



# The Shipping Industry in Kuwait:

## A Strategic Maritime Hub in the Gulf

Kuwait, a small yet economically significant country in the Arabian Gulf, holds a strategic position in the global maritime landscape. Though its coastline stretches only about 500 kilometers along the northwestern shore of the Arabian Gulf, Kuwait has cultivated a robust shipping industry that plays a vital role in its trade, oil exports, and economic diversification efforts.

### Strategic Location and Historical Context

Historically, Kuwait has leveraged its location at the crossroads of trade routes between India, East Africa, and the Levant. Before the discovery of oil, Kuwaiti dhows carried goods and pearls across the Gulf. With the advent of oil in the 20th century, the country transitioned from a traditional maritime trading hub to an oil-exporting powerhouse. Today, the shipping industry in Kuwait remains a critical component of the national economy, heavily tied to the export of petroleum and import of consumer goods.

### Major Ports and Infrastructure

Kuwait's shipping operations are primarily supported by three major commercial ports:

**Shuwaikh Port:** Located near Kuwait City, this is the most significant commercial port in the country. It handles a large share of Kuwait's imports and is equipped to accommodate container ships, bulk carriers, and general cargo vessels.

**Shuaiba Port:** Situated in the south, Shuaiba is both an industrial and commercial port. It primarily handles oil exports and petrochemicals, serving the adjacent industrial zone.

**Doha Port:** Once the primary port before the development of Shuwaikh, Doha Port now primarily supports smaller cargo vessels, local trade, and maritime services.

In addition to these, Mina Al-Ahmadi is a specialized oil port operated by Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), crucial for exporting crude oil and petroleum products.

### Role in Oil Exports

Kuwait's shipping industry is dominated by oil logistics. The country is one of the world's leading crude oil exporters, and much of this oil is transported via tankers operated by the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC), a subsidiary of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). KOTC plays a central role in ensuring the efficient and secure delivery of crude oil, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and petroleum products to markets worldwide.

With around 90% of Kuwait's export revenue coming from hydrocarbons, maritime shipping remains vital to the country's economic stability and its link to global markets.

### Efforts Toward Diversification and Modernization

In recent years, Kuwait has initiated plans to modernize and expand its maritime infrastructure as part of its "Vision 2035" development strategy. A cornerstone of this initiative is the Mubarak Al Kaber Port, currently under construction on Boubyan Island. Once completed, it will be one of the largest ports in the



Gulf region, with ambitions to turn Kuwait into a key regional transshipment hub.

This mega-project is expected to enhance Kuwait's position in global supply chains, attract foreign investment, and support broader economic diversification beyond oil. The port will be integrated with rail and road networks, facilitating seamless movement of goods across the Gulf

Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Iraq.

Despite its strengths, Kuwait's shipping sector faces several challenges. Regional geopolitical tensions, such as those in the Strait of Hormuz, pose risks to maritime security. Additionally, competition from neighboring ports in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar makes it imperative for Kuwait to continuously

invest in infrastructure, technology, and logistics services to maintain competitiveness.

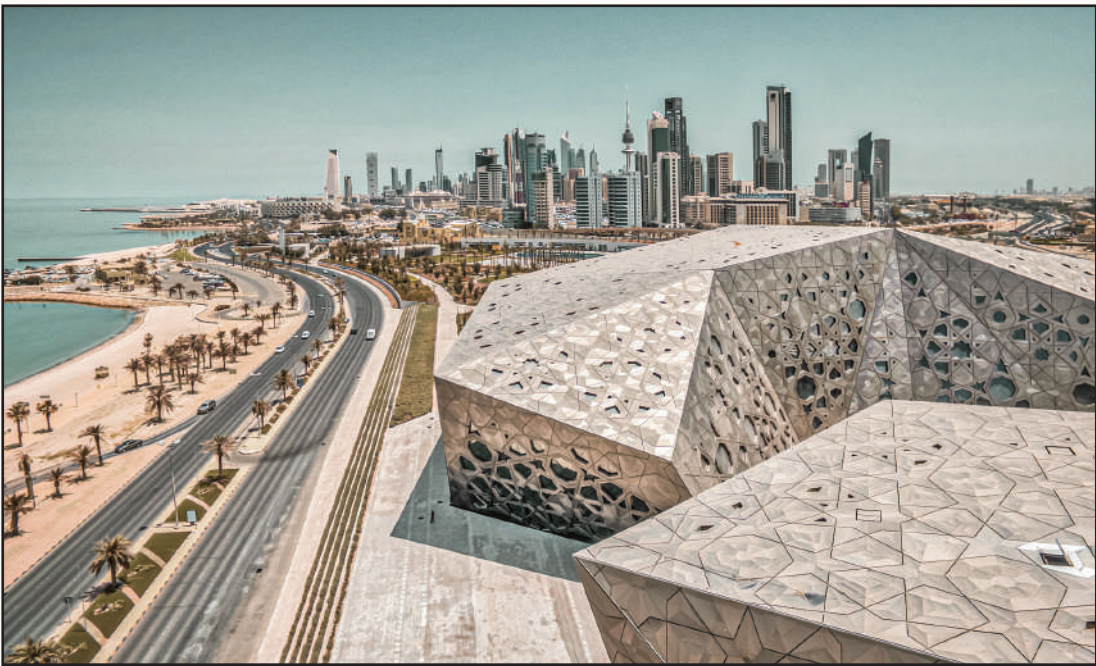
### Future Outlook

The outlook for Kuwait's shipping industry is optimistic. As global trade continues to evolve and shift toward Asia, Kuwait's location and investment in port infrastructure position it well to benefit from increased maritime activity.

Continued expansion of logistics services, digitalization of port operations, and a focus on sustainability will be key to maintaining long-term growth.

Moreover, Kuwait's strategic efforts to become a logistics hub for northern Gulf states, including Iraq and Iran, could significantly elevate its regional importance in the coming decades.

## Strategies for Efficient Shipping, Freight and Logistics Operations



IN an increasingly interconnected world, the efficiency of shipping, freight, and logistics is vital to business success and economic growth. The ability to move goods swiftly, safely, and cost-effectively not only meets consumer expectations but also boosts profitability and sustainability. With rising fuel costs, global competition, and environmental concerns, companies must continually innovate and refine their logistics operations. Here are key strategies to improve efficiency in this critical sector.

### Embrace Technology and Automation

Digital transformation is the cornerstone of modern logistics. Implementing technologies like Transportation Management Systems (TMS), Warehouse Management Systems (WMS), and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) helps businesses track inventory, optimize routes, and manage orders more effectively. Real-time tracking and predictive analytics provide greater visibility and decision-making power.

Automation also plays a crucial role. Automated sorting systems, robotic pickers, and self-driving forklifts reduce human error and speed up warehouse operations. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning can forecast demand, detect inefficiencies, and suggest process improvements.

### Optimize Supply Chain Networks

Efficient logistics start with a well-designed supply chain network. Businesses should regularly analyze their supplier locations, distribution centers, and customer bases to ensure the most strategic placement. Tools like network modeling and simulation software can help identify bottlenecks and inefficiencies in current setups.

Additionally, consolidating shipments, minimizing empty truckloads, and choosing the right mode of transportation — be it road, rail, air, or sea — are key to reducing transit time and cost.

### Improve Inventory Management

Poor inventory management leads to stockouts, overstocking, and increased holding costs. Adopting just-in-time (JIT) inventory systems, where goods arrive exactly when needed, reduces waste and frees up storage space. Businesses can also leverage demand forecasting tools to ensure optimal stock levels at all times.

Barcoding and RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) systems improve accuracy in tracking inventory movements, which enhances warehouse efficiency and reduces errors during picking and packing.

### Focus on Sustainability

Efficiency and sustainability go hand-in-hand. Green logistics not only reduce environmental impact but can also result in long-term cost savings. Companies are increasingly using electric or hybrid delivery vehicles, optimizing packaging to reduce waste, and utilizing eco-friendly materials.

Consolidating shipments and improving route planning can also cut fuel consumption and lower carbon emissions. Moreover, some governments offer tax incentives or grants for companies investing in sustainable logistics solutions.

### Train and Empower Staff

Even with the best technology, human capital remains essential. Providing regular training for logistics and warehouse staff ensures they are up-to-date with the latest systems and safety protocols. Cross-training employees to perform multiple roles also adds flexibility and resilience to operations.

Empowering staff to identify inefficiencies and suggest improvements can lead to valuable insights from those on the front lines of logistics operations.

### Strengthen Collaboration Across the Supply Chain

Efficient logistics require strong communication and coordination between suppliers, carriers, and customers. Shared platforms and integrated systems foster collaboration and transparency. When all parties have access to the same real-time data, they can make informed decisions quickly, especially during disruptions.

Building strong relationships with reliable carriers and third-party logistics providers (3PLs) also ensures consistency and reliability in transportation services.

Efficiency in shipping, freight, and logistics is no longer optional — it's a competitive necessity. By embracing technology, optimizing supply chains, managing inventory smartly, and fostering collaboration, businesses can reduce costs, improve service levels, and adapt more quickly to market changes. Ultimately, a streamlined logistics operation is key to delivering the right product, at the right time, to the right place — every time.

## Why Today's Container Ships Are Bigger Than Ever – and Still Growing

Modern container ships are the giants of the seas — floating mega-structures that can carry tens of thousands of containers across oceans in a single voyage. These vessels, often longer than four football fields and taller than many buildings, are central to global trade, transporting over 80% of all goods shipped internationally. But how is it possible for these ships to be so massive? The answer lies in a combination of engineering innovation, economic demand, and evolving port infrastructure.

### Economies of Scale Drive Size

One of the main reasons for the increasing size of container ships is economic efficiency. Larger ships can carry more containers with relatively lower fuel and operating costs per unit of cargo. This concept, known as economies of scale, means that shipping companies can reduce costs and emissions per container by using larger vessels.

For example, a vessel that can carry 24,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) costs only slightly more to operate than one with a capacity of 14,000 TEUs, yet it delivers a significantly greater volume of goods. As global trade volumes have grown — particularly between Asia and Europe — shipping companies have responded by commissioning ever-larger vessels to stay competitive.

### Advanced Hull Design and Materials

A key factor in building such enormous ships is the design of the hull, the body of the ship. Modern container ships have wide, flat-bottomed hulls designed for maximum stability and buoyancy. These hulls are made from high-tensile steel that is both strong and relatively lightweight, allowing the structure to support massive cargo loads without compromising safety.

Engineers also use finite element analysis and advanced simulation tools to test designs under various stress conditions, ensuring the vessel can withstand waves, wind, and cargo weight. Bulbous bows and hydrodynamic hull shapes reduce drag, improving fuel efficiency and stability.

### Powerful and Efficient Engines

Despite their massive size, modern container ships are surprisingly fuel-efficient. They are powered by low-speed two-stroke diesel engines designed to operate at optimum efficiency over long distances. Some of the largest engines in the world are found on container ships, capable of generating more than 80,000 kilowatts of power.

These engines are paired with slow cruising speeds — usually around 18 to 22 knots — which reduce fuel consumption and emissions. Innovations such as air lubrication systems, waste heat recovery, and alternative fuels (like LNG or methanol) are becoming more common to meet stricter environmental regulations.

### Modular Container Stacking

The design of modern container ships also makes them efficient at carrying cargo. Containers are stacked in modular rows both above and below deck. The decks are reinforced and structured to allow precise, vertical stacking of containers, sometimes up to 10 tiers high.

Computer systems and onboard software assist in determining the optimal loading pattern for weight distribution, access, and balance. Specialized lashing systems secure containers against shifting during rough seas.

### Port Infrastructure and Global Support Systems

Large container ships wouldn't be viable without the global infrastructure to support them. In recent decades, major ports like Rotterdam, Singapore, Shanghai, and Los Angeles have expanded and modernized their facilities to handle ultra-large vessels. These upgrades include deeper harbors, larger cranes, and automated cargo handling systems.

Additionally, nautical charts, tug services, and pilotage operations have been adapted to accommodate larger ships, allowing them to safely navigate through tight channels and busy shipping lanes.

### Limitations and the Future

There are, however, limits to how big container ships can get. Physical constraints like the depth of harbors, canal dimensions (e.g., Suez or Panama), and the risk of port congestion place practical boundaries on vessel size. Furthermore, disruptions like the 2021 Suez Canal blockage have highlighted the logistical and economic risks associated with ultra-large vessels.

As the shipping industry seeks to balance size with flexibility and sustainability, future innovations may focus less on sheer scale and more on smart shipping technologies, greener propulsion, and fleet diversification.

### Conclusion

The enormous size of today's container ships is a product of advanced engineering, global trade demands, and a complex web of supporting infrastructure. These vessels represent the peak of maritime logistics—carefully designed to move the modern world's goods with maximum efficiency across vast oceans.



IT gives me great pleasure to present to our esteemed readers this special supplement on Shipping, Freight and Logistics highlighting Kuwait's strategic position as a vital hub for imports and exports. This growing role necessitates efficient and reliable shipping, freight and logistics services to support the country's expanding economic and trade activities.

The supplement features a spotlight on the wide range of services offered by leading shipping companies in Kuwait. It also provides comprehensive insights into various aspects of the shipping and logistics industry, underscoring its critical importance to the national economy.

There is a common misconception in today's media landscape regarding the relevance of print media. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize why print media continues to play a vital role.

Print offers a tangible, focused reading experience that digital platforms cannot replicate. Newspapers and magazines are often perceived as more credible and trustworthy sources of information. Moreover, print content enjoys a longer shelf life and is easily accessible to a wide audience, making it a valuable medium in today's fast-paced world.

We hope you enjoy this special supplement and invite you to share your thoughts and feedback with us.

Happy reading!

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# Shipping, Freight and Logistics

Arab Times Special Supplement

## The Future of Shipping, Logistics and the Freight Industry in Gulf Countries



THE shipping logistics and freight industry in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries — comprising Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman — is undergoing a profound transformation. As global trade patterns shift, technological advancements accelerate, and regional economies diversify, the Gulf region stands at the forefront of redefining maritime logistics. The future of this sector in the Gulf is poised to be shaped by investments in infrastructure, digital innovation, sustainability initiatives, and strategic geopolitical positioning.

One of the most significant drivers of change is the massive investment in infrastructure by Gulf nations. The UAE's Jebel Ali Port, one of the world's largest and most advanced, exemplifies this trend. Similarly, Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 aims to transform the country into a global logistics hub, with ports like King Abdullah Port and the expansion of Dammam and Jeddah Islamic Ports gaining prominence. These efforts are designed to increase the region's share of global maritime trade and reduce reliance on oil revenues. The development of multimodal logistics zones — integrating ports, airports, and rail — will further enhance freight movement efficiency.

Digitalization is another cornerstone of the industry's future. Ports and shipping companies across the Gulf are increasingly adopting technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, Internet of Things (IoT), and digital twin modeling. These tools improve cargo tracking, automate customs procedures, and optimize supply chain management. For instance, Dubai's DP World has launched digital platforms like "CARGOES" to streamline trade logistics and port operations. As these technologies mature, real-time decision-making, predictive maintenance, and reduced operational costs will become standard across Gulf shipping networks.

Sustainability is also gaining ground as an essential part of the logistics strategy. With the International Maritime Organization (IMO) pushing for lower carbon emissions,

Gulf countries are investing in green port infrastructure and cleaner maritime fuels. The UAE has committed to net-zero emissions by 2050 and is encouraging ports and logistics firms to follow suit. This includes deploying electrified cargo handling equipment, using alternative fuels like LNG, and integrating renewable energy sources into port operations. These efforts not only align with global environmental standards but also appeal to international trade partners prioritizing eco-friendly supply chains.

Geopolitics and regional cooperation will continue to shape the industry's future. The strategic location of Gulf countries — at the crossroads of Asia, Europe, and Africa — makes them natural gateways for East-West trade. The normalization of relations between Gulf states and Israel, ongoing collaborations with China under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and partnerships with Western countries enhance their trade corridors and logistics connectivity. Regional projects such as the GCC railway network will further link Gulf states internally and externally, reducing road congestion and increasing freight capacity.

However, challenges remain. The industry must grapple with fluctuating oil prices, geopolitical tensions, and the risk of overcapacity due to rapid infrastructure expansion. Moreover, cybersecurity threats, climate-related disruptions, and the need to upskill the logistics workforce are pressing concerns. Addressing these will require coordinated policy-making, public-private partnerships, and resilience planning.

In conclusion, the future of shipping logistics and freight in Gulf countries is promising and dynamic. With strategic investment, digital innovation, and a growing commitment to sustainability, the Gulf is positioning itself as a global maritime leader. If managed effectively, the region's shipping sector can become not only a cornerstone of economic diversification but also a model for smart and sustainable logistics in the 21st century.

Key Trends in the Shipping and Logistics Sector in Gulf Countries:

### Focus on Kuwait and the Wider Region

**The shipping and logistics sector in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, including Kuwait, is undergoing a significant transformation. Driven by economic diversification, digitalization, infrastructure investments, and shifting trade routes, the region is rapidly evolving into a global logistics hub. As Gulf nations seek to reduce reliance on oil exports and strengthen non-oil sectors, logistics is emerging as a strategic pillar of long-term growth.**

**Massive Infrastructure Development**

One of the most visible trends in the Gulf shipping sector is large-scale investment in port and logistics infrastructure. Countries like the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait are expanding existing ports and constructing new ones to increase capacity and efficiency.

In Kuwait, the flagship Mubarak Al Kabeer Port project on Boubyan Island exemplifies this trend. Designed to become a key transshipment hub for northern Gulf countries, the port will integrate with regional rail and road networks. Similarly, the UAE's Jebel Ali Port and Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah Port are expanding to accommodate larger vessels and increased container traffic.

These developments aim to position Gulf ports as essential links in global trade routes connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa.

#### Digitalization and Smart Logistics

Digital transformation is playing a crucial role in modernizing logistics operations across the Gulf. Technologies such as blockchain, AI, the Internet of Things (IoT), and cloud computing are being implemented to enhance supply chain visibility, reduce costs, and improve customer service.

Ports in the region are adopting Port Community Systems (PCS) and Terminal Operating Systems (TOS) that streamline port operations, reduce paperwork, and allow real-time tracking of shipments. In Kuwait, logistics companies are investing in digital platforms to automate freight forwarding, customs clearance, and inventory management.

The pandemic accelerated this trend, pushing companies to adopt contactless and remote solutions to maintain supply chain continuity.

#### Focus on Economic Diversification

With a collective goal of reducing dependency on oil, Gulf countries are investing heavily in trade, manufacturing, and logistics as part of their economic visions. Kuwait's Vision 2035, Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, and the UAE's Economic Diversification Strategy all prioritize logistics as a key sector for non-oil growth.

These initiatives encourage private sector participation, foreign investment, and public-private partnerships in the development of logistics parks, free trade zones, and multimodal transport systems.

As part of this strategy, Kuwait is seeking to become a regional logistics gateway for Iraq and Central Asia,

enhancing its relevance beyond energy exports.

**Regional Integration and Cross-Border Connectivity**

Gulf countries are increasingly investing in cross-border infrastructure to enhance regional trade. Projects like the GCC Railway, once completed, will connect six countries via a 2,117 km rail network, significantly improving overland cargo movement.

For Kuwait, which shares borders with Iraq and Saudi Arabia, improving cross-border connectivity is crucial. Investments in customs modernization, joint border posts, and harmonized regulations are gradually easing the flow of goods across the region.

Increased regional integration is expected to reduce logistics costs and increase the competitiveness of Gulf ports and transport corridors.

#### Green and Sustainable Logistics

Environmental concerns are beginning to shape logistics policies across the Gulf. Compliance with IMO 2020 sulfur emission regulations, efforts to reduce carbon footprints, and the adoption of cleaner fuels are gaining momentum.

Several ports in the region are introducing shore power, electrified equipment, and waste management systems to enhance sustainability. Kuwait, for instance, is exploring solar-powered facilities and eco-friendly logistics hubs as part of its environmental commitments.

Logistics providers are also looking to optimize transportation networks to reduce empty runs and increase fuel efficiency.

#### Growing Role of E-commerce

The rapid rise of e-commerce in the Gulf is creating new demands on logistics infrastructure. Consumers expect faster delivery, real-time tracking, and seamless returns, prompting logistics firms to invest in last-mile delivery, fulfillment centers, and automated warehouses.

In Kuwait, the growing number of online shoppers has pushed both global and local logistics companies to expand their services. Companies are leveraging technology and local partnerships to meet rising consumer expectations.

E-commerce logistics is expected to be one of the fastest-growing segments in the region, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated digital shopping habits.

The shipping and logistics sector in Gulf countries, including Kuwait, is on the cusp of a new era. As governments invest in infrastructure, digital transformation, and regional cooperation, the region is positioning itself as a key player in global logistics. While challenges remain — such as geopolitical risks and the need for regulatory alignment — the overall trajectory points toward growth, innovation, and increased global integration.

By embracing these trends, Kuwait and its neighbors are not only enhancing their maritime and logistics capabilities but also laying the foundation for a diversified, knowledge-based economy in the years to come.

## AL-BAHAR SHIPPING

### A pioneering name in shipping industry in Kuwait



#### Service Offerings

Our shipping business was established in the 1950s, it now serves as the exclusive Kuwait agent for two major shipping lines: Cosco (China) and PIL (Singapore). We specialize in container cargo, general & break bulk cargo, RORO, heavy-lift project cargo, sea & air freight forwarding, customs clearance, and door delivery services.

#### Global Reach

We represent two global shipping lines:

- **Cosco:** One of the world's largest shipping companies serving 145+ countries and approximately 650 ports globally



Nishad Victor  
General Manager

■ **PIL:** Singapore-based carrier serving nearly 500 locations worldwide

#### Competitive Position

Operating since the 1960s as agents for leading shipping lines demonstrates our strong market presence. The decades-long trust from our shipping partners validates our ability to meet their objectives. Our experienced local

teams, customer service focus, and market adaptability have established us as valued industry partners.

#### Market Environment

Our industry now navigates complex dynamics including Kuwait's consumption-driven market, Red Sea route disruptions, geopolitical uncertainties, regional competition and evolving tariff structures.

#### Strategic Outlook

Kuwait's economic diversification initiatives present significant opportunities, with the Mubarak Al Kabeer port development serving as a cornerstone project. This emerging logistics hub is positioned to attract major global shipping and logistics corporations, creating a foundation for industry expansion and regional influence.

Al Bahar Shipping will soon be celebrating a major milestone, 75 years of superior customer service, reliability, and trusted partnerships



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# Shipping, Freight and Logistics

Arab Times Special Supplement

## AL-RASHED INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING CO.

### Regional Experience with Global Vision

*The most trusted shipping company in Kuwait over the decades*



Ravi Varrier  
CEO

It was in 1911 that the founder of the Al-Rashed Group, the late Abdulaziz Abdulmohsen Al-Rashed had laid down the foundation of a trading company with a commitment to advance and diversify the business. His vision was focused on the future infrastructure development and industrial rise of Kuwait from a fishing and pearl diving village to a major oil producing metropolitan state.

Since the discovery of oil in Kuwait, Al-Rashed Group has been participating in major infrastructure and industrial government projects. The foundations of the business continue to be based on quality, reputation, customer service and performance. The highest emphasis is placed on human resources and the deployment of the latest in information technology within the Group's business operations.

Leveraging more than five decades of experience in the shipping and logistics industry, Al-Rashed International Shipping Co. offers unique solutions that cater to specific customer requirements. Blending regional experience with global vision and extensive capacity, the company has spread its wings over all aspects of vessel

handling at Kuwait and Iraq ports. Along with air and ocean freight, the company handles inland transportation, project logistics, and integrated supply chain solutions that allow them to offer integrated services to customers.

Al-Rashed International Shipping Co. in association with proactive, reliable global partners, and equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure and after-sales machinery is positioned to lead the way in offering shipping and logistics solutions across the world. Treating each challenge as an opportunity that can be turned to better service to their customers, the company leads the way in providing services that are unique to the industry, leaving competition far behind in its wake.

Elaborating on the company's strategies, **Ravi Varrier, CEO of Al Rashed International Shipping Co.**, said, "To meet the challenges in a highly competitive business environment, we constantly assess our objectives and business activities to consistently provide innovative solutions and services to our customers. In association with proactive, reliable, professional global partners and equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure and after-sales machinery, we are positioned to lead the way in offering shipping and logistics solutions across the world."

Distinguished by a character that is humble and passionate, with a far-sighted mind and a crystal-clear vision for the future of the company, Mr. Varrier through his sincere leadership infuses his employees with dedication and loyalty. With a positive attitude and commitment to perseverance, the staff of Al Rashed International Shipping work cohesively towards one goal of providing the best products and services in the shipping and logistics industry.

The company's



Bassim Saud A. Al-Rashed  
Chairman

vision is to be the undisputed regional leader providing uncompromising 360 logistics solutions through commitment to customer service, excellence in financial performance and foster the spirit of teamwork and mutual growth among our people with a desire to excel.

To achieve this vision, the company is committed to consistently deliver ex-

traordinary value to our customers and stakeholders through the building of passionate, empowered and high performance teams.

Dynamic solutions are vital for the energy business. Oil and gas logistics have traditionally been facing business challenges of maintaining quality performance, timely deliveries, and protecting the environment. Logistics to balance specialized services and safe transportation requirement, in an environment of ever-increasing client demands simultaneously, while complying with all necessary local regulations within time-limits in a meticulous manner.

Freight forwarding and contract logistics continue to be a growth industry and Al-Rashed has already established a strong presence in the GCC, and many multi-national companies are using their services. The strategy is to focus their market with a more flexible business model, increased expertise and better IT tools with the trend.

To bring out the best in people, it is important to put sincere efforts in everything we do. After all, small things make a big difference," says **Pradeep Menon, CFO of Al Rashed International Shipping Co.**

He adds, "Today, we are an established player in our own space and have created a strong foundation for future growth. Our continued initiatives towards cost rationalization and effective improvement will take us to the next level. I am confident that by focusing on delivering better services and value to our clients, we will maintain a strong and sustainable business."

We continue to strengthen our core operations while exploring diversified activities connected to the shipping industry. As a



Pradeep Menon  
CFO

reliable logistics service provider, we are committed to offering expert solutions tailored to the needs of our clients.

Al-Rashed International Shipping Co. has been awarded the quality management system certification with UKAS accreditation as per the ISO 9001, 18001 and 14001. This certification acknowledges the Quality system maintenance in the company's activities of shipping, vessel handling, air and ocean freight, inland transportation, project logistics, warehousing and integrated supply chain solutions.

Today Al-Rashed International Shipping Co is an established player in their own space and has created a strong foundation for future growth. Their continued initiative towards cost rationalization and effective improvement will take them to the next level of growth. Based on their continued delivery of premium services and value to their customers, they will have a strong and sustainable business over the long term. They continue to focus on and strengthen their core business, and look for every opportunity for diversified activities connected with the shipping industry.



We make reliable logistics, timely delivery, and unwavering commitment to your satisfaction our priority.

## WHO WE ARE

One of the leaders of the Kuwait Marine Industry, Al Rashed International Shipping Co a division of The Al Rashed Group a long established trading company founded in 1911 by Late Mr Abdul Aziz Abdul Mohsin Al Rashed, from the highly respected Al Rashed family

## WHY CHOOSE US?

We deliver exceptional logistics services with a focus on efficiency, reliability, and customer satisfaction. Our team combines expertise and experience to handle shipments of any scale, from planning to delivery. Trust us to exceed your expectations and manage your logistics with precision and care.



### SHIPPING

- | Port Agency
- | Liner Agency
- | NVOCC
- | Cruise Vessel Agents
- | Oil Tankers



### MARINE

- | Offshore Agency
- | Crew Change
- | Survey
- | Shiphandling Services



### LOGISTICS

- | Sea Freight
- | Air Freight
- | Project Logistics
- | Overland Trucking
- | De-Consolidation
- | Customs Brokerage



### WAREHOUSING

- | Warehousing
- | Distribution Services



# Shipping, Freight and Logistics

Arab Times Special Supplement

Kuwait's Path to Logistics Leadership:

## Building a Regional Shipping Powerhouse by 2035

Kuwait is strategically positioning itself to become a leading logistics and shipping hub over the next decade, leveraging its geographic location, infrastructure investments, and technological advancements.

### Strategic Location and Infrastructure Development

Situated at the northern tip of the Arabian Gulf, Kuwait offers direct access to major shipping routes connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa. This prime location is being enhanced through significant infrastructure projects. The Mubarak Al Kabeer Port on Bubiyan Island, part of the Silk City initiative and China's Belt and Road Initiative, is a key development. The port aims to serve as a vital link for trade between Central Asia and the Middle East.

Complementing this is the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Causeway, a 36-kilometer bridge completed in 2019. This causeway significantly reduces travel time between Kuwait City and the northern economic zones, facilitating smoother transportation of goods and integration of logistics operations.

### Modernizing Ports and Logistics Infrastructure

Kuwait is investing in upgrading its existing ports to handle increased cargo volumes efficiently. The Shuwaikh Port is undergoing a redevelopment project valued at KD48.8 million, aiming to extend dock lengths and enhance machinery and storage facilities. Similarly,

Shuaiba Port is being upgraded to support offshore drilling and exploration activities, reflecting its role as the country's primary industrial port.

The Kuwait Ports Authority is also embracing the concept of smart ports. Initiatives include implementing a maritime single window system to link multiple ports, establishing a smart port to automate operations, and creating the country's first dry port to streamline the flow of goods and reduce border congestion.

### Development of Logistics Cities

To further bolster its logistics capabilities, Kuwait plans to develop four logistics cities, covering 1.9 million square meters. These cities are designed to specialize in areas such as e-commerce, re-export activities, and warehousing, aiming to attract foreign investment and support small- and medium-sized enterprises.

### Expansion of Air Transport Facilities

Kuwait International Airport is undergoing significant expansion with the construction of Terminal 2, designed to increase the airport's capacity by 25-50 million passengers annually. Scheduled for completion by the last quarter of 2026, the terminal aims to be one of the world's largest environmentally friendly airport projects and is a crucial component of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Through strategic infrastructure projects, modernization of



ports, development of logistics cities, technological integration, and expansion of air transport

facilities, Kuwait is laying the groundwork to become a central logistics and shipping hub in the

region. These initiatives not only aim to diversify the economy beyond oil but also position Kuwait

as a competitive player in global trade and logistics over the next decade.

## Kuwait: A Strategic Trade Hub in the Gulf

KUWAIT, a small yet influential country located at the northern edge of the Arabian Gulf, holds a strategic position in the global trade landscape. Despite its modest geographic size and population, Kuwait's location, wealth in natural resources, and developed infrastructure make it a vital player in regional and international commerce. Understanding what makes Kuwait strategically important for trade — as well as its key imports and exports — sheds light on its role in the global economy.

### Strategic Geographic Location

Kuwait is situated between major Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and directly across the Gulf from Iran. This placement makes it a gateway to the Middle East and a natural bridge between Asia and Europe. The Port of Shuwaikh and Port of Shuaiba serve as major entry and exit points for goods, connecting international shipping routes with the broader Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region.

Furthermore, Kuwait is part of the Northern Arabian Gulf's strategic maritime corridor, allowing easy access for cargo vessels. Its proximity to key energy markets and shipping lanes like the Strait of Hormuz enhances its logistical significance. This strategic location has encouraged the development of free zones and trade partnerships that further bolster its attractiveness as a trading hub.

### Rich Natural Resources and Export Capabilities

With one of the world's largest proven oil reserves — estimated at over 100 billion barrels — Kuwait is a become a major oil exporter. The state-owned Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) oversees petroleum production and export, making Kuwait one of the top oil suppliers to countries such as India, China, Japan, and South Korea.

Apart from crude oil, refined petroleum products like diesel, fuel oil, and lubricants also form a significant portion of its exports. Petrochemicals and fertilizers are other important exports, stemming from the country's integrated oil-based industrial sector.

The revenue generated from these exports funds infrastructure, healthcare, education, and diversi-

fication efforts, giving Kuwait economic leverage and influence in regional trade affairs.

### Key Imports: Diversifying to Meet Demand

While Kuwait is a major exporter of oil, it relies heavily on imports for consumer goods, food, industrial machinery, and technology. Due to limited arable land and fresh water, Kuwait imports most of its foodstuffs, including grains, dairy, fruits, vegetables, and meat products. Countries like India, the United States, China, and the UAE are major trade partners supplying these essentials.

Kuwait also imports vehicles, electrical machinery, electronics, construction materials, and pharmaceuticals to support its growing infrastructure and population needs. The high standard of living and consumer demand among Kuwaiti citizens and expatriates further increase the diversity and volume of imports.

### Trade Agreements and Economic Initiatives

Kuwait is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which promotes economic and trade integration among Gulf countries. The GCC Customs Union and common market help facilitate the free flow of goods, services, and capital across member states, enhancing Kuwait's role as a trade corridor.

Additionally, the government is pushing forward with its "New Kuwait 2035" vision — a long-term development plan aimed at reducing oil dependency and transforming Kuwait into a regional financial and commercial hub. Major investments in logistics infrastructure, such as the Mubarak Al Kabeer Port, aim to position Kuwait as a critical node in the Belt and Road Initiative, enhancing its global trade connectivity.

Kuwait's strategic geographic location, vast oil reserves, and trade-friendly policies make it a key player in global commerce. Its significance lies not only in what it exports — mainly oil and petroleum products — but also in its growing import market for consumer and industrial goods. As the country continues to invest in diversification and infrastructure, its role in regional and international trade is poised to grow even further, reinforcing its position as a vital link in global supply chains.

Streamlining the Future:

## Strategies for Efficient Freight, Shipping, and Logistics Operations



In an increasingly interconnected world, the efficiency of shipping, freight, and logistics is vital to business success and economic growth. The ability to move goods swiftly, safely, and cost-effectively not only meets consumer expectations but also boosts profitability and sustainability. With rising fuel costs, global competition, and environmental concerns, companies must continually innovate and refine their logistics operations. Here are key strategies to improve efficiency in this critical sector.

### Embrace Technology and Automation

Digital transformation is the cornerstone of modern logistics. Implementing technologies like Transportation Management Systems (TMS), Warehouse Management Systems (WMS), and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) helps businesses track inventory, optimize routes, and manage orders more effectively. Real-time tracking and predictive analytics provide greater visibility and decision-making power.

Automation also plays a crucial role. Automated sorting systems, robotic pickers, and self-driving forklifts reduce human error and speed up warehouse operations. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning can forecast demand, detect inefficiencies, and suggest process improvements.

### Optimize Supply Chain Networks

Efficient logistics start with a well-designed supply chain network. Businesses should regularly analyze their supplier locations, distribution centers, and customer bases to ensure the most strategic placement. Tools like network modeling and simulation software can help identify bottlenecks and inefficiencies in current setups.

Additionally, consolidating shipments, minimizing empty truckloads, and choosing the right mode of transportation — be it road, rail, air, or sea — are key to reducing transit time and cost.

### Improve Inventory Management

Poor inventory management leads to stockouts, overstocking, and increased holding costs. Adopting just-in-time (JIT) inventory systems, where goods arrive exactly when needed, reduces waste and frees up storage space. Businesses can also leverage demand forecasting tools to ensure optimal stock levels at all times. Barcoding and RFID (Radio Frequency Identifica-

tion) systems improve accuracy in tracking inventory movements, which enhances warehouse efficiency and reduces errors during picking and packing.

### Focus on Sustainability

Efficiency and sustainability go hand-in-hand. Green logistics not only reduce environmental impact but can also result in long-term cost savings. Companies are increasingly using electric or hybrid delivery vehicles, optimizing packaging to reduce waste, and utilizing eco-friendly materials.

Consolidating shipments and improving route planning can also cut fuel consumption and lower carbon emissions. Moreover, some governments offer tax incentives or grants for companies investing in sustainable logistics solutions.

### Train and Empower Staff

Even with the best technology, human capital remains essential. Providing regular training for logistics and warehouse staff ensures they are up-to-date with the latest systems and safety protocols. Cross-training employees to perform multiple roles also adds flexibility and resilience to operations.

Empowering staff to identify inefficiencies and suggest improvements can lead to valuable insights from those on the front lines of logistics operations.

### Strengthen Collaboration Across the Supply Chain

Efficient logistics require strong communication and coordination between suppliers, carriers, and customers. Shared platforms and integrated systems foster collaboration and transparency. When all parties have access to the same real-time data, they can make informed decisions quickly, especially during disruptions.

Building strong relationships with reliable carriers and third-party logistics providers (3PLs) also ensures consistency and reliability in transportation services.

Efficiency in shipping, freight, and logistics is no longer optional — it's a competitive necessity. By embracing technology, optimizing supply chains, managing inventory smartly, and fostering collaboration, businesses can reduce costs, improve service levels, and adapt more quickly to market changes. Ultimately, a streamlined logistics operation is key to delivering the right product, at the right time, to the right place — every time.





# Shipping, Freight and Logistics

Arab Times Special Supplement

## Seguro Shipping

### A prominent name in the shipping business in Kuwait

**What are the main challenges your company faces in running the shipping business smoothly?**

**Costing:** We must determine the appropriate price. If it's excessively high, we lose clients. If it's excessively low, we don't earn sufficient income. Customer and product analysis will be conducted prior to providing a quote.

**Competition:** The market has numerous freight forwarders, so we must build a bigger database of clients and secure additional business.

**Technology:** Staying updated with innovative business concepts and marketing tactics is essential for maintaining our competitive edge.

**Profit:** We must make sure that we generate enough revenue after accounting for all expenses.

**Connections:** it is essential to nurture positive connections with liners to secure more favorable rates.

**Guidelines:** It is essential to adhere to all the rules and regulations within their sector.

**How would you rate your company's success in today's highly competitive market?**

We are concentrating on our current clients and their requirements.

We are aware of our market competitors and their products.

We consistently focus on our marketing efforts.

We are seeking the top talent in the field.

Reducing expenses whenever needed.

We are attempting to test various products and services.

**What difficulties do you encounter from time to time in managing the business?**

When employees lack specific targets and objectives, it can be simple to underachieve what's anticipated. Effectively convey objectives and specify anticipated outcomes to every member of your team. In this manner, if any outcomes are lacking, you can confront the issue directly by evaluating expectations against actual results. Ensure that you're consistently tracking real performance against these established goals. This allows you to identify any issues early and give helpful feedback, which aids in preventing bigger problems later. If performance fails to improve, now is the moment to pursue a transparent and just disciplinary procedure.

**What's is your role in the current shipping business?**

Create and execute business development plans to accomplish the organization's sales targets and aims. Discover and chase new business possibilities by prospecting, evaluating, and finalizing agreements. Establish and nurture robust connections with current clients.



Mohammed Fanas  
General Manager

**What type of services does your company offer to its clients?**

#### Land freight

Seguro offers unmatched road transport services in Kuwait and the GCC region, possessing extensive expertise in land freight, we are dedicated to ensuring complete client satisfaction. From complete trailer loads to specialized logistics, we provide the most adaptable and reliable services with economical delivery of individually packaged packages. We collaborate with industry leaders and our carriers to ensure that your products reach their destination on time. Tracking services will consistently inform you about the location of your item. No matter your sector, our experts will guarantee that land freight reaches its destination safely and punctually. To deliver tailored road services that align with our customers' needs, we fully grasp the importance of safe cargo management and prompt delivery, along with optimized speed and routes. We provide complete openness and adaptability in every facet of land freight, encompassing information sharing, management, and operations. We function in Kuwait and GCC nations with an impressive fleet of car carriers, refrigerated trucks, side loaders, low bed trailers, and curtain-sided trailers. We have garnered praise for our tailored, affordable, reliable, and prompt delivery services.



#### Sea freight

We provide ocean freight services of various dimensions, volumes, and sizes for time-sensitive, door-to-door ocean transport to and from all major ports. We have the ability to establish long-term contracts with ocean carriers that offer advantages in competitive pricing and scheduling flexibility. We can fulfill customer needs, which encompass consolidated shipments, full and partial charters, roll-on/roll-off freight transport, project cargo, and refrigerated containers. We are currently enhancing our system capabilities to offer improved sailing schedules, online shipment tracking, and comprehensive supply chain visibility. Our tailored freight forwarding services guarantee that shipments arrive at their destinations promptly and safely.

#### Specialized Services

Delivery from door to door, DDU and DDP shipments, Full Container Load (FCL), Less than Container Load (LCL), Breakbulk services, Personal and household items, Factory packing, Project cargo, Heavy lifts, Motor vehicles, Managing documentation.

#### Air freight

We provide a diverse array of air freight services characterized by the secure, dependable, and economical transportation of shipments. Our skilled and committed teams can manage the necessary documentation and ensure prompt customs clearance. Our reliable and established partnerships with various service providers in leading airlines, freight carriers, and charter services

allow us to acquire goods and services with meticulous care at each phase of the shipment.

**How long does it typically take to clear shipments with local authorities, and how smooth is the process?**

Customs clearance typically requires one to two days, provided the goods are sent in accordance with all customs regulations, which includes the precise submission of all essential documents and information for clearance. If something is not functioning properly, there will be hold-ups.

**Which are the main countries you import from and export to?**

We mainly source imports from various parts of the world, such as China, USA, UK, Germany, India, and eastern nations.

Our main export markets are Indian sectors, the GCC, and countries in the far east.

**Are there any plans for business expansion in the near future?**

Indeed, we currently operate branches in Dubai, Iraq, and India, and we are looking to expand into additional GCC nations too.

**How does your company ensure compliance with international shipping regulations and standards?**

Adequate documentation is the cornerstone of global shipping and customs adherence. Businesses should guarantee that all shipping documentation, such as commercial invoices, packing lists, and bills of lading is precise, thorough, and adheres to regulations.

## Inside the Engine of Global Commerce: Understanding Freight Shipping



The shipping freight industry is the backbone of global trade, responsible for transporting goods across continents efficiently and cost-effectively. It encompasses a complex network of shipping companies, freight forwarders, ports, customs agents, and logistics providers that work together to ensure products move smoothly from one location to another.

At its core, freight shipping refers to the process of transporting commodities, merchandise, and cargo by land, sea, or air. The most prominent mode is ocean freight, which accounts for about 90% of international trade. Massive cargo ships transport everything from electronics and automobiles to food and raw materials across vast oceans.

The process begins when a shipper (usually a manufacturer or seller) needs to move goods from one place to another, often internationally. They may work directly with a carrier, which owns the ships, trucks, or planes, or more commonly with a freight forwarder. A freight forwarder acts as a logistics expert who coordinates the entire shipping process, handling documentation, booking cargo space, arranging pickup and delivery, and navigating customs regulations.

There are two primary types of ocean freight: Full Container Load (FCL) and Less than Container Load (LCL). In FCL, a single shipper uses an entire container for their goods, offering better control and often lower costs per unit. LCL involves combining shipments from multiple customers in one container, suitable for smaller loads but generally more expensive per unit.

After goods are packed and prepared for shipment, they are transported to a port where they're loaded onto a cargo vessel. These ports are equipped with advanced infrastructure, including cranes and warehouses, to manage the high volume of containers. Major ports like Shanghai, Singapore, and Rotterdam serve as critical hubs for global shipping routes.

Once the ship departs, it follows established sea routes to its destination, often passing through key chokepoints like the Suez Canal or the Panama Canal. During transit, shipping companies use tracking systems and logistics software to monitor cargo and ensure timely delivery.

When the ship arrives at its destination port, the containers are offloaded and pass through customs. This is a critical phase where proper documentation — such as bills of lading, commercial invoices, and packing lists — must be submitted for clearance. Customs agents verify that the cargo meets all regulatory requirements and that duties and taxes are paid.

After clearance, goods are transferred to inland transport — usually trucks or trains — for final delivery to their destination. This stage is known as "last-mile delivery" and can significantly impact overall shipping time and cost.

In addition to physical movement, digitalization is reshaping the freight industry. Technologies like blockchain, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are improving transparency, reducing delays, and streamlining communication between stakeholders. For example, real-time tracking allows customers to monitor their shipments, while AI can optimize routes and predict disruptions.

The shipping freight industry also faces challenges, including port congestion, fluctuating fuel prices, labor shortages, and environmental concerns. In recent years, there's been a growing push for greener practices, such as adopting low-emission fuels and more efficient vessels to reduce the industry's carbon footprint.

In summary, the shipping freight industry is a vital, intricate system that keeps global commerce moving. It relies on coordination between many players and increasingly on technology to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving world. Whether delivering consumer goods or industrial equipment, the industry's role in connecting markets and enabling trade is indispensable.

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# Shipping, Freight and Logistics

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## Untangling the Web: Understanding the Complexities of Shipping Logistics



Shipping logistics is one of the most intricate and vital components of the global supply chain. It involves the planning, coordination, and execution of transporting goods from one location to another — often across international borders. While the idea of moving products from point A to point B may sound straightforward, the reality is far more complex. From coordinating multiple modes of transport to navigating regulatory requirements and overcoming unpredictable challenges, shipping logistics demands precision, flexibility, and expertise.

One major complexity in shipping logistics is the multimodal nature of transport. Goods rarely move via a single method; instead, shipments often involve a combination of ocean freight, air freight, rail, and trucking. Each mode has its own advantages and constraints. Ocean freight is cost-effective for large, non-urgent shipments, but it's slower. Air freight is fast but expensive. Rail and road transport fill the gap, especially for inland distribution. Coordinating these different modes to ensure a smooth and timely transition at each stage is a logistical feat that requires detailed planning and strong partnerships.

Timing is another critical factor. Delays in one part of the chain can cascade through the entire system. For example, a delay at a port due to congestion, weather, or labor strikes can cause missed connections with trucks or trains, ultimately affecting delivery deadlines. Logistics managers must account for these risks and often build in contingencies to maintain service levels.

Customs and regulatory compliance add another layer of complexity. Every country has its own rules for importing and exporting goods, including documentation requirements, tariffs, inspections, and security protocols. A small error in paperwork — such as an incorrect tariff code or missing invoice — can cause significant delays or financial penalties. Shipping logistics professionals must stay up-to-date on international trade laws and ensure all documentation is accurate and compliant.

Inventory management is closely tied to shipping logistics. Companies must strike a balance between holding enough stock to meet customer demand and

avoiding excess inventory that ties up capital. This becomes especially challenging when lead times are long or unpredictable. Efficient logistics enable just-in-time (JIT) inventory strategies, which reduce storage costs but require flawless coordination and real-time visibility into shipment status.

Technology plays a central role in managing these complexities. Logistics software helps automate scheduling, track shipments, manage inventory, and optimize routes. Advanced analytics and artificial intelligence are being used to forecast demand, predict disruptions, and recommend contingency plans. The Internet of Things (IoT) enables real-time tracking of cargo conditions, such as temperature or humidity, which is critical for perishable goods.

Despite technological advancements, human expertise remains essential. Logistics professionals must constantly make decisions under pressure, resolve issues as they arise, and maintain communication with stakeholders across different time zones and languages. Building strong relationships with carriers, customs brokers, and warehouse operators is key to keeping the supply chain running smoothly.

Environmental concerns are also influencing shipping logistics. There is growing pressure to reduce carbon emissions, which has led to changes in routing, fuel choices, and packaging strategies. Companies are increasingly looking at how to make their logistics operations more sustainable while still meeting delivery expectations and cost targets.

In conclusion, shipping logistics is a highly complex and dynamic field that plays a critical role in global commerce. It requires the seamless integration of multiple transportation modes, strict adherence to international regulations, and the ability to adapt quickly to unforeseen challenges. As global trade continues to expand and evolve, the importance of efficient and resilient logistics systems will only grow. Understanding and managing these complexities is essential for businesses seeking to compete in the modern marketplace.

## Charting the Future: Where Global Shipping Trade Is Heading in the Next Decade



As we move deeper into the 2020s, global shipping is entering a transformative period shaped by technology, environmental regulation, geopolitical shifts, and evolving trade dynamics. The next decade promises not only increased demand for maritime transport but also significant changes in how goods are shipped across the world's oceans. Here's a look at the key trends that will define the future of global shipping trade through 2035.

### Green Shipping and Decarbonization

One of the most pressing challenges facing the maritime industry is the need to drastically reduce carbon emissions. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has set ambitious targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions from ships by at least 50% by 2050, compared to 2008 levels. Over the next decade, this will push the industry toward cleaner fuels such as liquefied natural gas (LNG), methanol, ammonia, and even hydrogen. Investment in electric and hybrid propulsion for short-sea shipping is also expected to grow.

Major shipping companies are already experimenting with alternative fuel vessels and carbon-neutral technologies. Ports will need to adapt too, providing infrastructure to support cleaner fuels and green logistics. The race to decarbonize could reshape ship design, routing decisions, and port operations globally.

### Automation and Smart Shipping

The rise of automation will redefine shipping logistics. Smart ships — equipped with advanced sensors, AI-based navigation, and automated systems — are expected to become more prevalent. While fully autonomous ocean-going vessels may still be a decade away, semi-autonomous operations and AI-driven decision-making will enhance safety, efficiency, and reduce crew requirements.

Digitization of shipping documentation, blockchain-based supply chains, and real-time cargo tracking will streamline global trade, minimize delays, and reduce fraud. Smart ports, utilizing AI and robotics for cargo handling and traffic management, will be central to this evolution.

### Shifting Trade Routes and Geopolitical Tensions

Geopolitical factors will continue to influence shipping lanes and trade flows. Rising tensions in the South China Sea, the Red Sea, and around the Taiwan Strait could affect key routes and insurance costs. Addition-

ally, new strategic corridors may emerge.

One example is the Northern Sea Route, which, due to melting Arctic ice, could become a viable seasonal shortcut between Europe and Asia. Though environmental concerns and operational risks remain, Russia and other Arctic nations are investing in infrastructure to support this potential corridor.

Elsewhere, China's Belt and Road Initiative continues to develop alternative land-sea trade links, and India is increasingly looking to expand its maritime presence to counterbalance China in the Indo-Pacific.

### Port Infrastructure and Global Hubs

As trade volumes grow and vessel sizes increase, major ports around the world will undergo modernization. Automation, digital integration, and expanded capacity will be key priorities for global hubs like Shanghai, Singapore, Rotterdam, and Los Angeles.

There will also be a trend toward building more regional transshipment hubs to decongest mega-ports and improve resilience in global supply chains. Smaller ports may benefit from investments aimed at diversifying logistics networks, especially as companies seek to avoid future supply chain shocks like those seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Changing Trade Patterns and Regionalization

While globalization remains strong, there's a noticeable shift toward regionalized supply chains. The rise of nearshoring and reshoring — especially in North America and parts of Europe — is reducing reliance on long-haul routes in some sectors. However, this doesn't mean the end of global shipping. Instead, it suggests a more balanced trade environment where regional and global trade coexist, with new shipping patterns emerging.

Asia will continue to dominate maritime trade, especially as Southeast Asian economies grow and manufacturing continues to expand in countries like Vietnam, Indonesia, and India.

The global shipping trade in the next decade will be shaped by a blend of environmental responsibility, technological innovation, and shifting economic priorities. While the seas will still carry the bulk of global trade, how, where, and why goods move across them will evolve dramatically. Stakeholders — from shipbuilders and carriers to port authorities and regulators — must adapt swiftly to remain competitive and sustainable in this changing maritime landscape.

## Inside the Suez Canal: How One Waterway Moves Global Trade

THE Suez Canal is one of the most vital maritime passages in the world, connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea and allowing ships to travel between Europe and Asia without circling Africa. Stretching 193 kilometers (120 miles) across Egypt, the canal is a crucial link in the global supply chain, handling over 10% of international trade by volume. But how exactly does this engineering marvel function?

### A Sea-Level Canal

Unlike some other canals, such as the Panama Canal which uses locks to lift ships between different water levels, the Suez Canal is a sea-level canal. This means ships can travel through it without being raised or lowered by locks. This design simplifies transit and allows for a steady, uninterrupted flow of ships — albeit one that is tightly controlled and highly organized.

The canal runs from Port Said on the Mediterranean coast to Suez on the Red Sea. It passes through various terrain including lakes (like Lake Timsah and the Great Bitter Lake), desert landscapes, and engineered channels.

### Northbound and Southbound Traffic

The Suez Canal is designed to accommodate two-way traffic, thanks to expansions and bypasses added over time — most notably the New Suez Canal, a parallel waterway opened in 2015 to allow simultaneous passage of ships in both directions along part of the canal. However, not the entire length allows two-way traffic, so vessels must follow a convoy system.

Typically, ships travel in convoys, with northbound and southbound groups scheduled at specific times. These convoys are carefully managed to avoid collisions and ensure smooth transit. Ships that need to wait often anchor in the Great Bitter Lake or other designated zones until it's their turn.

### Pilotage and Navigation

Every ship passing through the Suez Canal must take on Egyptian pilots, experienced navigators who board vessels to guide them through the canal's narrow stretches. While the ships' captains retain command, the pilots provide essential local expertise to

prevent accidents.

Navigation is aided by buoys, markers, radar systems, and a centralized traffic control center. The canal's straight, narrow sections require precision, especially for large container ships that may have just a few meters of clearance on either side.

### Depth and Size Restrictions

The canal's depth is currently around 24 meters (79 feet), allowing large vessels — including some of the biggest container ships and oil tankers — to pass. However, there are still limits on the size of ships, referred to as Suezmax. Ships exceeding these dimensions may not be able to transit, though expansion projects have increased the maximum permissible size over time.

The Suez Canal Authority (SCA) continues to invest in dredging and widening projects to keep up with the growing size of modern ships, ensuring it remains competitive with alternative routes.

### Economic and Strategic Significance

The Suez Canal is a major source of revenue for Egypt, generating billions of dollars annually from tolls. Fees are determined based on ship size, cargo type, and route. For shipping companies, the canal saves thousands of kilometers and several days of travel compared to sailing around the Cape of Good Hope.

Its strategic location also makes it geopolitically sensitive. Any disruption — like the infamous 2021 blockage by the Ever Given — can have massive ripple effects on global trade, delaying goods and raising shipping costs worldwide.

### Ongoing Improvements

The Suez Canal continues to evolve. Projects are underway to widen and deepen more sections, improve traffic flow, and reduce waiting times. The Egyptian government is also working to develop the Suez Canal Economic Zone, aimed at turning the area into a global logistics and industrial hub.

## Highways of the Sea: The Busiest Shipping Lanes in 2025

Shipping lanes are the lifelines of global trade, facilitating the movement of goods across continents. In 2025, more than 90% of global trade by volume continues to be transported by sea, making shipping lanes vital to economic stability and global supply chains. The busiest shipping lanes today are not only defined by traffic volume but also by their strategic importance, geopolitical relevance, and the sheer value of cargo they carry.

### The Strait of Malacca

One of the most critical maritime chokepoints in the world, the Strait of Malacca links the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean through the South China Sea. Stretching between Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, this narrow passage is the shortest route between the Middle East and East Asia. It is estimated that over 100,000 ships pass through the strait each year, carrying goods such as oil, liquefied natural gas, and consumer electronics. As China's economy remains a global powerhouse, and Southeast Asian trade grows, the Malacca Strait continues to be one of the most trafficked sea routes globally.

### The Suez Canal

Connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, the Suez Canal is a crucial route for shipping between Europe and Asia. Operated by Egypt, this 193-kilometer canal sees over 50 ships a day and handles more than 10% of global trade. The 2021 blockage of the canal by the Ever Given demonstrated its global economic significance, causing billions in trade losses and weeks of supply chain disruptions. Since then, improvements have been made, and traffic remains consistently high, especially for container ships and oil tankers.

### The Panama Canal

Linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Panama Canal is vital for maritime traffic between the Americas, as well as between Asia and Europe via the western hemisphere. Expanded in 2016 to accommodate larger vessels (New Panamax ships), the canal sees thousands of transits annually. It remains especially important for U.S. East Coast ports and is a key alternative to the Suez Canal for certain routes.

### The English Channel

The English Channel, particularly the Strait of Dover, is the busiest shipping lane in the world by ship numbers. Located between southern England and northern France, it is a key route for vessels moving between the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Around 500–600 ships pass through this lane daily. It serves not only commercial container ships but also ferries and fishing boats, creating a high-density traffic zone that requires sophisticated vessel traffic systems.

### The South China Sea Routes

Encompassing trade routes from the Strait of Malacca through to China, Japan, and South Korea, the South China Sea is among the most commercially significant and politically sensitive maritime areas in the world. These routes support trillions of dollars in annual trade. Territorial disputes in the region add a layer of strategic complexity, but the lanes themselves remain highly trafficked, especially for bulk carriers and container ships supplying East Asian manufacturing hubs.

### Trans-Pacific and Trans-Atlantic Routes

These ocean-spanning routes don't pass through narrow chokepoints but are essential for high-volume trade between continents. The Trans-Pacific route, for instance, connects Asia (especially China, Japan, and South Korea) to the United States and Canada. Major ports like Shanghai, Los Angeles, and Vancouver are linked through these lanes. Similarly, Trans-Atlantic routes between Europe and North America — connecting major ports like Rotterdam, Hamburg, and New York — are critical for containerized goods and energy exports.

### Conclusion

Today's major shipping lanes reflect global economic patterns and geopolitical realities. As trade volumes increase and environmental and security challenges grow, these arteries of commerce will continue to evolve. Future developments such as the Northern Sea Route in the Arctic, and increased automation in shipping, could reshape global trade — but the strategic shipping lanes of today remain the backbone of international commerce.



# Shipping, Freight and Logistics

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## UNITED LOGISTICS COMPANY

### Navigating Success

**What are the main challenges your company faces in running the shipping business smoothly?**

In the world of logistics every wave of change be it geopolitical tensions or the recent economic tariff war affects routing and even acceptance of cargos which leads to disruption in the supply chain network and ultimately the availability of goods. Educating our clients of the unprecedented challenges we as a community face has been of prime importance in the recent past. Having said that we are very much optimistic of what the future beholds. Given the recent development plans laid down by the Kuwait Administration including but not limited to logistical hub and the new airport, we feel there is lot of opportunities that will present itself that can be tapped into. We are firm believers of the quote "No Pressure No Diamonds". Our undying attitude of excelling in whatever the condition might be is the reason we have excelled over the last 22 years.

**How would you rate your company's success in today's highly competitive market?**

In this modern shipping, we would rate our company's success as Rank 1, for the reason that we have adopted a strategy and polished principles, without spoiling the standards. Good Customer service and nurturing a group of solid, committed employees adds value every day. A strategy of always watching for opportunities.

**What difficulties do you encounter from time to time in managing the business?**

Competition. Fundamentally an unhealthy competition between the offices with the same business in terms of cutting up the basic elements. Discounting the delivery order Fee and the BL fee which are considered to be the overhead costs, by old standards. This is not only a challenge, in practical terms a threat to the industry itself.

One another major difficulty is the space constrains from different sectors by different modes due to



Sivi Paul  
Founder and Managing Director

the dynamic geopolitical scenarios. The quoted rates are not honored by the carriers/ airlines due to the space constrains but we honor the commitments made to our clients and take the hit in our stride.

**What is your role in the current shipping business?**

Our main or current role in the shipping business is on multiple Freight segments. In terms of broader applications.

Airfreight – Both Import and export. Focusing on urgent cargoes to meet the customer needs. Time bounded commodities, or sensitive

and perishable items.

Sea Freight – FCL / LCL, Break Bulk cargoes / OD cargoes

FCL (Full container load) – Customers with huge quantity requirements. Helping them to take care of their goods and reaching it within the time.

LCL (less container load) – This business is very much sensitive comparatively, because it's all sharing spaces in one container and it's being handled by multiple know/ unknown people, right from the Shipper's premises till the buyer / consignee's stores. More alert and responsible movement, with profes-



sional monitoring.

We rank 1 in this business in Kuwait Market, since we have built and maintained a regularized Groupage services, basis setting up suitable networking with all sea ports in the world. Direct regularized groupage is our own exclusives, which helped our valuable customers to reach their shipments early on time.

Break Bulk cargoes / OD sized project cargoes – This is a kind of transport used for oversized, heavy or irregular shaped goods. Since the traditional intermodal containers have size and limitation, we provide suggestions to customers or project contractors to use this service. Oil field pipes, and highly sensible machines are the most commodities moved and we are masters on this so said project logistics.

Customs clearance & Delivery – Customs clearance is a compulsory process which goods must pass every time they enter or leave a country. Kuwait being a import dominated country, we mostly focus on importers. High priority taskers, and we have it all to meet each of our customer requirements. Received excellence awards from various project contractors and high brands importers multiple times.

Offshore handling- We are among the very few forwarders in the industry to have handled offshore projects. These project movement are in a league of their own

and their successful completion give us much pride and satisfaction. Kuwait Customs and all related agencies extend their utmost support in the successful completion of these challenging projects which lay the foundation of the road to excellence of the State of Kuwait.

**How long does it typically take to clear shipments with local authorities, and how smooth is the process?**

With the onset of digitalization post COVID, customs clearance has become much more efficient, transparent and easy to transact with. It is interesting to note that the transformation from physical to digital platform was done by the State of Kuwait in a matter of few days post COVID which in itself is a very remarkable feat. There after every update has helped transform the system to the holistic system it is today. It typically takes 2-3 days to clear a shipment depending on the mode of the shipment. We have been blessed with a team of versatile and dedicated staff who can also bring the turnaround time to 1 day if our client demands for the same. The fact that Kuwait Customs and associated departments work round the clock; even during holidays helps us in delivering this service to our clients.

**Which are the main countries you import from and export to?**

As per our recent studies, we

have found out that 50% of the imports happen from Europe /US and UK, and the rest half are from the Chinese ports and other Far East ports. Exports are dominated by petroleum byproducts, exhibition cargos and return project cargo to name a few sectors.

**Are there any plans of business expansion in the near future?**

Well, we had been expanding our business from the start of this organization, and still continued expanding in 2016 again with adding The Groupage segment (LCL). A further expansion will depend on the progress and development of upcoming new projects in Kuwait as envisioned by the Kuwait Administrations which we are eagerly waiting for.

**How does your company ensure compliance with international shipping regulations and standards?**

We maintain the standards, by following the ISO 9001:2015, ISO 140001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 certified approved process. We also do have an internal quality assurance standard that we adhere to which is monitored by our QHSE to ensure all the balances are checks are in place to ensure the best services are rendered to our clients with maximum efficiency. We also have a feedback requisition from our clients which forms our database to strive to excel every passing day.

**We Don't Serve the Cargo,  
We serve the people who entrust it to us.  
We serve YOU.**

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### Key Players in the Shipping Industry in Kuwait: Driving Maritime Trade and Logistics



Kuwait's shipping industry plays a critical role in supporting the country's economy, especially as it remains primarily reliant on imports and oil exports. As Kuwait moves toward economic diversification under its Vision 2035 strategy, its maritime infrastructure and logistics ecosystem are becoming increasingly vital. Several key players, including government entities, port operators, shipping companies, and logistics providers, contribute to the functioning and growth of Kuwait's shipping sector.

#### Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA)

At the core of the country's maritime administration is the Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA), the government agency responsible for managing and operating the country's three commercial ports — Shuwaikh, Shuaiba, and Doha. KPA oversees port development, safety, regulation, and coordination with international shipping standards.

KPA is also involved in major infrastructure projects, including the upcoming Mubarak Al Kaber Port on Boubyan Island, which aims to position Kuwait as a major regional transshipment hub. The Authority is critical in setting policies to enhance operational efficiency and attract investment into port and shipping services.

#### Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC)

A subsidiary of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) is the primary operator of the country's oil and gas shipping fleet. Established in 1957, KOTC owns and operates a fleet of modern tankers that transport crude oil, refined petroleum products, and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to international markets.

KOTC's role is crucial for maintaining the country's oil export capabilities, which account for around 90% of Kuwait's export revenues. The company is also responsible

for marine agency services, ship repair, and marine gas oil bunkering operations within Kuwaiti waters.

#### Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC)

While primarily focused on refining and petrochemical production, KNPC is a key stakeholder in shipping logistics, especially through its export terminals at Mina Al-Ahmadi and Mina Abdullah.

#### Agility Logistics

A global logistics powerhouse with Kuwait roots, Agility is one of the most prominent private sector players in the country's shipping and freight forwarding scene. Though Agility operates in over 100 countries, its influence in Kuwait remains significant through customs clearance, freight forwarding, warehousing, and supply chain management services.

#### United Arab Shipping Company (UASC) – Legacy and Merger with Hapag-Lloyd

Until its merger with Hapag-Lloyd in 2017, UASC was a major player in the Gulf region, including Kuwait. Though now part of a global shipping giant, the legacy of UASC's operations continues through Hapag-Lloyd's regional presence. This merger enhanced Kuwait's connectivity with European and Asian markets via an expanded fleet and service routes.

#### Mubarak Al Kaber Port Development Stakeholders

Although still under construction, the Mubarak Al Kaber Port is bringing new players into the Kuwaiti shipping scene. International contractors, consultants, and potential operators are already involved in the planning and infrastructure development phases. Once operational, this port is expected to attract new shipping lines, logistics companies, and regional trade partners, significantly increasing competition and capacity.



# Shipping, Freight and Logistics

Arab Times Special Supplement



## Al-Kazemi International Shipping Logistics Leader in Kuwait

### Kuwait's Strategic Location

KUWAIT'S geographic position offers distinct advantages as a regional logistics gateway. Historically, before developing ports in Dammam and Um Qasr, Shuwaikh Port served as a vital hub for cargo transiting to Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Today, Kuwait maintains efficient road links to KSA, Iraq, the broader GCC, and beyond. Through multimodal operations via Iran, it can also serve the CIS markets.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, the country is investing heavily in logistics infrastructure, aiming to transform into a regional logistics and financial hub. Projects such as Mubarak Al Kabeer Port with its associated free zone and the Gulf Railway are set to redefine regional trade and connectivity.

**How would you rate Al Kazemi's success in today's competitive shipping and logistics market?**

Al Kazemi Group has established and sustained a strong presence in Kuwait's dynamic market since 1953, earning a solid reputation for reliability, integrity, and consistent performance. Originally founded as a shipping agency, the Group has since diversified into multiple sectors, including General Trading, Contracting, Engineering, Travel & Tourism, FMCG, Real Estate, and Investments. The Key Success Factors of Shipping & Logistics:

- We offer end-to-end comprehensive portfolio of logistics solutions, including shipping agency, freight forwarding, project logistics, express services, airline GSA representation, customs brokerage, warehousing, distribution, local & GCC transportation.
- Long-term agency representation of leading global carriers such as K-Line Ro-Ro, Wan Hai Lines, RCL, UPS, Vanguard, and PSA BDP. Additionally, through a joint venture with Sharaf Shipping, the Group represents major lines in Kuwait, including MSC, YML, ESL, etc.

- A dedicated team with deep knowledge of Kuwait's regulatory framework and specialized expertise in customs clearance, chemical logistics, defence logistics, heavy-lift transport, and over-dimensional cargo handling.

- GMTC, a key subsidiary of Al Kazemi Group, is an approved logistics vendor for Kuwait's major oil and infrastructure companies (K-Companies). It has successfully executed over 20 project logistics assignments ranging from small-scale operations to large and mega



Shajy George,  
General Manager

projects.

- Having a well-established global network of seasoned, reliable, and highly professional logistics partners, trusted for their proven expertise, operational excellence, and commitment to delivering dependable, end-to-end logistics solutions across markets.

**What difficulties do you encounter in managing business operations in Kuwait?**

Kuwait's economy is primarily driven by oil exports, which contribute nearly 90% to its GDP. While government spending drives economic growth, several challenges persist:

- Rigid regulatory frameworks relating to company registration, work permits, land acquisition, and government approvals slow down new investments and business expansion.
- Economic dependency on oil makes the country vulnerable to global price volatility and delays in credit recovery.
- The industrial and value-added manufacturing base outside oil remains limited, hindering business diversification.
- Delays in awarding and exe-



The longest unit ever transported in Kuwait

cuting development projects create business uncertainty, particularly in the contracting and infrastructure sectors.

- High operational costs restrict the feasibility of re-export and transshipment opportunities.
- Kuwait's relatively small market size and modest growth rate contribute to the intense competition in established sectors.

With over 70 years of market presence, Al Kazemi has developed deep institutional knowledge, enabling smoother navigation of regulatory frameworks and government processes. We mitigate economic volatility with a diversified business portfolio and competitive partnerships.

**What services does Al Kazemi Shipping offer to customers in Kuwait?**

Al Kazemi Shipping delivers end-to-end logistics solutions tailored to the needs of both local and international customers. Our offerings include:

- Shipping Agency & Liner Representation (Ro-Ro, BB, Container bulk)
- Global Freight Forwarding (air, sea, land - cross-trade, D2D)
- Project Logistics (ODC & heavy-lift, cable drums, transformers, oil rigs, etc.)
- Express Courier Services (UPS)
- Airline GSA Services (Akasa Air, Azerbaijan Airlines, PIA etc.)
- Customs Clearance & Brokerage (Inclg. DG and Defence Cargo)
- Local & Cross-Border Transportation
- Warehousing & Distribution
- Chemical Logistics
- Defence Logistics

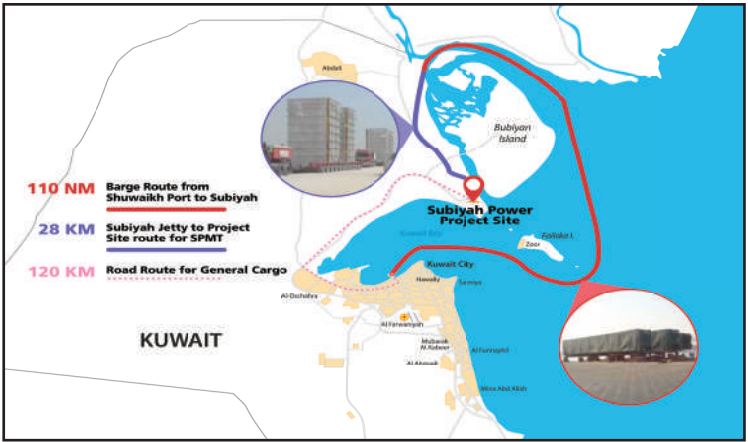
Our integrated solutions are backed by decades of experience, industry compliance, and a strong

global partner network.

**Strength of Al Kazemi Shipping in Project Logistics**

With over seven decades of legacy in shipping and logistics, Al Kazemi shipping stands as a proven and trusted partner for Project Logistics in Kuwait. The Group's strength lies in its ability to manage complex, large-scale logistics operations, particularly in sectors such as oil & gas, power generation, infrastructure, and EPC contracting.

Having successfully executed logistics for over twenty major projects, Al Kazemi has earned its position as an approved logis-



Route map of Subiyah CCGT Power Station Project

tics service provider for Kuwait's leading oil, energy, and public infrastructure authorities — including KOC, KNPC, KIPIC, PIC, MEW, and MPW — reflecting its deep familiarity with regulatory frameworks, project protocols, and compliance standards essential for mega-project execution.

The Group specializes in handling Over-Dimensional Cargo (ODC) and heavy-lift equipment, including turbines, transformers, generators, cable drums, refinery modules, and oil rig components, through strategic partnerships with certified heavy haulers and barge operators across Kuwait and the GCC.

It offers both local and cross-border bonded trucking, along with specialized transport solutions such as SPMTs, lowbeds, and barges, while an experienced in-house team manages customs clearance, duty exemptions, and temporary import/export permits, etc.

This holistic, approach ensures projects are delivered safely, compliantly, and on schedule.

**Which are the major logistics projects Handled by the Group?**

**A. Subiya Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) Power Project**

- \* Project Owner: MEW

- \* EPC: HHI, Korea
- \* Project Value: USD 1.3 billion
- \* Duration: 3 years

Scope: Transportation of 425,000 ft of BB & Containerized Cargo from Shuwaikh Port to project site using low beds, SPMT and Barge

**B. Clean Fuels Project - Mina Al Ahmadi**

- \* Project Owner: KNPC
- \* EPC: JGSK (JGC, GS & SK)
- \* Project Value: USD 4.9 billion
- \* Duration: 3 years
- Scope: Transportation of 750,000

due to aging berth infrastructure.

- The container terminals at Shuwaikh Port experience space limitations and periodic congestion, particularly during peak seasons.

- The limited number of inspection facilities available at the port leads to delays in container clearance and long queues.

**Are there any plans for business expansion in the near future?**

Yes, we are actively planning growth in line with national development goals:

- Leveraging future logistics zones at Shuwaikh, Doha, and Mina Abdullah
- Establishing a presence at Mubarak Al Kabeer Port as it becomes operational
- Continuing our digital transformation to enhance global service delivery

**How does Al Kazemi ensure compliance with international shipping regulations?**

Compliance is embedded in our operational philosophy:

- ISO certifications for Quality (9001), Health & Safety (45001), and Environment (14001)
- Adherence to IMO, IATA/IMDG, and GCC Unified Customs Laws
- A skilled internal clearance team aligned with updated trade laws and HS code regulations
- Regular audits, compliance training, vendor evaluations, and strict data security protocols
- Active membership in global forwarding networks ensures we meet international ethics, data protection, and service standards

**What technologies or innovations has Al Kazemi adopted to improve efficiency?**

We are committed to leveraging technology to enhance operational efficiency:

- A centralized logistics management system for bookings, tracking, warehousing, and billing
- Digital documentation workflows for faster processing
- GPS-enabled fleet tracking and route optimization
- International IT security protocols to protect customer and partner data

These innovations allow us to deliver reliable, transparent, and timely service to our clients and partners worldwide.

## Your Shipping & Logistics Partner

- Shipping Agency
- Liner Representation
- Global Freight Forwarding
- Project Logistics
- Express Courier
- Local & Cross-Border Transportation
- Customs Clearance & Brokerage
- Warehousing & Distribution
- International Relocation
- Chemical Logistics
- Defence Logistics
- Airline GSA

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