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Hapag-Lloyd turns 175 years old

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On 27 May 1847 -or 175 years ago- a group of shipowners and merchants founded the Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft (Hapag) in Hamburg.

Then, it was not until 1970 that Hapag-Lloyd AG emerged from Hapag's merger with Bremen-based North German Lloyd. Further acquisitions followed, such as those of Canadian Pacific (2005), CSAV (2014), UASC (2017), NileDutch (2021) and the intended incorporation of the container liner business of DAL (2022).

Today, Hapag-Lloyd is the fifth-largest container liner shipping company in the world and the largest shipping company in Germany.

“Our anniversary fills us with great pride,” said Rolf Habben Jansen, CEO of Hapag-Lloyd AG. “As with many long-established companies, our history has also been characterised by constant change and innovation. Hapag, which initially sailed the Atlantic with just a single sailing ship beginning in 1848, has today become a renowned and internationally active logistics company serving almost all of the world's major ports.”

When it was founded in 1847, the company's main field of business was transporting mail and passengers, especially emigrants headed to North America. Cargo initially only played a secondary role. Director-General Albert Ballin (1857-1918) transformed Hapag into the largest shipping line in the world, invented cruising, and led the emigration business in Hamburg to great heights. Although the shipping company had lost practically its entire fleet in the two world wars, it managed to re-establish itself in

both cases.

The company is commemorating 175 years of transformation with a range of activities throughout the year, including a scholarly conference, a party for employees in Hamburg, and a congress. "Hapag-Lloyd has every reason to celebrate – but also to be grateful," Habben Jansen added. "Thanks are due to our more than 14,000 employees around the world, our customers, our shareholders and everyone who has played a part in helping Hapag-Lloyd to stay on course and to successfully weather even the most difficult times over the past 175 years."

(Hapag-Lloyd)