

## Inaugural Saudi Maritime Congress draws strong attendance

The city of Dammam on the East coast of Saudi Arabia played host to the Kingdom's entire maritime industry late last year at the inaugural Saudi Maritime Congress Seatrade held November 25-26, writes Gary Howard.

Organised by Seatrade along with its strategic partner The National Shipping Company of Saudi Arabia (Bahri), the conference attracted over 300 maritime industry professionals to the opening day. In addition, an exhibition featured some 30 stands showcasing the Kingdom's principal maritime players.

An introduction by Eng. Abdul Aziz Mohammed Al Tuwaijri, president, of the Saudi Ports Authority and chairman of the Organising Committee was followed by the inauguration of the event by H.E. Dr Jubarah Bin Eid Al-Suraiseri, the Saudi Arabian Minister of transport and chairman of Saudi Ports Authority.



Minister of Transport leads dignitaries on exhibition tour

The Minister's opening address welcomed delegates and stressed the importance of a healthy and vibrant maritime sector to the Kingdom's economy.

The first day of lively discussions focused on the development of Saudi Arabia's maritime industries. Presentations included an assessment of the Kingdom's shipbuilding and shiprepair sector by Zamil Offshore Services senior executive Hassan Abouraya; while

overseas speaker Khalid Hashim, md of Precious Shipping, delivered his '10 commandments of dry bulk shipping'. On the second day, the significance of technology, automation and training in Saudi ports took centre stage, with speakers stressing their importance in accommodating the significant forecast economic growth within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Planning for the next Saudi Maritime Congress is now underway with dates to be confirmed shortly.

## Shipyard De Hoop celebrates 125 years



Shipyard De Hoop of the Netherlands celebrated its 125th anniversary with a magnificent evening's entertainment for employees, partners, clients, suppliers and other stakeholders at a modern theatre in the Dutch town of Zwolle at the end of 2014, writes Tobias Pieffers.

The entertainment began with a performance by popular singer Alma Nieto, whose repertoire included a

song specially written for De Hoop, celebrating the innovative and creative spirit of the yard and the craftsmanship of its employees.

Shipyard De Hoop has two separate shipbuilding facilities, one in the Dutch province of Gelderland (De Hoop Lobith) and the other in the province of Groningen (De Hoop Foxhol); to support both facilities there is an outfit

quay in the Rotterdam harbour area. The company has carved out a niche for itself by building specialised vessels in a broad range of vessel types, from river cruise vessels to seagoing offshore workboats.

'We design our vessels based on specific functional desires of our clients', says marketing manager Annemarie Janssens 'As a result every vessel we deliver is unique in its own way.'

A book chronicling the history of the shipyard was also launched at the event. Entitled 'De Hoop 125 years of Miracles', this was also the theme of a stunning laser lightshow at the end of the event complete with beautiful imagery depicting the craftsmanship at the down the years. Further details of the book and light show are available on the De Hoop website.

'This event was organized to celebrate our history,' Mrs Janssens says. 'We are now looking forward to another 125 years of shipbuilding.'