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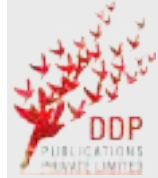
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Air cargo, MSMEs, export growth take centre stage

The Union Budget gave boost to air cargo, warehousing, and MSMEs, recognising their importance in driving export growth. Focusing on setting up Export Promotion Mission, new destinations and linkage under UDAN scheme and greenfield airports, the Budget seeks to expand India's reach in global market.



CT Bureau

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, presenting the Union Budget 2025-2026 in the Lok Sabha, focused on MSMEs to

The Budget lay emphasis on boosting exports out of India, especially of high-value perishables and agri-produce



be the second growth engine to achieve Viksit Bharat 2047.

The Budget lay emphasis on boosting exports out of India, especially of high-value perishables and agri-produce. Export Promotion Mission was also proposed

to be set up jointly by the Union Ministries of Commerce, MSMEs and Finance. The mission will facilitate easy access to export credit, cross-border factory support, support to MSMEs to tackle non-direct measures in overseas markets.

Digital public infrastructure for global trade will be set up as a unified platform for trade documentation and financing solutions. This will complement the unified logistics interface platform (ULIP). Support will be provided to develop domestic

manufacturing capacities for economies' integration with global supply chains and PMGS data will be made accessible to the private sector.

Cargo screening and customs clearance processes will be made user-friendly to

improve efficiency and ease for stakeholders. Sectors will be identified based on the objective criteria. Presentation groups with participa-

Modified UDAN scheme to enhance regional linkage to 120 new destinations and support helipads and smaller airports in Northeast region

tion of senior officers and industry representatives will be formed for selected products and supply chains.

Through this, there will be huge opportunities for Industry 4.0, which requires skills and talent. A national framework will be formulated as guidance to states for promoting global capability centres in emerging tier II

cities. The government will facilitate upgradation of infrastructure and warehousing for air cargo, including high-value perishables and agri-produce. The investment and turnover limits for classification of all MSMEs will be enhanced to 2.5 and two times, respectively. “This will give them the confidence to grow and generate employment for youth. There will also be a boost in technological upgradation for MSMEs,” the Minister said.

She proposed to set up a Maritime Development Fund with a corpus of ₹25,000 crore. She mentioned this corpus will be for distributed to support and promote competition in the maritime industry. The fund will have up to 49 per cent contribution by the government, and the balance will be mobilised from respective ports and the private sector.

The Budget also proposed to facilitate ‘shipbuild-



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- ✚ MSMEs to be the second growth engine for Viksit Bharat 2047
- ✚ Focus on boosting exports of perishables and agri-produce
- ✚ Export Promotion Mission to be set up jointly by the Ministries of Commerce, MSMEs and Finance
- ✚ Digital public infrastructure for global trade will be set up under ULIP
- ✚ Cargo screening and customs clearance processes will be made more user-friendly
- ✚ UDAN scheme to enhance regional connectivity to 120 new destinations
- ✚ Greenfield airports will be facilitated to meet future needs of Bihar
- ✚ Expansion of capacity of Patna airport and a brownfield airport at Bihta
- ✚ Shipbuilding clusters to increase range, categories and capacity of ships

ing clusters’ to increase the range, categories and capacity of ships. This will include additional infrastructure facilities, skilling and technology to develop the entire ecosystem. Commending the Regional Connectivity Scheme UDAN, Sitharaman, in her Budget speech, said, UDAN has enabled 1.5 crore middle-class people to meet their aspirations for speedier travel. The scheme has linked 88 airports and operationalised 619 routes.

Inspired by this success, a modified UDAN scheme will be launched to enhance regional connectivity to 120 new destinations and carry four crore passengers in the next 10 years. This scheme, she added, will support helipads and smaller airports in hilly, aspirational, and North-East region districts.

“The government will facilitate upgradation of infrastructure and warehousing for air cargo, including high value perishable horticulture

produce. Cargo screening and customs protocols will also be streamlined and made user-friendly,” the FM said, while presenting her straight eighth Budget.

Giving infrastructure filip to Bihar, she proposed greenfield airports will be facilitated in Bihar to meet the state’s future needs. Apart from expansion of Patna airport’s capacity, a brownfield airport will also be set up at Bihta town.

2025 WHAT TO EXPECT

US\$ 8.96 trillion
Size of logistics market in 2023

US\$ 21.91 trillion
Size of the market in 2033

9.35%
Growth of CAGR

Tax breaks
Given for modernising warehouses

State-wise logistics policies, infra, skilling on agenda

Twenty-six states have already formed their logistics policies. We have seen the drafts of remaining states and given our inputs. By this year-end, we may have all the policies in place, says **Jivisha Joshi, Deputy Secretary, DPIIT, Union Ministry of Commerce & Industry.**



 Ritika Arora Bhola

The Centre is prioritising infrastructure development, skilling initiatives and state-specific logistics action plans to boost economic growth and regional connectivity. Focused investments are being made in upgrading transportation networks, airports, ports, and digital infrastructure to enhance efficiency. Skill development programmes are being rolled out to empower the workforce and equipping them with necessary capabilities for emerging industries. Tailored logistics action plans are being implemented in each state, addressing regional challenges and optimising supply chains to ensure faster and more cost-effective delivery of goods.

Comment on the state of logistics, considering the progress taking place under initiatives such as PMGS, NLP and ULIP?

The government initiatives have transformed the Indian logistics sector in the past two to three years. We can also use geotags and GeoMap efficiently. There have been investments in digital and physical infrastructure as well as social assets. Today, anything which

is above ₹500 crore comes to our network planning group wherein inputs of all the modes are considered before any project is finalised. This helps in advanced planning and future projections. Even in the Union Budget 2024-2025, an investment of ₹11.2 lakh crore in infrastructure was announced. If you look at the consistent investment in infrastructure development over the past few budgets, you will realise that this is where the focus lies. Coming to NLP, out

of 36 states and UTs, 26 states have their own state logistic policy in place and many of them granted industry status to logistics.

When can we expect the remaining to receive their respective state policies?

The remaining 10 states have their policies in the draft stage. In Northeast, Sikkim, Meghalaya and Nagaland have their drafts ready and we have already gone through the drafts and given our input. We try to have a look at what kind of drafts they are making, and give our feedback based upon what can be incorporated and what extra can be done.

So, cross learning is important. If one state does well or follow a good practice, we try to share that with all the other states. So that they can come out with the best possible poli-

Cross learning is important. If one state does well or follows a good practice, we try to share that with all the other states

cies in their case. By this year-end, we may have all the policies in place.

What solutions would you like to suggest to overcome issues such as lack of adequate infra and high logistics costs?

The important thing the Centre can do is to put a policy in place, which works as a guideline. The government then expects each state to follow the same and make



Jivisha Joshi
Deputy Secretary, DPIIT, Union
Ministry of Commerce & Industry

“The important thing the central government can do is to put a policy in place, which works as a guideline.”



appropriate guidelines. We already have National Logistics Policy (NLP) in place. All the states will have their logistics policies and those who have it ready have also started working on them. It may be a slow progress, but I feel that slow and steady progress is better than fast and an ad hoc way of moving forward. We have started working towards standardisation of processes at airports or ports. Whichever is the major aggregator area when it comes to air cargo transportation, we are trying to standardise processes, trying to share the best practices.

How would MSMEs be the second engine of growth for the Viksit Bharat 2047? How could they contribute to overall growth?

Most of the logistics sector is unorganised. It is not a well-defined sector. The entire supply chain has small players, most of them come under the MSMEs. So, the MSME ministry is already working on a lot of schemes to empower MSMEs. These schemes will prove beneficial for MSMEs, and all the issues be it skilling or costs will be resolved under these policies.

One of the biggest positives of the ministry and our dept is we have never walked alone. We have always worked together

Do we have the skill set in India to train the workforce to adopt and use advanced technology?

We always say, if not us then who? The kind of Information Technology force that we have generated; there is no dearth of skilled people in the country. But then one must always remember that it is a continuous exercise, it is a continuous endeavour in life and skilling. So, skill, reskill and repeat that is the kind of thing we need to have.

What is important is to have a proper skilling course in place so that we keep adopting to the coming changes. Technology is changing very fast. We are investing into it. We are looking at a lot of courses at the skill council level and the ministry is also trying to collaborate and work towards it.

How crucial is collaboration for the industry’s growth?

One of the biggest positives of this ministry and our department is that we have never walked alone. We have always worked together, whether it is industry associations, small players, or startups. We believe in collaboration. There are certain things which a government can do. One should always recognise that it is a combined effort. It is not an individual effort and collaboration is the prime thing to do. You must start from there. Only then will you realise what are the problems on the ground and then you will have the policy which will address the issues. Otherwise, you will only end up making policies.



2025
WHAT TO EXPECT

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Size of logistics market in 2023

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Size of the market a ound in 2033

9.35%
Growth of CAGR

Tax breaks
Given for modernising warehouses

DPIIT, KoTI sign pact to support infrastructure growth

DPIIT and KoTI have signed an agreement to strengthen collaboration in logistics and infrastructure development. The collaboration underscores the country's commitment to global partnerships and technology advancements in infrastructure planning.



The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Government of India, and the Korea Transport Institute (KoTI), Republic of Korea (RoK), have signed an agreement to strengthen collaboration in logistics and infrastructure development. Youngchan Kim, President, KoTI, and His Excellency Amit Kumar, Am-

The pact aims to facilitate cooperation in the logistics and infrastructure sectors by leveraging KoTI's expertise

bassador of India to the Republic of Korea formalised the agreement at Sejong National Research Complex, South Korea, with, representing the respective nations.

The agreement aims to facilitate cooperation in the logistics and infrastructure



sectors by leveraging KoTI's expertise to support India's ambitious infrastructure development initiatives. Under this agreement, joint working meetings will be convened to advance strategic objectives and ensure effective implementation of the collaborative efforts.

A significant aspect of this partnership is the establishment of a comprehensive

framework for knowledge exchange and institutional cooperation between DPIIT's Logistics Division and KoTI. This initiative aligns with the objectives of the Prime Minister Gati Shakti (PMGS), which is designed in order to enhance infrastructure connectivity across India. By integrating advanced technological solutions and best practices, the pact seeks to optimise logistics efficiency and master planning processes.

Key benefits of this collaboration include the development of research-driven programmes aimed at enhancing domain expertise in logistics and infrastructure. The partnership will facilitate cross-learning opportunities in master planning, technology adoption and innovation. It will also promote the utilisation of Geographic Information System (GIS)-based data technology to enhance infrastructure development and

decision-making processes on an international scale.

The agreement is likely to play a vital role in strengthening ties between India and South Korea, while fostering innovation in logistics and infrastructure development. By sharing best practices and technical know-how, the duo can work towards improving efficiency in the sector and achieving long-term SDGs.

The collaboration underscores the country's commitment to global partnerships and tech advancements in infrastructure planning. The pact also aligns with the broader vision of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', celebrating India's progress and fostering international cooperation to drive economic growth. The agreement sets the foundation for future engagements, encouraging continuous dialogue and joint research efforts between the two nations.



Kale launches Malaysia Maritime Single Window at Port Klang

Kale's Malaysia Maritime Single Window has cut vessel clearance times as Port Klang, Malaysia, saw 5 per cent YoY growth in 2024 cargo volume. The improvement seen in Port Klang's operation speaks volumes of capabilities of this level of collaboration, especially as Port Klang targets 15 million TEUs in 2025.



Vineet Malhotra
Co-founder and Director
Kale Logistics Solutions

“The improvement already seen in Port Klang's ops speaks volumes of the capabilities of this level.”

to five days, down to within hours, due to the real-time data and transparency of service level agreements (SLAs) it manages.

“The Ship Clearance System has been a game changer for us. Transitioning from a manual, time-consuming process to a seamless digital platform has significantly improved efficiency and reduced clearance times—we are proud to be among the first to implement it successfully,” Captain Subramaniam, General Manager, Port Klang, said.



The MMSW digitally enhanced operations at Malaysia's largest port situated on the world's second busiest shipping lane, the Malacca Strait, to which 11,000 vessels call each year. Further phases of the MMSW project are set to see more ports join the system and the system's capabilities set to increase further.

“I am proud to see how the Kale system has helped Malaysian trade, as Malaysian ports reported over 30 million TEUs last year, a 10 per cent increase over the previous year,” disclosed Vineet Malhotra, Co-founder and Director, Kale Logistics Solutions.

The improvement already seen in Port Klang's operation speaks volumes of the capabilities of this level of collaboration, especially as Port Klang targets 15 million TEUs in 2025.

Following implementation at Port Klang the system was initiated across other federal ports in Malaysia, creating a digital framework to make port cargo operations vastly more efficient.

MMSW is part of Kale's Port Community System, designed to promote paperless trade through the digitalisation of port systems to increase their efficiency, improve sustainability, and improve stakeholder communication.



NEXT GEN COMMODITIES POWERING GROWTH



India's future growth will be driven by blend of conventional and new commodities, especially those tied to technological advancements, sustainability and demographic changes. Sectors such as pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, electric vehicles, digital technologies and sustainable agriculture are likely to see significant growth soon.



Ritika Arora Bhola

With government support and active state-wise industry participation, Indian logistics sector has entered an era of optimism and growth. Initiatives such as Prime Minister Gati Shakti, National Logistics Policy, Make in India and Self-Reliant India have played

PPPs are boosting infra, while policies such as subsidies, tax perks and ESG are shaping a resilient and future-ready commodities

a crucial role in enhancing overall logistics performance, attracting foreign investors and showcasing the country as a potential trade and investment destination.


Several foreign manufacturers, forwarders, aircraft manufacturers such as Airbus and Boeing have opened their facilities in India in the past few years. India's economic growth is driven by several commodities, aligned with global trends, technological advancements and domestic needs. E-commerce, pharma and energy sectors have witnessed surge in demand in the past three to four years and contributed to the growth.

As per experts, industries such as pharma, perishables, EV components, renewable energy materials such as lithium and cobalt, are essential for EVs, clean energy, renewable energy resources and technologies such as semiconductors, will play a vital role in fuelling India's growth. As the country shifts towards sustainable energy, electrification of transport and digital transformation, these emerging sectors will drive innovation and economic expansion.

Commodities tied to infrastructure, healthcare and farm sectors will ensure a resilient

growth trajectory, positioning India as a global leader in various industries, while meeting the needs of its growing population. PPPs are driving infra development, while policies such as subsidies, tax incentives, and ESG mandates are shaping a future-ready commodities market. These futuristic investments ensure long-term growth, energy security, and economic stability in a rapidly evolving global eco-system.

The Union Budget 2025-26 focused upon establishing Exports Promotion Council to boost exports and promised over ₹11 lakh crore investment in infrastructure. The announcements will certainly boost cargo domestically and globally. Standardisation is a must, considering the logistics sector's unorganised nature; it is important to have exporter friendly policies and regulatory reforms in place for encouraging them to achieve optimal productivity in maximising exports. We expect the govt. to drive regulatory reforms through the PMGS and NLP to establish a global standard air logistics ecosystem as the PMGS focuses on infra development, pivotal in modernising transportation networks. The government needs to investigate upgradation and modernisation of the airports located in the satellite towns to derive strategic advantages by the exporters.

 speaks to experts to know in-depth about the current trade, govt. initiatives to enhance production and transportation capabilities and efficiencies and commodities which will drive growth soon.

AT A GLANCE

- ➔ The emerging sectors' tech advancements will drive innovation and economic expansion
- ➔ PMGS, NLP have played a major role in enhancing overall logistics performance.





Pharma to drive growth in cold chain logistics

“ I believe commodities needing specialised transportation will play a vital role in economic growth, such as lithium, aluminium, and zinc. These are a must for new AI-enabled, tech-driven world and its shift toward pollution-free mobility. Agri products, such as grains and oilseeds cater to the food and dietary demands of a growing global population. Pharmaceuticals such as vaccines and biologics will drive growth in cold chain logistics.



Ayesha Katgara
Head, Corporate Strategy
Jeena & Co

Green hydrogen may play vital role in enhancing efficiency in the sector

Green hydrogen, from a sustainability perspective, is likely to play a vital role in enhancing efficiency within the logistics industry.”

E-commerce pushes demand for rapid logistics

“ Global trade is shifting, and certain commodities will play a key role in economic growth. Pharmaceuticals are in high demand, with new biotech developments and rising healthcare needs. Renewable energy materials such as lithium and cobalt are essential for EVs and clean energy. Agri-tech and perishables are also growing as food security becomes a global priority. Semiconductors and electronics continue to drive the digital economy. The governments and industries are making big moves to ensure long-term trade growth.”



Kritika Seth
Head, Business Development
Allied Aviation

Agri-tech and perishables are also growing as food security becomes a global priority



Contd. on next page ▶



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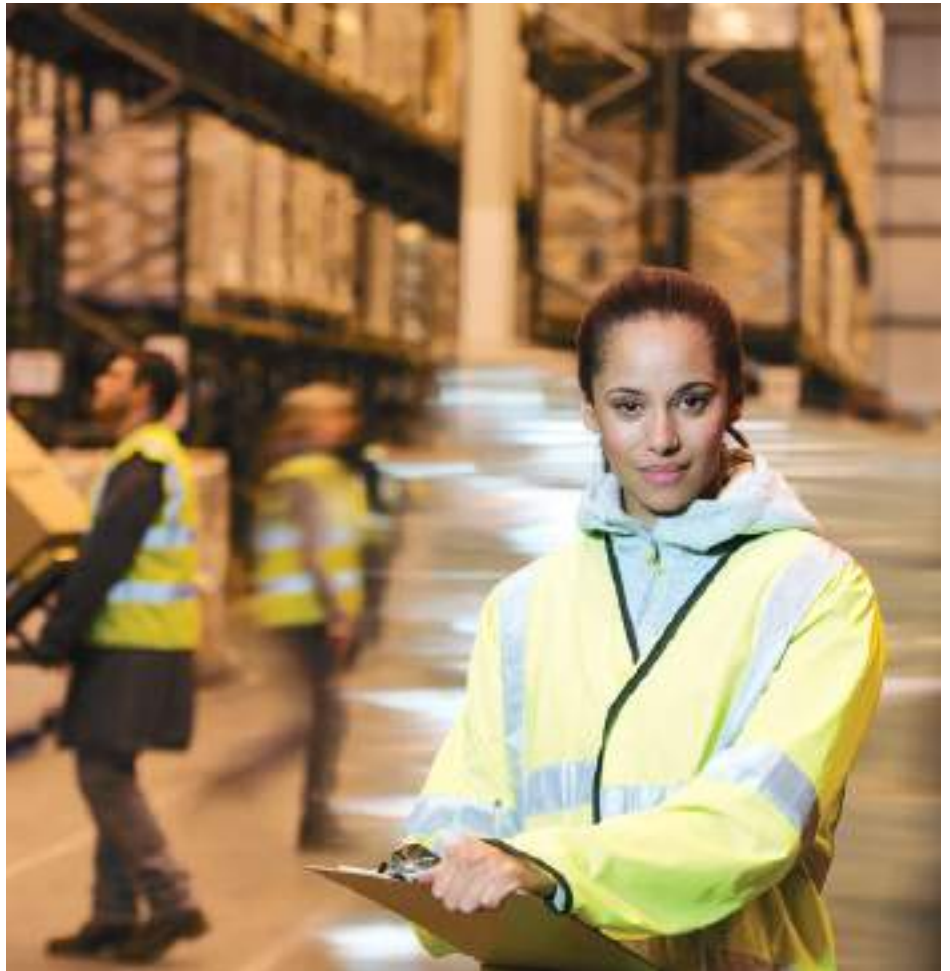
Regulatory support for sustainable practices

“As the world focuses on sustainability and improving environmental conditions, use of EVs is expected to rise. Products essential for EV production, such as lithium batteries, cobalt, and copper, will experience growth due to need for sustainable solutions. With the evolution of AI, AI-based hardware such as robots will become prevalent in manufacturing sectors to automate production processes. Govts. and industries focus on 4Is—information, insight, influence and impact—before making investments. Regulatory support to promote sustainable practices play a vital role in ensuring growth.”



Kavitha Suresh
AGM, Crown Workspace & Warehousing

AI-based hardware will become prevalent in manufacturing sectors



Green hydrogen to change energy landscape

“The future of global trade will be shaped by emerging commodities such as lithium, cobalt, rare earth elements, hydrogen, and sustainable biofuels. These resources are vital for energy transition, EVs, and advanced technology sectors. Green hydrogen and ammonia are set to transform the energy landscape, while plant-based proteins and precision-fermented foods will redefine global food systems. Many nations are implementing mineral security strategies, incentivising domestic mining and processing to reduce dependence on single-source suppliers.”



Sharmila Amin
Managing Director,
South Asia India
Bertling Logistics India

The future of global trade will be shaped by lithium, cobalt, earth elements etc

Emerging markets make 65% of economic growth

“Considering the geopolitical situations, rare earth minerals, critical minerals and semi-conductors will be the markets controlling emerging products. It will play a vital role in shaping global economy. They are expected to bring 65 per cent of global economic growth by 2035, with nine emerging markets ranking amongst the 20 largest economies. From industry point of view, they would have to invest in R&D, tech and diversify to take advantage of the products in their region, understand trade shifts and probe resilient initiatives.”



Chaitaly Mehta
Director
EKF Global Logistics

To take benefit of the products, the emerging markets would have to invest in R&D, tech etc



Shift towards products supporting renewable energy

“There is a shift towards commodities that support renewable energy production. The demand for EVs, electronics, lithium, cobalt and nickel is increasing. Green hydrogen is emerging as an energy solution, replacing fossil fuels in transport, power generation, and heavy industries. The govt. has launched a Critical Mineral Mission in 2025 to produce cobalt, nickel and lithium and formed JVs to get expertise in developing critical minerals. The sustainable manufacturing’s future rests on biodegradable and smart materials.”



Alpna Chaturvedi
CEO
My Logistics Gurukul

Green hydrogen is emerging as an energy solution, replacing fossil fuels

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Capital spending to boost infrastructure

“EV batteries, green hydrogen, rare metals, renewable energy components, and farm products will see phenomenal growth. The govt. will help small businesses by supporting them in increasing credit limits and making it easier to get funding. This will benefit MSMEs. Govt. has initiated Bharat TradeNet and Export Promotion Mission, working to link manufacturers with global supply chains. These changes will require make better infra, supply chain management, and transportation tech. To sustain in new markets, firms need to innovate and use sustainable practices.”



Reema Jogani
Director
Reema Transport

The sectors that are doing well are e-commerce, processed foods and pharma



More demand likely for farm products, biofuel

“The future of global growth hinges on a new generation of commodities. Beyond traditional staples, we see critical minerals taking centre stage. Lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements are essential for EVs, renewable energy systems, and advanced electronics. In the APAC region, with its burgeoning tech sector and focus on sustainability, these commodities become crucial. We anticipate more demand for sustainable farm products and advanced biofuels, driven by growing populations and the need for eco-friendly solutions. These commodities will fuel economic growth and shape a sustainable future.”



Smitha Shetty
Regional Director, APAC
Achilles Information

Beyond traditional staples, we see critical minerals taking centre stage



Sustainable biofuel to transform transportation

“Lithium and rare earth metals dominate as demand for EVs and renewable energy surges, while green hydrogen emerges as a game changer for clean energy and industrial decarbonisation. Silicon, gallium, and germanium fuel AI, 5G, and automation, driving paradigm shifts in technology. Sustainable biofuels will revolutionise transportation, alter carbon footprint, and carbon credits will become an asset in the push toward net zero. These commodities will change the future of energy, industry, and sustainability, driving the next wave of global economic growth.”



Purvi Sanghvi
Director
Axis Solutions

Energy and industry to drive the next wave of global economic growth

DELIVERING HEALTH, WORLDWIDE

KEY FEATURES



Integrated
Cargo Terminal



Pharma Zone & Unbroken
Cold Chain Facility



Road Feeder
Services (RFS)



Cargo Satellite Building
Offices & Warehouses



State of Art Cargo
Handling Equipment



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Cool Container
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Resilient global supply chains vital to enhance efficiency

Quality of a country’s infrastructure—digital and physical—plays a crucial role. This includes broadband capacity, transportation facilities, new airports and rail lines. Availability of skilled workforce is another consideration, as India invests in education to prepare their labour force for emerging industries.



DHL Global Forwarding has published a white paper titled, ‘China Plus X: The New Global Supply Chain,’ focusing on the importance of multishoring strategies that go beyond the classic ‘China + 1’ philosophy and focuses on diversifying production and supplier locations in several countries. The

Geopolitical tensions, trade barriers and dreaded Covid-19 have highlighted how fragile supply chains can be

aim is to enable companies to safeguard their supply chains against international disruptions and to strengthen their operational flexibility.

In the recent years, the geopolitical tensions, trade barriers and dreaded Covid-19 have highlighted how fragile supply chains can be.

The white paper discusses various countries in South-east Asia, Southern and East-

CHINA PLUS X: THE NEW GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Global supply chains are changing. To build resilience, companies must diversify production and embrace a multi-shoring approach for more effective global supply chain management.

Geopolitical risk is considered the top threat to supply chain stability. **44%** of companies have regional diversification of suppliers.

This shift has led to the rise of China Plus X – an approach where manufacturing is located in China and multiple other countries.

Why choose this approach?

- Risk mitigation and increased resilience
- Access to different markets
- Potential cost savings

Considering a China Plus X strategy?

Start with these five essential criteria:

- Transportation
- Cost
- Country Infrastructure
- People
- Regulatory environment

China Plus X: DHL Global Forwarding shows new ways to build resilient global supply chains

Five essential factors for successful implementation of Plus X are—the white paper outlines five essential criteria that plays a role in the selection of suitable production and supply chain locations. A robust transportation infra is paramount, as it encompasses the capacity, quality, and transit times for efficient logistics. Vietnam and Mexico are investing in their transportation networks, which serve as the backbone of their supply chains. An analysis of the cost structure is vital. This includes evaluating logistics expenses, labour costs, and the return on investment (RoI) associated with relocating production to a specific country.

The quality of a country’s infrastructure—digital and physical—plays a crucial role in this assessment. This includes broadband capacity, transportation facilities, such as new airports and rail lines that will support alternative sourcing strategies. The availability of a skilled workforce is another consideration, particularly as India invests in education to prepare their labour force for emerging industries.

ern Europe, Middle East and South America as alternatives to China, as these countries offer infrastructural investment and trade-friendly regulatory environments.

“The future of international supply chains lies in a flexible, sustainable and diversified structure designed for resilience. DHL Global Forwarding supports companies with a global network and local expertise to shape this transformation. With our extensive portfolio of logistics and transportation solutions, we provide customers with the tools they need to realise their Plus X strategy and to focus on long-term stability,” Niki Frank, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), DHL Global Forwarding Asia-Pacific, said.

Finally, understanding the regulatory environment is essential. This comprises taxes, customs, tariffs, and participation in trade pacts, which can impact operational efficiencies and costs. Emerging Plus X countries are seeking to set up favourable trade pacts and offer trade-friendly environments to attract foreign investment. In this context, a long-term commitment to these locations is crucial, as establishing a diversified production base often requires substantial upfront investments.

Highlights

- The future of global supply chains lies in a flexible, sustainable and diversified structure
- India must invest in education to prepare labour force for emerging industries, such as semiconductors

Impact

- Favourable trade agreements & trade-friendly environments to attract foreign investment
- A robust transportation infra is paramount, as it encompasses capacity, quality, and transit times

Group Concorde is GSSA of Air Caraïbes & French bee

It reflects our commitment to delivering top-tier cargo solutions and strengthening air freight ops. We look forward to contributing to success of airlines in these markets, says **Prithviraj Singh Chug**, CEO, Group Concorde.



CT Bureau

Group Concorde announced its latest partnership with Air Caraïbes and French bee starting February 2025. This agreement grants Group Concorde exclusive GSSA rights in 20 countries in Asia Pacific & Middle East, solidifying its presence in key international markets. As part of this strategic collaboration, Group Concorde will represent Air Caraïbes and French bee

in cargo sales and marketing, ensuring seamless logistics and enhanced connectivity for customers.

Group Concorde is well-positioned to drive growth and expand market reach for both airlines. "We are honoured to be entrusted by Air Caraïbes and French bee as their GSSA partner in 20 countries," Prithviraj Singh Chug, CEO, Group Concorde, said.

"This partnership reflects our commitment to delivering

“We are honoured to be entrusted by Air Caraïbes and French bee as their GSSA partner in 20 countries.”

top-tier cargo solutions and fortifying air freight ops. We look forward to contributing to the success of the airlines in these key markets,” he added.



Prithviraj Singh Chug
CEO
Group Concorde

This collaboration will enable shippers and freight forwarders in around 20 countries to benefit from enhanced cargo services, increased capacity, and optimised logistical solutions. ↴




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Air cargo flying on wings of technology, sustainability

Digital platforms and blockchain are changing air cargo by enhancing transparency and security. Cloud-based tracking systems provide end-to-end visibility of shipments, ensuring users can track their goods in real-time. Also, air cargo businesses must navigate the challenge of maintaining efficiency.



Akash Tyagi

In this fast-paced world, air cargo industry is experiencing a transformatory phase. The demand for quick and efficient transportation of goods has forced the industry to adopt and integrate advanced technological solutions for air cargo operations. To cater to the users' demand, the industry is embracing cutting-edge technologies such as AI, IoT, automation and ML to boost operational efficiency and accuracy. Digital platforms and blockchain technology are transforming the sector by improving transparency and security through real-time tracking and tamper-proof transaction records.

By creating a decentralised and trustworthy ledger

accessible to authorised parties, blockchain minimises the risk of fraud and errors. This enhanced visibility streamlines operations, reduces delays, and fosters greater trust among supply chain stakeholders.

Along with advanced technology, sustainability is another key growth driver for the industry in this ever-evolving global economy. As the government and organisations have set ambitious goals of reducing carbon footprint, it

has become crucial to adopt strategies that minimise the environmental impact of air transportation. The use of SAF reduces emissions up to 80 per cent in comparison to conventional jet fuels, which can play a pivotal role

Insights

- AI, IoT, automation and ML help in boosting operational efficiency
- The use of SAF reduces emissions up to 80 per cent in comparison to conventional jet fuels
- Cybersecurity awareness, upskilling the workforce
- Leveraging advanced AI and ML can enhance efficiency by analysing previous data

Impacts

- Blockchain eliminates fraud risks and ensures data integrity
- AI-powered route optimisation reduces waste and emissions
- Cloud-based tracking systems improve communication and efficiency
- IATA's Fly Net Zero initiative aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2050

Focus

- Fuel-efficient aircraft and utilising SAF crucial to achieve sustainability goals.
- Initiatives such as Air Cargo Community System, Electronic Air Waybill helping the industry
- To drive technology investment, the industry must highlight RoI and promote collaboration



Scalable solutions and industry-wide digital literacy will speed up adoption of tech and transformation of cargo operations

vehicles, and eco-friendly packaging. Optimising flight routes and adopting collaborative logistics solutions can reduce carbon footprint, while meeting the demand for faster deliveries.

However, there are few constraints that the industry still faces in the adoption of technology.


The air cargo sector faces challenges such as high costs, lack of standardisation, cybersecurity risks, regulatory hurdles, and resistance to change, while adopting new technologies. To promote

in achieving the sector's sustainability goals. Air cargo firms can strike a balance by investing in sustainable technologies such as fuel-efficient aircraft, electric ground



investments in technology, the industry must highlight return on investment (RoI), promote collaboration, ensure cybersecurity awareness, upskill the workforce and engage regulators. Scalable, cost-effective solutions and industry-wide digital literacy will accelerate adoption

of technologies and transformation of cargo operations.

 interacted with women leaders from the industry to get their insights on why tech-adoption and sustainability practices are crucial for the growth of air cargo sector.

Eliminating fraud risks to ensuring data integrity

“ Digital platforms and blockchain are boosting transparency and security in air cargo. It enables real-time tracking, predictive analytics, and seamless collaboration between stakeholders. Blockchain fortifies security by creating tamper-proof records and shipment documents, such as bills of lading and customs declarations. It eliminates fraud risks, ensuring data integrity. It provides the stakeholders with access to verified information. By integrating these technologies, the industry achieves transparency, reduces errors, and streamlines processes. The sector faces issues such as high upfront costs and resistance to change.”



Padma Handa
Director
Hans Infomatic

The sector faces issues such as high upfront costs and resistance to change

Carbon tax regulations push firms to innovate

“ Sustainability has evolved from a mere choice to an imperative necessity. The focus on green logistics includes transitioning to alternative fuels, adopting renewable energy solutions for warehouses, and reducing packaging waste. Internationally, initiatives such as EU's Fit for 55 and carbon tax regulations are pushing the companies to innovate. In the country, challenges such as reducing carbon footprint is being addressed through EVs, solar-powered warehouses, and investments in green corridors. Public-private partnerships will play a significant role in giving pace to sustainability efforts and meeting long-term goals.”



Sakshi Gupta
Country Manager, India
Air Logistics Group

Challenges such as reducing emissions are being addressed through EVs

Awareness of long-term benefits of tech crucial

“The sector faces constraints such as high costs, lack of digital integration, and resistance to change. To overcome them, awareness about long-term benefits of tech investments is crucial. Reducing errors and enhancing customer satisfaction can drive efficiency. IATA has developed digital cargo technical specifications to aid in the transition to flexible supply chains. Balancing environmental goals with demand for quick deliveries requires adopting sustainable practices such as using biofuels and optimising flight paths. Digital tools for route optimisation and blockchain for supply chain transparency help achieve this balance.”



Apeksha Gupta
Head, Skilling
VJ Foundation

ICAO works to reduce air cargo's environmental impact with technology

Emerging tech steadily gaining acceptance

“ The industry faces many challenges, including high implementation costs, fragmented infrastructure, and lack of standardised platforms. As emerging tech demonstrates their investment potential and long-term benefits, they are gaining acceptance. Educating stakeholders before and after integration is crucial for seamless adoption and sustained success. Air cargo must maintain efficiency, while adopting sustainability to ensure timely deliveries.



Vandana Singh
Director, Global Corporate
Key Account Management,
Saudia Cargo

Educating industry stakeholders before and after integration is important

With stress on sustainability, air cargo to implement environmental improvements sans compromising quality.”



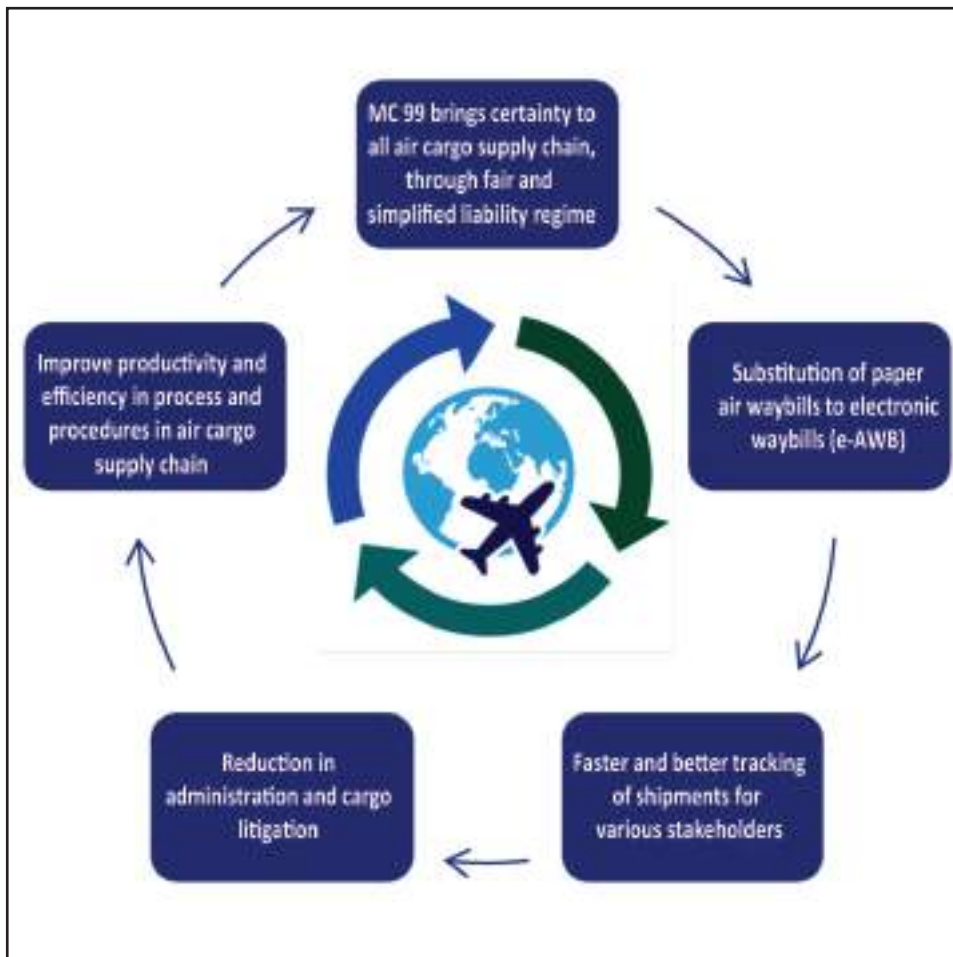
Digital tech streamlines efficiency, reduces delays

“ The sector is integrating digital platforms and blockchain to enhance transparency and security. Blockchain enables tamper-proof tracking of shipments, reducing fraud and ensuring data integrity. Digital platforms streamline documentation, automate processes, and enhance efficiency through AI and IoT-driven analytics, cutting delays and bottlenecks. Adopting new tech faces multiple constraints, high implementation costs, integration challenges with legacy systems, and regulatory complexities. Awareness is needed to highlight the long-term cost savings and efficiency gains.”



Jalpa H Vithalani
Director
Global Aviation Services

Firms can balance sustainability with demand for quick deliveries by utilising SAF



Sustainable infra key for quicker deliveries

“ Digitalisation is changing air cargo warehousing by streamlining operations, enhancing security and improving supply chain visibility. Smart sensors enable real-time tracking for cargo storage and transport, while reducing manual intervention and errors. We integrate advancements with automation to enhance cargo terminal efficiency. Our loading bay equipment enhances efficiency by reducing handling time, optimising cargo flow, and ensuring air tight sealing to protect against the external contaminants. The sector faces challenges such as high investment costs, and the like.”



Jinali Gandhi
Business Head, Global
Growth & Expansion
Gandhi Automations

Many of the operations still rely on manual handling, leading to inefficiencies and safety risks

Contd. on next page ▶



Jeena

Estd 1900

GENERATIONS OF TRUST



Air Freight



Sea Freight



Customs Clearance



Door to Door Logistics



Projects Logistics



3PL & Contract Logistics



Critical Care Logistics



Multimodal Logistics



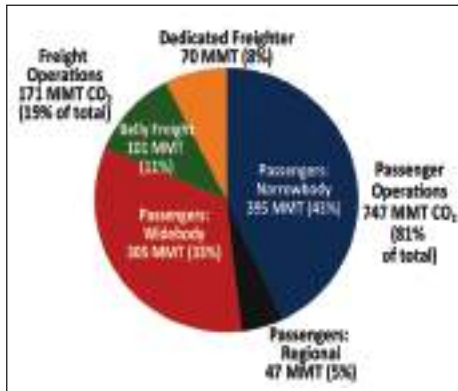
Digital literacy vital to change cargo operations

“ Digital platforms like Cargo Community Systems (CCS) are designed to evolve with technologies such as blockchain and AI. Blockchain enhances CCS by making secure, tamper-proof data accessible to the community. Every transaction is recorded, preventing unauthorised changes. Cryptographic encryption safeguards sensitive cargo data, while shared ledger ensures transparency and reducing disputes. The sector faces challenges such as high costs, cybersecurity risks and regulatory hurdles while adopting new technologies. To drive tech investment, the sector must promote collaboration and cybersecurity awareness.”



Rajni Patwardhan
Head, Marketing
Kale Logistics Solutions

AI-driven route planning, optimisation, enhances efficiency



Resistance to modernity hurdle to adopting tech

“ Security in ocean cargo shipments has become a concern. To quell risks to operations, transparency-enhancing tools such as real-time tracking of shipments, location and status monitoring, and documentation automation come in handy. These tools reduce paperwork, which is a win for the environment, and minimise errors and enhance accuracy. The hurdle when it comes to adopting tech is the prevailing cultural resistance to embracing modernity. The sector is slow to adopt new technologies and changing this culture can be quite a challenge. If implemented, it would require heavy costs, making ops less affordable.”



Vaishali Kadam
National Head Sea
Freight, Galaxy Freight

Hurdle when it comes to adopting tech is cultural resistance

E-commerce boom steps up demand for faster deliveries

“ Many firms view digital transformation as an expense rather than an efficiency multiplier. The industry’s patchwork of legacy systems creates integration challenges, but the hurdle is data standardisation—sans alignment across industry, even the best tech is underutilised. Tech is not about replacing expertise but enhancing decision-making. Logi-Sys helps forwarders automate workflows, while saving human oversight. E-commerce boom intensified demand for rapid air cargo deliveries. Speed and sustainability coexist through route optimisation and AI-driven planning.”



Uma Negi
Global Head
Marketing, Partner
Programme Learning,
Softlink Global

Technology is not about replacing expertise but enhancing decision-making

Cybersecurity & data privacy major concern

“ India is one of the fastest-growing aviation and logistics markets. We are leveraging digital platforms and blockchain technology to enhance efficiencies, transparency, and security in air cargo shipments. Several initiatives and innovations are shaping the industry, such as Air Cargo Community System, Electronic Air Waybill. Blockchain ensures documents such as invoices, customs declarations, and airway bills are secure. Cybersecurity and data privacy is a major concern and under constant threat. The adoption of digital platforms and blockchain in India’s cargo sector is improving efficiency.”



Nomita Kothari
CEO
New Globe Logistik LLP

Adoption of digital platforms and blockchain improving efficiency

Climate control, tech to cut energy consumption

“ Today there is insufficient integration and interlinking of first, middle and last-mile elements of supply chain, leading to delays, damages and higher costs. A key differentiator towards this are digital technologies and community platforms that can host all players together, rather than having standalone systems. The new age airport community systems such as the Galaxy ACS being used by WFS Bengaluru via BLR Cargo is one such system. It brings direct digital integration with regulators and stakeholders. Within SATS Group and at WFS Bengaluru, we are looking at ways to decarbonise ops.”



Anupama Kacchap
Head, Commercial,
Worldwide Flight Services

Galaxy ACS system brings digital integration with regulators and stakeholders

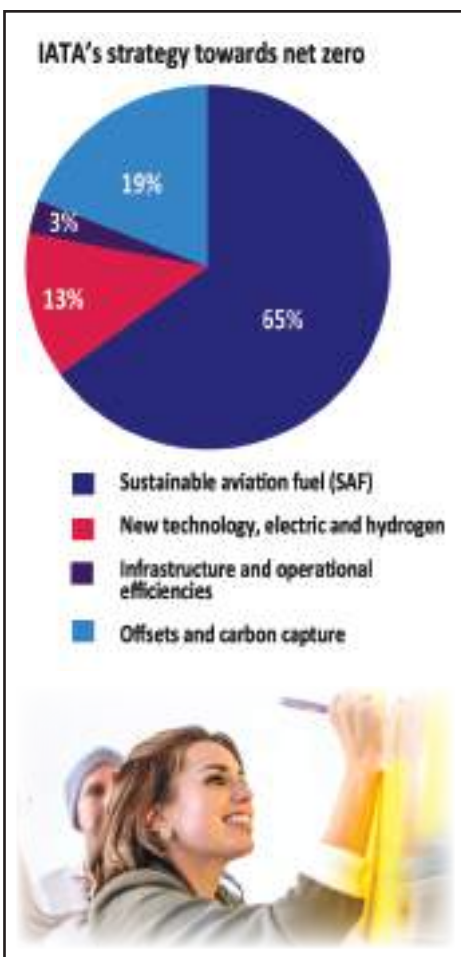
Digital platforms make transactions transparent

“ Cargo transactions become transparent, accessible to all stakeholders and less prone to errors or tampering. Digital platforms such as cloud-based tracking systems, provide visibility of shipments, ensuring customers and operators can track their goods in real-time, improving communication and efficiency. The industry faces several constraints, while adopting new technologies. Digital platforms and blockchain are transforming air cargo by enhancing transparency and security. Blockchain’s decentralised ledger enables real-time tracking of goods, ensuring data integrity and minimising fraud.”



Chandrima Govil
Director
MKF Logistics

Optimising flight routes & logistics solutions can reduce emissions



Carbon tax regulations push firms to innovate

“ While high implementation costs and complexity pose challenges, adopting these innovations is no longer optional but essential to maintaining a competitive edge. The future of air cargo logistics depends on digitising to drive operational excellence and create a transparent, secure, and sustainable supply chain. By leveraging fuel-efficient tech, optimising operations, and embracing green practices, companies can meet deadlines while minimising their environmental impact. Technology and sustainability will work as twin engines driving the future of air cargo growth.”



Sonia Nair
National Head
Customer Service
Blue Dart

By leveraging fuel-efficient technology, optimising ops, and embracing green practices

Empowering women in air cargo: Crucial role of data integration

Impact of geopolitical situation like Israel-Palestinian conflict, and Russia-Ukraine war was huge and affected Indian EXIM trade, it led to increased operating costs for airlines, making it difficult for freight forwarders to operate, says **Reshma Zaheer**, CEO, TT Logistics & Cargo, and Chairperson, ACFI.



As new ACFI Women's Wing President, how do you plan to take industry issues forward?

My primary objective is to promote gender diversity and ensure that women are adequately represented within the workforce. We aim to focus on their professional development by organising targeted training sessions that enhance their skills.

By collaborating with stakeholders and allied organisations, we hope to amplify our efforts and create systemic change within the industry regarding gender equality. This is the cornerstone of the ACFI Women Empowerment Group's mission.

One of our key initiatives is to build a comprehensive database using ACFI membership data to analyse gender representation in the industry. This data will help us understand the current landscape: the number of women in the industry, their career growth,



Reshma Zaheer
CEO, TT Logistics & Cargo and
Chairperson, Women's Wing, ACFI

and progression. Additionally, it will enable us to identify the reasons behind their departure and develop effective retention strategies. We also aim to work closely with ACFI members to attract more women to join the industry.

Ultimately, we believe that achieving gender equality must start within our own organisations. All the members of the Women Empowerment Task Pillar are committed to working hand-in-hand with the ACFI governing body and within our own organisations to set an example and lead by example. By fostering a cul-

“We are planning to build a database using ACFI membership data to analyse gender representation.”

ture of inclusivity and equal opportunity, we can inspire and drive change across the entire industry.

Do you have plans to collaborate with other women leaders?

Definitely. Right now, we are focusing on building a solid database to advocate for fair gender representation within industry bodies, starting with ACFI. By ensuring each task pillar has balanced gender representation, we can support women's professional development more effectively. Looking ahead, we are excited about collaborating with industry bodies such as AMTOI, ACAAI, and FFFAI.

By joining forces, we can create a more inclusive and diverse industry. Plus, we are planning to launch a mentorship program after April next year. This programme will pair experienced women leaders with aspiring women aiming for leadership positions in the air cargo industry.

It is all about providing guidance, sharing valuable insights, and building a supportive network for the future women leaders. Through these efforts, we are committed to driving systemic change

and creating a more equitable environment for women in the industry.

What are the pain points when it comes to cargo movement domestically and globally?

Well, the geopolitical landscape has really been impacting the air cargo industry. The Israel-Palestinian conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war have both taken a toll on Indian EXIM trade. With all these conflicts, operating costs for airlines have shot up, and those costs inevitably get passed down to freight forwarders and shippers. This spike in costs is usually the first noticeable impact.

On top of that, these geopolitical tensions have wreaked havoc on supply chains, causing delays and uncertainties. Take the Russia-Ukraine war, for example; it led to fluctuating fuel prices and changes in trade routes, which in turn affect the overall cost and efficiency of cargo transportation. The Israel-Palestinian conflict has its own set of challenges for maritime trade, disrupting the flow of goods and increasing the risk of delays.

And then, there is the whole issue of risk management. Companies now have to be more vigilant than ever, planning for all sorts of contingencies to keep things running smoothly. This often means rerouting shipments and dealing with more stringent security measures.

Overcoming these challenges is going to require a coordi-



nated effort from everyone involved to build more resilient and adaptable supply chains.

How would you rate infra in India for multimodal cargo movement?

Well, both infrastructure and processes always have room for improvement. When it comes to road or rail transportation, there are certainly areas that need attention.

For example, if we look at the processing time at airports, there's definitely scope for enhancement. The question is: where exactly is the

It is not just about audits. For past five years. We have been investing heavily in tech to stay ahead of the curve

weakest link? Is it the airport infrastructure, the regulatory authorities, or the customs procedures? Identifying this link is crucial so that we can work on strengthening it.

Moreover, the adoption of technology plays a significant role in making us more efficient. By leveraging the latest advancements, we can streamline operations and im-



prove overall efficiency. There are indeed huge areas of improvement that we need to address to remain competitive on the world stage. Continuous improvement is key, and by focusing on these aspects, we can ensure that our infrastructure and processes meet global standards.

What kind of relations do you maintain with your airline and airport partners in the ecosystem?

At TT Logistics, we put a lot of effort into building strong relationships with all stakeholders. This goes beyond just our airline principals and extends to forwarders, airport opera-

tors, trucking partners, team members, among others. In the spirit of partnership, we believe in working together and tackling or handling challenges as a team. When issues arise, we focus on how we can jointly resolve the situation.

Building resilience into our operations is crucial. By having a proactive and collaborative approach, we ensure that we are prepared to handle any challenges that come our way.

How crucial is innovation? How do you offer best in class services to your customers?

Innovation is absolutely vital for us. At TT Logistics, we live by the principle of continuous improvement. We have got processes in place, and we conduct regular audits to ensure we are always at our best. Our dedicated quality assurance team runs these audits and presents the results

back to us, so we are always in the loop about where we can improve.

But it is not just about audits. From the past five years. We have been investing heavily in technology to stay ahead of the curve. By leveraging the latest technological advancements, we are able to offer top-notch services to our customers.

Advanced technology has become the backbone of our operations. From advanced software that allows us to track shipments to automated workflows that streamline processes to Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions that deliver an elevated customer experience, our company is harnessing technology to enhance efficiency and accuracy.

With continuous innovation and a strong focus on technology, at TTL we are paving the way for a more efficient and customer-centric future.



Highlights

- Collaboration with industry bodies such as AMTOI, ACAAI, and FFFAI on agenda
- There are plans to launch mentorship programme after April next year

Impact

- Due to ongoing geopolitical tensions, operating costs for airlines have shot up
- Fluctuating fuel prices & changes in trade routes affect cost and efficiency of cargo transportation

14.5% year-on-year Asia's cargo demand growth in 2024

Global air cargo industry achieved a milestone last year, emerging as one of the strongest-performing sectors amidst economic volatility and geopolitical uncertainty. Global routes posted exceptional performance, with December demand growing at 7% year-on-year, says **Willie Walsh, Director General, IATA**.



CT Bureau

The Asia-Pacific Airlines led the global market with 14.5 per cent YoY growth past year. This was supported by robust intra-Asia trade and the recovery of global supply chains. December saw an 8.4 per cent increase in demand, alongside a 6.3 per cent rise in capacity.

Latin American carriers experienced robust growth, with 12.6 per cent increase year-in-year cargo demand for the last year. December saw the highest regional growth of 10.9 per cent, while capacity expanded by as much as 8 per cent. International routes posted exceptional performance, with December demand increasing 7 per cent year-on-year. The Asia-North America corridor, the largest by volume, grew 8 per cent, continuing a 14-month expansion streak.

Looking ahead, Willie Walsh, DG, IATA, forecast,



Willie Walsh
Director General
IATA

“Air cargo was the standout performer in 2024, with airlines moving more air cargo than ever before.”

“Economic fundamentals point to another good year for air cargo—with oil prices on a downward trajectory and trade continuing to grow.

There is no doubt, however, that the air cargo industry will be challenged to adapt to unfolding geopolitical shifts. The first week of the Trump administration demonstrated its strong interest in using tariffs as a policy tool that could bring a double whammy for air cargo—boosting inflation and deflating trade.”

The Europe-Middle East trade lane led all routes with a 26 per cent year-on-year surge, driven by limited ocean shipping capacity and rising e-commerce demand. The global air cargo industry entered this year on a high note, buoyed by record demand, capacity growth, and resilient trade lanes. While challenges persist, the sector could well adapt to changing market dynamics ensures a promising future for air cargo worldwide.

This performance was supported by strong demand on certain trade lanes, particularly the Europe-Middle East corridor. The lane posted a remarkable 26 per cent year-

on-year increase. The region's belly-hold capacity grew marginally, but overall capacity lagged global averages.

“Global air cargo was the standout performer in 2024, with airlines moving more air cargo than ever before. Importantly, it was a year of profitable growth. Demand, up by 11.3 per cent year-on-year, was boosted by strong e-commerce and various ocean shipping restrictions,” he added. This combined with airspace restrictions and limited capacity on some key long-haul routes to Asia, helped keep yields at exceptionally high levels. While average yields continued to soften from peaks in 2021-2022, they averaged 39 per cent higher than 2019,” he added.

Capacity, measured in ACTKs, grew by 7.4 per cent YoY last year, was driven by the recovery of belly-hold capacity. Belly-hold capacity accounted for 54.8 per cent of global cargo in 2024, while freighters contributed 45.2 per cent.

TRADE LANE GROWTH

North America: North American carriers experienced the lowest regional growth at 6.6 per cent year-on-year. However, the North American region's December performance remained steady, with demand up 5.3 per cent and capacity increasing by 2.1 per cent.

Europe: European airlines showed 11.2 per cent year-on-year demand growth in 2024, benefiting from strong e-commerce demand-trade with Asia. ↴



MARKET LEADERS

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IMPORTANT,
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IT.



No reason to change growth forecast for this year: Xeneta

Volumes of 11% in October and spot rates of 19% YoY reflected maturity among buyers and sellers of capacity, as per latest market data by Xeneta. Lower cargo demand growth in January was not because of tariff levies by US President Trump, but Lunar New Year, says **Niall van de Wouw**, Chief Airfreight Officer.



CT Bureau

This year began with lower-than-expected growth in global air cargo demand in January of little over 2 per cent year-on-year compared to the double-digit monthly increases throughout last year but fears of a trade war over tariffs impacting volumes and growth forecasts for the year are premature, say industry analyst Xeneta.

January's data was impacted by the earlier Lunar New Year reducing volumes out of

China, but the big drop in demand came as quite a surprise, Niall van de Wouw, Chief Airfreight Officer, Xeneta, said.

However, he sees no immediate reason to change Xeneta's +4-6 per cent growth forecast for global air cargo in 2025 despite the market's nervousness over new tariffs introduced by the USA, particularly on China and their subsequent retaliation.

"The lower growth in air cargo demand in January was not because of President



Niall van de Wouw
Chief Airfreight Officer
Xeneta

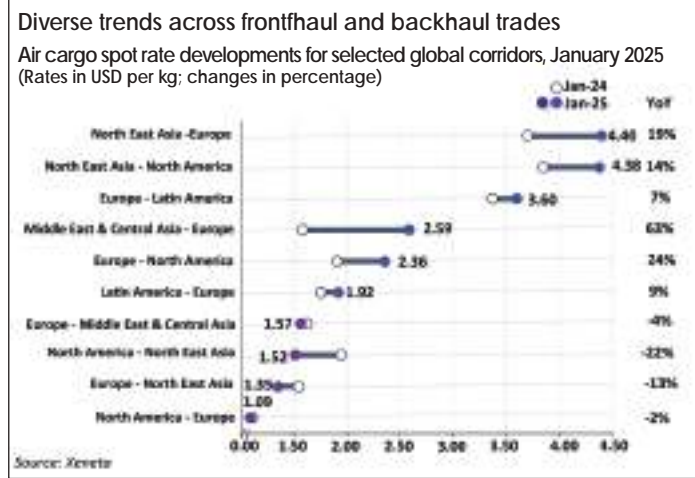
“We don’t know what will happen, but we do know uncertainty is not good for trade confidence.”

someone who is ready to negotiate everything, and the rest of the world can influence the outcome, as we have already seen. The consistency here is he is looking for a deal,” van de Wouw said.

Trump, nor, entirely due to earlier Lunar New Year. It also compares to an unusually high comparison in January 2024,” van de Wouw said.

“Nonetheless, the air cargo market is entering a period of uncertainty, which makes planning extremely challenging. The implementation of tariffs by the Trump administration and the responses of China, Canada, and Mexico are just the start of a negotiation. It is all transactional. We could well end up in a global trade war, but in the case of President Trump, we have

“We don’t know what will happen, but we do understand that uncertainty is not good for trade confidence, and it does not help investment. People like to see some kind of stability before they put their money down,” he added. “If I was a shipper, I would not be rushing to make too many plans or take any drastic measures. I would have my team ready to do things differently and wait to see what happens because there is a lot of sabre rattling and noise, but little clarity.”



E-COMMERCE SUSTAINABLE?

Cross-border e-commerce demand was one of the main pillars fuelling global growth in air cargo volumes since Q3 2023. Is this now at risk? In 2024, China cross-border e-commerce shipments to the USA accounted for 25 per cent of its total global sales and filled over 50 per cent of cargo capacity from China to the USA.

Suspension of the de minimis exemption could, there-

2025 begins with modest cargo demand growth, creating a more balanced market
Global air cargo demand, supply, load factor and freight rate developments



fore, have a profound impact on air freight capacity between China and the USA and beyond by prohibiting these import shipments from de minimis entry, increasing costs, and adding time-consuming entry filing requirements and potential customs delays.

“E-commerce volumes out of China grew +20-30 per cent last year, following similar growth in 2023, so it is going to take a sledgehammer to crack that level of consumer demand, and I am not sure blocking de minimis alone is enough. China e-commerce was not set up to take advantage of de minimis loopholes—it has taken advantage of consumer demand for cheap, fast goods,” Van de Wouw said. “E-commerce products may be slightly more expensive if de minimis is removed, but they will still be cheaper than buying through retailers in the US – but delays in receiving

the goods due to operational disruptions could have a bigger impact than price because it takes away the attractiveness for consumers,” he added.

China’s e-commerce giants knew this day would come and will not allow a business model on this scale to collapse due to de minimis, van de Wouw said. “Even if de minimis is being blocked, the e-commerce retailers will keep selling and shipping the goods. There may not be a significant impact on air freight rates in the short term in this scenario, even if it causes chaos at the receiving airport in the USA.”

In the longer term, demand for e-commerce—and therefore freight rates—will be impacted if the consumer feels the cheap price is not worth it if they face a longer wait to receive their goods. “In this scenario, we would expect to see a major downward impact on

freight rates at a global level, but to predict this now would be to ‘cry wolf’. Let us wait and see. Maybe nothing changes,” he said.

The winners of any muted growth in e-commerce volumes will be general freight shippers globally as capacity is deployed elsewhere, placing a downward pressure on rates in these new markets. But general air freight demand has recorded no real growth in recent years and there’s little expectation of any significant upturn in its fortunes in 2025, he cautioned.

CARGO PERFORMANCE IN JANUARY

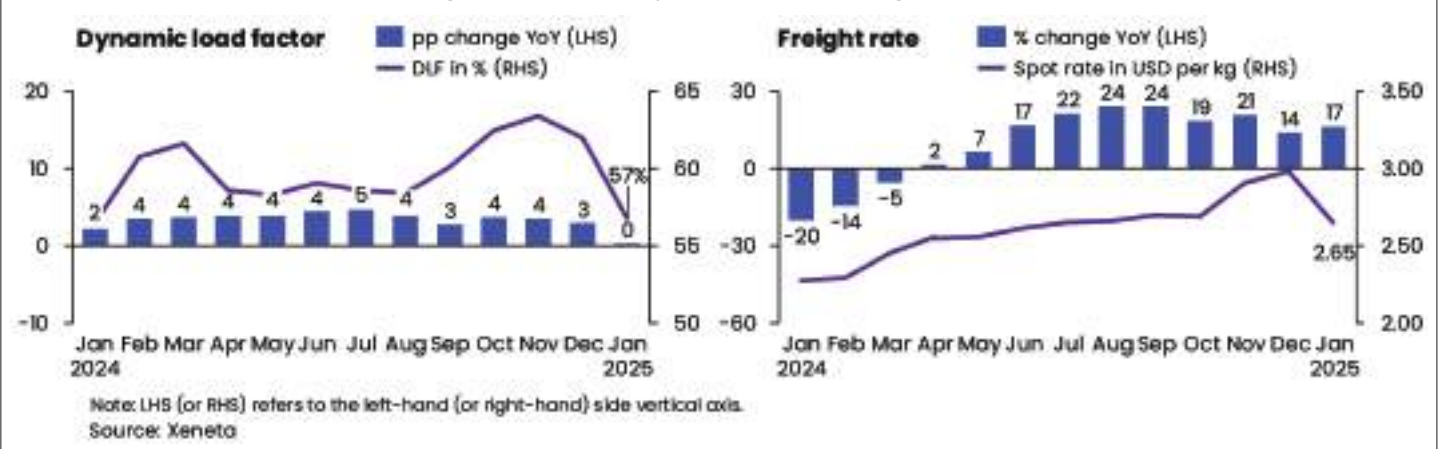
Global air cargo chargeable weight in the first month of the year grew just 2 per cent year-on-year, influenced also by the diminishing impact of ocean shipping disruptions. As anticipated, global air cargo capacity showed a similarly

modest growth of 2 per cent in January, lowering the dynamic load factor to 57 per cent in January, on par with a year ago. Dynamic load factor is Xeneta’s measurement of capacity utilisation based on volume and weight of cargo flown alongside available capacity.

Global air cargo spot rates in January remained 17 per cent higher than a year ago, reaching US\$ 2.65 per kg and 56 per cent above pre-pandemic levels. These elevated rates can be attributed to the e-commerce boom, limited air cargo capacity from slow aircraft production, flight rerouting due to Russian airspace closure, and delayed adjustment of freight rates.

Month-on-month, January’s international air cargo spot rate fell 11 per cent, a slower decline compared to the same period a year ago (more than 13 per cent). ↴

2025 begins with modest cargo demand growth, creating a more balanced market
Global air cargo demand, supply, load factor and freight rate developments



Note: LHS (or RHS) refers to the left-hand (or right-hand) side vertical axis.
Source: Xeneta

Hike in engineering exports in January 2025

Trade: Export

Sl. No.	Commodities	Values in Million USD				% Change	
		JAN '24	APR '23- JAN '24	JAN '25	APR '24- JAN '25	JAN '25	APR '24- JAN '25
1	Tea	64.87	672.85	79.12	768.09	21.97	14.15
2	Coffee	73.68	950.52	115.73	1362.35	57.07	43.33
3	Rice	949.06	8267.64	1372.48	10097.83	44.61	22.14
4	Other cereals	13.96	468.56	28.36	218.30	103.20	-53.41
5	Tobacco	105.73	1216.30	168.30	1698.89	59.18	39.68
6	Spices	335.24	3244.47	343.01	3501.11	2.32	7.91
7	Cashew	32.69	282.13	34.93	289.01	6.85	2.44
8	Oil meals	173.76	1400.80	102.84	1118.48	-40.81	-20.15
9	Oil seeds	125.71	1157.22	117.51	1126.88	-6.53	-2.62
10	Fruits & vegetables	300.73	2813.23	303.16	2971.74	0.81	5.63
11	Cereal preparations & miscellaneous processed items	235.36	2324.75	261.56	2563.53	11.13	10.27
12	Marine products	500.78	6353.10	540.75	6219.06	7.98	-2.11
13	Meat, dairy & poultry products	379.99	3689.88	515.49	4161.75	35.66	12.79
14	Iron ore	584.85	3233.35	163.09	1653.76	-72.11	-48.85
15	Mica, coal & other ores, minerals, including processed minerals	368.34	3796.15	470.40	3991.56	27.71	5.15
16	Leather & leather products	353.04	3606.33	375.53	3686.29	6.37	2.22
17	Ceramic products & glassware	295.57	3560.91	326.43	3326.47	10.44	-6.58
18	Gems & jewellery	2585.84	26892.17	2998.28	24379.63	15.95	-9.34
19	Drugs & pharmaceuticals	2132.92	22533.59	2590.63	24300.49	21.46	7.84
20	Organic & inorganic chemicals	2398.53	22629.65	2351.78	23609.50	-1.95	4.33
21	Engineering goods	8765.87	88095.36	9418.06	96745.72	7.44	9.82
22	Electronic goods	2293.96	22602.92	4105.46	30224.95	78.97	33.72
23	Cotton yarn/fabs./made-ups, handloom products etc.	892.13	9562.20	1038.55	9954.57	16.41	4.10
24	Man-made yarn/fabs./made-ups e tc.	379.71	3808.05	425.82	4036.10	12.14	5.99
25	RMG of all textiles	1441.36	11583.03	1606.42	12922.23	11.45	11.56
26	Jute mfg, including floor covering	24.87	283.80	34.99	318.92	40.67	12.38
27	Carpet	114.86	1152.80	135.58	1285.08	18.04	11.47
28	Handicrafts, excl. handmade carpet	135.03	1307.25	161.35	1480.37	19.49	13.24
29	Petroleum products	8614.80	70524.89	3561.76	53066.31	-58.66	-24.76
30	Plastic & linoleum	640.91	6569.59	726.22	7434.10	13.31	13.16
	Sub-Total	35314.15	334583.49	34473.56	338513.07	-2.38	1.17
	GRAND TOTAL	37323.80	353973.67	36425.71	358906.54	-2.41	1.39

Note 1: Exports include Re-Exports.

Note 2: The figures for JANUARY 2025 are provisional. Note 3: Grand total is inclusive of component 'Other

(Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India)

Petroleum imports grew in January 2025

Trade: Import

Sl. No.	Commodities	Values in Million USD				% Change	
		JAN '24	APR '23- JAN '24	JAN '25	APR '24- JAN '25	JAN '25	APR '24- JAN '25
1	Cotton raw & waste	19.62	518.43	121.72	1040.41	520.26	100.69
2	Vegetable oil	1237.10	12875.13	1378.28	14897.24	11.41	15.71
3	Pulses	309.10	2777.03	755.98	4545.70	144.58	63.69
4	Fruits & vegetables	238.10	2414.99	318.69	2721.50	33.85	12.69
5	Pulp and waste paper	135.90	1549.69	162.49	1717.76	19.57	10.85
6	Textile yarn fabric, made-up articles	184.64	1931.67	237.86	2081.22	28.83	7.74
7	Fertilisers, crude & manufactured	486.27	9488.35	840.82	9005.78	72.91	-5.09
8	Sulphur & unroasted iron pyrites	11.48	182.66	27.13	240.64	136.31	31.74
9	Metaliferrous ores & other minerals	753.82	7892.66	1247.28	9463.62	65.46	19.90
10	Coal, coke & briquettes, etc.	3176.08	32466.51	2692.60	26787.59	-15.22	-17.49
11	Petroleum, crude & products	15525.60	145499.28	13431.50	154835.25	-13.49	6.42
12	Wood & wood products	476.80	5384.46	655.41	5923.03	37.46	10.00
13	Leather & leather products	53.32	801.85	72.68	835.00	36.33	4.13
14	Organic & inorganic chemicals	1856.89	22561.59	2542.71	24128.53	36.93	6.95
15	Dyeing/tanning/colouring materials	321.15	4343.06	374.54	3604.40	16.62	-17.01
16	Artificial resins, plastic materials, etc.	1624.61	18781.25	1719.69	19051.38	5.85	1.44
17	Chemical material & products	785.57	11060.99	1350.10	10306.95	71.86	-6.82
18	Newsprint	20.40	367.64	25.73	364.95	26.11	-0.73
19	Pearls, precious & semi-precious stones	1728.79	19153.24	1225.52	14590.62	-29.11	-23.82
20	Iron & steel	2056.46	20062.06	2199.08	19267.31	6.94	-3.96
21	Non-ferrous metals	1536.18	17940.73	1935.10	20754.65	25.97	15.68
22	Machine tools	402.41	3974.50	540.78	4739.06	34.38	19.24
23	Machinery, electrical & non-electrical	3703.98	40612.56	4734.01	44528.91	27.81	9.64
24	Transport equipment	2632.27	24151.53	2675.40	25632.59	1.64	6.13
25	Project goods	229.42	1004.32	118.98	891.61	-48.14	-11.22
26	Professional instrument, optical goods, among others	617.19	6346.21	677.09	6955.82	9.70	9.61
27	Electronic goods	7943.27	73375.61	9357.33	81707.62	17.80	11.36
28	Medicinal & pharmaceutical products	680.59	6901.76	790.34	7484.98	16.13	8.45
29	Gold	1908.29	37859.53	2686.59	50001.46	40.79	32.07
30	Silver	483.02	2896.26	883.18	4132.10	82.84	42.67
	Sub-Total	51138.31	535175.56	55778.63	572237.67	9.07	6.93
	GRAND TOTAL	53876.53	560268.35	59423.15	601895.25	10.30	7.43

Note 1: Imports include Re-Imports. Note 2: The figures for JANUARY 2025 are provisional.
Note 3: Grand total is inclusive of component 'Other'.

(Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India)



‘Developing skills important to thrive in logistics business’

With lean logistics and multimodal transportation taking centre stage in logistics, it is crucial for experts to be adept at managing supply chain from multiple models of transportation to inventory levels in warehouses, says **Mahima Agarwal, President, HR, CJ Darcl Logistics.**



How do you address the gap between required skills and available talent pool?

The logistics industry is evolving rapidly, requiring a workforce that is skilled and adaptable. To bridge the gap, we have a structured comprehensive training framework wherein we conduct four to six training sessions every month. Focusing on five key areas such as Leadership, Behavioural, Functional/Technical, Sales, and Operational, we cover topics such as problem solving, critical thinking, effective use of AI and team building, among others. Since



Mahima Agarwal
President, HR
CJ Darcl Logistics

our driver community stands as a strong pillar of our business, we ensure they are provided with training they require to enhance their skills. We conduct driver assessment tests and compile review as-

“Since our drivers stand as a strong pillar of our biz, we ensure they are imparted training to enhance skills.”

essment report for each driver. These reports serve as a valuable resource highlighting the areas of improvement that need to be worked on. We have AI-enabled dashcams in our fleet that provide us with insights into the drivers’ driving patterns, which helps us customise trainings for them to improve their driving skills and enhance their safety on

road. With the help of these trainings and workshops, we enable our workforce to learn and evolve so that they develop skills and competencies needed to meet market demand and thrive in the industry.

How do industry associations, educational institutions, and logistics firms team up to enhance upskilling?

Collaboration between logistics firms, industry bodies, and educational institutions is vital for strengthening workforce capabilities. In this direction, the government, through bodies like the National Skill Development Corporation

(NSDC) and Logistics Sector Skill Council (LSC), has launched various skill development programmes offering certifications and training in warehousing, transportation, and supply chain management. The Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya is playing a crucial role in logistics education, designing courses tailored to India's evolving transportation needs. As part of our training programmes, we provide internships and training to college students and freshers to provide them exposure to the logistics sector and empower them to become emerging leaders in the supply chain.

What trends are emerging in cargo logistics that experts should be prepared for?

With lean logistics and multi-modal transportation taking the centre stage in cargo logistics, it is crucial for professionals to be adept at managing supply chain from multiple models of transportation to the inventory levels in warehouses. As the industry is integrating technology into its operations, it is imperative for them to be proficient in using AI and IoT and the like. Another trend is the sector's focus on reducing its emissions, so professionals need to be updated with the best practices to be adopted



for creating a sustainable future of cargo logistics.

How to develop leadership skills within the industry, and what are the key challenges?

Developing leadership in logistics requires a blend of technical expertise, strategic thinking, and people management skills. We focus on leadership development through structured mentorship programmes, executive

training workshops, and exposure to diverse logistics functions. Our leadership training is part of our broader learning framework, ensuring employees at different levels build confidence in decision-making and problem-solving. In today's world, with the industry evolving, it is critical for leaders to stay agile and updated with tech, policy reforms, and market trends. Balancing logistics knowledge with digital acumen and sustainability-driven approach is crucial for navigating the industry's future.

How do you foresee automation and AI reshaping the job market in future?

We all heard that noise during the launch of AI that the tech will take up jobs, but we know that it is a tool to support us in automating tasks and forecasting patterns with the vast amount of data it has been fed. Since AI has proven to be of potential in the logistics industry enabling features such as route optimisation, fleet management, and predictive maintenance of vehicles, I expect that having a hands-on experience and understanding of AI will be the next big thing in the logistics job market. Professionals skilled in managing AI led operations will have an

edge over their fellow job applicants in the logistics industry.

Can you recommend any platforms, training programmes, or workshops to enhance skills in logistics?

Logistics requires constant learning. Online courses from platforms such as the LSC and NSDC provide in-depth and detailed understanding of various domains such as agri logistics, e-commerce, air cargo, road transportation, maritime logistics and logistics management. Attending workshops and events such as conferences, summits and panel discussions related to the industry are a way to stay updated with the trends and enhance your skills.



Unlocking air cargo potential & opportunities in South India

The Air Cargo Forum India (ACFI) hosted its South India Conclave in Hyderabad recently. The objective was to bring together industry stakeholders, regulators, and thought leaders for discussing the future and pros and cons of the air cargo and logistics industry.

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Sandip Prakash, Principal Chief Commissioner graced the event as its Chief Guest, he highlighted the regulators' efforts to facilitate smooth cargo movement, citing the impressive 92 per cent assessment rate through computer servers via the Risk Management System (RMS). Pradeep Panicker, CEO of

GMR Hyderabad International Airport (GHIAL), was invited as the Guest of Honour, he appreciated ACFI's integrated efforts in promoting air cargo growth, stating that such initiatives are crucial for the development of the industry. The conclave featured three business sessions – bridging the gap in trade imbalance: Strategies for a sustainable air cargo industry, Building Strong-Car-

go Infrastructure: Focusing on Tier 2 and Tier 3 city airports and Building a Thriving Air Cargo Ecosystem: Exploring the role of allied agencies. Sanjiv Edward, ACFI Chairman emphasised the importance of inclusive growth, aligning with the national target of 10 million tons of air cargo by 2030. Industry thought leader Satish Lakkaraju shared insights on the industry's growth, chal-

lenges, and impact. Kamal Jain, Chairman of the Hyderabad chapter, underscored the need for such conclaves to prepare the industry for future challenges. The ACFI South India Conclave provided a platform for meaningful discussions, knowledge sharing, and networking among industry stakeholders, paving the way for a sustainable and thriving air cargo ecosystem in India.





Women aspirants must not be afraid of making mistakes: Yuvika

We have invested into marketing, and are targeting Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern manufacturers looking to expand into the USA. It is critical to create a working environment where everyone in the team speaks up and voices their opinion, says **Yuvika Sharma Rineberg, MD, A&M Global Logistics.**



What inspired you to join the logistics business. How has the journey been?

One of my favourite stories is how I got into pharma and supply chain. This was when I was finishing my MBA in finance from La Salle University. I had a job interview with a couple of finance companies lined up and was waiting for my turn to interview with Vanguard in the lobby. It was then I saw two people from Johnson & Johnson sitting there and I just had to approach them. I walked right up and asked, "What's wrong with my resume, that no one from J&J has even acknowledged my resume?" One thing led to another and before I knew it, I was working in a pharma supply chain and managing one of their highest selling drugs, raw

materials to finished goods, calculating demand and supply to ensuring logistics to over 100 countries. I stayed in the pharmaceutical supply chain until I founded A&M Global Logistics (AMG). It was the purely the unadulterated love of trade, economics, and being a part of the world relationships in this realm that has kept me going and motivated even today.

How crucial is gender diversity in today's times?

In a male-dominated industry, it is time for women get a foothold as the new leaders. Cargo logistics is a great place to be in these tumultuous times. I encourage more women to step up and become decision-makers instead of following the male lead.

Women aspirants should not be afraid of making mistakes. If you are not making mis-



Yuvika Sharma Rineberg
Managing Director
A&M Global Logistics

“I encourage more women to step up and become decision-makers instead of following the male lead.”

Tell us about the genesis of your business operations at A&M Global Logistics?

A & M stands for Asher and Meyer, my two sons. It was in March 2024 that I established AMG, which is has now grown into a full-fledged NVOCC/FF company doing business in India and the USA. We also work in other part of Southeast Asia, China and the Middle East. We hope to triple our volumes by the end of this year.

What mode of transportation do you integrate into your multimodal logistics solutions, and how do you determine the best?

My company deals in air, ocean and land transportation, including customs clearance, and FDA approval. I am involved in the decision-making and handling of every shipment. Having been born and brought up in Delhi and then having moved to the USA for the past two decades, has given me the advantage to understand both markets. The best combination for any shipment is what helps our customer's bottom line. And the bottom line includes service i.e. delivery of goods in the same con-

takes, then you are not trying, and it would be difficult to go up the ladder.

Times have changed. Now we have become supportive of women in the workforce. This has played a huge part in my life and growth my company will see in the future. I must accept help whenever I can; I cannot do this without the support of my husband, brother and mom.





dition as it was handed over to us at his/her door and costs. We are in the business of serving, and that comes down to how each shipment's solutions are designed and curated specific to that shipment, whether it is air, ocean, trucking, or warehousing and distribution.

How do you ensure seamless coordination between modes of transportation in your logistics ops?

The keys are communication and transparency. Even if things are in a complete mess, we must own up and communicate it on time so that it can be addressed before it becomes a bigger issue. For example, if the packing list is incorrect it can lead to the shipment being stuck in customs for days and cause demurrage. However, with all the different agencies we work within the logistics framework, there are enough checks and balances in place to know beforehand if documentation is inaccurate. It is critical to create a working environment where everyone in the team speaks up and voices their opinion.

How do you look at India as trade and investment destination?

At AMG our largest volumes move in the India-USA trade lane. Firstly, my father's company NSM was in the same trade lane working with major vendors such as JCREW, Adri-

anna Pappell and other designers in the USA. Today, we are seeing an economic shift on the world stage. Ever since USA President Trump joined office, Mexico was slapped with tariffs at 25 per cent—Mexico is the biggest exporter to the USA. Tariffs on Canada increased by 25 per cent and China at 10 cent in addition to what previously existed. Last week, PM Narendra Modi and Trump's meeting concluded with reciprocal tariffs as well. The Indian government is taking steps to lower these export tariffs to make India accessible for trade and investments. India is a growing economy and there is huge growth potential despite the shift in the nature of the business.

What kind of cargo is moved to and from the USA and India?

I believe it is diamonds that comes up as the biggest mover. AMG is currently in automotive, pharmaceuticals and garments. We are looking at food too as possible source of expansion and defence. One thing is for sure, that with President Trump in office, defence

sector will see high growth in terms of exports from the USA and imports into India. Also, oil and gas are the next two products that will see the maximum growth in trade between these two nations.

What are the challenges you face when handling time-sensitive shipments and how do you address them?

Instead of looking at them as challenges, we prefer to see them as opportunities. We are in the business of providing the best customer experience, which is one step up from customer service. Anyone can provide service. There are a couple of examples that come to mind, where I took the time out of base business needs to personally oversee my clients' needs. One of my partners in Delhi needed a delivery for a pharma client in the USA, and it was then that a category 5 hurricane hit Florida. No one was willing to courier the lab goods due to the dire possible repercussions. But despite the storm, I personally offered to fly it down to Florida to hand

over the products. That is the level of service we believe in providing. Another instance that comes to mind, is where I spent two consecutive days in the warehouse in Memphis to ensure the re-palletisation was done accurately and updated the client with pictures and videos of myself in real-time.

What investments and advancements have been done in tech to improve operational efficiency?

AI is here to stay, and we should see it as an assistant as opposed to something that is here to replace any jobs. AI can help streamline demand vs supply projections to production scheduling for our customers. This tapestry of AI

AI is here to stay, and we should see it as an assistant as against something that is here to replace any jobs

technology and supply chain operations is a huge advancement in our industry. Again, it cannot and should not replace human experience, where the emails and telephones are still answered by people—nothing can replace that real live interaction with a human brain as opposed to algorithms.

What are your ongoing projects or those in pipeline? Any expansion plans?

We have a several expansion plans. As you know, we are year old into this profession and growth and expansion are top priority. We are looking to at least triple our trade volume this year and have invested heavily into marketing, and not just any marketing we are directly targeting South-east Asian and Middle Eastern manufacturers looking to expand into the USA. I believe I can be that bridge for these parts of the world, having grown up and built a company in the USA. 🇺🇸


<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #0056b3; color: white; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px;">Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ AI can help streamline demand-supply projections to production scheduling for our customers ■ Trade of auto products, pharma, garments, diamonds growing 	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #0056b3; color: white; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px;">Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The govt. is taking steps to lower these export tariffs to make India accessible for trade and investments ■ There is a growth potential despite the shift in the nature of the business
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Logitrust Global Solutions begins India operations

Logitrust Global Solutions was launched in New Delhi recently. The launch event was graced by Samanjasa Das, Principal Chief Commissioner of Customs, Delhi Zone, and Rajesh Menon, Maritime Specialist, Union Ministry of Commerce & Industry. Pushpendra Pratap Singh, MD & CEO gave a special address.



Flight optimisation technology to reduce carbon emissions

The air cargo industry in Middle East has initiatives from fuel-efficient aircraft and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) to advanced technologies such as the COMET TMS to reduce its carbon footprint, says Nissrine Elqobai, CEO and Co-founder, ENY Consulting, in an exclusive interview with .



What initiatives are being implemented to reduce air cargo's CO2 footprint in the Middle East?

The air cargo sector in the Middle East is increasingly adopting innovative measures to reduce its carbon footprint. Airlines are investing in fuel-efficient aircraft, exploring use of SAF, and adopting advanced flight optimisation technologies to reduce emissions. These initiatives support environmental goals and improve operational efficiency by cutting fuel costs. Our partner AHOY is devoted to mobility and sustainability, COMET is their



Nissrine Elqobai
CEO and Co-founder
ENY Consulting

TMS (for first, middle and last-mile), that is, embedding carbon tracking.

How can collaboration between agents, airlines and regulatory authorities drive adoption of sustainable solutions?

Collaboration between the cargo agents, airlines, and regulatory authorities play a significant role in accelerating sustainable practices. Efforts can facilitate the adoption of green fuels, optimise flight routes for reduced carbon footprint, and promote eco-friendly packaging materials. Partnerships across the value chain fosters a culture of innovation and share the responsibility for sustainability.

What steps can agents and airlines take to improve transparency in reporting the environmental impact?

Transparency in environmental reporting is a must to build trust and meet global sustainability standards. Cargo agents and airlines can achieve this by adopting standardised reporting frameworks that

Airlines invest in fuel-efficient aircraft, exploring use of SAF, and adopting flight optimisation to reduce emissions

track emissions and sustainability metrics. Sharing these insights with stakeholders demonstrates accountability and encourages continuous improvement.

At ENY Consulting, we partner with digital solution providers such as Shippeo, a leading real-time multimodal transportation visibility platform. Shippeo plays a significant role in reducing the carbon footprint across various modes of transport, including air cargo, through a unified user interface. It helps optimise transport routes, reduce delays, and eliminate unnecessary fuel consumption by offering real-time visibility and predictive insights.



Regulatory frameworks to boost MMLPs growth, reduce costs

MMLPs are instrumental in enhancing logistics operations and play a pivotal role in boosting growth of SMEs. These hubs provide manufacturers with access to storage, and efficient transportation networks, reducing production lead times and costs, says **Aditi Kumar, ED, TVS Industrial & Logistics Parks.**



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Tell us about your Grade A MMLPs across India.

How are they boosting exports, reducing costs and promoting trade facilitation?

Our upcoming logistics parks projects diversify across southern, eastern and central regions of India in Vizag, Indore, and Cuttack, among others. Our underconstruction Grade A built-to-suit parks aim to provide seamless operation, connectivity, and supply chain efficiency to our clients. Our Vizag Park covers 4 lakh sq. ft. and has a prime location along NH-16 and NH-26 to ensure seamless connectivity. The Indore logistics park, spanning

5.4 lakh sq. ft, offers connectivity via NH-47. It is situated 23 km from Devi Ahilyabai Holkar International Airport and 25 km from Indore City.

Under construction within Choudwar Industrial Estate, the Cuttack logistics park covers 3.2 lakh sq. ft. and is located on NH-16. It is 19 km from Cuttack Junction Railway Station and is in the proximity of Biju Patnaik International Airport. MMLPs are instrumental in enhancing logistics operations and play a pivotal role in boosting the growth of SMEs.

By supporting manufacturing clusters, MMLPs create job avenues. These hubs provide manufacturers with seamless access to storage, and transportation networks, reduce production lead times and costs.



Aditi Kumar
Executive Director
TVS Industrial & Logistics Parks

How do you assess logistics infrastructure in India, in terms of linkage and efficiency?

India's logistics infrastructure has improved in recent years, but we still face challenges in connectivity and efficiency. Poor road conditions, con-

“India's logistics infra has improved in recent years, but we still face challenges in connectivity and efficiency.”

gested ports, limited rail connectivity, and a fragmented market continue to slow down movement of goods, leading to higher costs and delays. Despite investments, infra struggles to keep pace with growing demand. While efforts are being made to promote multimodal transport, road transport dominates, limiting the cost-effective movement of volumes by rail or waterways. Addressing these issues through better integration and investment in logistics hubs will be crucial to improve India's supply chain efficiency. Government initiatives such as PMGS, Bharatmala, and NLP are aiming to enhance multimodal connectivity, reducing logistics costs, and streamlining regulatory processes to create a more efficient and competitive logistics ecosystem.

What are the key gaps in India's logistics infra that need immediate attention for smoother supply chain ops?

The availability of industrial corridors for logistics park development in India is still limited, leading to fragmented storage facilities and inefficient supply chains. There is a lack of unified information access, which leads to a struggle with



inconsistent road regulations for transport goods vehicles. A centralised digital platform providing real-time updates on road access, congestion, entry-exit time and regulatory curbs can enhance planning and reduce transit delays. The sector faces a shortage of skilled workforce, which can be bridged by providing industry-specific programmes and skill development courses to get more trained professionals.

How can India improve warehousing and cold chain infra to meet the demands of e-commerce and agriculture sectors?

To improve India's warehousing and cold chain infrastructure for e-commerce and agriculture, I believe we need strategic investments in modern cold storage facilities, especially in rural areas.

Integrating IoT sensors and cold chain management software will enable real-time temperature monitoring, reducing spoilage. Renewable energy solutions such as solar power can also enhance efficiency while cutting costs. For instance, we support our client Dairy Day by providing tailored power solutions to optimise their cold storage operations within their cold room facility.

How is the government supporting public-private partnerships under the NLP?

We have benefited from these initiatives by expanding our operations in key regions, aligning with the NLP's objectives. Securing 20 acres of government land in Indore's Pithampur Sector 7 from MPIDC enables us to develop a logistics park, strengthening

regional connectivity and creating several job opportunities. We are hopeful continued government support through clear policy frameworks, regulatory incentives, and digital integration will promote efficiency and cost reduction in the sector. Through PPPs, the NLP aims to nurture local private sector capabilities, improve competitiveness of local businesses, transfer skills to state-owned enterprises, and optimise public sector value for money in achieving long-term value creation.

How does development of multimodal logistics parks align with the initiatives of PMGS and NLP?

The development of multimodal logistics parks aligns perfectly with the goals of PMGS and NLP by enabling seamless integration of multiple transportation modes within a single hub. With MMLPs, we can leverage multimodal linkage—rail, road, water and air transport—to ensure the smooth transfer of goods, which is the PMGS' key objective. By streamlining logistics ops, bringing together warehousing facilities, customs clearance and cargo handling, we can minimise transit times.

This approach helps reduce overall logistics costs, aligning with the NLP's focus on improving efficiency. Their strategic location in economic zones allows us to optimise supply chain connectivity, ensuring faster movement of goods to markets and production hubs.

With advanced digital integration, we can enhance transparency and operational efficiency, supporting the policy's push for digitisation. By



consolidating cargo handling in one place, we contribute to reducing congestion on roads and highways, making logistics network more sustainable and cost-effective.

How do you anticipate the logistics industry to adapt to evolving trends such as automation, digitisation, and sustainability?

The logistics sector is evolving and is projected to generate revenue of US\$ 545.6 million by 2030. With advancements in automation, digitisation, and sustainability, we are adapting to these transformative changes. Technologies such as AI, robotics, and IoT streamline operations, minimise manual effort and enhance efficiency.

Digitisation utilises data-driven solutions such as blockchain and cloud computing to improve supply chain transparency, optimise route planning, and enable real-time tracking. These innovations are revolutionising logistics by reducing costs, increasing speed, and ensuring sustainable growth. Despite challenges such as high costs and skill gaps, government support is accelerating adoption of au-

I believe we need strategic investments in modern cold storage facilities, especially in the rural areas

tomation, digital technologies, and sustainable practices in the logistics sector.

Across our sites, we integrate eco-friendly measures such as rainwater harvesting, solar panel roofing, and advanced waste management systems. These efforts contribute to our sustainability achievements, including 1,126 million litres of water saved annually, 14 million units of energy conserved each year, and 10,000 tonnes of carbon savings.

With 8,000 trees planted and 30 per cent of our clients from the sustainability sector, we continue to drive green solutions in industrial and logistics infrastructure. By integrating such initiatives, we enhance efficiency, transparency, and resilience across the supply chain, making India's logistics sector competitive and future-ready, while ensuring a greener tomorrow. 🌱

Highlights

- Despite investments, infra still struggles to keep pace with growing demand
- While efforts are being made to promote multimodal transport, road transport still dominates

Impact

- There is lack of unified information access, leading to a struggle with road regulations for transport good vehicles
- Investments in cold storage facilities in rural areas must

Rhenus Logistics opens CDC for IKEA in India

Rhenus Logistics opens a warehouse facility that supports storage and fulfillment of over 7,000 IKEA products. The 180,000 square feet facility is fully outsourced Central Distribution Centre (CDC) for IKEA, with sustainable features and technology for seamless doorstep delivery to the Delhi NCR region.

The CDC for IKEA, with a storage capacity of 12,000 m³, will enable the Swedish home furnisher to fulfil most orders within 24 hours, as part of its strategic

expansion plans in India. The facility is seamlessly integrated with Rhenus Warehouse Management System. The CDC is equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure, cutting-edge

storage and modern material handling systems. This facility will facilitate enhanced efficiency and productivity, with an aim to cater to the north India market seamlessly. Situ-

ated around 35 km from the airport, the CDC for IKEA is in Farrukh Nagar, Gurugram, and well connected to the region's rail, road, and air channels.



‘Last-mile challenge drives growth, efficiency in logistics’

Last mile delivery plays a crucial role in today’s times. We don’t only want to ship products, we want it to be meaningful for society, for the ecosystem. Our deliveries are mostly via EVs, says, **Saiba Suri, Country Fulfilment Manager, IKEA India.**



CT Bureau

Tell us about IKEA’s newly launched customer distribution centre (CDC) in Farrukh Nagar near Gurugram in north India.

We are unlocking North with this newly opened CDC facility in collaboration with Rhenus Logistics. This is a 180,000

square feet facility, but this is just a beginning of our journey in Delhi. Delhi customers are home crowd; we know they are waiting for IKEA. We are following online first approach in Delhi, soon we will have stores in Gurugram and Noida. But this CDC will continue to be the epicentre, as we expand to more cities in North. So, any new unit that we build, any new store that comes up, this CDC along with Rhenus Logistics will be a replenishment and fulfilment centre. On a country level, we have used the cluster approach because India is a huge country. We work with the Northern, Central and Southern cluster concept. And this will now cater to the entire north cluster.

Tell us about this collaboration with Rhenus Logistics?

The courtship between us began in 2016. But I think it has been an interesting journey. Our relationship with Rhenus Logistics is not new. IKEA and Rhenus have been working for



Saiba Suri
Country Fulfilment Manager
IKEA India

What kind of expectations do you have from Rhenus, which is your logistics partner?

The fundamentals will be togetherness and transparency. We can face roadblocks or challenges together we can celebrate together. But ultimately looking at a long-term perspective we do not want to keep changing partners, as we keep expanding. We want to

the past couple of decades together. And they are supporting our business in several countries, Germany being one of the largest, where it is not only warehousing, but end-to-end. The last-mile delivery (LMD) is undertaken by Rhenus. When we look at a partner, it is important to have a like-minded ethos and value system, because IKEA believes in long-term partnerships. We do not believe in short-term ones. We want to grow with our partners just as we do with our suppliers. After signing a pact and 12 months have flown past. And here we are sitting now at the inauguration, looking forward to many things together.

What modes of transportation will be used to ensure seamless LMDs across India?

It is majorly rail and road. Rhenus is managing our distribution services and warehouse management. But when we get the goods in from port or from our warehouse in Pune: that is being handled by a separate service partner.

“We have online first approach in Delhi, soon we’ll have stores in Gurugram and Noida.”

continue to grow organically. we already see opportunities and how we can collectively work on those fronts as well. Plus, it gives an impetus to global projects. Since IKEA is expanding globally, Rhenus is also expanding.

How crucial is LMD in today’s times?

The LMD plays a vital role in customer experience, in how the customers get our products and perceive them. Our stores are built on the concept of instant gratification. So, if you go to IKEA store today, you can practically pick up anything. You can even take the sofa, if it is possible for you to take it. But then for what is not possible to take from the store, we have deliveries organised for customers. 🐦



LogiMAT explores cutting-edge Intralogistics solutions

LogiMAT India, held by Messe Stuttgart India, was recently held in Mumbai. Known for its excellence in logistics and supply chain solutions, the event was a platform for industry leaders, professionals and innovators from the logistics and material handling sectors.





Tech to redefine efficiency, accelerate gender-inclusivity

When complexities outstrip human capability, tech intervention becomes only option to boost efficiency, agility and productivity. Nowhere is this evident than in logistics and supply chain industry, where tech-driven innovation and expertise have become vital to managing scale and drive efficiency.



Technologies such as AI, ML as well as deployment of automation, data analytics, route optimisation and real time tracking have led to better decision-making, resource mobilisation, response capabilities and larger bandwidth to manage volume rush especially during festive seasons. Through technology deployment in

Logistics & supply chain form backbone of India's growth and its journey towards developed nation by 2047

warehousing in the form of automated picking tools, automated storage and retrieval systems (AS/RS), inventory management, packaging, transportation last-mile delivery, etc., logistics companies are offering superior customer

experience while reducing the burden of repetitive work tasks on the workforce.

Logistics and supply chain forms the backbone of the country's economic growth and its journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047. As per Economic Survey, logistics industry employs over 22 million people and as per various estimates, on the back of infrastructure development, supportive government policies and growing economic activities, the industry is projected to generate 10 million more jobs by 2027.2 Having said that, the growing technology interventions redefining the talent or human capital deployment narrative or outlook of the logistics and supply chain industry.

The growing technology integration made the logistics industry workforce more gender inclusive. With women comprising 15 percent of the logistics workforce in India, we are witnessing a steady

growth in women participation and the trend is expected to increase further as the industry is opting for skill-based approach while hiring human capital. With more and more labour-intensive roles are becoming technology-empowered, the scenario opens up opportunities for women to take up those critical roles rather than restricting themselves to passive operational roles. Along with efficiency, de-genderisation of profiles is one of the biggest transformations that new-age technology has brought in to the logistics workforce.

The erstwhile dominance of manual and physical labour is gradually making way for technology-skilled approach. The introduction of cutting-edge technologies in logistics is redefining workforce dynamics, driving greater gender inclusivity. As automation, AI, and robotics reduce the physical labour intensive aspects traditionally associated with logistics roles, the

scenario creates opportunities for women to step into operational positions that were considered male-dominated. This shift is creating a diverse workforce, allowing women to contribute to critical operational areas such as warehousing, inventory management, and last-mile delivery.

This transformation presents a unique opportunity to accelerate gender inclusivity by adopting a skill-based approach to acquiring talent. There is an urgent need to prioritise technological proficiency over physical strength so that women feel empowered to take on leadership and impactful roles within operations. The companies also need to adopt structured diversity programmes, upskilling initiatives, and inclusive workplace policies to sustain the momentum.

A logistics workforce is adept and diverse. By leveraging technology to break gender barriers, organisations can unlock new perspectives, foster innovation, and build a resilient logistics workforce.



Indrani Chatterjee
Group CHRO
Allcargo Group

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same)

Fortify your facility with reliable sectional overhead doors

Sectional overhead doors by Gandhi Automations is ideal for industries, warehouses, retail stores, and service centres, where space utilisation and accessibility are crucial. These doors consist of multiple panels connected by hinges, allowing the door to bend, slide and open vertically.



CT Bureau

Customisable to fit a range of opening sizes and designed to meet high aesthetic standards, sectional overhead doors are known for their reliability and durability. They provide excellent thermal insulation and soundproofing. These doors enhance the appearance of facility while contributing to long-term cost savings. Their robustness and energy-efficient features make them a smart investment, ensuring operational effectiveness and financial benefits over time. The range of sectional overhead doors, including Porto and Max Vista models, are

These doors enhance appearance of facility, while contributing to cost savings and smart investment

designed for industrial and commercial buildings. They are available in multiple operational versions: manual push-pull, electrically operated, and chain-hoist operated by pulling an endless chain. This flexibility ensures our doors meet the diverse needs of various applications.

KEY FEATURES

- ↳ Reliable and low-noise operation
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- ↳ Design-oriented surfaces and optimal light solutions
- ↳ Minimal bulk, providing more usable space indoors and outdoors
- ↳ Easy and practical to open and operate
- ↳ Energy savings and enhanced comfort
- ↳ Bright indoor environments and attractive design aesthetics
- ↳ Constructed from pre-painted, galvanised steel with a 40 mm thick sandwich panel
- ↳ Equipped with special non-aging rubber gaskets that seal the perimeter, preventing water, air, and dust infiltration
- ↳ Customisable as Gas Tight Ripening Room Doors
- ↳ For access to people and small vehicles, a side door can be provided to reduce the number of times the door is operated
- ↳ Opening-closing speed: 0.2–0.4 m/s
- ↳ Available sizes: Width up to 15,000 mm, Height up to 10,000 mm



Both models are offered with different lifting systems tailored to the available overhead space. The sliding system options include normal lift, high lift, vertical lift, low headroom lift, inclined lift and providing optimal solutions.

- Porto Sectional Overhead Doors: They seamlessly blend with any architectural style. Easy to use, quiet, and reliable, they are built with pre-painted, galvanised steel and have 40 mm thick sandwich panels.

- Max Vista Sectional Overhead Doors. These doors

They are available in multiple versions: manual push-pull, electrically and chain-hoist operated by pulling a chain

combine aluminium panels with special glazed panels enhancing natural light, gridded, or meshed windows for a distinctive look. They provide ample natural light and are durable and visually appealing. ↳

Future of warehousing: Smart, sustainable and cost-efficient

Warehousing automation goes beyond digital record keeping. It integrates technologies such as AI, robotics, and IoT-driven insights to create optimised warehouse ecosystems that are fast and green. It can improve inventory accuracy by more than 90 per cent, thereby reducing inefficiencies.

It's the morning rush. You grab your coffee, check your schedule, and suddenly remember—it's Secret Santa at work. You forgot to buy a gift. In a few clicks, you order a beautifully crafted snow globe, knowing it'll be the perfect choice for Amanda from accounting.

Moments later, as you reach for your keys, a knock on the door. The package has already arrived. This kind of near-instant gratification has become the norm. Consumers expect fast, seamless, and increasingly sustainable shopping experiences. But what often goes unnoticed is the intricate web of supply chains that enable this reality—spanning manufacturers, transporters, warehouses, and fulfillment networks.

At the heart of this transformation lies warehousing—an often-overlooked yet critical component of supply chain efficiency. A well-optimised warehouse is no longer just about stocking inventory. It plays a crucial role in demand forecasting, fulfillment speed, and cost efficiency. What's more—warehouses provide crucial value-added services like kitting, palletising, and return processing, to name a few.

MOVING THE NOW INTO THE NEXT

Despite their pivotal nature in managing supply chains, warehousing operations still rely on manual processes, leading to inefficiencies, human errors, and operational bottlenecks. The average retail warehouse in the U.S. operates at just 63 per cent inventory accuracy, according to a GS1 US and Auburn Uni-



versity study. This misalignment can lead to overproduction, excess transportation, and unsustainable logistics

“As consumer expectations evolve & sustainability becomes vital, warehousing will not be an afterthought

practices. The good news? Automation and digital solutions can improve inventory accuracy to over 90 per cent reducing inefficiencies, while making supply chains both faster and greener. The rise of automation, AI, and digitalization is reshaping how warehouses function, and with it, the very foundation of modern commerce.

According to a McKinsey report, companies today have the opportunity to save 20 –

50% of their logistics costs through efficient and automated warehousing processes. The benefits of warehouse automation go beyond cost savings; in today's consumer-shaped world, being able to fulfill orders faster leads to immense brand loyalty and retention benefits. The reduction of manual errors in picking, packing, and inbound/outbound operations through automation also means better customer experience, supplier relations, and bottomline performance.

BUSINESS COHERENCE WITH POINT AUTOMATION

Warehousing automation goes beyond digital record keeping. True automation integrates advanced technologies such as AI, robotics, and IoT-driven insights to create fully optimized warehouse ecosystems that are not only faster and smarter—but also greener. Bosch Mobility Platform and Solutions is part of this comprehensive approach with its Supply Chain Studio—an eas-

ily interoperable, cloud-based suite of supply chain management solutions. Imagine a warehouse manager having a single digital command center to automate and oversee:

- Picking and packing operations
- Outbound documentation
- Incoming truck verification
- Yard and bay management

The value of these digital solutions become exponential when paired with the right technologies on the floor, such as RFID, indicators, bots, and mobile devices.

THE VERDICT

The warehouse of the future will not just be faster and efficient—it will be smarter, more adaptive, and more sustainable. As consumer expectations evolve and sustainability becomes a competitive advantage, warehousing can no longer be an afterthought. Businesses that invest in intelligent, automated, and sustainable solutions today will be the ones leading the supply chains of tomorrow.



Hanna Cordes
Global GTM Head for
Mobility Platforms & Solutions, Bosch

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same)



Trendsetters of the month



Adani Vizhijam Port's team handled the MSC Carmelita, the deepest draft vessel ever accommodated at the port. The post got

1,492 likes
29 shares



Wide-body freighters are still in demand for e-commerce market. The post received

2,270 likes
93 shares
37 comments



The Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru posted that 44 million roses were shipped from the airport this season weighing 1,649 MT. The post churned out

3,500 Views



Etihad Airways shared the post of its A380 grand debut at Changi Airport. The post received

44.4k likes
156 comments



Adani Ports Mundra liquid terminal sets new record with 0.841 MMT of cargo in January 2025. The official post from Adani Ports and SEZ got

2,643 likes
33 comments
13 reposts



His Excellency Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Group Chairman & CEO, DP World said, "Prime Minister Modi's initiative 'Make in India' for the world is truly working." DP World's official post got

3,553 likes
15 reposts

AI advancing your cargo business



GoFreight: One-stop solution to manage freight forwarding business

In this highly competitive air cargo sector, it becomes essential for freight forwarders to be equipped with the latest AI tools, which will make their businesses grow.

These AI solutions help in streamlining the operations by automating repetitive tasks, optimising cargo routing, and in the management of complex logistics. One such solution in the market, which is specifically designed to assist the freight

forwarders and logistics players is 'GoFreight'.

GoFreight offers a tailored, comprehensive cloud-based software solution designed to meet the unique demands of the industry. It seamlessly integrates operations and boost visibility to secure a competitive advantage with the FMS platform expertly crafted by and for freight forwarders. It is automated freight forwarding workflows enhance the operational efficiency of freight forwarders by automating repetitive manual tasks, ensuring regulatory compliance, and enabling a greater focus on strategic decision-making.

The solution helps in empowering the cargo and logistics businesses with impeccable data-driven decision-making capabilities, optimise routes, and enhance customer service, ultimately improving profitability and optimising competitiveness. GoFreight offers highly scalable services, which helps in catering specific needs of the users. The modular architecture allows for easy expansion, accommodating both small and large-scale operations while ensuring optimal performance and efficiency. GoFreight is a one-stop solution for cargo busi-



nesses helping in saving time, reducing costs which eventually helps in enhancing the user experience.

Form - IV

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper Cargo Talk to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February

1. Place of publication	: 72 Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110001	4. Publisher's Name	: SanJeet
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		Address	: 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110001

6. Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the total capital: DDP Publications Pvt. Ltd. Shareholders: 1. SanJeet, 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi-1. 2. Sumati Jeet, 72, Todarmal Road, ND-1. 3. Devika Jeet, 72, Todarmal Road, ND-1. 4. Nikhil Jeet, 72, Todarmal Road, ND-1.

I, SanJeet, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: 01/03/2025

Sd/-
SanJeet
Signature of the Publisher

Movements

NLDSL India



Arvind Devaraj has joined as the new COO, NLDSL. He brings 20 years of experience where he focused on sales strategy, market analysis, and customer success. Before joining NLDS, Devaraj held leadership positions at Tech Mahindra.

TRUCKSUP India



Man Singh Jhajhria has been appointed as COO at TrucksUp. In his new role, he will focus on scaling TrucksUp's operations, driving value creation, and implementing sustainable solutions. He will lead the firm's efforts to meet long-term goals.

ALVAREZ & MARSAL India



Saurav Kumar has been appointed as the MD, Alvarez & Marsal (A&M) India, within its infrastructure and capital projects practice. He brings 16 years of consulting and industry experience in engineering, construction, and procurement.

DP WORLD India



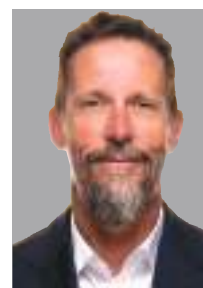
Suresh Ramani has joined as the new COO, Logistics, DP World for the subcontinent. He is experienced in business functions of sales, business development, product development, operations, and managing P&L. Ramani has worked across India.

ONEAVIA SERVICES India



S Hari has joined as the Director, OneAvia Services. Experienced in logistics and air cargo, he is an ideal fit for the role. He was the VP, Cargo, IndiGo, and SVP, AVIAPRO LOGISTICS. Hari is also experienced in air cargo management.

HELLMANN WORLDWIDE LOGISTICS Germany



Lee l'Ons has been announced as the Regional Chief Executive by Hellmann Worldwide Logistics for IMEA region. l'Ons possesses three decades of experience in the logistics sector. He has earlier served as the President, MEA, K+N.

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