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MONTHLY REPORT

# CRUISE SHIPPING

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# NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE SET TO RAMP UP INVESTMENT IN INDIAN MARKET

Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL), one of the world's largest cruise line operators, is planning to invest in the Indian market in a big way towards promotion and brand-building to expand its market share, according to a senior official. "We are going to invest more money in India in 2021 than we did ever before, considering the environment that we are facing in 2021," said Ben Angell, Vice-President & Managing Director of the Asia Pacific region, Norwegian Cruise Line.

He was addressing a virtual press conference to share the cruise company's plan for India and Asian markets. "We are currently investing more across the Asia Pacific region. We got a wonderful team, great product and we just need to spend more money to educate our future guests on the quality of the product that we offer and that will be a big part of our approach for 2021," he added. India is currently the number two market for NCL in Asia and number three in Asia Pacific region. "There have been times when India is the largest revenue contributing market in Asia, but due to a number of factors outside our control that actually pushed Japan ahead of India. But still, it (India) is a fantastic market for us," he added. "Our current cruise passengers from the Indian market want to cruise with us again in the post-pandemic world," Angell said, adding, "So, the challenge for us in India is really about how we increase our market share further." He further said that 'green shoots' of growth is already visible from the weekly booking data from India despite the current challenging environment. "We just launched our Northern Hemisphere Summer 2023 itineraries which gives our guests more choices in this uncertain world," Angell said, adding: "From Caribbean-island hopping to Alaskan-glacier viewing, or even European explorations – a favourite among Indian guests – we offer wide variety of experiences all the way out to Summer 2023."

Source: The Hindu Business Line

# DGS LIFTS QUARANTINE RULE FOR SHIPS ARRIVING FROM PORTS OF INFECTED COUNTRIES

The Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) has lifted the 14-days mandatory quarantine period stipulated for ships arriving from ports of infected countries after maritime trade complained that this was delaying the berthing of vessels with a cascading effect on the container logistics chain.

In view of the difficulties expressed by the stakeholders, it has been decided that the mandatory quarantine period of 14 days mentioned in the order dated March 20 shall not be insisted, Amitabh Kumar, Director-General of Shipping wrote in an order issued.

## **Cascade effect**

The 14-day quarantine imposed on vessels arriving from ports of infected countries has resulted in ships having to wait for up to 3-4 days before berthing at Indian ports,” said Sunil Vaswani, Executive Director of the Container Shipping Lines Association (India). This not only delays the discharge and the de-stuffing of import loads but also delays the availability of containers for export shipments. It also delays the whole cycle of several sailings put together and eventually results in a reduction in the number of sailings over a period of time, thereby causing a significant reduction in the number of export shipments, Vaswani added. Exporters have been facing shortage of equipment (empty containers) besides rising freight rates as shipping lines re-position empty boxes for exports at a cost. While removing the quarantine period, the DGS has also set conditions for the disembarkation of crew of vessels that have not completed 14 days from the last port of call.

Source: The Hindu Business Line



# KSINC BETS BIG ON CRUISE VOYAGES, TARGETS ₹100-CRORE BIZ NEXT FISCAL

Pinning hopes on inland water transport, coastal shipping and tourism, the Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation is eyeing a doubling of its business revenue to ₹100 crore in the next financial year.

Against the targeted turnover of ₹50 crore in the current fiscal, the state-owned entity has clocked ₹20 crore in Q3 despite setbacks to various activities on account of the pandemic. However, the re-opening of tourism destinations will undoubtedly boost the cruise trips offered by vessels Nefertiti and Sagararani to Arabian Sea that would further mop up the revenue, said Prasanth Nair, Managing Director, KSINC. The company has recorded a profit of nearly ₹1 crore in 2019-20. The focus on tourism activities has started generating income especially with the cruises which is evident from the enthusiastic customer bookings, he said. The completion of various tourism boat construction works for Malabar-Malanad river cruise circuit, Ashtamudi Lake circuit, Kumarakom, Changanassery and Kodimatha water sports are in final stages. The high-speed water craft, a six-seater water taxi is expected to be operational by February next year. Besides, there are also plans to launch water taxis, family cruises, thematic cruises by May next year, he added. The company has already supplied 36 kayaks to DTPC Kottayam and the construction of Shikkara boats is in progress. In addition, the trials are scheduled in January for jet skis in Kollam DTPC and the four-seater speed boat for Neyyar Dam. The construction of a 48-seater catamaran for Kollam and a 25-seater for Neyyar Dam is progressing. KSINC, he said, is expanding its operations to Odisha, Bihar and Lakshadweep for projects which include building vessels to operate at Chilka Lake in Odisha and the Kanika National Park in Bihar. A blueprint of speed boat and house boat for the Chilka Lake has been submitted for approval. There are also plans to construct a floating boat jetty for State Water Transport Department at various locations in Ernakulam as a pilot proposal. KSINC has also inked an agreement with the Inland Waterways Authority of India to run Ro-Ro services for cargo movement.

Source: The Hindu Business Line

# HIT BY COVID, LUXURY CRUISE LINERS QUEUE UP AT ALANG

This is the second cruise ship to arrive at one of the world's biggest ship-breaking yards in Bhavnagar within 40 days.

OCEAN DREAM, a 40-year-old cruise ship sailing under the flag of Comoros, arrived at Alang ship-breaking yard Friday to be dismantled. This is the second cruise ship to arrive at one of the world's biggest ship-breaking yards in Bhavnagar within 40 days. On November 21, luxury cruise liner MV Karnika had reached Alang to be demolished after around a year's gap. Haresh Parmar, the honorary joint secretary of Ship Recycling Industries Association of India (SRIA), said, "In last 40 days, MV Karnika and Ocean Dream have reached Alang for being demolished. We are expecting at least two more cruises to reach Alang for dismantling in January itself." A 1965 Soviet-built Marco Polo is the third cruise liner which is expected to reach Alang later this month. The European owner of the 14,000-tonne Marco Polo cruise, Parmar said, had gone bankrupt following which a local court auctioned it. "There is no hope for cruise vessels for the next six to eight months as the Americans and Europeans, who form the biggest group of cruise travellers, are the most affected by the Covid-19. Since its outbreak, more and more cruise liners are going in debt and are being sold as scrap," he added. According to Parmar, there are hardly any cruise liner that is in operations after the coronavirus outbreak. "The Covid-19 outbreak on Diamond Princess, a cruise ship docked in Japan in February 2020, caused a global scare with regard to cruise tourism," Parmar said. More than 3,600 passengers and crew members were quarantined onboard that vessel at Port of Yokohama in Japan and the outbreak eventually led to about 700 infections and seven deaths, he added. Ocean Dream, the cruise liner which arrived at plot number 61 in Alang Friday, was built in Denmark in 1981. The vessel, which weighs 35,265 tonnes and is 205-metre long, has about 10-odd decks and can carry about 1,400 passengers and 550 crew members. It has 670 passenger cabins, a sports deck, ballrooms, lounges, a book corner, swimming pools, jacuzzies, coffee shops, bars, and a sunbathing deck. "It was not being operated since the Covid-19 pandemic began last year," Nazir Kaliwala, a shipbreaker at Alang who heads NBM Iron and Steel Trading Pvt Ltd, said. The number of cruise ships that are up for auction is more than that available pre-Covid-19 pandemic, he added. The last decade of Ocean Dream's sailing career was spent under the Japanese NGO Peace Boat. The vessel, Kaliwala said, had joined Peace Boat in 2012 and continued to conduct world voyages and short trips in Japan till the onset of the Covid pandemic. "It was stationed near Hiroshima when it retired. We bought the vessel for around Rs 52 crore," he added. The 70,310-tonne luxury cruise liner MV Karnika, ship-breakers said, was the first to arrive at Alang in the last one year. The 14-deck vessel belonged to Jalesh Cruises, a sister company of Essel Group. Its operations had come to a standstill after creditors arrested the vessel through an order of admiralty court on March 17 last year. Though attempts were made to restart operations post the Covid-10 nationwide lockdown, the company officially discontinued it in October last year.

Source: The Indian Express

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