



OCEAN BREEZE

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Establishment of Offshore Geo-Survey Business Company and Launch of Geo-Survey Vessel EK HAYATE

Renewable Green Business Team, Carbon Solution Business Group

"K" Line Wind Service (KWS)—a joint venture between Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd. ("K" LINE) and Kawasaki Kinkai Kisen Kaisha, Ltd.—and EGS Survey Pte Ltd (EGS) have established a joint venture company, EK Geotechnical Survey LLC (EKGS) to service the offshore marine geo-survey business sector.

KWS's partner company EGS is a geo-survey company, established in 1974, with offices around the world, including Asia, Australia, the Americas and Europe.

EGS provides marine geo-survey services for offshore infrastructure development with a primary focus on renewable energy, as well as oil and gas. In Japan's coastal waters, EGS has a long track record of conducting geo-surveys for seabed telephone / telecommunications cable-laying routes.

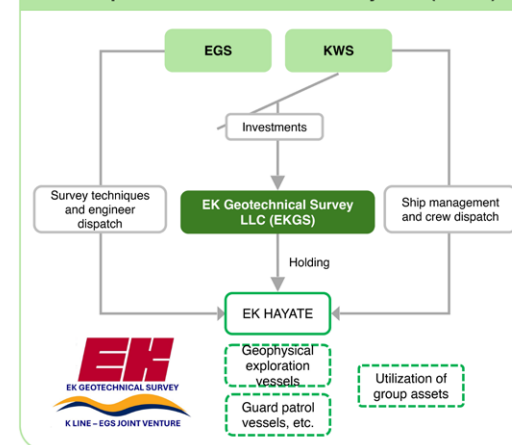
EKGS aims to provide boring and various geo-survey services to meet demand for seabed geological surveys, which is expected to increase with the development of offshore wind power. EKGS puts focus on offshore boring and geo-survey services for developing offshore wind market and will aim to provide various types of geo-survey methods.

In September 2024, the geotechnical survey vessel EK HAYATE ("the vessel"), owned by EKGS, entered into service as a Japanese-flagged vessel, being capable of providing offshore drilling services. In the development of offshore wind power projects, offshore geo-surveys are important to clarify the subsurface structure of the seabed, in order to determine wind turbine locations and seabed cable routes as well as its method of construction. These surveys are conducted prior to the start of the project, and development does not proceed until they are done. In Japan, there is a shortage of such vessels for offshore geo-survey operations, presenting a bottleneck in power generation project development plans. This vessel will help cater to this demand.

Outline of the Vessel

LOA	78.00 m
Width	17.00 m
Deck area	750 m ²
Maximum capacity	50
Flag	Japan

Startup of EK Geotechnical Survey LLC (EKGS)

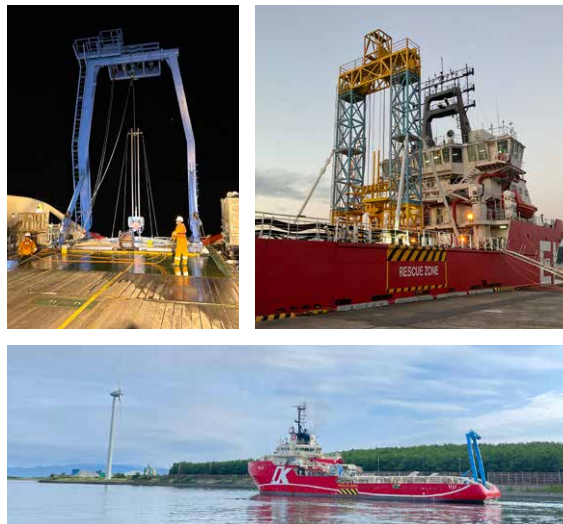


There are two main offshore geo-survey methods: (1) geophysical surveys (surveys to understand the subsurface structure under the seabed by scanning with sound waves) and (2) drilling surveys (drilling holes to investigate ground conditions and measure the depth of geological layer boundaries while collecting soil samples). Of these, EK HAYATE is primarily responsible for (2) drilling surveys, and is equipped with an 18m-high gate-type drilling rig that can drill from the water level down to a depth of 300 meters. The rig was designed to be able to increase work efficiency rate even though Japanese water is one of the most difficult ocean to work due to long swells.

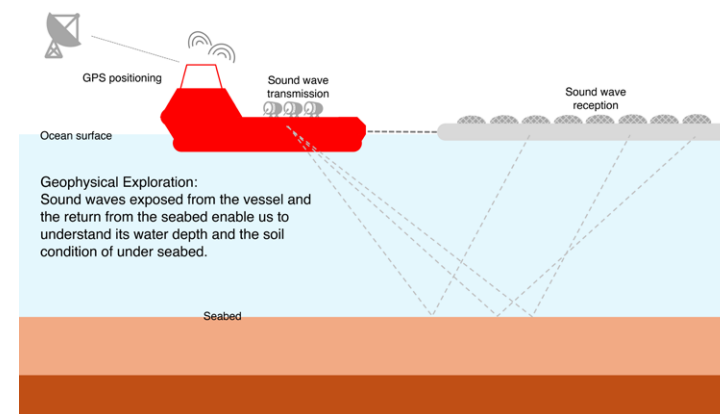
The vessel is likely to find places to play active roles not only in geo-survey operations for offshore wind power generation, but also for pipe line route survey for LNG, liquefied CO2 surveys for marine construction works of ports and bridges

In the summer of 2024, EKGS received an order for cable route survey for Happono Town and Noshiro City in Akita Prefecture. The survey was carried out with geo-survey equipment which EGS Group owns and a vessel operated and owned by Offshore Operation, another "K" LINE Group company. KWS would like to actively provide survey services not only through EK HAYATE, which is owned by EKGS, but also utilizing its Group companies and its domestic fleet in the same way to what we offered in our first job at Happono Noshiro.

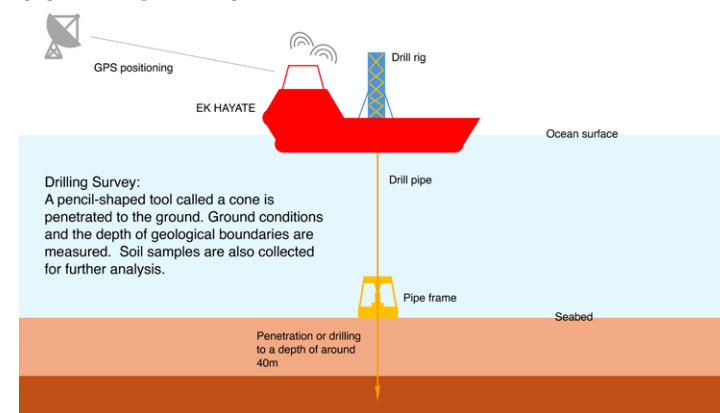
KWS and EGS established EKGS to be able to expand the business with offshore support vessel operation know how which "K" LINE Group has and outstanding track records of EGS around the world in the field of geo-survey. EKGS shall continue to contribute the development of offshore wind projects in Japan and the society's carbon neutrality.



(1) Geophysical Exploration



(2) Drilling Survey



Activities of “K” Line Wind Service, Ltd.

“K” Line Wind Service, Ltd.

Introducing “K” LINE’s efforts relating to the increasingly thriving offshore wind power generation business. Firstly, we shall introduce how “K” LINE tries to expand the rapidly developing business around Offshore Wind.

Who is “K” Line Wind Service?

“K” Line Wind Service, Ltd. (KWS) is an organization specializing in providing vessels and marine services for offshore wind power generation industry. It was established in June 2021, as a joint venture company between Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd. and Kawasaki Kinkai Kisen Kaisha, Ltd. Bringing together the “K” LINE Group’s know-how in safety in navigation and cargo transportation and the Group’s nationwide network, KWS is engaged in business development to provide vessels and marine services for offshore wind power generation industry, which is growing rapidly both in Japan and overseas.

What kind of services does KWS provide?

KWS is not aiming to join the power generation business by offshore wind. As a member of the “K” LINE Group, we are focusing on vessels and marine services required around offshore wind development. The potential customers are survey companies, construction companies and the power generators. The tasks and works required in offshore wind are much wider and more various than we imagine. It is not limited to transportation but also vessels and marine services to support the construction and maintenance works are required.

It is not an exaggeration to say that vessels are required for all offshore wind project development and operation stages throughout the project lifetime, including geo surveys, heavy cargo transportation, construction, maintenance operations. Unfortunately, the vessels and marine services in Japan are not sufficient to support the offshore wind industry to grow. Those vessels and skills had been developed in oil and gas industry where the offshore development is very common, but such industry is not so active in Japan and there was small chance to increase its fleet, crews.

KWS puts focus on such situation in Japan and recognized the chance to expand our know-how through the offshore vessel operation experience in past. We are rolling out offshore vessels and marine services for each phase of these projects, in cooperation with Group companies operating in various parts of Japan.



Initiatives in Each Department within KWS

(1) Sales Division

In Japan, the goal is to start full-scale offshore wind power generation projects by around 2030, and business development is progressing throughout the country.

The Sales Division researches the specifications and numbers of vessels required for each project and proposes optimal transportation and marine work services.

The division is also collaborating with Penta-Ocean Construction Co. Ltd. (Japan's largest marine construction contractor) on ship management in the field of construction and maintenance for offshore wind power generation projects, and also provides support vessels to Penta Ocean's marine operation.

(2) Business Development Division

The Business Development Division handles KWS company management and medium to long-term business development. An exemplary project is the geo-survey vessel business introduced on Page 1.

The water depth around Japan is much deeper compared to other region and this restricts the large development of bottom-fixed offshore wind projects (capable water depth to build offshore wind turbine is around 60 meters). For this reason, floating offshore wind gathers more focus in Japan. Wind turbine is assembled on the floating foundation and this foundation shall be moored to the seabed by chains and ropes.

The division is also participating in a NEDO project to develop floating offshore wind power generation projects, and is preparing for future large-scale projects, such as designing and developing a specialized vessel design to install the floating offshore wind turbines, in collaboration with Japan Marine United and Nihon Shipyard.

(3) Maritime Affairs & Technology Division

The Maritime Affairs & Technical Division provides comprehensive technical support for vessel operation and equipment.

In many cases with offshore wind support vessels, work efficiency is required over transportation efficiency. Even though we always handle vessels and maritime operation in daily business, there are lots of new findings and information by comparing the required efficiencies.

For example, mooring of floating wind turbines and geo survey business require a high level of knowledge and expertise. In order to perform these tasks safely and efficiently, it is important to manage the interface between deck work processes and vessel operation.

Each and every member of the team is working together to address these challenges and enable us to provide safe, high-quality services to our customers.

Conclusion

In Japan, the offshore wind power generation business itself is still in its infancy, and in reality, we do not have any determination which work can be operated in the best efficiency way by which vessel. We believe that this business field requires us to be flexible in developing the offshore wind support vessels and to combine various ways such as utilizing the existing vessels in Japan with new technology, bringing up-to-dated state of art from overseas, new conceptual design approach. If you are interested in these kinds of business opportunities, please contact KWS!



JFE Steel Corporation Presented Award to “K” LINE for Safety in Navigation and Cargo Operations

Coal & Iron Ore Carrier Team No.1, Coal & Iron Ore Carrier Business Group/
Coal & Iron Ore Operation Team No.1, Coal & Iron Ore Carrier Planning & Operation Group

Recently, JFE Steel Corporation (hereinafter “JFE”) presented an award to “K” LINE for its contributions to the stability of supply and demand for JFE through safety in navigation and cargo operations. The awards are presented to business partners of JFE’s Raw Material Department that made excellent contributions in the previous year. Last year, “K” LINE was presented with an award for its commitment to and track record of safe transportation.

On November 21, 2024, Mr. Shigemasa, Vice President, and other people from JFE’s Raw Material Department were invited to our office for a commendation ceremony. We received a letter of gratitude for having no problems in our raw material transportation activities in fiscal 2023.

The award was attributable to the unwavering commitment to safe transportation that our vessels’ crew members, shipowners, management companies and sea and land units have shown and our efforts to maintain and improve the quality of transportation.

Chief among these efforts is our continued regular vessel visits to ensure their safety.



Captain Yamamoto, who supervised vessel visits for JFE West Japan for 15 years, retired and was replaced by Captain Takada, a former "K" LINE employee, in 2020. He began visiting vessels for JFE East Japan. In 2022, we concluded a business outsourcing agreement with two Filipino marine engineering supervisors at the KRBS Kobe Office, and the vessel visits for JFE West Japan have continued. The Filipino supervisors visit every vessel and check the equipment to understand the facts of the situation. They give advice to the vessels with the goal of meticulously supporting them in terms of both tangible and intangible aspects of their operations that are difficult for shipowners and management companies to support. Also, these supervisors provide safety guidance so that all the vessels will always be able to meet "K" LINE standards and fulfill the needs of customers, including the cargo handling personnel of the head office's Raw Material Department and ironworks. These consistent efforts help increase the quality of transportation on our vessels.

Pre-boarding briefings, which involving vessel operators and new captains, which had mainly been conducted remotely since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, have returned to a face-to-face form. In addition, regular vessel visits are a KPI to ensure the safety standards for JFE raw material transport operations, examples of accidents from other ships and risks are shared with the crews of all the vessels so that they are fully understood. This approach leads to the development of solid trust-based relationships between crews and operators, and it is believed that it helps maintain and improve the quality of our transportation.

These activities are mainly implemented for dedicated vessels. We also have many opportunities to assign spot charters. Whenever we do this, we carefully select vessels from a shipowner or a management company whose safety awareness is equivalent to ours. We would also like to add that each operator's thorough efforts to do small and common tasks well are the foundation of safety in navigation and cargo operations. We understand that the recent award is due to the assistance of crew members who support safety in navigation and cargo operations as well as shipowners, management companies and site agents. We would like to thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

If one were to visit JFE's local ironworks, they would notice a poster with the slogan, "safety precedes everything else," and a photo of their president and his signature. Going forward, the Coal & Iron Ore Carrier Group strives to work together to lead the industry in safe transportation. We will contribute to the enhancement of "K" LINE's corporate value by providing all customers with safe, reliable transportation services at the highest level and by continuously being selected as a long-term partner because of customers' trust in us.

New Hub for Finished Vehicle Transportation Opened in Indonesia

Business Management Team No.1, Logistics, Port and Affiliated Business Group

PT. "K" Line Mobaru Diamond Indonesia (hereinafter "KMDI"), an affiliate of "K" LINE that operates a truck-based transportation business in Indonesia, has constructed truck-pool in Karawan International Industrial City located in Karawang Regency, West Java, Indonesia. On October 1, a ceremony celebrating the opening of the truck-pool was held with nearly 100 attendees, mainly employees of PT. Mobaru Diamond, KMDI's joint venture partner, PT. "K" Line Indonesia and KMDI.

Amid the economic growth in Indonesia, the quantity of cargo handled is increasing especially in the Jakarta metropolitan area, where manufacturers are expanding, foreign investment is concentrated and traffic congestion is a chronic social issue. The stagnation of logistics between the Port of Tanjung Priok, an international port in North Jakarta, and the industrial park in the eastern part of the metropolitan area where many companies are based has remained a problem for many years. Furthermore, construction to extend the new international Patimban Port is under way in Subang Regency, West Java. It is scheduled to be completed in the end of 2025.

With a view toward the full-scale operation of Patimban Port and changes in logistics in the future, KMDI has constructed another truck-pool (28,000 m²) in addition to the 18,000 m² truck-pool at the KMDI head office about 20 kilometers away from Port of Tanjung Priok. The new truck-pool is adjacent to Karawan International Industrial City which is between the Port of Tanjung Priok and Patimban Port. As the leading finished vehicle transportation company in Indonesia, we will support supply chains and contribute to the sustained growth of customers and Indonesia by providing high-quality services.

About KMDI

KMDI was established in 2003. It is the largest finished four-wheeled vehicle transportation companies in Indonesia and has many different types of carriers for transporting finished four-wheeled vehicles. KMDI also has carriers/trailers for transporting finished two-wheeled vehicles and containers, operating truck-based transportation businesses throughout Indonesia.

KMDI KIIC truck-pool



Ceremony celebrating the opening of the truck-pool

"K" LINE Peru and "K" LINE Chile Jointly Exhibited at EXPOALIMENTARIA Held in Lima

The three-day Expoalimentaria farm produce and food exposition was held in Lima, the capital of Peru, from September 25 to 27, 2024. "K" LINE Peru and "K" LINE Chile shared a booth. This is one of the largest and most high-profile expos in South America. Its exhibitors included over 650 companies from the restaurant, agriculture and food machinery industries along with logistics and shipping companies from Peru and other countries. As we exhibited as a logistics company, we mainly featured "K" LINE Logistics for branding purposes. It was the first time for us to exhibit at the expo, so we were feeling everything out. We had one of the smallest booths. Despite this, our booth was a big hit throughout the three-day event thanks to the hard work of all of the staff who prepared for the event and interacted with visitors.

We would like to share some comments from members of the sales staff who were at the expo.

Ms. Alejandra Fuentes

(18 years in "K" Line Chile Ltda.; motto: We live life to have fun)

The latest exhibition was a meaningful opportunity to enable many visitors to learn about the comprehensive logistics services offered by "K" LINE Chile and "K" LINE Peru. During the three-day period, our services were maximally advertised and we offered services that meet the needs of each customer. We had a great time creating the potential for future transactions with new customers and strengthening cooperation with suppliers (e.g., carriers, cargo agents) to build trust-based relationships so that we will be able to gain support for the expansion of the profitability of "K" LINE Chile and "K" LINE Peru. Sharing the same space, we learned how a Peruvian logistics company functions and builds relationships with customers. This will undoubtedly inspire us to improve our performance.

Ms. Rosa Diaz

(22 years in "K" Line Peru S.A.C.; motto: Offer better services at reasonable prices)

"K" LINE Peru feels honored to have exhibited with "K" LINE Chile in a global-scale food-related expo for the first time. This was an important opportunity to advertise the "K" LINE Logistics brand and we felt we were able to closely interact with visitors with increasing interest in the services we offer. Some visitors had previously used "K" LINE Logistics services. Each of our salespeople promised each customer that we would continue to improve our services.

"K" Line Chile Ltda.



Layout of the KPE/KCL stand



Alejandra (center) and Rosa (right) interact with a visitor at the stand.



Raul Araneda (left) provides guidance to a foreign guest in English.



Gilberto (right) elevated our booth's atmosphere significantly.

Mr. Gilberto Andrade

(three years in "K" Line Chile Ltda.; favorite food: arepas, a corn flour flatbread from his home country Venezuela)

Attending the expo helped broaden my knowledge regarding the management of a logistics business. I talked with many suppliers and clients such as ONE, MSC, COSCO, Wan Hai and Hapag-Lloyd at our stand and their gorgeous booths. I listened to different people's visions of business and experiences and learned a lot. I think "K" LINE is recognized by many people as a shipping company. However, I have felt that we need to do much more to gain recognition as a logistics service provider.

After participating in the expo, I am confident that we successfully impressed many visitors as a freight forwarder capable of supporting many food-related industries. "K" LINE has excellent teams that have the potential to rival strong competitors. We will take on new challenges as we strive to become a company that is loved and will continue to exist for a long time to come. We will work hard so we will be able to come back to this expo next year.

I will conclude with a report from myself, Shinoda. I participated in the expo as a member of the PR division. Exhibitors had to arrive at the venue by 8 a.m. and visitors were allowed to stay until 8 p.m. We had to interact with visitors nonstop for 12 hours. Throughout that time, our sales team members never lost the smiles on their faces and sometimes entertained visitors with humorous conversation. This made me feel proud of the team's persistence and professionalism. Mr. Andre Delgado, the sales manager of "K" LINE Peru, spent a long time with the organizer working on details and creating the booth, which was small but bright and full of characteristic "K" LINE features. Gilberto did a great job energizing the roulette wheel which was used to hand out prizes. On the third day, the line of visitors in front of our booth was longer than that of any other exhibitor. Some of the other exhibitors opened DJ booths and cocktail bars in the late afternoon. The club- or bar-like atmosphere maximally energized the venue.

We are motivated to add some entertainment elements to our booth next year.

The venue was filled with one-of-a-kind spaces and ingenuity to keep visitors from being bored. I was inspired by the incomparable level of Peruvians' enthusiasm about events. As we prepare for next year's exhibition, I will contribute to our team from the perspective of a PR person. Well done to our team.



"K" LINE Beer was also very well-received!

Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN) Fall Conference

Corporate Legal Risk & Compliance Group

"K" LINE endeavors its anti-corruption and anti-bribery initiatives as a member of the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN), a global network that strives to eliminate corruption in the marine transportation industry for the benefit of all of society.

At the fall meeting held in Malaysia in October 2024, about 140 industry leaders and anti-corruption specialists gathered to exchange opinions from many different perspectives and shared best practices on issues including corrupt acts in the marine transportation industry, fraudulent transactions, the payment of small amounts of money to government officials taking place around port, the provision of cartons of cigarettes and alcoholic beverages and other so-called facilitation payments.

By participating in MACN's activities, we strengthen our anti-corruption initiatives, gain new insight and continue to build an anti-corruption network. The "K" LINE Group continue to endeavor to develop a sustainable, transparent business environment.



MACN Member Meeting Photo

Correspondences from Ports of Call

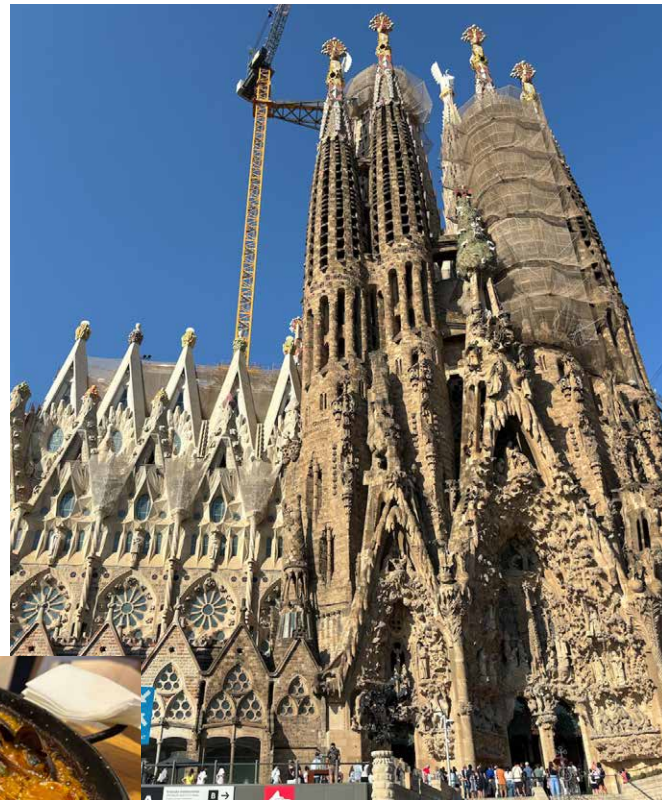
Introducing stories from ports of call experienced by new marine staff during pre-employment onboard training. These employees joined the company in October 1, 2024.

Blue ocean, blue sky, pure white cruise ships, ladybug-like tugboats— Everything looked stylish as I arrived in Barcelona, Spain. Coming ashore, I hit the town itching to see Casa Milà, Sagrada Família and other famous Gaudí buildings. Many souvenir shops with a variety of colors line both sides of the street. The sidewalks are spacious and are richly adorned with plants, creating wide-open spaces. People walk the streets in cool sunglasses and chat holding a glass of wine in their hand during the day. It was like a painting that they actually lived in.

Finally I got to see Gaudí's architecture. I was fascinated by its intricate detail and beauty. I did not forget to buy Barcelona souvenirs in the areas around these buildings. At dinner, I ate Spanish meals so that I would have energy for the rest of the itinerary. I enjoyed the famous patatas brava French fries and paella topped with many kinds of seafood from the Mediterranean sea, as well as cheese and dry-cured ham.

I closed the Barcelona tour by walking along the shore and listening to the sound of waves as I returned to the ship. The beautiful views and superb meals left me very satisfied, both in heart and mind.

Contributed by Mr. Yuzuru Maekawa



Sagrada Família



Paella

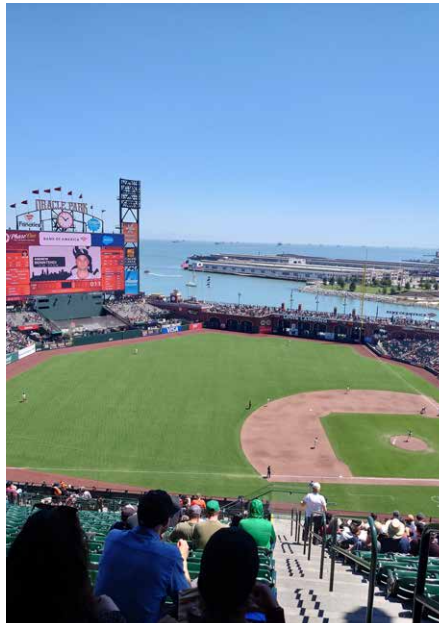
Arriving in Canada, I headed to Gastown and walked around, looking at the historic brick buildings.

I also saw the steam clock in the center of the neighborhood and enjoyed its unique atmosphere. I stopped at a local café in the tranquil neighborhood, sipping coffee and feeling refreshed mentally and physically free from the hectic nature of my job aboard the ship. The streets of Gastown were calm and I experienced the peaceful passage of time.

In the United States, I went to Oracle Park in San Francisco to watch a Giants game.

Surrounded by the excitement in the stadium and the energy of the spectators, I was impressed by the design of the stadium and its ocean-view location. I obtained a renewed understanding of the attractiveness of San Francisco while watching the baseball game. After that, I went to Fisherman's Wharf and enjoyed fresh seafood. In particular, the crab and clam chowder were exquisite. I appreciated the local flavors. I enjoyed a luxurious and heartwarming time with a beautiful seaside view.

Contributed by Mr. Kyoji Kinoshita



United States: Oracle Park



Canada: The Gastown steam clock

"K" LINE UNIVERSITY 2024



In front of the hotel (Day 1)



Watching traditional Japanese performing arts



Preliminary seminar (sightseeing)



Workshops Day 2



Day 2 workshop: popcorn session



Workshops Day 1 icebreaking



Farewell party at Restaurant Alaska

Under the clear, crisp autumn skies, “K” LINE UNIVERSITY 2024 (“KLU”) was held, like last year, at our head office between Monday, October 21 and Thursday, October 24. To discuss leadership, 24 participants from overseas “K” LINE Group companies in 18 countries and regions gathered in Tokyo.

This most recent program started with preliminary guidance (participants introduced themselves online and increased their awareness of issues before KLU 2024) and a preliminary seminar (involving homestay and sightseeing activities). We deepened our interactions with the KLU participants. Most of the participants had not been to Japan before, and their interest in many different parts of Japanese culture, including its food, was memorable as they experienced things that we see as everyday with fresh eyes.

During the latest KLU, “K” LINE and the participants increased their mutual understanding through various programs, including workshops, explanations about the medium-term management plan, explanations from our divisions’ officers about the divisions and a shipyard tour. Participating in the workshop was also a very good opportunity for our Tokyo head office’s employees to communicate to increase their understanding of other employees’ cultures. During the explanations about our businesses, many participants asked questions about the KLU lessons that they should apply in their workplaces. They attentively listened to presentations. Many participants had never entered a shipyard even though they had visited ships. They were full of curiosity during the shipyard tour.

“I’m proud of my work as a member of the “K” LINE Group,” one of the KLU 2024 participants commented. Another participant said, “KLU informed me of the direction of the medium-term management plan and enabled me to clearly understand the mindset I should have when addressing everyday jobs.” Encouraged by these comments, we understood anew the significance of holding KLU every year.

Once again, we would like to express our gratitude to everyone who worked hard to make KLU 2024 possible.



The closing ceremony

Comments from KLU Participants



Mr. Andy Kwok
K LINE MARINE & ENERGY PTE. LTD.

In Autumn of 2024, I had the privilege of attending “K” LINE UNIVERSITY in Tokyo head office. The theme for the year centred around “Leadership”. In addition, the comprehensive program aimed to deepen our understanding of the company’s vision, divisions, and global operations.

The opening ceremony, hosted by the Human Resources and Training Team (HRT), set a positive tone for the week. Throughout the week, there were multiple Groupwork sessions which encouraged us to tackle real-world challenges in cross-cultural communication while promoting teamwork and innovative problem-solving skills, essential for effective leaders.

During the sharing sessions by the various Executive Officers, not only did we have a better understanding on the Vision and Mission of the company, we also benefited from insightful division introductions, showcasing how effective leadership influences each sector, from LNG to Bulk Carriers. The shipyard tour in Toyohashi provided a firsthand look at our shipbuilding process, emphasising the company’s efforts in maintaining operational excellence.

The program concluded with a closing ceremony and farewell party, offering further opportunities to build relationships with colleagues and interact with the Executive Officers.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisors for supporting my attendance at this program and I am eager to apply what I have learnt, contributing more effectively to our company’s objectives. Overall, “K” LINE UNIVERSITY 2024 was an enriching experience for me.

Ms. Nissa Ardiana
PT. K Line Indonesia

Through the seminars, we understand more about “K” LINE’s mid-term management plan (which has been shared by top management of “K” LINE during Divisions’ presentation), and to understand where we at and how are we doing, and what we can do for the company. From the workshop, we understand how the culture in an organization plays a key role, with its diverse values and mutual respect among members. Most importantly, creating ‘a great place to work’ where goals are achieved, people’s talents are tapped into and everyone’s contribution valued is at the heart of Inspirational and effective Leadership.

We may come from different cultures, but one value as “K” LINE, and it was a remarkable journey of how people can be connected, bonded, and shared the same interest in such a short time – from the participants to “K” LINE’s colleagues, everyone also so positive and captivating. I could say loudly that I am a proud to be part of “K” LINE, Bon voyage!





Mr. Nick Wawrzyniak

"K" Line European Sea Highway Services GmbH (KESS)

Dear All,

I am Nick Wawrzyniak from KESS Germany.

I had the pleasure to participate in "K" LINE University 2024 which was under the motto "Leadership". It was a great experience to meet colleagues from all over the world, to understand different perspectives and get a better understanding of "K" LINE Business worldwide.

The group work sessions were particularly valuable. It encouraged us to share diverse perspectives and best practices from our respective regions, leading to insightful discussions about leadership and different ways of working.

Not only the group work but also the presentations from "K" LINE staff were innovative and inspiring, reinforcing our shared mission and goals. It was very interesting for me as I could learn a lot about other business units besides the car carrier sector.

Furthermore, we visited the shipyard in Toyohashi. The journey on the Shinkansen was a fantastic experience in itself, allowing us to appreciate Japan's efficiency and modernity. At the shipyard we could see two new "K" LINE vessels which are scheduled to be launched soon. It was the first time for me to visit a shipyard and to embark on a vessel that is still under construction, which was fascinating to see.

Last but not least I truly enjoyed the dinners with great food and nice conversations and especially to experience a Japanese karaoke bar was unforgettable!

Overall I can say that for me the "K" LINE University 2024 was a great success and I would like to thank the whole "K" LINE Team for the perfect organization and hospitality.

"K" LINE UNIVERSITY 2024 Pre-Seminar

Contributed by Ms. Wakana Iida, LNG team No.1, LNG Group

During the latest "K" LINE UNIVERSITY 2024 Pre-seminar, I was a guide for Mr. Syed from "K" Line Maritime Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. in Kamakura. Mr. Syed had told me he wanted to see traditional buildings and experience Japan's culture. That is why I chose Kamakura. Having visited Kamakura several times, this time I discovered a new side of the city by seeing Kamakura from the perspective of Mr. Syed as I was guiding him on our sightseeing tour. I enjoyed sightseeing that day, feeling as if I was visiting Kamakura for the very first time.

Our first destination was the Great Buddha of Kamakura. Seeing Mr. Syed excited to see the Great Buddha rising majestically into the blue sky, I started the day in a happy mood together with Ms. Samo, another guide. After that, we went to Shichirigahama. Mr. Syed was more moved by the Enoden train which happened to pass in front of us than the beach. The Enoden is a one-track railway that runs against the backdrop of the sea. It is impressive. (We went to Komachi Dori because Mr. Syed wanted to buy souvenirs at the end of the trip. He was holding an Enoden train magnet in his hand with a smile when leaving the Kamakura glassware shop that we stopped in.)

After lunch, we visited Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine and we each got a paper fortune there. Mr. Syed laughed with amusement and surprise when he saw someone nearby crying because their fortune was dai-kyo (extremely bad luck). It made me realized that cross-cultural experiences can happen unexpectedly.



Our final destination was the Houkokuji. The temple is famous for its bamboo forest. We had a relaxing time at the end of the day as we felt the autumn breeze blowing between the bamboo.

Before we said goodbye at the end of our trip, Mr. Syed expressed his appreciation for our guiding him many times, thanking us and saying that the tour was very nice. I still remember that clearly. The tour is a precious good memory for me. The time I spent with our friend from overseas was invaluable. As a member of the "K" LINE Group, I was able to meet him through "K" LINE even though I have just joined the organization and only worked for the company for less than a year. As a member of "K" LINE Group, I would like to value these experiences while developing personally.



An Arabian Story: Episode 9

Contributed by Mr. Goichi Tsuruta, Middle East Representative Office

Visiting Islay Island

The new year has begun. I suspect that many of you spent the New Year in a tipsy mood.

There was a spin-off edition in last year's winter issue of Arabian Tales about my experience watching the Rugby World Cup in France. This year, I have another spin-off edition about my visit to Islay Island.

First, where is Islay Island? If you are already reacting to the name, Islay Island, you are a big whisky lover. This time, I went to some places related to whisky. Some of you may be totally uninterested, but I would appreciate if you still read this.

First, a brief introduction of Islay Island. It is a British island west of Glasgow on Scotland's west coast (between Scotland and Ireland). The only way to fly to the island is in a propeller plane with a capacity of about 80 passengers. There are two flights to and from Glasgow on weekdays (only one on Saturdays and Sundays). There is also ferry service between the island and the British mainland. I had wanted to go there when I was an expat in London, but I had second thoughts due to the inconvenience of transportation. Then I learned that there is a nonstop flight from Dubai to Glasgow. I decided to go there on vacation.

Nine unique whisky distilleries operate on Islay Island, including Bowmore Distillery which started operating in 1779. It is the second oldest whisky distillery currently existent in Scotland. The whisky distilled in these places is well-known for its unique peaty smell. Honestly, the smell is somewhat offensive. But many people get hooked on it and the peaty whisky captivates whisky lovers around the world. I am one of them. To whisky lovers, the island is like a sacred place. In the process of distilling whisky, malt from germinating barley is put into hot water to ferment. It needs to be dried to stop the malt's growth. Distilleries on Islay Island use the peat which is the island's specialty as the fuel to do this. Peat is a kind of mud-like coal that includes the remains of plants. Peat extracted on Islay Island is said to also contain ocean seaweed and other components. Using peat as fuel gives the whisky a unique peaty smell (of seaweed, which is like seirogan = stomach medicine) and makes Islay Island whisky distinctive.

During my stay on the island, I planned to visit the all nine distilleries and also took some of the distilleries' tasting tours. I planned to depart from Dubai in the morning and arrived on Islay Island via Glasgow at around 6 p.m. on day one. I would then stay on the island from day two to the afternoon of day five, take the evening flight back to Glasgow on day five, stay two nights in Glasgow and take a flight departing at 2 p.m. on day seven to return to Dubai.



Peat

However, a problem occurred on day one. The flight to Glasgow arrived late. It had to attempt to land more than once due to strong winds. This was a sign of trouble. After arriving at Glasgow Airport an hour later than scheduled, I checked in for the flight to Islay Island. Thirty minutes before the scheduled departure time, a middle-aged male attendant muttered, "The wind is strong today. My intuition based on my long experience is telling me the plane may not fly." This concerned the about 30 passengers who were there. Twenty minutes later, it became a reality. The flight was cancelled. All of the passengers were told to leave and they lined up in front of the airline's desk. While waiting in line, I tried to book the next day's flight. I could do it online for free using a mobile phone. Also, I had to partly cancel my two-day stay at the hotel on Islay Island which would have started that day. Since I was cancelling the first day that I had reserved on the day of the reservation, it was possible that I would have to pay the same amount as if I had stayed there. I telephoned the hotel and got a shocking response. The receptionist said it would be fine to cancel as my room had been double-booked. Someone else would

use the room I had reserved that day. For the next day, the operator told that they would book a room at another hotel five miles away of their hotel and requested me to go to there. What now? Is that something that a guest is supposed to hear on the day of their stay? Anyway, I did the procedures at the airline counter and checked in at a Holiday Inn, the hotel the airline had arranged. Dinner was included. Not great, but I did not have another choice. I ate at the hotel's restaurant. At least I wanted a sip of British beer. But the menu had European beers only, such as Stella and Beck's. I ordered a medium sirloin steak but it was served well-done and hard. It was not seasoned at all and was without sauce. That's the British meal we often hear about. I went to bed hoping that at least the plane would depart in the morning of the next day so I could make it to the 1 p.m. Bowmore Distillery tasting tour I had booked.

On day two, I checked in early in the morning and waited in front of the boarding gate. Many of the other passengers I had seen the day before were also there. The male attendant, whom I had also seen the day before, made an announcement, saying that he was not sure whether or not the flight would depart and that it would depart about 30 minutes later than scheduled. The passengers I had also seen the day before shuddered again. Wait a minute. The next boarding gate was already letting passengers on for a propeller plane flight to Ireland. We were growing impatient. Thirty minutes later, we heard them announce that our flight would start boarding. About 30 passengers cheered and applauded with delight. The plane arrived on Islay Island 30 minutes later than scheduled. I made it to the taxi I had booked.

(Note: A means of public transportation on Islay Island is the bus. They come more than once a day, maybe three or four times. Most of the local distilleries are quite far from the bus routes. They are not very convenient in that regard. To efficiently visit all of these distilleries you need to take a taxi, and you must charter it for several hours. Rental cars and rental bicycles are also available, but you cannot use them if you drink whisky along the way.)

I complained to the hotel that I would have stayed at the day before. I booked the hotel because it was very near a distillery. Staying at a hotel five miles away meant that I would have to take a taxi to the distillery. The hotel



Assorted Langoustine

receptionist suggested that I come to the hotel and they would give me lunch for free. I went there and ate cod and chips. Regular fish and chips are usually made using catfish from Vietnam or some other unidentifiable whitefish, but the hotel appeared to serve fish and chips using cod from the North Sea. I ordered it. The cod tasted good. Using the right ingredients makes such a difference. I gave Islay Island a little credit for this. I ate dinner at the hotel which had been arranged for separately. Islay Island oysters were served as appetizer. They were fruity and good. The main dish was an assortment of langoustine. It was served extra-large. Instead of being seasoned unnecessarily, the prawns were simply steamed. This was great. Aside from whisky, Islay Island's main industries include fishing and livestock farming. This means that the foods from nature were very tasty and I fully enjoyed them. White wine and local whisky made me feel very good.

Now, the main purpose of the trip begins: distillery tours. I have much to say about each of the nine distilleries, but I know many or most of you are totally uninterested. I could write about them in detail, but you would definitely skip it, so I will write about one of them, the celebrated Bowmore Distillery. I visited it on the first day and took the tasting tour. Hopefully this will at least enable you to feel the atmosphere of the distillery. Bowmore is the oldest distillery on Islay Island (and it is currently owned by Suntory). I participated in a comparison of unblended whisky at three casks from the oldest storage currently existent. The fee for this was 60 pounds (approx. 12,000 yen or USD80). I checked in at the reception desk and went up to the second floor where I was served a welcoming drink, a 15-year-old Bowmore whisky, at the bar while watching a video about the distillery. Next, it's time to enter storage. Waiting in the room 3 old casks which were located in a side space of hundreds of casks. One is a cask originally used for bourbon barrel which aged whisky 19 years in the cask, 2nd one is a cask originally used for Red Wine which aged whisky 21 years in the cask and 3rd one is originally used for Sherry which aged whisky 19 years in the cask. (The process for aging whisky often involves reusing bourbon barrels. Red wine or sherry casks can also be used.). Distilleries generally blend raw spirits from each cask and adjust the unique flavor before shipping it. It is rare for unblended whisky to be uncasked and sold on the market. The experience of drinking unblended whisky from the cask is something that can only be done in a distillery. Two shots are poured into a tasting glass, and you can compare the whiskeys in sequence, enjoying their different flavors while listening to the guide's explanation. Furthermore, you can put your favorite in a 200-milliliter bottle and bring it home. After that, we returned to the bar and drank a 23-year-old whisky to close the tour. The 23-year-old whisky is rare and valuable. It is priced at about 40 pounds (8,000 yen) per glass in Islay Island's bars. Having an opportunity to drink valuable liquors that you rarely have the opportunity to drink, together with an explanation, is a good thing about taking a tasting tour. It was a truly priceless experience. Some other distilleries combine a tour of their distilling process and a tasting as a set or only allow tasting at the bar. Each of them is ingeniously designed. They have one thing in common: you can have at least one glass of a valuable liquor that you rarely have the chance to drink. It was a series of very happy experiences. If you want just a distillery tour, some distilleries provide them for about 15 pounds.



Bowmore Distillery



You can get the whisky directly from the aging cask for the tasting.



Tasting at the Bunnahabhain Distillery



Sheep looking at the camera

The whisky distillery tour started on day two. Throughout the tour, I took an McIntyre Private Hire owner-driver taxi operated by John and Nicola, a married couple that were about 60 years old. They flexibly served me and also provided bits of tourist information. Islay Island is at 55 degrees north latitude, but its climate is relatively warm because of the Gulf Stream. Even in winter, they rarely see piles of snow. The island is rich in nature and much of it is still unexploited and intact. There are broad barley fields and pastures. Through the windows of the taxi on the way to the distilleries, I saw sheep grazing on the grass in the pastures. The view was relaxing (incidentally, the population of the island is only 3,500 when there are 7,000 sheep). The weather was beautiful on day two. But it suddenly stormed and then cleared up again. Dizzying changes in the weather are typical of Britain. I stayed in a small town named Port Ellen. The hotel serves breakfast but not dinner. I was told that the town had only three

restaurants. I went outside in the late afternoon as the wind and rain got worse. I do not have an umbrella because it does not rain in Dubai. As expected, all of the restaurants were full and would not even accept a reservation. Somehow I found Chinese take-out. I gave up on eating seafood for dinner, which I had envisioned, and bought Chinese take-out instead and returned to the hotel, soaked in rain.

Back at the hotel, I checked my emails and found one from the airline which said that the plane might not depart on day five or day six because of bad weather. The airline would compensate for changing flights in the event that it didn't depart, but the decision to depart would be made right before the scheduled departure time. The email advised me to change my flight before it was too late, if I could. I wondered what to do. I had booked a flight that was scheduled to depart in the late afternoon of day five. If it did not depart, I might have to wait until the next morning or also the evening. At that time, would I be able to book alternative flights? If I missed a morning flight on day seven, I wouldn't make the flight from Glasgow to Dubai. After thinking for some time, I transferred to a flight departing in the morning of day seven, leaving it to fate. Next, I had to book a hotel. It was quite difficult. I suspect many other travelers had the same difficulties that I had. Somehow I managed to book the third bed and breakfast that I telephoned. I felt relieved.

Well, this meant I would have nothing to do in the afternoon on day five and six. I would have spent that time in Glasgow. Looking for things to do in that time, I browsed the Internet and found a vacancy on a tour of a distillery I had wanted to take but had not been able to book because it was already fully booked. In the taxi, I sounded depressed when I told Nicola that I had put off my departure from the island because the scheduled flight would not depart. She asked me what I would do instead, and suggested that I go sightseeing. Nicola said they were available, obviously trying to sell me on it. Persuading myself that this must be the will of the whisky gods, I made up my mind. The rest of my time on the island would be spent visiting distilleries.



A photo taken in the back yard of the Bridgend Hotel

Despite the many things happening, I spent day two to six getting up late in the morning, having breakfast and going out before noon to visit three or four distilleries. I joined tasting tours or otherwise tasted whisky at distillery bars. Then I would drunkenly stop in at the hotel, nap, eat dinner and drink again. Whisky lovers would feel envious but, to the eyes of those uninterested in alcohol, I was a typical example of a no-good man that a child shouldn't imitate. After all, I was able to make two rounds of the nine distilleries. My fate was at stake on day seven. I got up that morning and the wind was a bit strong. Thankfully, though, the flight departed without trouble and I arrived in Dubai as scheduled. It was as if no unexpected problems had happened during my trip. It was a carefree solo trip. I had some problems with flights, but they are things that a traveler should expect. I am back, healthy and well. This is a happy ending. Also, fortunately, I didn't have to pay for accommodations on day one or lunch on day two as a result.



Bowmore Distillery's bar

Lastly, for those whisky lovers, here are brief introductions of some of the distilleries I liked there.

• ARDNAHOE

This is the newest distillery on Islay Island. It started distilling whisky in 2018. Ardnahoe started shipping five-year-old whisky in 2023. The owner who loves Islay Island built the distillery from scratch, based on their desire to make their own whisky. This newest distillery deserves a lot of attention. I am looking forward to seeing what kind of whisky they will release over time, in ten and twenty years.

• KILCHOMAN

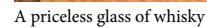
The distillery emphasizes Islay Island's terroir. In other words, they work to complete the entire process from the cultivation of barley to its distillation, maturing and bottling on Islay Island. (Many local distilleries procure malt from off-island and mature it on the mainland.)

Kilchoman also owns a field for producing barley. They are very motivated and I like it.

• BUNNAHABHAIN

Bunnahabhain does not use peaty smells, which is rare for a distillery on Islay Island. They let visitors compare four types of whisky matured in sherry casks. Among them, the 19-year-old whisky matured in an amontillado sherry cask was brilliant.

If you are interested in any of them, please contact me personally.



Letter from Panama - Episode 3

Contributed by Mr. Hideaki Kotake, Primary Secretary (Economy Team), Embassy of Japan in Panama

— Panaman Holiday —

Go to the canal and see ships on a holiday in Panama. We have children, so we face the question of what to do to enrich our time on weekends when there is no preschool. Because we cannot spend weekends just relaxing, we searched for ways to “seriously” enjoy a holiday in Panama. Here they are:

1. Convenient Destinations (within 15 minutes by car)

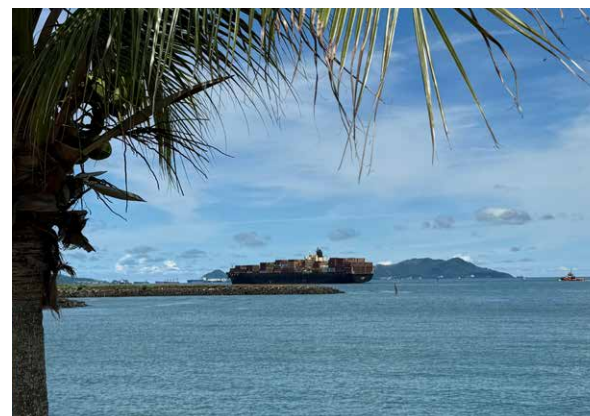
Panama has three gigantic shopping malls that are representative of malls in Panama. Alta Plaza’s indoor play area is popular with visitors with kids. The mall has suitable facilities where children can exhaust their energy, such as a ball pit that is unimaginably huge compared to the Japanese standard, a room filled with many trampolines, and an obstacle course whose safety is a bit questionable. The spacious building is appropriate for people who want to take their time shopping. The shopping malls are much appreciated in Panama where the rainy season is almost the entire year.

2. Sunny Day (within 20 minutes by car)

The cruise terminal was completed in 2024. You can enjoy the view of the sea from the port, catch fish and eat at a seaside restaurant. There are two small museums where you can see animal, insect, fish and dinosaur fossils. These are valuable facilities because Panama has no zoo or aquarium. They are adjacent to an outdoor garden and a small amusement park. People gather there from the late afternoon when the temperature has cooled.



Cereal-like ball pool



Amador Cruise Terminal

3. Ecology Day (within 45 minutes by car)

The town of Gamboa is at the halfway point between Panama's Pacific and Caribbean coasts where you can fully experience a tropical rain forest. The town offers a boat tour of the nature around the Panama Canal and an activity in which you ride through a jungle tunnel in a gondola. There is also a facility for viewing butterflies, frogs and sloths. Gamboa also has resort hotels with jungle-view, not ocean-view, rooms for guests to relax in while enjoying the view of the river that elegantly flows through the tropical rain forest.

4. Sea (one or two hours by car)

As there is water both to the north and south of Panama, some locals go fishing, surfing and yachting. If you drive for a little more than an hour, and you will see one of the beaches that stretch along the Pacific coast, like Kujukuri Beach. Enjoy splashing around in the water and surfing. If you put some more energy in and drive about two hours, you can get to a beautiful sea with coral on the Caribbean coast. This is a good place to enjoy diving, snorkeling and other marine activities.

5. Canal Day (30 minutes or an hour and a half by car)

With all of the above information, you may still want to enjoy the canal. Your destination is the canal visitor center. One of the nearer visitor centers is Miraflores on the Pacific coast. There, you can see Panamax vessels passing through the canal up close. The Miraflores Visitor Center has an IMAX 3D movie theater where you can watch a 45-minute film on the canal's history. If you drive for an hour and a half, you can see the Agua Clara Visitor Center on the Caribbean coast. There, you can see New Panamax vessels up close. Utilizing the undamaged nature around the facility, the visitor center is spacious and also has a jungle pathway that visitors can relax on.

Moreover, Panama Canal Railway operates passenger trains on weekends. Seated in a traditional passenger car, visitors can spend three hours traveling along the Panama Canal between the Pacific and Caribbean coasts. The short trip lets visitors step back in time to 100 years ago and imagine the days of canal development.



Facing Lake Gatun

6. History Day (20 minutes by car)

Colorful colonial-style buildings stand in a row in the old town of Casco Viejo. They are souvenir shops, Panama coffee shops, restaurants, churches and other buildings. Souvenir shops in Panama display geisha coffee, Panama hats and clothes with traditional embroidery called mola. Dance the night away in a rooftop club. Walking around the town feels exotic. But if you walk down the wrong road, you could enter a very dangerous area. It is quite a risky experience.

7. Fleeing Abroad, a Somewhat Luxurious Pastime

One of the unexpected advantages of living in Panama involves traveling abroad. In the last issue, I wrote that Tocumen International Airport is the largest hub airport in Central America. Like flying from Tokyo to Hokkaido or Okinawa, you can go north to Mexico, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, south to Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, or east to Jamaica, Barbados and Puerto Rico. Round-trip airline tickets start at 300 dollars, and all of the above countries can be reached within three hours. Being able to easily go to different places on a long weekend is one of the attractive advantages of living in Panama.

These are tips for spending a weekend in the country. Of course, inbound travelers can equally enjoy them as much as locals. Different destinations can be combined into an itinerary, from a short two-day trip to a long trip of about a week. If this article has piqued your interest in Panama, feel free to contact us at any time.



Interior of a Panama Canal Railway passenger car

A Big Round of Applause for Our Colleague, Mr. Rahendra Kasekar Bronze Medal in Hill Marathon

"K" Line (India) Private Limited

"K" Line (India) Private Limited extends our warmest congratulations to Mr. Rahendra Kasekar (Accounts Dept.) for his remarkable achievement in the JBG Satara Hill Half Marathon 2024. With a chip time of 02:45:57, held on Sunday, September 1, 2024, Mr. Kasekar secured the bronze medal in this challenging race.

This outstanding accomplishment is a testament to his dedication, hard work, and perseverance.

His success not only highlights personal commitment to excellence but also brings great pride to entire "K" LINE Family. We are truly inspired by his achievement and wish him continued success in all future endeavours.

Congratulations once again on this impressive accomplishment!



The Conquest of Mt. Kilimanjaro

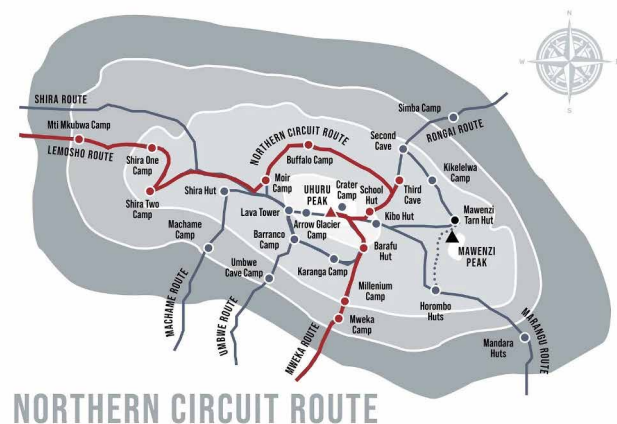
Contributed by Capt. Rajan Mathur, "K" Line Ship Management (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. and Capt. Manish Mathur, "K" Line Pte Ltd

19th September 2024, our hearts filled with pride and sense of achievement as we unfurled the K Line Flag on the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro, the highest free standing mountain in the world at 5895 meters or 19,340 ft.

Preparation for this momentous occasion had started 6 months back. With previous experience of 3 high altitude treks (Everest Base Camp- 5400 meters, Mt. Kinabalu- 4100 meters and Annapurna Base Camp 4,200 meters), the heart longed for some challenge and the one name which crops up in every trek enthusiast's mind is Mount Kilimanjaro.

It required a dedicated commitment to prepare, both mind and body. The first step was to fix a schedule and select a good trek company to take us through this adventure. That done, the preparations began in full swing.

Weight training, stair climbing, long distance cycling, incline walks, diet plans were inducted in the daily routines. This was once in a lifetime opportunity, and we wanted to give it our best shot. As we trained and prepared, it became clear that this trek would test not just our physical capabilities, but also the mental strength.



10th September 2024 touchdown at Kilimanjaro airport and an hour's drive brought us to Moshi town, our base and meeting point for the group. Keeping an additional day in hand prior the trek helped us tune the mind and body to the surroundings and also meet the 14 other members of our group.

12th September 2024, D Day arrived, and we set out from the Hotel for a 2-hour ride to Lemosho Gate, the start point for the trek.

Apart from the 14 who were trekking there was a huge contingent of 43 support staff assisting us as porters, guides, cooks, tent riggers, toilet cleaners and helpers. The superheroes as we called them !

There are several routes leading to the Kilimanjaro summit, and after a lot of consideration we had chosen the 9 days Northern Circuit route.

Northern Circuit Route has the highest Kilimanjaro Success Rate and approaches from south of Kilimanjaro.

The route initially follows the western side of Kilimanjaro to the Shira Plateau, then heads north and circles the main summit in a clockwise direction, descending straight down the southern Mweka route.

Day	Start	Altitude (m)	Altitude (ft)	Finish	Altitude (m)	Altitude (ft)	Time (hrs)	Distance (km)	Distance (miles)
1	Londorossi Gate	2,360	7,742	Mti Mkubwa	2,895	9,498	3-4	6	4
2	Mti Mkubwa	2,895	9,498	Shira 1 Camp	3,505	11,500	5-6	8	5
3	Shira 1 Camp	3,505	11,500	Shira 2 Camp	3,810	12,500	3-4	7	4
4	Shira 2 Camp	3,810	12,500	Lava Tower	4,630	15,190	3-4	7	4
	Lava Tower	4,630	15,190	Moir Hut	4,200	13,580	2-3	7	4
5	Moir Hut	4,200	13,580	Buffalo Camp	4,020	13,200	5-7	12	7
6	Buffalo Camp	4,020	13,200	3rd Cave	3,870	12,700	5-7	8	5
7	3rd Cave	3,870	12,700	School Hut	4,750	15,600	4-5	5	3
8	School Hut	4,750	15,600	Uhuru Peak	5,895	19,341	6-8	6	4
	Uhuru Peak	5,895	19,341	Mweka Camp	3,068	10,065	4-6	12	7
9	Mweka Camp	3,068	10,065	Mweka Gate	1,640	5,380	3-4	10	6
Total								88	53

After the registration and formalities at the Lemosho Gate, we finally began the Day 1 trek. The 4-hour trek that day itself gave us a fair idea that this journey would be way tougher than any of the treks we had done earlier.

The overall length of the route over 9 days is about 88 kilometres, and traverses 4 climate zones as we ascend in altitude.

The first two days are spent trekking through the rainforest zone which has lush greenery all round. The path is shaded with the tall and gigantic trees some dating back to hundreds of years. As we approach the 3000m altitude on day 3, the thick forests gradually make way for short shrubs of the moorland zone.

The afternoon of Day 4 takes us into the Alpine Desert Zone at Lava Tower which is



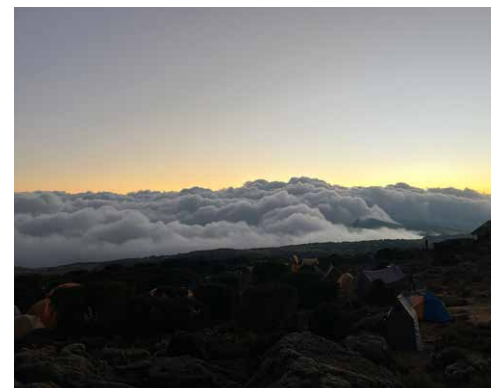
devoid of any plantation. Just the overbearing sun beating down upon the rugged, rocky terrain. Day 5, 6 and 7 are spent circling the mountain from the West to the North, walking around the 4000-meter altitude level at the periphery of the moorland and the alpine desert zones.

What made this trek more difficult than others was a combination of several factors. High Altitude, uneven terrain, steep inclines with loose soil, cold temperatures, all added up to the challenge. Each day completed was an achievement in itself. A clear indication of the toughness level was the fact that 3 of the climbers dropped out of the trek between day 2 and 5.

The night before the final ascent, we camped at Kibo Hut, an altitude of 4,720 meters - surrounded by the chill of cold temperatures. Sleep was elusive, filled with a mixture of excitement and apprehension.

The push for the summit began at midnight, an extremely arduous climb of 7 km gaining more than a 1,000 meters in altitude. The terrain was steep and soft – like sand. Every step forward was followed by half a step slide back. Headlamps illuminating the path, the group trudged on step by step, taking short breaks every 30 min. heads down, goading each other to keep going, the mind controlling the body to finish!

As the first light of dawn broke over the horizon, we were just about 50 meters from the top! The sky painted in hues of orange and gold, the clouds below us, standing almost at the roof of Africa.



Reaching the summit was indescribable. Standing at 19,000 feet, filled with a sense of achievement and awe. It was a moment of pure triumph, a culmination of days spent testing the limits of our endurance and spirit.

The journey is not just about conquering a mountain but also about camaraderie among climbers, the support of experienced guides, and the resilience tested along the way. Each step taken toward the summit embodies perseverance, making the successful trek a deeply rewarding experience etched in memory forever.