



India: Shipping ministry unveils relief package for Covid-19-hit cargo terminal operators at major ports

The Shipping Ministry has allowed firms running cargo terminals at state-owned major ports on the public-private-partnership (PPP) mode to defer their April, May and June months' revenue share, royalty and equipment hire charges without any interest. This is part of a relief package signed off by the Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya to ease the burden on PPP operators, port users and other stake holders hit by the outbreak of the coronavirus. The revenue share, royalty and equipment hire charges deferred will have to be paid by the PPP operator after interest free period of three months (reckoned month to month – the charges due in April 2020 shall be paid in month of August 2020). Alternatively, the deferred amount can be paid through six monthly equated instalments at interest rate equal to RBI's 91-days treasury bill (primary) yield rate (as on the due date of initially deferred amount) after expiry of interest free period, according to an order issued by the Ministry late on Tuesday.

Direct China-Europe rail service looking attractive to air shippers in a queue

Chaos in the air freight industry could lead to a greater reliance on rail on the Asia-Europe lane. As images of congestion in Shanghai began to arrive and forwarders report the challenges of sending goods by air, Davies Turner said shippers should look instead to rail. Air freight is experiencing little or no immediate booking capacity available, and there are waits of more than a week to get cargo on a flight out of Shanghai – and with prices at all-time highs, rail is looking increasingly attractive. To help shippers, Davies Turner said it would quote price per kilo. "It is the language that air freight importers are more used to dealing with," explained Tony Cole, head of supply chain services for Davies Turner. "It makes a comparison between the relative costs of the intermodal rail service and air freight more immediately obvious. "At the current rate of just \$0.24 per kg or 2,000 cubic meter, with a minimum cost of \$120, it is no surprise that our direct Express China Rail service is becoming of great interest to the air freight sector. They are facing sky-high air freight rates out of China; \$10 to \$15 per kg now being seen.

Iran, Oman to launch new shipping line in coming days

Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) says a third shipping line is going to be launched between Iran's southern Jask Island and ports in Oman in the coming days, IRIB reported late on Thursday. "To develop and expand the level of trade relations between Iran and Oman, the third shipping line between Jask port and some Omani ports will be launched within the next few days," Hamid Zadboum said. Referring to the increase in trade volume between the two countries, he noted that last month the two countries launched a container shipping line to transit cargoes between the southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas and Port Sultan Qaboos in Oman. "The line is used to transit container cargoes, mainly fruits, and vegetables, between the two countries," the official said. Iran and Oman had signed a maritime cooperation agreement in December 2019 for boosting maritime transportation between the two countries.

Chabahar plays a central role as India's wheat aid all set to reach Afghanistan

Chabahar Port is the link that has helped India in sending its humanitarian aid of 5022 MT wheat consignment to Afghanistan deal during the coronavirus pandemic. The vessel that set sail from Kandla port in Gujarat reached the Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar on April 15 2020. Dr Behruz Aghaei, Chabahar Port General Director on the arrival of Indian aid said, "One of the unique advantages of Chabahar is its transit capabilities. Today, Chabahar is one of the most flourishing southern ports of Iran on the transit domain, which can play a vital role in regional trade connectivity." The 5022 MT is the first consignment of 75000 MT of wheat India is sending to Afghanistan as a gift. Shipment will be cleared and transited through Milak border to Afghanistan next week. Afghan Ambassador to Iran Abdol Ghafoor Liwal while expressing his "special thanks to both India and Iran as our friend and neighbouring country for helping transit of shipment" said, "port of Chabahar has very good potential and proper facilities to send Afghanistan cargoes to different destinations in the world".

HMM to add 12 units of 24,000 TEU to its fleet to run on the Alliance route

South Korea's sea flag carrier HMM Co., formerly Hyundai Merchant Marine, is scaling up after it has become a formal member on The Alliance and will add 12 vessels in 24,000-TEU (twenty-foot equivalent) class to its fleet by August. HMM is scheduled to unveil Algeciras, a 24,000-TEU container carrier built by Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering, for the first time at Busan New Port on April 28. Algeciras, the biggest container ship in the world, will set sail for Ningbo, China, the following day. The shipper will take delivery of all 12 units of 24,000-TEU container carriers by August, adding up 288,000 TEU to its current total cargo handling capacity of 450,000 TEU. The full deployment of the vessels is expected to make the company the world's eighth largest container carrier.

APM Terminal Pipavav handles 35 vessels since lockdown, says ops running smoothly

APM Terminals Pipavav on Monday said it has handled more than 35 vessels and its operations are running smoothly despite the lockdown. The APM Terminals Pipavav port is running 24x7 due to the concerted efforts of all the stakeholders that has resulted in the smooth functioning of the port ever since the lockdown was announced in March 2020, it said in a statement. "The port operations are proceeding safely and efficiently despite some challenges. The port handled over 35 vessels and more than 175 rakes since the lockdown without any delay. "The port has created additional yard space and working with extended logistics partners to ensure the smooth flow of goods and help address any emergent supply chain needs," the company said. The pre-emptive steps taken by various authorities are commendable, it said.



Saudi Arabia starts operating new shipping line to East Africa

Saudi Arabia's Ports Authority announced on Sunday it has started operating its new shipping line between the Kingdom and East Africa, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported. King Fahd Industrial Port in Yanbu received its first container ship (CONTSHIP ONO) that was carrying the Siberian flag. The announcement comes as Saudi Arabia steps up investment in its King Fahd Industrial Port site on the Red Sea coast in order to meet the needs of the region. The new shipping line will contribute to enhancing the coastal transportation of container ships between the Kingdom's ports and East African ports. This is expected to lead to opening direct lines to ship and export national products, and increase increasing trade from East Africa. The new shipping line will provide a new weekly direct service between the Kingdom, Kenya and Somalia through 4 dedicated vessels, according to SPA.



DP World launches worldwide digital platforms

DP World has launched new online logistics tools and services, covering sea, land and air shipping around the world. The new connected ecosystem of platforms will enable freight forwarders and any business, to book shipments of cargo from and to anywhere in the world, by any combination of sea, land and air. "The initiative represents a major step forward in digitizing the management of logistics to increase the efficiency, visibility and the resilience of global supply chains. DP World has accelerated the already planned roll-out of the platforms to help companies meet the challenge of the Covid-19 crisis and keep trade flowing including vital food and medical supplies," DP World said.