



### Transworld Group pledges support to COVID-19 relief measures

COVID-19, a global pandemic has registered millions of cases across the globe and are only on the rise. It is spiralling irrepressibly within many countries in the world and has disrupted the flow of life in many aspects. Effective humanitarian response to this global crisis is the need of the hour. Transworld Group continued its legacy of working for the community in disaster and crisis situations. Lockdown exacerbated the situation of daily wagers as they lost wages and remain stranded in cities without access to food and basic hygiene. To avert the immediate hunger and starvation, we extended support by providing ration to 500 families of daily wage workers residing in Asia's largest slum, Dharavi, in Mumbai who is the hardest hit and form most vulnerable households with the support of GiveIndia platform implemented by ActionAid. To meet the urgent need of PPE kits to safeguard the health workers who have been protecting and safeguarding people round the clock with immense care and compassion, we collaborated with InDeed – Dentsu Aegis Network (India) to provide 300 PPE kits in Maharashtra. The support helped 300 health care workers on the front lines to do their life-saving work in Maharashtra by engaging with Maharashtra Health Department, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC). The Transworld Group remains committed to its mission of giving back to the community especially when it is needed the most amidst these unprecedented times of human crisis.

### DP World and Mastercard join hands to digitalise port payments

DP World and US-based multinational financial services company Mastercard have joined hands to digitalise payments at its ports, the media reported. The partnership will see both DP World and Mastercard create a facility that will help cargo owners and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to pay for their freight-related costs digitally. So far, the programme, which is called the Port Payments Digitization Project, has been launched through the co-branded Trade Card in the Dominican Republic and will be rolled out in Latin America and then across DP World's global port operations. Morten Johansen, executive director of DP World Caucedo, told the media, "This partnership is an important addition to DP World's digital transformation campaign. We are delighted that Mastercard has joined us in advance reflection and sharing our two-thirds experience enables smarter global commerce. This will help SMEs and cargo owners in general in the Dominican Republic to gain better access to the global economy and be an engine of economic growth. Our plan is to use the learnings from this pilot project to expand this partnership to other parts of the world."

### 'Chabahar Port's capacity for transit an advantage for Turkmenistan'

The governor of Sistan-Baluchestan Province said Turkmenistan can use the capacity of Chabahar Port (in southeast of Iran) and its trade-industrial free zone for transiting goods, IRNA reported. Speaking in a video conference with Iranian Ambassador to Turkmenistan Gholam Abbas Arbab Khales, Ahmad Ali Mouhebati said Sistan-Baluchestan Province, especially Chabahar, enjoys many capacities in trade, economic and commercial fields. Chabahar is connected to the open waters and plays a major role in developing trade, he added. Sistan-Baluchestan is considered an important opportunity for domestic and foreign investors, he said, adding that executive bodies will make all their efforts for starting economic activities. Elaborating on investment opportunities in Sistan-Baluchestan Province and Chabahar, Mouhebati called for Turkmen economic activists' investment and participation. Arbab Khales, meantime, expressed his readiness for maintaining coordination for Turkmen officials' visit to Chabahar. He noted that investment delegations will visit the capacities of Chabahar Port.

### Carriers are winning the freight rate battle

Hapag-Lloyd impressed analysts last week by keeping its full-year financial guidance despite the deleterious effects caused by Covid-19. Part of the reason for this upbeat forecast was in the carriers' collective ability to keep rates high in recent weeks, something analysed in the latest report from Danish container shipping consultants, Sea-Intelligence. "Carriers have been very good at maintaining freight rates – and net of fuel, spot rates are actually 25-40% up in some trades compared to last year," Sea-Intelligence noted, highlighting the "rapid and hard tactical capacity cuts" – the blank sailings – which have done so well in preserving the bottom line of most of the global carriers this year. Taking out the fuel cost component from the recorded spot rate indices, rates on the Asia – North Europe trade is up by around 25% year-on-year, Asia – Mediterranean and the transpacific to the west coast are both up by nearly 40%, while rates for sailings from Asia to the US east coast are up by around 5%. Sea-Intelligence also provided an update on the volume of blanked sailings, an historic high that has now passed the 500-mark.

### China-Europe rail freight services buck falling volumes trend

China-Europe rail freight is bucking the pandemic-wide trend of falling air and ocean volumes, boasting double-digit growth this year. According to China Railway Group, 2,920 trains ran between January and April, carrying 262,000 teu, up 24% year on year. Last month alone, westbound volumes were up 58% and eastbound 29%, totalling 88,000 teu. Duisport reported its weekly China trains for April had increased from the "normal" 35-40, to 50, following the end of the lockdowns in China. "We extended our train services to include further Chinese destinations," explained CEO Erich Staake, claiming the crisis had seen rail become an important alternative to ocean freight. Andre Wheeler, chief executive of Asia Pacific Connex, said Duisport's figures were an "important indicator", since 80% of all rail traffic out of Chongqing passes through the key dry port hub. "It is also interesting that new routes are being added, as rail is proving to be a viable option. For example, Maersk has recently introduced its first rail service from Xi'an to Izmit, in Turkey," he added.



### APM Pipavav handled 293 container trains in April, highest ever

APM Terminals Pipavav sets a new milestone in handling the highest number of container trains in a month. The terminal handled a record 293 container trains at the port in April 2020; a mix of single & double-stack trains. The previous record stood at handling 263 trains in July 2013. A clear shift of cargo from road to rail is visible in many parts of the country as lockdown crippled the road transport while rail freight moved unhindered. Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) in Navi Mumbai also broke its record by handling 499 container trains in April while the customs extended their port gate to ICD Mulund and ICD Tarapur for easy evacuation. Container Corporation of India (Concor) restarted its rail service from its Hyderabad ICD to PSA Chennai due to demand surge. Meanwhile, the shipping giant Maersk urged its customers to switch from road to rail for smooth movement of freight.

### Sea freight rates between Asia and Europe on the rise

France's CMA CGM, the world's fourth largest container line, has unveiled a \$300 increase in FAK (Freight of All Kinds) rates per 40 ft for journeys from Asia to Europe, to \$2,000 from 1 June. The AP Moller-Maersk, the world's biggest container shipping line, was among those carriers that had increased their short-term rates for the second half of May. Maersk's 40 ft price for its Shanghai to Felixstowe route had risen from \$1,220 to \$1,350 in recent days, media reported. Meanwhile the chief of Maersk said his firm was taking things "one quarter at a time", adjusting capacity when demand weakened. Chief executive Soren Skou predicted a 20-25% fall in shipping trade in the 2nd quarter (1 April-30 June) of 2020 as COVID-19 continues to disrupt global economics. Described by the FT as a "bellwether for global trade", Maersk was unveiling its first quarter 2020 results, with pre-tax earnings rising 23% on the previous year to \$1.5bn. He expects international trading firms to review their supply chains as a result of COVID-19. This would involve adding suppliers to their roster rather than replacing any, he said.