao.

The US has targeted $25bn in grain exports to China under a Phase 1 bilateral trade pact penned before recent tension between the two superpowers.

Platts takes in how trade has flowed from 2017 to 2019 to arrive at the present composition of its KMAX 9 weighted index that was launched in early May.

This said period overlaps with two years warmer bilateral relations between the US and China.

That being the case, the index would have reasonably factored in the unlikely event of the Phase 1 trade pact taking flight, Mr Rajan explained.

IN OTHER NEWS

UK Club warns on further premium hikes

THE UK Club has proclaimed its intention to take "future action on premium rates" to rectify its current combined ratio of 120%.

The decision comes even though the International Group affiliate pushed for and achieved firmer pricing in the mid-single-digit percentage point range last year, at the cost of a small diminution in entered tonnage, according to a Lloyd's List interview with chief executive Andrew Taylor earlier this year.

In a short statement released on its financial position this morning, the marine mutual highlighted the strength of its free reserves, which increased by $54m to $559m as of February 20.

LNG start-up orders 10 container carriers at Yangzijiang

TIGER Clean Energy has ordered up to 10 ISO tank container carriers at Yangzijiang Shipbuilding as the start-up company seeks to tap China's rising demand for liquefied natural gas.

Each newbuilding can be loaded with a total of 690 tank containers, each with 53 c um in capacity — about 18% larger than the normal 40 ft ones of such type, according to people familiar with the deal.

That is equivalent to a carrying capacity of 36,570 cu m for one vessel. The sources said the orders contain two firm units plus options for eight more. The first ship is scheduled for delivery in early 2022.

DSV Panalpina commits to carbon reduction targets

DSV Panalpina, the world's second-largest 3PL, has committed to reducing carbon emissions from its freight transport by 30% by 2030, a move that will put pressure on its carrier suppliers to do the same.

Last year, the company, which was formed by the $5.5bn takeover of Panalpina by DSV, said that it would develop targets for its emissions after signing up to the Science Based Targets initiative.

Those have now been revealed, and will see the company reduce scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions, those related to its offices, warehouses and company cars, by 40% by 2030 from a 2019 baseline.

Abu Dhabi Ports launches feeder line with Bengal Tiger Lines

ABU Dhabi Ports is following the act of its neighbouring port group DP World by entering the feeder line market, setting up Safeen Feeders as part of its strategy to facilitate growing trade demands within the Middle East Gulf region.

In partnership with Bengal Tiger Lines through a vessel sharing agreement, Safeen Feeders will introduce a new feeder service linking Abu Dhabi to ports serving the UAE, the broader Middle East Gulf region and Indian subcontinent.

Fellow UAE port operator DP World acquired feeder operator Unifeeder in late 2018.

Canada's Trans Mountain begins construction of new oil export pipeline section

CANADIAN pipeline company Trans Mountain Corp has reached another key milestone in its project to triple the capacity of a pipeline moving crude oil from the Edmonton area to the port in Burnaby, British Columbia.

Trans Mountain president and chief executive Ian Anderson said the start of pipeline construction in Kamloops, British Columbia is another "key milestone" for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project.

The company operates Canada's only pipeline system, transporting crude and oil products to the west coast. It delivers some 300,000 barrels per day through 1,150 km of pipeline in Alberta and British Columbia, and 111 km of pipeline in the US state of Washington.

Cyclone Nisarga forces JNPT to clear vessels

JAWAHARLAL Nehru Port Trust, India's largest container terminal, is clearing vessels and taking various mitigation measures in view of the cyclone moving across the Arabian Sea to the Indian coastal city of Mumbai.

Cyclonic storm Nisarga is likely to hit the west coast of Maharashtra on Wednesday. The storm comes barely two weeks after Cyclone Amphan hit India's east coast.

The Indian Meteorological Department has issued a cyclone warning for the area and JNPT is likely to experience heavy weather and sustained high wind speeds of 50–60 knots, so steps are being taken to mitigate the impact of the cyclone on port property and ships in JNPT waters, a statement said.

DNV GL teams with Genting Cruise Line on healthcare scheme

DNV GL, the Norwegian-German risk management company, has started work with Genting Cruise Lines on a tailor-made healthcare certification scheme.

The CIP-M (Certification in Infection Prevention – Maritime) programme draws on experts from DNV GL's maritime and business assurance teams. "We believe it is one step to restoring industry and passenger confidence," said DNV GL maritime chief executive Knut Ørbeck-Nilssen.

The vessel chosen is Genting's Explorer Dream, a ship with 1,856 lower berths, built in 1999 at Meyer Weft, Papenburg as SuperStar Virgo.

Sokana back as tanker manager in reboot with Interunity

INVESTOR interest in the chemical and product tanker markets has underpinned the rebooting of Sokana, a US-based commercial tanker manager, under a new joint venture with Greece-based owner and manager Interunity Group.

The company has resurfaced with a fleet under management of 24 tankers, aggregating 880,000 dwt, after a decade of lying dormant as an independent name.

Sokana can trace its lineage back 31 years to when it was first established by Lars Ebbesen with co-founder Arne Blystad.

Squire Patton Boggs recruits two HFW partners to build new shipping practice

SQUIRE Patton Boggs, an international law firm, has strengthened its commodities and shipping group with the hire of London-based two partners and four other staffers from HFW.

Chris Swart and Katie Pritchard are joined by director John Rollason, senior associate Gabriella Martin, and associates Joseph Magoon and Patrick Greaney.

The team will work with Singapore partners Barry Stimpson and Jessica Kenworthy, who recently joined the firm from Reed Smith.

Vitol to run bunker operation for major Caribbean terminal

TRADING giant Vitol has expanded its bunkering footprint in the US Gulf Coast and the Carribean islands through a partnership with storage terminal operator, GTI Statia.

The two parties have penned an agreement calling for Vitol to run a marine fuel bunker supply business out of the GTIS-operated 60-tank terminal on St Eustatius island, which is a municipality of the Netherlands.

This agreement seeks to leverage on Vitol's global network to expand GTIS' bunker business, a statement said.

Classified notices follow