



Iran, UAE restart maritime trade

Iran and United Arab Emirates (UAE) resumed bilateral trade exchange via sea, Fars news agency reported quoting the ports affairs director of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO). Ravanbakhsh Behzadian said that maritime trade between Iran and the UAE had been halted since the outbreak of the coronavirus epidemic. "According to the new health guidelines and protocols, these business communications have resumed between two countries," he added. Acting Minister of Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Hossein Modares Khiabani has said on Wednesday that Iran's exports at borders have been three times more than imports and there are no road-blocks for exports. Increasing non-oil exports to the neighboring countries is one of the major plans that the Iranian government is pursuing in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20). Last month, First Vice-President Es'haq Jahangiri called for developing non-oil exports as the only way for realizing the motto of the surge in production. "The Foreign Affairs Ministry should provide the necessary bases for the development of [non-oil] exports by expanding and strengthening economic diplomacy," he said in a meeting on reviewing ways of boosting economic relations with the neighboring countries and supporting non-oil exporters.

Adani Ports on way to handling 400 MT cargo by 2025: CEO Karan Adani

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone, backed by steps like optimising operating processes to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus crisis, is on the path to achieving 400 million tonnes (MT) of cargo throughput by FY25, its Chief Executive Officer Karan Adani said. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), part of the globally diversified Adani Group which is the largest integrated logistics player in India, had achieved cargo throughput of 223 MT in the last fiscal. "Ready for the future crisis situations like what we are witnessing can be all consuming. Keeping this in mind, our focus has been on actions that will not compromise future sustainability or impact our ability to capture opportunities that almost always arise out of a crisis. "We believe our actions will allow us to emerge stronger on the other side of the crisis and put us comfortably on the path to achieve 400 Million Tonne of cargo by FY 25 and thereby make progress towards becoming one of the most valuable port companies in the world by the end of the next decade," Adani said in the company's annual report released last week.

Inactive container shipping fleet hits all time high of 11.6% of capacity

The inactive container shipping fleet has reached an all time high of 11.6% of the fleet in capacity terms at the end of May, according to analyst Alphaliner. The idle containership fleet stood at 2.72m teu as of 25 May, or 11.6% of capacity, due to a combination of blank sailings to mitigate the impact of lower demand from the Covid-19 pandemic and vessels taken out of service for scrubber retrofits. Some 571,858 teu, 64 vessels, of the inactive are currently undergoing scrubber retrofits meaning that the portion of fleet take out service to manage capacity has passed the 2m teu mark. According to Alphaliner's weekly newsletter the world's two largest container lines – Maersk and MSC – account for the largest portion of the idle fleet with a combined total of 845,000 teu out of service. However, more than half this figure relates to vessels undergoing scrubber retrofits. Alphaliner said it expected the inactive fleet to peak shortly as lockdowns in many countries start to ease and demand recovers.

Vietnam's Quy Nhon Port opens route to Northeast Asia

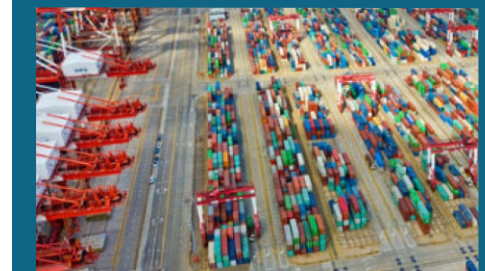
A transport route connecting Quy Nhon Port in the province of Binh Dinh, with Northeast Asian countries started on 2 June. Quy Nhon Port is located on Vietnam Southcentral Coast. Executives from Vietnam National Shipping Lines (Vinalines), which manages Quy Nhon Port, said the opening of the new route will create new developments for the central and Central Highlands regions, including Binh Dinh province, as it will help facilitate trade with Northeast Asia by cutting transport time and cost and improving the competitiveness of Vietnamese goods compared to regional rivals. Ho Lien Nam, Head of the Sales Department at the Quy Nhon Port, said the route will help the shipment of goods to Northeast Asian markets which are major importers of Vietnamese goods, in a shorter period of time. He noted that up to 60% commodities exported from Quy Nhon are wood chips, wood pellets, and tapioca. However, the shipment of certain goods of high value, such as frozen fruit, has faced difficulties as there has not been direct transport routes to those markets, Nam said.

Rail services between China and Europe building a new head of steam

Rail services between China and Europe are growing fast, with the reliability, speed and cost looking increasingly attractive in the face of blanked container shipping services and very high air freight rates. "The freight trains on the new Silk Road are well booked," said Patrick Merkel, managing director of 4PL Prologue Solutions. "Freight forwarders advise their customers to reserve capacities two weeks in advance. "Rail transport between China and Hamburg currently takes only 18 days, instead of 32 or more by sea transport." Despite slightly increasing demand, the rates per container were relatively stable, added the company – on average, 50% cheaper than air freight. And services are increasing. Yesterday, Russian Railways, SNCF Forwardis and Cosco Group launched a 20-day train service connecting Jiangxi with Paris. Transloading occurs at the Dostyk/Alashankou (China/Kazakhstan) and Brest/Malaszewicze (Belarus/Poland) border crossings.

CONCOR shuts 15 unviable inland terminals; looks to merge regions

State-run Container Corporation of India Ltd (CONCOR) has shut 15 under-performing inland cargo terminals and returned the land on which they were operating to the Indian Railways. India's biggest rail hauler of containers has also started merging regions as it looks to keep itself financially fit on the road to privatisation. The closure of the terminal at Sabarmati is the only surprise in the list of 15 facilities that have been shuttered. The Sabarmati terminal had a turnover of Rs 51.40 crore in FY19, the highest among the 15 facilities. The land on which the Sabarmati terminal was operating has been handed back on demand to the Indian Railways in order to use it for the development of the National High-Speed Rail Corridor or the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project. The traffic handled at Sabarmati terminal will be shifted to the nearby MMLP at Khodiyar.



China port container volumes return to normal in late May

During the last ten days period of May, the cargo throughput of major Chinese ports kept increasing and posted an increase of 0.9% year-on-year. The overall container throughput and international container cargo volume of eight major Chinese ports increased 20% and 18% respectively comparing to middle May, resuming to around 98% and 96% of the volume in the same period of last year. The crude oil shipments at major coastal ports increased 15.43% year-on-year. The iron ore shipments at major ports increased 6% compared year-on-year, among which the growth rate of Ningbo-Zhoushan port and Qingdao port exceeded 10%. The port business along Yangtze river continued recovering in late May. The cargo throughput of three major ports, Nanjing, Wuhan and Chongqing, has reached the same level of last year's while the container volume resumed to 98%.

Maersk ramps up rail service to keep exports on track

Integrated container logistics company Maersk recently said it has ramped up its rail services to help manufacturers move their cargo to ports amid acute shortage of trucks during the lockdown. It said that the Indian logistics ecosystem has come under tremendous pressure due to the nationwide lockdown implemented to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and the supply chains have started slowing down despite logistics and shipping being deemed as "essential services which were exempt from all lockdown measures. "One of the key factors affecting the supply chains was the severely impacted trucking ecosystem. Trucks were abandoned by their drivers who rushed back to their home towns, dwindling away the movement of cargo," it said in a statement. "Maersk's solution included moving goods straight from the exporters manufacturing facilities on rail to the required port or moving the cargo first to the closest inland container depot by road and then loading it on to rail," the statement said.