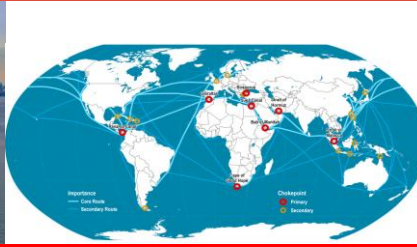


Indian Maritime News Express

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International Maritime Trade & Transport



Liner charges for ‘free’ Gulf container storage

China, France and Italy in Hormuz talks as countries refuse Trump escort demand

One required to return empties to Salalah and Sohar in Oman or Jeddah in Saudi Donald Trump’s demand for shipping escorts while China, France and India one major shipping line is offering free extended storage time for containers At least diverted in the Persian Gulf – but charging shippers for the accommodation.


At the same time, nations are reportedly negotiating with Iran to get trapped vessels out of the region and safely through the Strait of Hormuz. Hapag-Lloyd in an advisory said it’s giving Gulf shippers an extra 10 days’ free time if they have to return diverted empty containers via truck – for a flat fee of \$25.

Maersk (MAERSK-B.CO), partner with Hapag-Lloyd in the Gemini Cooperation, suspended the return of empties to Gulf countries. Importers are

A number of nations including Australia, Germany, Greece, Japan, Italy and Spain have rejected Trump’s demand that they send naval vessels to escort ships through the Strait of Homuz, the 20-mile wide waterway that guards entry and exit to the Persian Gulf. The Iran conflict has stalled tanker traffic that carries 20% of all crude oil to global markets.

“Europe has no interest in an open-ended war,” European Commission Vice President Kaja Kallas told reporters. “There was no appetite in changing the mandate of the [Red Sea] Operation Aspides for now. This is not Europe’s war, but Europe’s interests are directly at stake.”Arabia. There are exceptions – for a charge of as much as \$3,000 per box.have rejected President

The International Maritime Organization is meeting March 18-19 to discuss the situation. It said the war has trapped 20,000 mariners, cruise passengers and maritime workers in the Gulf.(Source: American Shipper Daily)



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OOCL imposes emergency bunker surcharge amid Hormuz risk



"The EBS will be monitored and reviewed every 14 days to Orient Overseas Container Line Ltd. (OOCL) will introduce a temporary Emergency Bunker Surcharge (EBS) as disruption to fuel flows through the Strait of Hormuz tightens global bunker availability and raises procurement costs.

The carrier is moving to recover fuel expenses that sit outside its existing **Fuel Cost Recovery (FCR)** and **Low Sulphur Adjustment (LSA)** mechanisms, signalling that current frameworks are no longer sufficient under present market conditions.

For shipments outside FMC scope, the EBS will take effect from 23 March 2026 (shipment rate date), subject to regulatory approval. For shipments within FMC scope, implementation will follow from 13 April 2026 (shipment rate date).

A representative from **OOCL** said: "The EBS set out in this notice is valid until further notice (unless otherwise specified) and governed by and subject to carrier's prevailing tariff(s)."ensure it remains aligned with prevailing fuel availability and cost conditions."

This temporary EBS follows [OOCL's earlier move to keep its vessels clear of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz amid escalating regional tensions and tightening maritime restrictions](#), underlining how quickly operational risk is translating into cost pressure across liner networks.(Source: Port Technology)





Iran Asks India To Release Seized Ships In Talks Over Hormuz Passage: Report



Indian authorities seized the three Iran-linked tankers near Indian waters, alleging they had concealed or altered their identities.

As part of talks seeking the safe passage of Indian-flagged or Iran has asked India to release three tankers seized in February India-bound vessels out of the Gulf via the Strait of Hormuz, three sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

Indian authorities seized the three Iran-linked tankers near Indian waters, alleging they had concealed or altered their identities and were involved in illegal ship-to-ship transfers at sea. Tehran has also sought supplies of certain medicines and medical equipment, according to one of the sources, an Iranian official.

Iran's ambassador to New Delhi met Indian foreign ministry officials on Monday to discuss the issue, the source said. The sources declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter.

India's foreign ministry, the Iranian embassy in New Delhi, and Iran's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Iran recently allowed two Indian liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tankers to pass through the strait, according to Indian officials, and one of them returned to western India on Monday. Traffic has ground to a near standstill on either side of the strait since the beginning of the war in Iran.

Asked about negotiations to ensure passage for Indian vessels, foreign ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Monday that recent movements reflected a "history of engagement, of dealing with each other". He told a daily news briefing that nothing was being exchanged.



This Iranionship was arrested in India

Since the start of U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran in late February, Tehran has responded with attacks across the region including on ships attempting to transit the Strait of Hormuz, killing three Indian sailors and leaving one missing.

India said on Monday that at least 22 Indian-flagged vessels and 611 Indian seafarers remained in the Gulf.

Indian source said six of the vessels were loaded with LPG and the country was keen for their passage first to ease a shortage of the cooking fuel. About 90% of India's total LPG imports come from the Gulf. Iranian-Linked Tankers Anchored Off Mumbai

Indian authorities seized the tankers Asphalt Star, Al Jafzia and Stellar Ruby, alleging they had concealed or altered their identity and movements, and were involved in illegal ship-to-ship transfers.

Stellar Ruby is Iranian-flagged, while the other two vessels are flagged to Nicaragua and Mali. A police complaint filed by the Indian Coast Guard on February 15, and seen by Reuters, said Asphalt Star was involved in the smuggling of heavy fuel oil that was transferred to Al Jafzia and bitumen to Stellar Ruby. All three are currently docked off Mumbai.

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Stellar Ruby is Iranian-flagged, while the other two vessels are flagged to Nicaragua and Mali. Around the time of the seizure, Iranian state media cited the National Iranian Oil Company as saying that the three tankers seized had no connection to the company.

ugwinder Singh Brar, whom the United States accuses of running a shipping fleet that helps transport Iranian oil, said he was a consultant for all three ships seized by India and that they had done nothing wrong.

"We were transporting bitumen, and there is nothing illegal in doing this. My ships have been there for 40 days, and I have faced losses," he told Reuters by phone, adding he was not aware of any negotiations over the tankers.(Source: NDTV)

Indian tanker was loading when Fujairah terminal was attacked



India-flagged crude oil tanker Jag Laadki, which was loading oil at the UAE's Fujairah port on Saturday when the [oil terminal there came under attack](#), safely set sail for India from the port on Sunday morning, the government said Sunday. Jag Laadki is carrying around 80,800 tonnes of Murban crude — a crude grade produced by the UAE — and the tanker as well as all Indian seafarers on board are safe. According to ship databases, Jag Laadki was built in 2010 and is currently owned and operated by Mumbai-based Great Eastern Shipping Company.

The war in West Asia has heavily disrupted vessel movements in the region from where a sizable chunk of global energy supplies originate. While the Fujairah port is in the Gulf of Oman and ships coming from there to India don't need to cross the perilous waters of the Strait of Hormuz, the incident highlights the threat to merchant vessel safety in other parts of the region as well.

"On 14 March 2026, while the Indian-flag vessel Jag Laadki was loading crude oil at the Fujairah Single Point Mooring, the Fujairah oil terminal was attacked. The vessel sailed safely from Fujairah at 1030 hrs IST today carrying about 80,800 MT of Murban crude oil and is bound for India. The vessel and all Indian seafarers onboard are safe," the government said in a release. **(Source: Indian Express)**



Central Asia Logistics Sector

CMA CGM deploys multimodal routes to bypass Strait of Hormuz



CMA CGM Group is mobilising alternative logistics solutions to maintain Middle East trade flows in response to maritime restrictions in the Strait of Hormuz and regional tensions.

According to the French carrier, safety for crews and employees remains its top priority, while its integrated maritime, rail, and road capabilities are leveraged to ensure supply chain fluidity despite navigation constraints.

Ports south of the Strait, **Khor Fakkan, Fujairah, and Sohar**, serve as key entry points for cargo bound for the Gulf.

From these hubs, **CMA CGM** operates multimodal corridors to major UAE centres including **Khalifa, Jebel Ali, and Sharjah**, as well as to neighbouring countries via regional land and feeder maritime transport.

The **Port of Jeddah** on the Red Sea provides a bypass to Hormuz. CMA CGM deploys road corridors, with or without maritime connections, to serve **Saudi Arabia (Dammam), the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Iraq**, while also linking cargo flows to the **Mediterranean** and **Asia** without exposure to the Strait.

Omani ports offer a third bypass option, enabling road connections to the **UAE** and feeder links to the **Upper Gulf**.

This multimodal setup provides a reliable alternative for regional and cross-border flows, ensuring resilience for international trade.

INTERMODAL

ASIA / **2026**

22-24 April, Shanghai

India-Iran talks on 22 safe Hormuz passage for ships; 611 seafarers in Gulf



India is in touch with Iranian authorities to arrange the safe passage of almost 22 Indian-flagged merchant vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, which has effectively been closed by the Iranian forces These ships have 611 Indian seafarers onboard

"All Indian seafarers in the Persian Gulf area are safe. No incident has been reported in the last 24 hours, and we are keeping a continuous watch on the situation," Sinha said, adding that, "We are in touch with each vessel and its crew. 22 Indian-flagged vessels, as was reported on Saturday, with 611 Indian seafarers remain in the west of the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf."

Two Indian-flag LPG carriers crossed the Strait of Hormuz on March 14 carrying about 92,712 MT of LPG. **because of the conflict with Israel and the US.**

Rajesh Kumar Sinha, special secretary, ministry of ports, shipping & waterways, told Monday in a briefing that Indian authorities are closely monitoring 22 Indian-flagged vessels with Indian seafarers currently located to the west of the Strait of Hormuz., and the government remains in constant communication with each vessel and its crew.

ports had indicated that the first LPG carrier, which sailed from the Persian Gulf, crossed the Strait of Hormuz and headed towards India.

The vessel successfully crossed the strategically important Strait of Hormuz, a major global shipping route currently under close monitoring due to rising tensions in the region. Officials said all necessary arrangements have been made at the port to ensure that there is no delay in the discharge of cargo.

Government officials emphasised that the arrangements were made in advance so that there would be no disruption or delay in handling the shipment.

These preparations are aimed at ensuring that the cargo is discharged quickly and efficiently once the vessel reaches the port.

The second LPG carrier is expected to reach an India port early today morning.

Another Indian-flagged ship, carrying crude oil, sailed from the UAE on March 14 and is safely enroute to India. The vessel and all Indian seafarers onboard are reported safe.



Since activation of the DG Shipping Control Room, 3,030 phone calls and about 5,497 emails have been handled from seafarers, their families and maritime stakeholders seeking assistance, including over 310 calls and 597 emails in the past 48 hours.

DG Shipping has facilitated the safe repatriation of 286 Indian seafarers from the Gulf region so far, including 33 repatriations in the past 48 hours, the ministry of petroleum & natural gas said on Monday.

Authorities said they will continue to monitor developments and ensure the safety of Indian vessels and maritime personnel in the region.

The Directorate General of Shipping continues to monitor the situation in coordination with ship owners, RPSL agencies and Indian Missions.

“External affairs minister and the foreign minister of Iran have had three conversations in recent days. The last one discussed issues pertaining to safety of shipping and India’s energy security. Beyond that, it would be premature for me to say anything,” India’s external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told a weekly media briefing.

Iran’s foreign ministry said in a statement on the March 11 phone call between Jaishankar and Araghchi that the two sides had discussed the “consequences” of the war on the security of shipping and vessel traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

“Referring to Iran’s principled approach to safeguarding shipping security in the Persian Gulf, [Araghchi] reminded that the insecure situation and problems arising for shipping in the Persian Gulf are a result of the aggressive and destabilising actions of the United States, and the international community must hold the US accountable for this situation,” the statement reads.

Meanwhile, authorities in India said LPG supply continues to be monitored in view of the prevailing geopolitical situation.



Indian Port Sector

Congress questions Centre's stance on Chabahar Port

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh accuses Modi Government of abandoning it.



Questioning the Centre's stance on the Chabahar Port project in Iran, Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh on Sunday said that "continuity in governance" is an "essential reality" that the Narendra Modi Government refuses to acknowledge, and termed the apparent disengagement from the project a strategic setback to India's outreach in Central Asia.

In a post on X, he asked, "Does this mean that India has exited, or that its Ramesh's investment time commitments for the being have been fulfilled?"

Chabahar, which is about 170 km west of Pakistan's Gwadar port built by China, is now not on the horizon. This is a second strategic setback to India's Central Asian diplomacy, coming as it does after India's closure of its air force base in Ayni near Dushanbe in Tajikistan," Mr. Ramesh said. remarks come amid the absence of any allocation for the Chabahar Port in the 2026-27 Union Budget

investments in Chabahar in the late 1990s as part of a broader IndiaRecalling India's engagement with the project, he said New Delhi began exploring –Afghanistan–Iran cooperation strategy. The project gained renewed momentum after then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh attended the 16th Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Tehran.

According to Mr. Ramesh, the Union Cabinet approved an initial investment of \$115 million for the project in May 2013. He said this decision was taken even as India was implementing the India–U.S. civil nuclear agreement signed in 2008—an example, he said, of a balanced and strategic foreign policy approach.

The Congress leader also alleged that after coming to power in 2014, the Modi government "repackaged" the Chabahar initiative and projected it as part of the Prime Minister's own vision without adequately acknowledging the UPA Government's foundational role.

US waives shipping regulation to ease fuel, fertilizer deliveries

The Trump administration on Wednesday announced a 60-day waiver of Jones Act shipping regulations to help ease deliveries of fuel and fertilizer to combat rising prices and supply disruptions caused by the conflict in Iran.

"President Trump's decision to issue a 60-day Jones Act waiver is just another step to mitigate the short-term disruptions to the oil market as the U.S. military continues meeting the objectives of Operation Epic Fury," White House spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said.

"This action will allow vital resources like oil, natural gas, fertilizer, and coal to flow freely to U.S. ports for sixty days, and the Administration remains committed to continuing to strengthen our critical supply chains," she said.

High energy prices carry significant political risks for President Donald Trump and fellow Republicans, who have long argued that their policies would keep fuel affordable for American consumers.

U.S. gasoline prices have surged since the start of U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran on February 28 as the conflict effectively closes the Strait of Hormuz, the outlet for around a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas supplies.

The conflict has also disrupted fertilizer supplies, which is a major concern for U.S. agricultural interests. Under the Jones Act, goods shipped between U.S. ports must be carried on vessels that are U.S.-built, U.S.-flagged and mostly U.S.-owned.

The requirement sharply limits the number of tankers available for domestic shipments, but is supported by maritime industry unions.

Waiving the rule temporarily would allow foreign ships to carry cargoes between U.S. ports, potentially lowering shipping costs and speeding deliveries. Analysts have said, however, that the impact on pump prices will likely be minimal.

(Reuters Reporting by Jarrett Renshaw, Gram Slattery and Jonathan Saul, editing by Richard Valdmanis and Chizu Nomiya)



Port of Nansha Leads South China Growth as Shippers Prioritize Lower-Risk Gateways

Foreign Trade

More than 250 containers of French apples blocked due to conflict in the Middle East

The conflict in the Middle East and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic gateway for world trade, are causing major disruption to trade flows. As a result, a number of food shipments have come to a standstill, as is the case with French apples. More than 250 containers, or around 5,000 tons of apples bound for the Middle East (including Dubai and some Asian markets), are currently stuck at sea, with an estimated value of between 7 and 8 million euros [8 and 9.2 million USD].

Added to this situation are the numerous costs applied by shipping companies, linked to the risk of war, including for containers already on the water. "This generates almost €900,000 [1,032,425 USD] in additional costs for France as a whole," explains Sandrine Gaborieau. Added to these extra costs is the question of insurance: war risk cover either disappears or becomes extremely costly.

Faced with these constraints, operators are trying to find alternatives. "Exporters are currently looking at ways to transport their containers, notably via the Cape of Good Hope, but this adds around ten days for journeys to Asian destinations," explains Sandrine Gaborieau.

These price levels have a direct impact on consumption. "Prices are obviously having an impact on consumption, and the war in the Middle East is also causing concern. With the expected rise in energy prices, households will have to make new trade-offs in their spending, to the detriment of fresh produce, which is often used as an adjustment variable."

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



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