104, Janki Niwas, 1st Floor, Dr.Moose Road
Opp. Gadkari Rangayatan, Talavpali,
Thane (West)-400 602, Mumbai, India.
Email- afged2019@gmail.com

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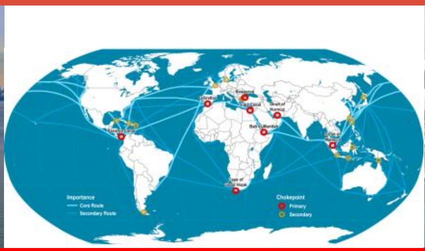



Major Containership Fire at Port of Los Angeles Brought Under Control

A major fire aboard the container ship ***ONE HENRY HUDSON*** at the Port of Los Angeles was brought under control after a coordinated multi-agency response that saw the vessel moved offshore, with all 23 crew members safely evacuated and no injuries reported.

The incident began at 6:38 PM on Friday, November 21, when fire broke out aboard the docked vessel at Berth 218 in the Port of Los Angeles, prompting a major firefighting operation involving nearly 200 Los Angeles City Fire Department personnel, supported by the Long Beach Fire Department, the United States Coast Guard, Los Angeles Port Police, and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

“The Los Angeles Fire Department personnel were the first to arrive on scene and immediately coordinated a response with local partners from other agencies,” said Assistant Chief Carlos Calvillo, LAFD incident commander. “Fire burned on multiple sub-levels below deck in areas that were largely inaccessible, which required a high level of communication and coordination from everyone to ensure the safety of on scene personnel and the crew members aboard the vessel. Remarkably, and thankfully, no injuries have been reported as a result of this ship fire.”

The firefighting effort deployed resources from land, sea, and air. LAFD’s specialized teams included Heavy Rescue, HazMat, USAR, Fire Boats, and Air Operations units. Long Beach Fire Department contributed two Battalion Chiefs, a foam apparatus, and Fire Boats 15 and 20 to work alongside LAFD’s five fire boats. Thermal imaging from a CalOES FIRIS fixed-wing aircraft provided critical monitoring of fire conditions and heat signatures from above.(**Source: gCaptain)**

U.S. Sanctions Indian Shipping Firms Over Alleged Role In Iran’s Illegal Oil Trade

The United States has imposed new sanctions on companies and individuals involved in Iran’s covert oil network, including an India-based shipping operator and a petroleum products trader.

The move is part of Washington’s effort to block funding that it says supports Iran’s nuclear activities, armed groups, and military operations in the region.

The sanctioned Indian entities include RN Ship Management Private Limited from Maharashtra and TR6 Petro India LLP from Pune. Two Indian nationals, Zair Husain Iqbal Husain Sayed and ZulfiAccording to the US State Department, TR6 Petro imported more than USD 8 million worth of Iranian-origin bitumen between October 2024 and June 2025.

The firm has been designated under Executive Order 13846 for taking part in a significant transaction involving Iranian petroleum products.kar Hussain Rizvi Sayed, were also named.

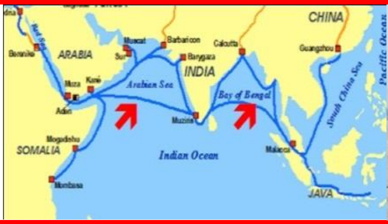
According to the US State Department, TR6 Petro imported more than USD 8 million worth of Iranian-origin bitumen between October 2024 and June 2025. The firm has been designated under Executive Order 13846 for taking part in a significant transaction involving Iranian petroleum products.

RN Ship Management was listed because it was believed to have managed vessels carrying Iranian crude on behalf of Sepehr Energy Jahan Nama Pars Company, which is already under US sanctions for its links to Iran’s military.

The US Departments of State and Treasury jointly announced the designations. In total, the State Department listed 17 entities, individuals and vessels, while the Treasury added 41 more connected to Iran’s petroleum and petrochemical trade.

US officials said Iran’s oil revenue continues to support its armed forces, especially as they rebuild after the recent 12-Day War with Israel. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Washington viewed restricting this revenue as important to slowing Iran’s nuclear ambitions and limiting its support to regional groups.

(Source:gCaptain)



Direct box Shipping Between Novorossiysk & Goa Being Discussed

Russia's Delo Group is discussing the launch of a regular sea container line featuring calls between Novorossiysk Port and Mormugao Port, in Goa, India, according to Delo CEO Sergei Shishkarev. He was speaking on the sidelines of the Transport of Russia 2025 forum.

Mormugao Port ceased container handling several years ago, but the equipment for this exists, Shishkarev said, and he thinks it could be made operational again. Goa is a small Indian west coast state, with a population of about 1.6 million. It is one of India's wealthiest states, with a GDP (PPP) income close to US$50,000, and is also quite concentrated in its population distribution, with nearly 80% of its population living in urban areas. The tourism sector is vibrant with numerous luxury five-star resorts.

Goa has successfully attracted a growing number of international visitors, particularly from Russia and Central Asia. Direct flight services from cities such as Ekaterinburg, Kazakhstan; Novosibirsk; and Moscow have been established, and October 2025 saw 34 charter flights from these regions alone. These routes have strengthened Goa's position as a prime destination for global travellers; hence, Delos is interested in both servicing this market and helping Goan producers access Russian markets.

Goa has a somewhat different feel to the rest of India, as it was under Portuguese administration from 1510 until 1987. The state has a unique culture, is mostly Christian, with Portuguese-influenced foods and some of the best beaches in India.

Delo Group operates marine container terminals in the Azov-Black Sea, Baltic, and Far Eastern basins; a network of railway container terminals; and a fleet of containers and well cars. The group's transportation and logistics division includes the intermodal container operator TransContainer and the multimodal transport operator Ruscon, while its stevedoring division includes DeloPorts and leading container terminal operator Global Ports.

Indian Port Sector

Sagarmala Finance to raise ₹8,000 crore to boost maritime sector

SMFCL in a statement said in a recently held annual general meeting , the board approved a proposal to raise ₹8,000 crore in the current financial year

Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited (SMFCL) will raise Rs 8,000 crore in the current financial year from banks, financial institutions and through bonds to further boost the maritime prowess of the nation.

SMFCL, formerly known as Sagarmala Development Company Limited, is India's first maritime sector-specific Non-Banking Financial Company.

It was formally registered as an NBFC with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on June 19, 2025.

SMFCL in a statement said in a recently held annual general meeting , the board approved a proposal to raise ₹8,000 crore in the current financial year. It also approved the overall borrowing limit of Rs 25,000 crore.

"For achieving this SMFCL shall raise the fund from various bank and financial institutions and through bonds in accordance with the resource mobilization plan and start lending operations soon," it said.

The corporation comes under Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. It aims to bridge the financial gaps in the maritime sector, facilitate investments, and provide sector-focused financial products to port authorities, shipping companies, MSMEs, startups, and maritime educational institutions.

CISF also gets command of minor ports security

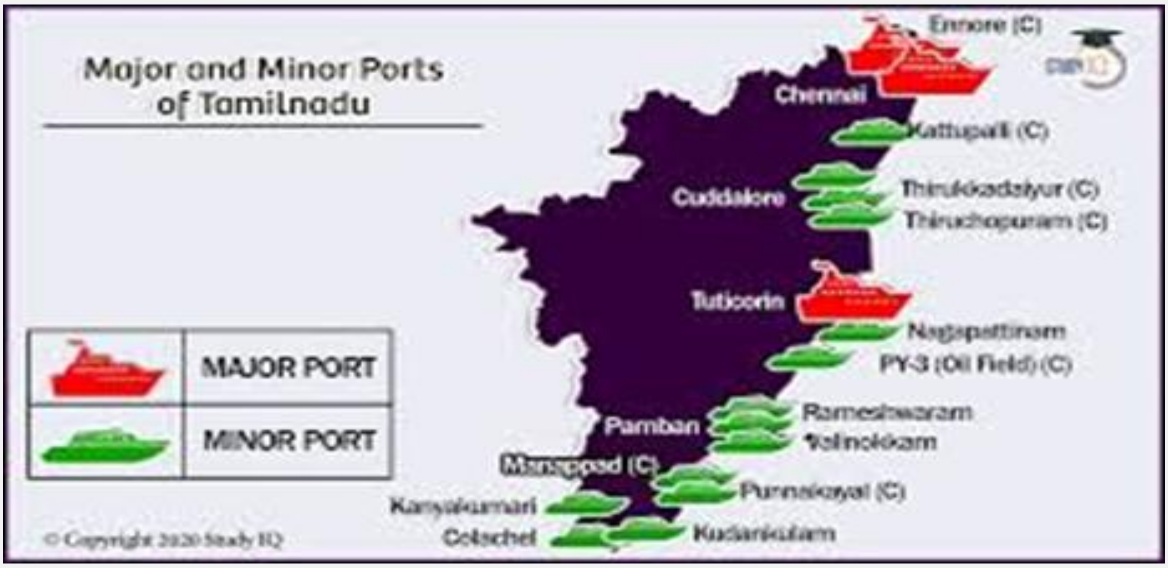
In one of the most sweeping reforms to India's maritime security architecture in two decades, the government has designated the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) as the country's Recognised Security Organisation (RSO) for all ports under the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code -- a move that puts India's entire EXIM gateway network under a single, specialised security authority for the first time.

The decision marks a decisive shift towards standardised, professional port protection at a time when India is aggressively expanding its maritime footprint and positioning the blue economy as a key growth engine.

With the new mandate, CISF will undertake fresh Port Facility Security Assessments (PFSA) and prepare Port Facility Security Plans (PFSP) for all EXIM ports — both major and non-major — according to orders issued by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

The official said the step addresses long-standing vulnerabilities stemming from non-standardised, patchwork security arrangements at non-major ports.(The Tribune)

Tamil Nadu unveils ₹1.2 trillion port expansion drive to boost maritime competitiveness



State officials note that the investment aligns with Tamil Nadu's long-term maritime strategy and its ambition to attract global supply chain players.

Tamil Nadu has rolled out an expansive ₹1.2 trillion port development programme, marking one of the most ambitious maritime infrastructure overhauls ever undertaken by the state. The initiative is designed to elevate Tamil Nadu into a leading logistics and maritime gateway, supporting its fast-growing industrial base and strengthening its position in global trade networks.

The plan includes large-scale capacity expansion across both major and minor ports. New deep-draft terminals, additional berths, modern cargo-handling equipment, and upgraded storage and warehousing facilities are set to be developed to handle larger vessels and rising cargo volumes. These upgrades aim to ease congestion, enhance operational efficiency, and reduce ship turnaround time.

A key thrust of the programme is the improvement of multimodal connectivity. The state government is prioritising direct, high-capacity links between ports and major transportation corridors—such as national highways, railway lines, and dedicated freight routes. These measures are expected to speed up cargo evacuation, lower logistics costs, and improve access to major industrial clusters, including auto manufacturing hubs, textile centres, and electronics zones.

Digitalisation also forms a core pillar of the expansion blueprint. Tamil Nadu plans to introduce advanced smart port technologies, including automated cargo systems, real-time tracking tools, predictive logistics platforms, and upgraded vessel traffic management systems. These innovations are aimed at creating more transparent, efficient, and future-ready port operations.

State officials note that the investment aligns with Tamil Nadu's long-term maritime strategy and its ambition to attract global supply chain players. The mega project is expected to create thousands of jobs, strengthen the state's export competitiveness, and boost key sectors such as automobiles, textiles, petrochemicals, and electronics.

Once completed, the comprehensive port expansion is set to transform Tamil Nadu into one of South Asia's most capable and strategically important maritime gateways.

Vizhinjam ICP Status Poised to Boost Kerala's Cruise Economy

The hospitality sector in Kerala is set for a strong upswing with the Union government granting Integrated Immigration Check Post (ICP) status to the Vizhinjam International Seaport—a move industry stakeholders say will reshape Thiruvananthapuram's tourism and port-driven economy.

Notified on November 20, the ICP status enables the port to handle immigration procedures for international crew, passengers, and cruise arrivals. The development is expected to sharply reduce vessel turnaround time, a critical metric in global shipping competitiveness. More importantly, it unlocks the long-awaited start of crew change operations in the state capital.

Located just 10 nautical miles from one of the world's busiest East–West shipping lanes, Vizhinjam now offers a strategic stop for crew sign-on and sign-off with minimal deviation from international routes. This advantage places it ahead of Kochi, which—despite ICP status—lies significantly off the deepwater sailing channel, deterring large vessels from entering.

For Kerala's hospitality sector, the benefits are immediate. Senior officers from global fleets—predominantly from the Philippines, India, Russia, China, and Ukraine—are expected to stay in three- to five-star hotels during crew transitions. Hoteliers anticipate a marked increase in bookings, F&B revenue, and long-stay occupancy.

In the second phase of development, Vizhinjam is also planning a cruise terminal, which could bring up to 2,000 international travellers per vessel for short city excursions. Currently, Thiruvananthapuram sees only 50,000–65,000 foreign tourists annually. Officials expect that number to surge once cruise calls and crew change operations scale up.

With no major bunkering or crew-change hub between Singapore and Fujairah, Vizhinjam's new ICP status positions it as a competitive maritime gateway—one that could significantly amplify Kerala's hospitality-led economic growth.(Source: The Hindu)

India’s Foreign Trade

Despite surge in exports, India’s trade deficit with China keeps widening

In the April-Oct 2025 period, trade deficit with China has reached $64 billion. In FY25, India's trade deficit with the country was over $99 billion

Even as Indian exports to China grew 25% during the April–October period, India’s trade deficit with China continued to widen, touching $64 billion in the first seven months of the current financial year, compared with $57.65 billion in the same period last year. In 2024–25, India’s trade deficit stood at $99.12 billion, coming close to breaching the $100-billion mark.

While the government has attributed the recent surge in exports to China to diversification of export markets in response to the impact of US tariffs, India’s overall exports to China have been on a declining trend for the past five years. India’s exports to China fell nearly 33% between 2020–21 and 2024–25, even as imports from China rose by almost 74% over the same period.

India’s exports to China have declined every year, touching an all-time low of $14.25 billion in the last financial year. In the first seven months (April–October) of the current financial year, exports have reached $10.03 billion. The surge in Chinese imports in 2024–25 was driven by rising demand for electronics, EV batteries, solar cells, and key industrial inputs. According to the Global Trade Research Initiative, China is India’s top supplier across all eight major industrial product categories.

Even as electronics remain one of India’s major export categories, the sector depends heavily on China for raw materials. Trade experts have consistently flagged that India’s internal manufacturing gaps and lack of deep industrial capabilities will continue to fuel dependence on Chinese imports. Manufacturing sectors like steel have repeatedly raised concerns over dumping by China and the impact of predatory pricing, which has burdened domestic producers.

“Several Indian businesses continue to import from China because raw materials are available at far more affordable prices. Reducing imports is not that easy,” said a government official who did not wish to be named.

Even during periods when exports to China rise, the trade deficit tends to expand as well. While exports grew by a little more than 4% between April and August this year, the deficit increased by over 15% during the same period.

To address this, the government has formed an Inter-Ministerial Panel for Import Surge Monitoring, with representation from the Department of Commerce, DGFT, Customs, and DPIIT, to keep a close watch on potential dumping by China.

However, the recent relaxation of quality control orders on items such as stainless steel, textiles, and petrochemicals has triggered fresh concerns among manufacturers about the possibility of a renewed import surge.

Miners' industry body seeks rise in customs duty on aluminium imports to 15%

The Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI) has submitted recommendations to the Ministry of Finance ahead of the Union Budget 2026–27, calling for an increase in basic customs duty on primary aluminium and downstream products to 15 per cent. The industry body said the measure is needed to counter rising imports and support domestic manufacturers.

According to FIMI, the sharp increase in aluminium inflows from surplus countries has been driven by tariff and non-tariff measures imposed globally, resulting in diversion of material to India. The federation said the domestic aluminium sector faces pressure despite adequate installed capacity.

Rising imports and concerns over scrap inflow

FIMI said nearly 55 per cent of India's aluminium demand in FY26 is projected to be met through imports. It highlighted significant inflows from China, Russia, ASEAN member states and the Middle East.

The federation also raised concerns about rising imports of aluminium scrap. Without domestic quality standards or BIS norms for scrap recycling, FIMI said India has become a major destination for low-grade material diverted from regions such as the United States, European Union, UAE and the United Kingdom.

FIMI recommended the introduction of quality standards aligned with global scrap norms, in line with the Aluminium Vision Document released by the Ministry of Mines earlier this year.

Investments and production capacity outlook

FIMI highlighted ongoing and proposed investments of more than ₹1.5 lakh crore in domestic aluminium capacity, with an additional ₹1.6 lakh crore planned. These investments aim to raise primary aluminium production to 7.2 million tonnes per annum by FY30 and about 9 million tonnes per annum by FY33.

The federation said these projects are expected to generate over eight lakh direct and indirect jobs and contribute to the government's "Viksit Bharat" agenda by supporting supply-chain development and industrial growth.

Cost structure and duty corrections

FIMI said domestic aluminium producers face high production costs due to expensive raw materials, an inverted duty structure, multiple taxes and cesses, electricity duty and logistics costs.

Compiled by Dr.Sham Choughule through various sources for private circulation

Director

AFGED
YOUR GATEWAY TO GLOBAL BUSINESS

(International Business, Logistics, and Maritime Transport)

Shamc2001@yahoo.co.in

Association for Global Economic Development-India

Corporate Office: A/111, Mittal Court, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.

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