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BD136m 'superport'

Bahrain is already planning a massive expansion for the new super-port, more than doubling its size and capacity.

The BD136.4 million Khalifa bin Salman Port (KBSP) began operations earlier in the year, but was officially opened this month by His Majesty King Hamad, in a ceremony attended by His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Deputy Supreme Commander.

It will play a huge role in opening up more trade for Bahrain and the region with the rest of the world, says General Organisation of Seaports (GOP) chairman Shaikh Daij bin Salman bin Daij Al Khalifa.

The port was now capable of handling 1.1 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEU) a year.

TEU is an inexact unit of cargo capacity often to describe the capacity of container ships and terminals - based on the volume of a 20-foot long intermodal container.

Shaikh Daij said that over the next few years, the port would be able to handle nearly 2.5m TEU's per annum.

"The area along which the port is spread will also increase from the present 110 hectares to



●Quayside cranes at the ready

250 hectares, with more land being reclaimed from the sea," he said.

"We are already in the process of further deepening the approach channel to the port,

which will go up to a depth of 14 metres by the end of March next year from the present 12.7m.

This will further increase to 15m as we go on expanding."

Shaikh Daij said it was a matter of pride for Bahrain that the new world-class facility was operational.

"This is a valuable addition to the existing strong infrastructure that exists in the country and will assist faster development of all sectors of the economy," he said.

The port is already turning out to be a lifeline for Bahrain and as it expands, will become a boon for trade with the rest of the world, as it will provide an ideal connection with the countries of the Northern Gulf, said Shaikh Daij.

"Not only will Bahraini vessels benefit, they will be able to feed goods to feeder vessels that, in turn, will mean increased trade between Bahrain and other countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq and Iran," he said.

"In the future, these transshipments will increase and overall, this will have a huge positive impact on the economy of Bahrain."

Shaikh Daij said once the approach channel was dredged and the depth increased, the volumes would follow.

"We realise as time passes there will be more demand so we have thought of a large expansion plan," he said.

"As part of this plan, to be implemented very soon, we shall see the total size increasing to 250 hectares and capacity increasing to 2.5m TEU's. This is significant."

Though the recent economic turmoil all over the world has affected everybody, Bahrain escaped the brunt of the crisis.

"Volume grew by 12 per cent last year, compared to 2007 and we are happy with it," said Shaikh Daij.

"Hopefully, over the next few years, we shall continue to report strong growth.

"We are sensitive to the economic and business realities that 2008 brought with it and accordingly we are now placing even more emphasis on financial and fiscal prudence."

He said the port, from its striking contemporary architecture to the latest Navis technology (planning and control of container terminals programme) it uses, was borne of the 21st century and would be an unmistakable icon for Bahrain's maritime industry.

"Over the years, Bahrain's ports have been adapted and developed to keep abreast of the



Congratulations and best wishes to

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa

The Prime Minister

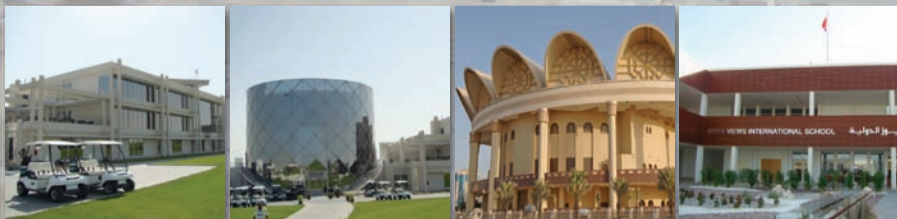
His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa

Deputy Supreme Commander

and the people of the Kingdom of Bahrain

on the occasion of

The National Day



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First 'boutique'

The Bahrain Logistics Zone (BLZ) is the region's first boutique logistics area designed to accommodate re-export and value-added activities.

The BLZ, three km from the Khalifa bin Salman Port, offers a high quality environment to companies that meet its stringent tenancy requirements for plots spread across 454,000sqm of leasable space.

It is operated by the General Organisation of Seaport (GOP) and is designed to offer local, regional and international companies a base to operate in a bonded area.

It enables them to take advantage of Bahrain's strategic position to cater to the Northern Gulf market.

While logistics firms are the favoured candidates, the BLZ also welcomes retailers and distributors - such as clothing retailers and auto parts exporters.

Typical favoured logistics activities include component assembly, labelling, packaging, re-packaging, mixing, weighing, filling, kitting, palletising, testing and repair.

The BLZ is focused on attracting commercial activities that encourage job creation for Bahrainis, foreign investment and volume throughput.

It was launched last year following a feasibility study that was carried out the previous year by management consultancy firm AT Kearney.

The implementation study covered developing the BLZ's organisation structure, hiring of key team members, building the tenant selection criteria and the subsequent selection of tenants through a book-building exercise.

While the construction of the key infrastructure was underway, Royal Haskoning was appointed to develop and finalise the zone's master plan.

This involved the completion of the definitive layout of the BLZ site, including the plots, roads and location of utilities.

The allocation of plots involved setting out their precise location to geographical coordinates, dimensions and area.