

Gujarat Maritime Horizon 2019 sees an eminent line-up of speakers & panelists deliberating on enhanced cargo & logistics

AHMEDABAD: EXIM India's Gujarat Maritime Horizon (GMH) 2019, a conference on shipping, ports, cargo and logistics, held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Ahmedabad on October 11, 2019, saw an eclectic mix of cargo and logistics players, shippers, regulatory authorities and

others associated with the sector deliberate on the myriad aspects of the event theme: **Trends in Cargo Movement & Multimodal Logistics in Gujarat.**

Across three sessions were covered the topics 'Today & Tomorrow in Shipping & Logistics', 'Challenges & Opportunities in Multicargo handling and potential of Coastal Shipping', and 'Digital Transformation in Cargo Movement and Importance of Maritime Education/Training'. The finer points of each of these topics was elaborated upon and discussed by an eminent line-up of speakers and panelists, which included representatives of leading logistics service providers, manufacturers/shippers, trade bodies representing exporters, and Customs officials.

Inaugural Session - Today & Tomorrow in Shipping & Logistics



Mr Samir Shah



Mr Vishwanath Sreenivasan

The Inaugural Session began with an incisive welcome address and theme presentation by **Mr Samir Shah, Director, JBS Group of Companies.** He talked about the need for logistics industry players to have a lot more discussions with each other and showcase themselves, especially in

these difficult times, stressing that logistics is an integral part of business and the economy and not an ancillary service as perceived. He highlighted that under the National Skill Ministry, there is a Logistics Sector Skill Council working for skill development in the sector, which has defined the sector in 12 different verticals. There

is scope for even more verticals, as in developed countries, and therefore all the players have huge opportunities in the logistics space, he said, adding that the verticals are well developed in Gujarat and offer opportunities across the spectrum. Gujarat is in a good position and therefore one needs to maintain positivity and enthusiasm, it was emphasised.

Mr Shah also called for society to recognise



Among those gracing the Inaugural Session were (from left) Mr Shankhesh Mehta, Mr Vishwanath Sreenivasan, Mr Aditya Gupta, Mr Rahul Agarwal and Mr Bajrang Bardia

logistics as a respectable career option and stressed on having more women in the sector.



Mr Rahul Agarwal

In his special address, **Mr Rahul Agarwal, Senior Assistant VP, Invest India**, highlighted that actual foreign investment of \$ 150 billion is presently happening on the ground in India. This is the best time for exporting goods manufactured in the country, he said, especially given the US-China trade war. India, therefore, has the

potential to capture a very large share of what China ships to the US, and overall there is potential for a trillion dollars of exports from India. He also made the point that there is a lot happening in the infrastructure space in India, which will give a fillip to growth.



Mr Bajrang Bardia

Mr Bajrang Bardia, Senior Vice-President, Gramsim Industries Ltd, in his special address, began by stating that slowdown is in a way good for the industry as people are forced to think about reducing costs, including logistics costs, and improving efficiencies. He pointed out that the logistics sector has seen impressive growth in the last several

years, facilitated by ease of doing business initiatives. Reforms like GST, e-way bill, self-sealing, AEO have been some of the steps taken to reduce inefficiencies, and projects like Sagarmala and DFC will bring about further improvement. But more needs to be done, he said, underlining the requirement of policy impetus to boost coastal shipping, need for growth in domestic container movement, increased digitisation, including shift to e-documents, and better skill development in logistics so that it is seen as a career.



Mr Aditya Gupta

Mr Aditya Gupta, Assistant VP, EXIM Sales, GatewayRail Freight Ltd, in his special address, informed that GatewayRail is India's leading private intermodal operator connecting North India to Western ports of Mundra, Pipavav and Nhava Sheva. It operates 4 rail-linked ICDs in North India and Gujarat along with 1 domestic container terminal in Mumbai. It has a fleet

of 31 train sets and does a monthly throughput of ~27,000 TEUs.

To facilitate integrated services, GatewayRail maintains a dedicated fleet of 335 GPS-enabled trailers

with a robust 24x7 centralised real-time tracking for first and last mile connectivity.

GatewayRail Inland Container Depots (ICDs) offer 42,000 sq. m of warehousing space for cargo handling, including Garment on Hangers (GoH) and temperature-controlled cargo storage. All the ICDs of GatewayRail are well equipped with reefer infrastructure.

In 2017, ICD Ahmedabad (Viramgam) was notified for Rail Operations and formally commenced EXIM operations on July 26, 2019.

ICD Ahmedabad (Viramgam) is designed with capacity to handle 100,000 TEUs and currently the installed capacity is about 50,000 TEUs. The facility is spread across 40 acres of land with 2 rail sidings and 2,400 sq. m of warehousing space.

Viramgam is the confluence point for all three gateway ports, thus the location provides an opportunity for the freight trains circuiting between ports and ICDs to pass through Ahmedabad. Thus, GatewayRail can offer maximum frequency for rail connections to Ahmedabad trade.

Basis cargo availability, GatewayRail commits a daily service to and fro Mundra and Pipavav Port from ICD Viramgam for the movement of EXIM containers. It will also provide thrice-a-week service to Nhava Sheva, making it a viable option for customers to use any of the gateway ports as required.

ICD Ahmedabad (Viramgam) is located in the middle of the industrial belt of Sanand, Mehsana, Becharaji, Surendranagar and Vitthalapur and is also the nearest ICD to Japanese Cluster Park and upcoming Mandal Becharaji Special Investment Region.

GatewayRail facilitates its customers with information through various IT-enabled services, including round-the-clock container tracking through website and other interactive portals such as Customer and Shipping Line portal. Shipping lines can also submit their DO (Delivery Order) online, making it convenient for the importers to take delivery post-clearance.

ICD Viramgam is also equipped to handle live reefer containers as a unique proposition for Ahmedabad reefer customers to book their refrigerated containers by rail, Mr Gupta highlighted.

The **Guest of Honour, Mr Shankhesh Mehta, IRS, Joint Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad**, talked about the journey of Customs from regulator/enforcer to facilitator/enabler, which has helped the country's growth. He highlighted programmes like RMS, EDI, ACP, self-assessment, as well as e-sanchit and AEO



Mr Shankhesh Mehta

introduced for the benefit of the trade, to facilitate smoother and faster clearances. He touched upon the benefits and advantages, for compliant firms, of the globally recognised Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) certification. Customs has evolved a lot and is constantly evolving, he said, adding that the trade and Customs should continue to be partners in growth.

The **Chief Guest, Mr Vishwanath Sreenivasan, Convenor, Federation of Indian Export Organisations**, in a forceful address, made the point that the speed of change in domestic logistics has not been in tune with the times. When times change, policies should change accordingly, failing which there will be a slowdown, he said. Reforms facilitate economic growth, leading to growth in exports, and when exports grow all other factors surrounding it grow, he emphasised. He also touched upon the fact that small entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs starting out in logistics find it difficult to get finance, unlike manufacturers, as an intangible service cannot be valued. He called for logistics service providers such as shipping lines and forwarders to be more transparent and upfront in their dealings with shippers/exporters. Logistics is a very important part of a country's economy, but do it intelligently, correctly and honestly, he stressed.



Mr Vishwanath Sreenivasan

This session was **expertly moderated by Mr Samir Shah**, who made the point that one thing lacking in coastal movement is the presence of many freight forwarders. There aren't too many players who want to work as freight forwarders in coastal shipping, he said, and stressed on the need to have more of them in a segment that has a lot of opportunity. Coastal and break-bulk movement will grow in Gujarat, he added. He also said that digitalisation is a work in progress, with paper processes still in vogue in many areas.



Mr Samir Shah

Among the panelists, **Mr Devang Joshi, President, The Ahmedabad Custom House Agents Association**, said that the role and responsibility has changed a lot in the shift from CHA to Custom broker. Today's Custom broker is a single entity logistician who is capable and dynamic, and offers complete logistics solutions. The future success of the Custom broker will depend on the quality of the software, improved connectivity and mindset change in the trade, he said. The Indian Custom broker is a most knowledgeable professional in the entire ex-im chain, adaptable and agile and ready to accept all the new challenges, he emphasised.

Mr Kaushik Datta Sharma, Senior Vice-President - Liner Division, Parekh Group, pointed out that there has been tremendous growth in cargo



Mr Devang Joshi

First Technical Session – Challenges & Opportunities in Multicargo Handling and Potential of Coastal Shipping



Participants in the First Technical Session were (from left) Mr Rajesh Nirmal, Mr Tushar Ranpara, Mr Ramesh Babu, Mr Madhukar Roat, Mr Samir Shah, Mr C. M. Muraleedharan, Mr Satyen Desai, Mr Kaushik Datta Sharma and Mr Devang Joshi



Mr Kaushik Datta Sharma

handling at Gujarat ports over the last few years, with a variety of commodities in the mix. On digitalisation, he said that leading lines have formed the Digital Container Shipping Association (DCSA), with a common goal to move the industry into the digital era. The association is working on driving standardisation, digitalisation and interoperability. India has to catch up in digitalisation but there is progress happening, he said. Under the new SCMT regulations, it is now compulsory for all shipping lines, importers and exporters to adhere to the defined timelines for manifest filing of all the cargo on a vessel to and from an Indian port. The rule is applicable to all cargo transshipping, discharging and moving via any Indian port, he added.

Commenting on the slowdown, **Mr Satyen Desai, COO, CKB Group of Companies**, said that a turnaround will be a gradual process, adding that LSPs will have to be prepared for the long haul and will have to take some hard decisions in the coming months. He expected cargo growth in Gujarat to be robust over the long term, which will boost the economy of the country. The state's new port policy and other initiatives will help, as also will projects like DMIC and DFC to facilitate cargo growth, he said.



Mr Satyen Desai

Mr C. M. Muraleedharan, President, Avana Logistek Ltd, said coastal shipping has huge po-



Mr C. M. Muraleedharan

tential in Gujarat and can reduce logistics costs. He pointed out that the main commodities currently carried are tiles, fertilisers and agri products and called for better port facilitation to give a fillip to coastal shipping. The Transworld Group has been investing a lot

in coastal shipping, deploying a large number of vessels with significant cargo carrying capacity to provide connectivity from Gujarat to ports all along the country's coast, he added.

Mr Madhukar Roat, IRTS, Chief General Manager, North Western Region, Container Corporation of India Ltd, too highlighted the excellent

potential of coastal shipping, and called for better logistics solutions, freight forwarders, aggregators of logistics, innovative solutions to containerise new cargo, development of distribution logistics, and improved port infrastructure and facilitation to give the segment a boost. Some of the challenges he pointed to were first and last mile connectivity and lack of infrastructure at ports causing berthing delays. Ports should give more importance to coastal shipping, he said. He also made the point that projects like Sagarmala and DFC will enhance cargo movement to and from Gujarat. DFC will facilitate time-bound services and much reduced transit times, he said, adding that CONCOR has brought down the dwell time at ports for containers.

There is huge scope for movement of heavy lift and project cargo in Gujarat, including through coastal shipping, said **Mr Ramesh Babu, MD, Seashell Logistics Pvt. Ltd**. But what is needed is skilled manpower and ancillary facilities, he added. There is lack of necessary infrastructure and equipment at ports, and coastal shipping is not given adequate importance, he said. He also talked about high port charges and bunker costs, but expressed optimism about the future. Regarding the slowdown, he said it is cyclical and could be considered an opportunity.

Mr Tushar Ranpara, MD, EPT Global Logistics Pvt. Ltd, said that shippers and freight forwarders/LSPs should be fair and reasonable to each other, have better understanding on issues, and better interaction/dealings for facilitating seamless cargo movement. Freight forwarders don't control a lot of variables, but are still responsible for their success or failure, he said, pointing out that there is pressure on freight forwarders due to external factors like congestion at ports and airports, etc.

Mr Rajesh Nirmal, General Manager-Logistics & Commercial, Harsha Engineers Ltd, drew attention to the high turnaround time at the



Mr Madhukar Roat



Mr Ramesh Babu



Mr Tushar Ranpara

gateways, which needs to be reduced by shippers and LSPs working together. There should be less gap between policy announcement and implementation, he said, adding that policy shouldn't be trial and error but formulated with proper homework and thought process. He called for better synchronisation in digitalisation in order to do away with multiple entries of the same data. While first and last mile connectivity is a problem in coastal shipping, an option is the RoRo movement of trucks through the coastal route, he said. He also expressed optimism about the potential of coastal shipping.



Mr Rajesh Nirmal

tal freight forwarder, he pointed out, and called on freight forwarders to offer services like track & trace on their platforms. He asked whether the fraternity is ready for freight being bought online. Technology can be used for transfer of information to the relevant multiple stakeholders, which is important. On the role of freight forwarders and their importance, he emphasised that they add value and are a specialist that shippers require. Freight forwarders are here to stay, he stressed.



Mr T. Venkataraman

Mr T. Venkataraman, Managing Director, Goodrich Maritime Pvt. Ltd, in a special address, talked about the grit, determination and pride of the Gujaratis, which has seen the state become the front-runner in growth, including in the maritime sector. And they

Second Technical Session – Digital Transformation in Cargo Movement and Importance of Maritime Education/Training



The Second Technical Session saw participation from (from left) Mr Anurag Chaturvedi, Mr Mahendra Pokhriyal, Mr T. Venkataraman, Mr Vivek Kele, Mr Kunal Rathod and Mr Ajay Nair

This session was brilliantly, and interactively, moderated by **Mr Vivek Kele, Director, Team-global Logistics Pvt. Ltd.** Logistics service providers have to embrace digitalisation, or they will find it increasingly difficult going ahead, he said. With digitalisation, everything becomes transparent, and that's a challenge. Therefore, one has to change one's business practices or risk being left behind. Among the aspects of digitalisation are digital platform and digi-



Mr Vivek Kele

are not one to rest on their laurels, but will keep seeking new avenues for growth, he added. On training, he stressed it is an absolute must and made the point that while academics is important, a majority of the learning in this sector happens on the job. It is, therefore, the responsibility of companies to properly train youngsters. Employees should have the desire to upgrade their skills, not just for increments or promotions, but to be thorough in their job, he said. On technology, he said it is something one cannot stop and will overwhelm you.

Mr Kunal Rathod, Co-Founder, Head of Business Growth, Cogoport, in a special address, said terms like digitalisation and online



Mr Kunal Rathod

marketplace have become buzzwords because technology is today a key enabler and facilitator. There is data in all aspects of cargo movement and when all of it collated and made more intelligent, it is known as digitalisation. It is something that cannot be ignored going forward. The online marketplace, where buyers and sellers can come together, improves visibility for all stakeholders, he said, adding that a digital platform provides convenience.

Among the panelists, **Mr Mahendra Pokhriyal, Cargo Manager – Gujarat, Emirates**, pointed out that air cargo has grown manifold at Ahmedabad airport over the years, but has been stagnating of late due to factors like inadequate infrastructure and security reasons. But that will change as there remains huge scope for airfreight in Ahmedabad and Gujarat. A variety of commodities are handled by air cargo in the state, he said.

Mr Ajay Nair, CMD, Winwin Maritime Ltd, said while the logistics industry is getting transformed digitally, which is beneficial to the trade, there are challenges like lack of requisite infrastructure, internet connectivity issues, etc. He also made the point that personalised service still counts for many in the trade, who don't find technology to be too reliable. Therefore, personalised service is important and



Mr Mahendra Pokhriyal



Mr Ajay Nair

cannot be discounted.

Mr Anurag Chaturvedi, Assistant Vice-President & Head Transport Management Center – Heavy-Lift & Projects, ABB Ltd, said a lot of changes have happened in the last 5-7 years with regard to digitalisation, leading to better visibility, transparency and reduced overall costs. ABB, he added, is majorly into digitalisation and today offers many services to customers completely on digital



Mr Anurag Chaturvedi

platforms. A highlight of the conclave was the active participation of the delegates, again comprising knowledgeable representatives from LSPs, shippers, regulators, etc., who made spirited points on issues like shippers forcing LSPs to become financiers, the exchange rate charged by shipping lines, double taxation, the quality, or lack thereof, of contemporary training and education, and more.

Felicitations & Lucky Draw

The event also saw fifteen key sectoral players being felicitated for their valuable contribution to the trade, among them being **Mr Anant Pancholi of International Cargo Services** for his lifetime contribution.

In addition, there was an exciting Lucky Draw for shippers and LSPs, with three from each category taking home a gold coin as the prize. **(See box for the winners.)**

On the whole, it was an informative and instructive deliberation on the multiple aspects of cargo movement and multimodal logistics in this state and beyond, which brought out issues, highlighted the constraints, and put forth constructive suggestions. The event was thoroughly appreciated by the huge and eminent gathering of delegates from the varied segments of maritime, cargo and logistics, regulatory authorities and enablers, as well as shippers and consignees, who also availed of the opportunity to network given that the entire fraternity was gathered under one roof.

Gujarat Maritime Horizon 2019-SHIPPERs & LSP LUCKY DRAW WINNER LIST

| Shippers | | LSPs | |
|--------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Person Name | Company Name | Person Name | Company Name |
| Mr Rahul Kavade | Arvind Ltd | Ms Jyotee Mackwana | MSC Agency (India) Pvt. Ltd |
| Mr Irfan Babi | ABB India Ltd | Mr C. M. Muraleedharan | Avana Logistek Ltd |
| Mr Himanshu Mistry | ABB India Ltd | Mr Kishan Jobanputra | Landmark CFS Pvt. Ltd |

GUJARAT MARITIME HORIZON 2019 - FELICITATIONS

MR ANANT PANCHOLI, INTERNATIONAL CARGO SERVICES



For a lifetime contribution dedicated to providing the best of Logistics Services to the Trade

AHMEDABAD CUSTOMS



For its proficient facilitation and regulation of ex-im trade in Gujarat

GUJARAT MARITIME BOARD



For its contribution towards the growth of Gujarat Region Trade

MR SAMIR J. SHAH, DIRECTOR, JBS GROUP OF COMPANIES



For being a valued mentor to the Cargo, Logistics and Ex-Im Trade in Gujarat

GUJARAT MARITIME UNIVERSITY



For its commitment to build the knowledge gap in the maritime and shipping sector by establishing a maritime university focusing on the global maritime and shipping trends

DMICDC LOGISTICS DATA SERVICES LTD



For its innovation in Container Tracking Solution

ADANI PORTS AND SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE LIMITED



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade

MSC AGENCY (INDIA) PRIVATE LIMITED



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade

CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD



For its pioneering efforts in developing & continuously enhancing Ex-Im logistics in Gujarat

CKB GROUP OF COMPANIES



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade

SURAJ FORWARDERS PVT. LTD



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade

KAUSHALI INTERNATIONAL



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade

GOODRICH MARITIME PVT. LTD



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade

AVANA LOGISTEK LTD



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade

TOTAL TRANSPORT SYSTEMS LTD



For its contribution towards the growth of Ahmedabad Region trade





