



Donald Trump was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on the 20th Jan. Trump, 78, was the country's 45th president, and only the second to serve a second nonconsecutive term. With Trump's inauguration, President Joe Biden leaves office after a single four-year term in the White House.

After 15 months of war that began with a brutal attack on Israel by Hamas and ended with much of the Gaza Strip levelled by Israel, a ceasefire came into effect on the 19th Jan, that saw three women hostages released from Gaza and 90 Palestinians freed from Israeli jails in return. Extensive planning had gone into the delicate handover, with military medics and psychologists readied for the first stages of the process at a reception centre designed to ease the hostages' transition. Hope this stays and peace prevails for the good of humanity.

In sporting action, from the world of Tennis the first Grand slam of the year, The Australian open concluded with a new Australian open first time grand slam women's Champ in Madison Keys of the US who beat the defending champion and world No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka. In the Mens final the world no. 1 and defending champion Jannik Sinner of Italy won the crown defeating Alexander Zverev.

The New year has started with accidents, natural calamity but also hope, peace and a mix of good and bad. Let us hope that we move forward progressively and globally stability and prosperity prevail. We must have heard a relevant saying – Hope is the only thing stronger than Fear So let us hope for Peace and prosperity.

Lets Read on

Light Moments

A Dad Daughter conversation

Daughter's text to Dad:

Daddy, I'm coming home to get married soon. As you know, I'm in Australia and he's in the US. We met on a dating site, became friends on Facebook, and had long chats on WhatsApp. He proposed to me on Skype and now we've had a 2 month relationship through Viber. Dad, I need your blessing, good wishes, and a really big wedding. Lots of love, Lilly.

Dad's reply:

My dear Lilly, Like Wow! Really? Cool! Whatever... I suggest you two get married on Twitter, have fun on Tango, register for your stuff on Amazon, and pay for it all through PayPal. And when you get fed up with this new husband, sell him on eBay.
Lots of love, Dad.

News from Sevenseas

The New year has begun on a slow but firm note. Activities and business flow has begun faster than usual after the year end holiday season. For sure a good sign for the trade. At Sevenseas it has been a busy time.

Sevenseas has been strengthening our systems, team and infrastructure in a very phased and planned manner. There have been restructuring of activities and updated systems introduced. The recent development has been a centralised pricing on select lanes. Not to forget the better infrastructure, by way of the upgraded offices at many of the Sevenseas office locations. As always we are keeping pace with the market and have kept ourselves opportunity ready. We look forward to growing together with continued support during this year and further ahead.

You are most welcome to visit our improved and updated website on www.sevenseasexpress.com

Food Trail - Less famous but delicious dishes - Sarde in saor, Italy



Some dishes are so iconic, people will journey halfway across the globe to try them. But what about lesser-known delicacies. Sarde in saor is a simple Italian dish. The freshest sardines are deep-fried and left to marinate in a slightly sweet, slightly vinegary sauce along with thin slices of prized Chioggia onions. This process both flavours and preserves the dish. To serve, they're sprinkled with pine nuts and sometimes raisins, making for an admittedly unusual but very tasty dish.

Trade News

CMA CGM starts gradual return to Suez Canal

The Suez Canal is set to gradually resume its full capacity, as conditions for improved security in the Red Sea region start to be created following the ceasefire agreement in Gaza and Houthis pledge to limit their attacks on non-Israeli ships. Adm. Ossama Rabiee, Chairman of the Suez Canal Authority, emphasised the canal's readiness to accommodate these returning services. French liner major CMA CGM has emerged among the first shipping lines that are resuming transits through the Suez Canal following the ceasefire, signalling what is hoped to be the beginning of a gradual return to normalcy for the vital waterway. Rabiee said that starting January 23, several CMA CGM vessels are set to transit the canal as part of the EPIC (Europe Pakistan India Consortium) service between South Asia and Europe. The weekly service includes 13 ports of call and a vessel fleet of 13 container ships, including those from COSCO and OOCL.

According to Rabiee, the Suez Canal Authority continues to enhance its capacity and services, including the completion of a new 10-kilometre channel at the southern end of the canal. The expansion increases the length of the two-way section of the canal from 72 kilometres to 82 kilometres, which is expected to improve the canal's capacity by allowing the passage of an additional 6 to 8 ships per day. The project also aims to enhance navigation efficiency and increase the canal's ability to manage potential emergencies. The commercial operation of the new channel is set to start in the first quarter of 2025.

MSC starts feeder service connecting Vizhinjam transshipment terminal with Haldia Dock Complex

MSC, the world's biggest container shipping line, has started a feeder service linking Haldia Dock Complex of state owned Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port Authority with the newly opened container transshipment terminal at Vizhinjam in Kerala. The containers originating and bound for Kolkata/Haldia trade were earlier transhipped through Colombo port, a regional transshipment hub. The service to be run every ten days is the first feeder service to be launched between an Indian gateway port and the Vizhinjam transshipment port after India constructed a transshipment facility to cut dependence on Colombo port for sending and receiving containers. The 'Haldia Shuttle' service will also halt at Paradip port enroute to Vizhinjam. At both Haldia and Paradip ports, the feeder service will call at the terminal run by J M Baxi Ports & Logistics Ltd. The Vizhinjam container transshipment facility has drawn the most ship calls from MSC since it began operations, initially on a trial basis in July 2024 and then launching full-fledged commercial operations in December. The terminal handled almost one lakh TEUs during the trial period, which ran from July to November.

According to estimates, Colombo, Singapore, and other regional ports tranship about 3 million TEUs of cargo containers heading for India each year. Over 85% of this is handled by Colombo, Singapore, and Port Klang, with Colombo alone handling roughly 2.5 million TEUs. Transshipment of cargo leads to logistical cost inefficiencies for Indian industry because of the additional port handling fees that are incurred at the transshipment hubs. Sources noted that the extra port handling costs, which amount to \$80-100 per TEU, might be avoided if the container was imported or exported as direct gateway cargo rather than being transhipped.

Yards 'choked with boxes' as congestion returns to Colombo

A nagging capacity strain at Sri Lanka's Colombo port, which caused considerable congestion issues in early 2024, has come back to haunt container lines and shippers using the busy South Asia hub. A confluence of factors seems to have contributed to the latest bout of disruption, with fears the delays will last at least through the month, according to industry sources in Colombo. "Inter-terminal activity is painfully slow, and yards are alarmingly choked with containers," one ship agent said. Brisk inter-terminal transfers (IITs) are critical for container transshipment operations. The source noted: "Vessels are often incurring delays of up to three days to berth." With no specific official updates on the logjam, sources believe sporadic vessel bunching and some slackness by importers in picking up cargo after Customs' intensified inspections have added to the capacity pressure at the port.

Travel Diaries – Mana Pools National Park, Zimbabwe



Mana Pools National Park is in the far north of Zimbabwe. It includes the south bank and islands of the Zambezi River, which forms the border with Zambia. The park is known for wildlife visibility beside the river and in the flood plains. Large populations of elephants, hippos and Nile crocodiles gather at sunrise in the Long Pool. In the park's south, lions wait for prey around the waterhole at Chitake Spring. Few places in Africa are as wild. "Elephants shake the acacia trees to dislodge pods to munch, lions roam in huge prides hunting big herds of buffalo, crocodiles grow to five metres, and hippos still rule the rivers,".

Off Beat News - Homewoner Removes Doors and Windows After Tenants Stop Paying Rent



A landlord in northern France is trying to force his tenants to leave in the middle of winter by removing the doors and windows on his property. In France, as in many European countries, it's illegal to evict tenants in wintertime, even if they are behind on rent. However, one landlord in Pas-de-Calais, a department in northern France, is trying to skirt around the law by forcing his tenants to vacate the property without actually asking them to leave. On December 20th, a team of workers arrived at the property and started disassembling the doors and windows under the pretext of replacing

them. However, the tenants claim that they just loaded up the old doors and windows in a car and drove away, leaving them to brave the cold and face potential intrusion at all hours of the day and night.

The tenant, a mother of one, told sources that she tried reaching out to the landlord after the incident, but they have been unreachable. Left with no other option, the woman barricaded the windows and doors with cardboard. She claims she is too terrified to leave the property now, so she spends all of her time at home. Contacted by French media, the landlord took responsibility for their actions, admitting to having the doors and windows on her property removed, adding that she only did it because the tenant failed to keep up their end of the bargain.

"They didn't insure the house. In fact, we had agreed together that she would pay. She owes me five months' rent," they told France Info. The French Homeowners' Association told reporters that they understand the landlord's motives, adding that the method used to coerce the tenants into leaving the property is completely illegal. The tenant has filed a complaint for breach of trust and is looking for social housing.

Thought for the month...

Some life lessons that we can value ...

Seek respect, not attention. It lasts longer