WORLD

Chancay Port becomes new trade gateway

Facility draws attention as cargo flows between China and Latin America rise

By YANG GAO in Toronto
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Peru's Chancay Port has completed its first full year of commercial operations, steadily emerging as a new gateway for trade between China and South America.

The port marked its first anniversary on Nov 15, a milestone that comes as cargo flows to and from China continue to rise.

Carlos Aquino, a professor of international economics at the National University of San Marcos in Peru, said early signs suggest the port is starting to reshape regional trade patterns.

"The volume of cargo leaving the port to go directly to China is increasing, not only the cargo from Peru, but also from Ecuador, Chile and Colombia," Aquino said. The new route shortens travel time by about 10 days, translating into a roughly 30 percent reduction in freight costs, he said.

The port is already influencing trade patterns across the region, boosting both Latin American exports to China and imports arriving from China, he said.

Peru's customs administration said in a statement on Oct 31 that the value of Chinese goods imported through Chancay Port has surpassed $759 million this year, led mainly by vehicles and machinery. The figure reflects the rapid expansion of bilateral trade since the port began operating, it said.

The agency added that 79 percent of customs declarations processed at Chancay listed China as the destination, underlining "the importance of trade between our country and China".

In the same statement, Javier Eduardo Franco Castillo, chief of the customs administration, highlighted Peru's commitment to strengthening the security and efficiency of its trade flows. The agency will continue facilitating international logistics chains and combating smuggling "to support trade with the world's main economies, including China, our principal trading partner", he said.

The rise of Chancay Port is also prompting competition within Peru. Aquino said the country's largest port, Callao, is upgrading its infrastructure to keep pace.

"Callao is investing more to be able to compete with Chancay ... and it is now also offering a direct link to China and Asian ports," he said, adding that the heightened competition is already "lowering the cost of freight for Peruvian exporters and importers".

Beyond port competition, Aquino said Chancay will trigger wider infrastructure investment across Peru. The need to transport more goods to the port is driving new proposals, including highways and the long-discussed bi-oceanic railway linking Peru and Brazil, he said.

"If (goods) could go directly from Chancay, it could save 20 days at least. But for that a railway linking Peru and Brazil is needed."

Two export-processing zones are also planned near the port, which could allow Peru to shift from exporting raw materials to manufacturing value-added goods, Aquino said.

Improved efficiency

Logistics efficiency has already improved, he said. More fresh agricultural goods such as blueberries, grapes and avocados are being shipped to China through Chancay, benefiting from the shorter transit time.

To reach the consumer market faster is crucial, Aquino said. "The faster they reach, the more time the products can be shown in the marketplace."

On the import side, Aquino said goods arriving from China are becoming more affordable, including electronics, automobiles and industrial machinery.

Chancay Port is also becoming a new entry point for Chinese electric vehicles, which are rapidly expanding in South American markets.

"EVs are becoming cheaper because they are coming directly through Chancay Port," Aquino said. Consumers are increasingly recognizing the long-term savings of electric models compared with gasoline-powered vehicles, he added.

These developments are reshaping regional supply chains, he said. "Peru is becoming the port of entry for Chinese and Asian goods to South American markets — and the exit port for South American goods to China and Asian markets."

As Chancay begins its second year of operation, Aquino sees its role only growing. With direct connections to Asia and interest from South American exporters, the port is "on track to become a major logistics hub between China and Latin America", he said.



Employees of Chinese company COSCO Shipping Ports monitor operations at Chancay Port in Peru on Oct 7. XINHUA



Thanksgiving rush

Holiday travelers pack baggage drops and security lines at Boston's Logan Airport on Wednesday, as the Thanksgiving rush drives what the American Automobile Association predicts will be a record surge in nationwide travel.

JOSEPH PREZIOSO VIA GETTY IMAGES

Unveiling silent heroes of Great War



Xing Yi
Reporter's log

FIRST PERSON VIEW

Every November, across the United Kingdom, poppy flowers catch my eye. Their deep scarlet-red petals and black centers are everywhere — not real blooms, which appear from June to September, but brooches pinned to black coats, tags on bags, and stickers on windshields.

Because poppies could flourish in soil churned up by firing and shelling, they became a natural symbol for fallen soldiers on the battlefields. In Britain, they are particularly associated with those who died on active service during World War I.

Each year, the British people mark the First World War's Armistice Day — also called Remembrance Day — on Nov 11 by laying wreaths of poppies at war monuments and memorials across the country.

In London, a wreath-laying ceremony is held at the Cenotaph — Greek for "empty tomb" — near Downing Street. As one of Britain's main national war memorials, the cubic stone pylon bears no individual names, only the inscription "The Glorious Dead".

I first met Peng Wenlan, Caroline Chu and Clive Harvey two years ago at the ceremony. They were laying the wreath to remember the Chinese Labour Corps, or CLC — the more than 140,000 Chinese workers who served the Allies during WWI, providing construction, logistics and recovery support.

These workers, mostly from Shandong province, were recruited by the UK and France and shipped to the Western Front. From 1916 to 1919, they dug trenches, built roads and railways, transported ammunition in northern France and Belgium, and many stayed after the war to clear mines and bury the dead.

Their sacrifices put China among the victors of WWI. While official records suggest that around 2,000 workers died, some believe the number was much higher.

Despite being the largest foreign labor corps to serve the Allies, the CLC remains little known in Britain and France.

Peng, co-founder of The Meridian Society, has spent almost a decade raising awareness of the CLC in the UK and produced an oral-history documentary, *Forgotten Faces of the Great War: The Chinese Labour Corps*, released in 2017.

"When we talk about war, we tend to think only of those who take up arms and fight at the front, but we forget those who work behind the lines," she told me.

At the time we met, Chu and Harvey were collaborating on a novel to bring the story of the CLC to a broader readership.

"When I was in school, the World War I was taught with no mention of China, not even a line," said Harvey, a British musician and author.

This month, I met the two again before the service, and they handed me an advance copy of their novel, *For Whom the Temple Waits*, scheduled for publication early next year.

Over the years, Chinese communities in Britain have also discussed ideas of a permanent recognition of the CLC. Mark Nam, a British-born Chinese priest, has recently launched a campaign to create and install a memorial plaque in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral — the resting place of some of Britain's most famous military heroes.

"Across the UK, there are more than 50,000 memorials to the glorious dead, yet none that bear the name of the Chinese Labor Corps. This memorial seeks to change that," Nam said.

When I reflected on this year's Remembrance Day, the Cenotaph, poppies, books, documentaries and memorials made me think that life can be remembered in different ways, a story can be shared via many forms, and the understanding of history in a society is not fixed but evolving, shaped by the commitment of individuals determined to remind the public of the forgotten.

And I tend to believe that the future generation will take a fuller view of the history that the scarlet-red poppies acknowledge not only the heroism of those on the battlefields, but also those who labored behind them.

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Beijing slams Takaichi's Taiwan remarks

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China said on Thursday it firmly opposes Japan's attempts to hype and trumpet "the Theory of the Undetermined Status of Taiwan", which "just compounds its wrongdoing".

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said during a parliamentary debate with opposition leaders on Wednesday, "We are not in a position to determine Taiwan's legal status or recognition."

Observers said Takaichi failed to cite the four landmark China-Japan political documents that clearly state Tokyo's commitment to the one-China principle.

Instead, she cited the "Treaty of San Francisco", which was signed in 1951 in the absence of China, and has never been recognized by Beijing. She said "our country has renounced all rights and claims regarding Taiwan" under the treaty.

By doing so, Takaichi "once again shows that she remains unrepentant to this day, and continues to damage the political foundation of China-Japan relations as defined by the spirit of the four political documents", Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun told reporters.

In addition, she "disregards the authority of the United Nations and openly challenges the postwar international order and the fundamental principles of international law", Guo said.

Anything set out in the treaty, including on the sovereignty over Taiwan or the handling of the territorial and sovereign rights of China as a non-signatory, is entirely illegal, and null and void, he said.

Lyu Chao, dean of Liaoning University's Institute of America and East Asia Studies, said the Japanese side has been busy looking for excuses in an attempt to cool down the heated situation, which Beijing will never accept.

These excuses are "perpetuating the erroneous view of supporting Japan's military intervention in case of a 'Taiwan contingency'," Lyu said.

Addressing the parliament on Nov 7, Takaichi stated the country's possible military intervention in Taiwan. Tokyo has refused to retract her comments.

After the Wednesday debate with Takaichi, Yoshihiko Noda, head of the main opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, told reporters that Takaichi has "de facto retracted" her Nov 7 remarks by "no longer mentioning" them.

In a rebuttal, Guo said "no longer mentioning" and "retracting" are two separate kinds of actions that are "totally different in nature".

It is a case of "burying one's head in the sand" for Japan to attempt to downplay and gloss over Takaichi's extremely erroneous remarks by "no longer mentioning" them, Guo said.

When asked about Japan's plan to deploy midrange missiles at an island just 110 kilometers away from Taiwan island, Senior Colonel Jiang Bin, spokesman for China's Ministry of National Defense, said Tokyo "surely will pay a heavy price" if it dares to invite or incite trouble.

S. Korea's 4th rocket launch successful

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South Korea successfully launched its fourth homegrown space rocket Nuri on Thursday, with President Lee Jae-myung calling it "a moment that opens a new chapter" in the country's space development.

The 200-metric-ton Nuri blasted off from the country's southern coastal village of Goheung, about 470 kilometers south of the capital Seoul, at 1:13 am, Yonhap News Agency reported.

The launch was slightly delayed from its scheduled time because of abnormal pressure sensor signals before a 516-kilogram main satellite and 12 secondary satellites were placed into orbit.

Hailing the launch as a new chapter in South Korea's space development, Lee said in a social media post that he believes it has proved the country's self-reliance in science and technology and will serve as a foundation for future generations.

The government will continue to support scientists and engineers to promote innovation while continuing its investment in the sector, he added.

In addition, the fourth launch marked the first time that a private company has participated in the entire process, he said.

Hanwha Aerospace led the manufacturing and assembly of the rocket, using technology transferred from the government and supervised by the Korea Aerospace Research Institute.

The institute oversaw the final launch, but Hanwha Aerospace's involvement in the whole process is seen as part of the government's long-term plan for the private sector in developing space technologies.

Turning point

In a news briefing, Bae Kyung-hoon, South Korea's deputy prime minister and minister for science, said the launch was a crucial turning point in the country's space industry's transition from a government-centric to a private-centric ecosystem.

The main satellite will conduct space science research, including observations of Earth's auroras.

The Nuri rocket program was started in 2021. The first launch was unsuccessful, but the two subsequent ones succeeded. Compared with the third launch, the number and weight of satellites carried by Nuri this time have both increased.

South Korea is also planning two more launches in 2026 and 2027, respectively. Yoon Young-bin, administrator of the Korea Aerospace Administration, said a seventh launch is possible in 2028, as plans to secure funds are underway.

Shin Dong-hyuk, an assistant professor in the Department of Aerospace Engineering at the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, said the new satellite, for example, will improve GPS services in South Korea, among other areas.

"The current GPS has an accuracy of around 10 meters, but in order to increase the accuracy, we need to know the space weather, and then this aurora observation can be a good indicator," Shin told government broadcaster Arirang News.

Briefly

UNITED STATES

National Guard soldiers shot in DC

Two National Guard soldiers were shot and critically wounded on Wednesday in downtown Washington near the White House in what officials described as a targeted ambush. The suspect was in custody after suffering gunshot wounds during the incident. The suspect was identified by the Department of Homeland Security as Rahmanullah Lakanwal, an Afghan national. According to DHS, Lakanwal entered the US in 2021 under a Biden-era program to resettle thousands of Afghans who assisted the US during the Afghanistan war. Late on Wednesday night, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services agency announced a halt to the "processing of all immigration requests relating to Afghan nationals".

UNITED NATIONS

Concerns aired over Guinea-Bissau situation

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appealed to all national stakeholders in Guinea-Bissau to exercise restraint and respect the rule of law, his spokesman said on Wednesday. Spokesman Stephane Dujarric told a daily briefing that the UN chief is following the Guinea-Bissau situation with deep concern and will continue to closely follow it. Guinea-Bissau's armed forces announced on Wednesday via national television that they had assumed full powers of the country and imposed several emergency measures, adding that the move was intended to respond to the actions of certain politicians attempting to destabilize the country. West Africa's Economic Community of West African States and the African Union also expressed concern over the military takeover.

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