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NIMASA DENIES GRANTING WAIVERS TO SHIPPING FIRMS

by Vanguard News Nigeria

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, NIMASA, has dismissed as false allegations that it has been granting waivers to shipping firms.

It also refuted allegations of preferential treatments for foreign shipping companies in the shipment of petroleum products.

Director General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, made the clarifications during an investigative hearing on the "urgent need to ensure strict compliance with statutory regulations and provisions regarding the Nigerian diving sector" organised by the Senate Committee on Local Content.

It would be recalled that the Ship Owners Association of Nigeria, SOAN, had petitioned the Senate, asking it to intervene in what the association described as "unfavourable treatment and injustice" towards Indigenous shipping companies, which grants undue advantage to their foreign competitors.

However, NIMASA DG denied any waivers or preferential treatments for foreign firms, adding that the agency lacked the powers to grant waivers, while the Ministry of Transportation, which is empowered by law to grant waivers had never granted any waivers for 15 years.

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APAPA GRIDLOCK PUSHES CARGO COST TO NIGERIA TO \$600M MONTHLY

by Eromosele Abiodun

The federal government's inability to find a solution to the intractable Apapa gridlock has negatively impacted the cost of shipping containers into Nigeria, which has risen by 600 per cent.

Numbers obtained by THISDAY revealed that in the first half of this year, it cost \$1,000 to ship a 20-foot container to Nigeria from the Far East.

Today, the cost charged by shipping lines for the same service is between \$5,500 and \$6,000. Also, haulage cost from Tin Can Port to any other part of Lagos has risen by more than 1,000 per cent from about N100, 000 to about N12 million

THISDAY investigation revealed that due to the massive congestion at Tin Can and Apapa ports, many shipping lines have started diverting Nigeria-bound cargoes to neighbouring ports in Cotonou and Ivory Coast

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MARITIME WORKERS SHUT EASTERN PORTS, BEGIN INDEFINITE STRIKE OVER 500 MEMBERS SACKED BY INTELS, AMS

by Victor Ahiuma-Young

Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria, MWUN, has ordered workers to shut all eastern ports operations and begin an indefinite strike from Monday, December 14, over the sack of members by Integrated Logistics Services, INTELS, Nigeria Limited and Associated Maritime Services, AMS, Limited.

Eastern Ports comprises Calabar Ports, Port Harcourt Ports, Onne Ports and Warri Ports.

In a statement by the Secretary-General, Felix Akingboye, the Union lamented that over 500 members were sacked by the two companies in the midst of negotiations on improved welfare and conditions of service for workers, and all entreaties to recall them were rebuffed.

According to the statement, the matter was worsened when several workers were hospitalised after they were allegedly brutalised, harassed and intimidated by the armed security operatives allegedly brought in by management.

The statement reads in part: "MWUN wishes to bring to public notice the increasing unfair labour practices and assault on our members at Integrated Logistics Services, INTELS, Nigeria Limited and Associated Maritime Services, AMS, Limited.

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Mele Kyari

INDIGENOUS SHIPPING FIRMS GET NNPC'S ASSURANCE ON PATRONAGE

by Sulaimon Salau

The Nigerian National petroleum Corporation (NNPC) has expressed its readiness to support indigenous fleet owners to enjoy greater patronage and participation in the oil and gas maritime business in Nigeria.

The Group Managing Director of NNPC, Mallam Mele Kyari, gave the assurance while playing host to members of the Nigerian Fleet Implementation Committee who paid a working visit to the NNPC Towers, Abuja.

Kyari said with the scale of the corporation's activities in the maritime sector, NNPC would get more active in the affairs of the Fleet Management Committee with a view to strengthening the synergy between the corporation and the private sector.

"We believe in this process; we will ensure that Nigerian ships enjoy a greater patronage in the business henceforth," Kyari assured. Speaking earlier, Chairman of the Committee, Hassan Bello, said Nigeria was losing \$1.9 billion to foreign ship owners yearly while appealing to the GMD to encourage NNPC subsidiaries to always engage indigenous shipping companies in their businesses.

He urged NNPC to grant local shipping companies the right of first refusal in crude oil lifting contracts, saying it would help grow the economy and sustain their businesses.

Bello noted that the committee was set up three years ago by the Federal Ministry of Transportation with a mandate to promote Nigerian ownership of ships and vessels to enable local companies take control of the shipping business which is in line with the economic diversification policy of the Federal Government.

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U.S. BLACKLISTS SIX COMPANIES, FOUR SHIPS OVER NORTH KOREA COAL SHIPMENTS

by Ship & Ports

The United States has blacklisted six companies, including several based in China, and four ships accused of illicit exports of North Korean coal, the Treasury Department said on Tuesday.

The United Nations Security Council banned North Korean coal exports in 2017. The 15-member body has unanimously boosted sanctions on North Korea since 2006 in a bid to choke off funding for Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

"The DPRK (North Korea) continues to circumvent the U.N. prohibition on the exportation of coal, a key revenue generator that helps fund its weapons of mass destruction programs," U.S. Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement.

"The North Korean regime often uses forced labor from prison camps in its mining industries, including coal, exploiting its own people to advance its illicit weapons programs," he said.

An annual report to the U.N. Security Council by independent sanctions monitors earlier this year said North Korea continued to flout council resolutions "through illicit maritime exports of commodities, notably coal and sand" in 2019, earning Pyongyang hundreds of millions of dollars.

The U.S. action freezes any U.S. assets of those sanctioned and generally bars Americans from dealing with them.

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DENMARK TO END OIL AND GAS ERA IN 2050

by Ship & Ports

The Danish Parliament has announced that it will cancel all future licensing rounds for new oil and gas exploration and production permits in the Danish part of the North Sea and end existing production by 2050.

As a major oil-producing country in the EU, Denmark's announcement is a landmark decision towards phasing-out fossil fuels in Europe.

The government of Denmark also agreed to allocate money to secure a just transition for impacted workers.

The government, the Liberal Party, the Radical Left, the Danish Party, the Socialist Party, and the Conservatives entered into a mutual agreement on the future of the North Sea, which sets a new green direction in line with the Climate Act's goal.

In addition to the end date in 2050, according to which it will no longer be possible to extract oil and gas in the Danish part of the North Sea, the agreement entails the cancellation of both the 8th and all future licensing rounds.

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