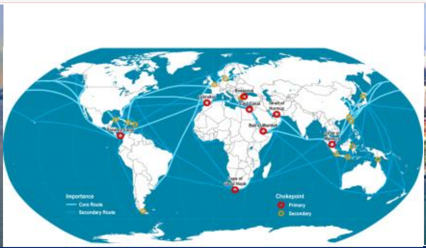
ASSOCIATION FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Asian Maritime News Express



15th June 26 Mumbai-India

Global Maritime Trade & Transport

US, Iran deal; Strait of Hormuz to reopen after 19 June signing

WASHINGTON Mon, 15 Jun 26-The United States and Iran have announced an agreement aimed at ending months of conflict and paving the way for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping route for global energy supplies, although key details of the accord remain unclear.

US President Donald Trump said the agreement had been completed and would be formally signed in Switzerland on Friday. He said the accord would lead to the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and the lifting of the US naval blockade on Iranian ports.

"The Deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran is now complete," Trump said in a post on Truth Social on Sunday. "With the opening of the Strait upon the signing of the Deal on Friday, oil will flow on both ends again for the Region, and the World."

The announcement came shortly after Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, whose government helped mediate negotiations between Washington and Tehran, said a deal had been reached.

Sharif said the memorandum of understanding provides for the immediate and permanent cessation of military operations on all fronts, including Lebanon, an issue that had complicated negotiations amid continued hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah.

Iran also signalled its support for the agreement. In a statement, the secretariat of Iran's Supreme National Security Council said military operations on all fronts, including Lebanon, would end permanently beginning Monday night.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said a broader agreement covering sanctions relief and other outstanding issues would be negotiated during a 60-day ceasefire period following the signing ceremony.

Despite the apparent breakthrough, Washington and Tehran have offered differing accounts of the next steps. Gharibabadi said future negotiations would depend on the United States first releasing billions of dollars in Iranian funds frozen abroad.

A US official rejected that assertion, saying no frozen assets would be released before Iran fulfilled its commitments under the agreement. "This is a pay-for-performance deal and no frozen funds will be released without the Iranians implementing their commitments," the official said.

The accord is also expected to result in the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, through which a significant share of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas shipments pass. Trump said he had authorised the removal of the US naval blockade on Iranian ports and described the reopening of the waterway as a key outcome of the agreement.(**Source: Trade Arabia)**

The global port race: Breakthrough hubs challenging maritime trade

While East Asian logistics gateways frequently capture the top headlines for sheer cargo volume, the true story of modern maritime logistics is the rapid decentralization of global shipping efficiency. As international corporations actively diversify their manufacturing networks, alternative trade gateways across the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe are stepping up to claim world-class status.

According to the comprehensive global data published in **The Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) 2025** by the **World Bank Group** and **S&P Global Market Intelligence**, several key international hubs are successfully implementing operational reforms. By examining the top performers and the fastest-rising container ports outside of China, we can map out the new corridors of global supply chain power.

Elite Transshipment Hubs: Shaking Up the Global Top Ten

The 2025 index proves that high efficiency is achievable in any region when a port leverages its geographical positioning with aggressive infrastructure investments. Outside of China, two specific gateways have cemented their status as elite global benchmarks.

The Salalah Powerhouse
Strategically situated on the Arabian Sea, the **Port of Salalah (Oman)** secured the **No. 3** position on the global leaderboard with a remarkable CPPI score of 135.9. Salalah serves as a massive transshipment junction connecting East-West trade lanes, allowing ultra-large container vessels to exchange cargo seamlessly without deviating from core global shipping paths.

The Mediterranean Gatekeeper
Morocco’s flagship maritime complex, **Tanger Med**, claimed the **No. 6** spot globally with an efficiency score of 134. Actively bridging the European and African continents, Tanger Med’s state-of-the-art automated terminals minimize vessel waiting times, outperforming the vast majority of traditional, long-established European gateways.Other prominent international hubs featured prominently in the global top tier include **Hamad Port (Qatar)** at No. 8, **Kobe (Japan)** at No. 10, and **Cai Mep (Viet Nam)** holding the No. 11 spot.(Source:Container News)

3 dead following vessel collision off Singapore's Pasir Panjang TML

Three people were killed as a result of a collision between two vessels near the Pasir Panjang Terminal in Singapore on Friday, June 12.

The incident occurred at around 09:30 local time when a supply boat collided with a landing craft.

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), the Singapore Police Coast Guard (PCG), and the Singapore Civil Defence Force's Marine Division immediately deployed vessels to the incident site and commenced search and rescue (SAR) operations.

The PCG has since recovered three bodies from the surrounding waters. The MPA said the bodies are believed to be those of the deceased crewmembers of the sunken supply boat.

SAR operations, including dive operations, are ongoing to determine if there are other crewmembers from the supply boat who are still missing. The MPA added that the landing craft has remained afloat with no reported injuries on board.

The MPA has assured that port operations have not been affected and that navigational broadcasts have been issued advising vessels to keep clear of the incident area.Investigations into the incident are ongoing.(**Source" BAIRD Maritime News)**

Taiwan Ministry announces ports upgrade plan

The upgrades would fund 34 projects at international ports and 73 projects at domestic ports to increase Taiwan's competitiveness in trade and tourism, the ministry said

The Ministry of Transportation and Communications yesterday unveiled a NT$57.2 billion (US$1.81 billion) plan to upgrade 11 Taiwanese sea ports to boost trade and tourism over the next five years.

The international and domestic port commercial management strategy and development plan would invest NT$47.7 billion in the nation's seven international ports and NT$9.5 billion in its four domestic ports, Department of Navigation and Aviation Director Han Chen-hua (韓振華) said.

The part of the budget allotted to international ports would fund 34 projects at the ports of Keelung, Taipei, Taichung, Anping, Suao and Hualien, he said.

The share of the budget allotted to domestic ports would fund 73 projects at the ports of Budai, Penghu, Kimen and Matsu, he said.

The plan is aimed at increasing the competitiveness of Taiwanese ports in international maritime trade and upgrading their facilities to align with global port and navigation sustainability efforts, the ministry said.

Taiwan needs to upgrade the port infrastructure to service ships with liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other novel fuels if the nation wants business from shipping entities that engage in sustainable practices, it said.

The plan's implementation would allow Taiwan to capitalize on its geographical position as a key link in global supply chains, it said.

Upgrades to the international ports revolve around sustainability, smart technology and adding to their versatility and value, the department said.

The capacity of the Port of Kaohsiung's Container Terminal No. 3 and No. 5 would respectively be increased to 18,000 twenty-foot-equivalent units (TEU) by next year and 24,000 TEU by 2029, it said.

The ministry is to subsidize the tourism industry in areas surrounding the Port of Keelung to invigorate the business opportunities brought about by its role as a node for cruise liners, the department said.

This would involve using a private-sector contractor to build and operate a mall on the former site of the Weihai Naval Base (威海營區), and establish a recreational area near Wharf 4 and Wharf 5 at the East Coast Area of the port, it said.

The Port of Taipei, Port of Taichung and Port of Kaohsiung are to be furnished with facilities for biofuels, LNG and hydrogen and ammonia-based energy sources, it said. Smart technology would be introduced to increase operational efficiency at those ports, it said.

The upgrade aims to grow the international ports' cargo volume to 15.5 million TEU, and passenger volume to 1.4 million people annually by 2031, it added. The plan would fund projects aimed at improving the ferry service quality and tourism potential of domestic ports, it said.

Spare land made available by the relocation of military bases near the Port of Penghu would be used to build a multi-purpose commercial zone featuring shops, restaurants, hotels and cultural and recreational activities, it said.

Floating docks for commercial ferries are to be built at the Port of Penghu and Port of Matsu, while cargo facilities would be expanded at the Port of Kinmen, Port of Penghu and Port of Budai, the department said.

For domestic ports, the funding aims to increase cargo volume to 5.3 million tonnes and passenger volume to 5.3 million people a year by 2031, it said.

In related news, Taoyuan International Airport Corp (TIAC) said yesterday that Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport is to suspend its automated Skytrain service connecting Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 from July 1 to facilitate connection works for the upcoming Terminal 3.

Passengers and staff who need to travel between the two terminals after the suspension can instead use the Taoyuan MRT or the airport's 24-hour shuttle bus service, TIAC said.

The Taoyuan MRT Airport Line directly links the two terminals, while the shuttle buses are to operate around the clock, it added.(**Source: Taipei Times)**

Major Port Cooperation Agreement Links Barcelona and Shanghai

The Ports of Barcelona and Shanghai have formalized a strategic cooperation agreement aimed at strengthening maritime connectivity, promoting trade growth, and enhancing collaboration across logistics and port operations.

The partnership marks a significant step in deepening ties between two of the world's most important maritime gateways. Under the agreement, both ports will work together on a range of initiatives, including the exchange of best practices, digital transformation, sustainability projects, and operational efficiency improvements.

The collaboration is also expected to support stronger supply chain integration between Europe and Asia, facilitating smoother cargo flows and improved logistics services. Port officials highlighted the importance of international cooperation in addressing evolving challenges facing the maritime industry, including supply chain resilience, decarbonization, and the adoption of advanced technologies.

Gemini shifts 18,000 TEU ships to Asia-Mediterranean trade

Gemini Cooperation has cut capacity on Asia-North Europe and redeployed larger ships into the Asia-Mediterranean trade, where its market share is projected to rise to 29.7% by July 2026, according to Sea-Intelligence's Sunday Spotlight issue 768.

The move marks a clear reallocation of East-West vessel deployment rather than a uniform network expansion. On Asia-North Europe, Gemini's market share fell from 25.7% in mid-May to 22.5% by June 2026 after a structural downgrade of the AE3/NE3 service.

Following a two-week blanking in early June, the service resumed with 14,000 TEU to 15,000 TEU vessels replacing 18,000+ TEU ships. The change cut weekly deployed capacity on the lane by about 5,500 TEU. Gemini moved in the opposite direction on Asia-Mediterranean. Its capacity share is projected to rise from a 23.4% baseline to 29.7% by July 2026 after changes made in the second quarter of 2026.

The shift included the launch of a fourth loop, AE19/SE4, using 14,000 TEU ships, and an upgrade of the AE15/SE3 service from an average 13,100 TEU to 18,400 TEU.

Sea-Intelligence's data shows the 18,000 TEU ships removed from Asia-North Europe were redeployed into the Asia-Mediterranean upgrade. The switch added a net 22,402 TEU of weekly capacity to the Mediterranean trade and gave Gemini a 28.1% capacity market share on the lane.

The strategy puts Gemini's emphasis on a denser Asia-Mediterranean network, while Ocean Alliance continues to expand capacity across major trade lanes.

Sea-Intelligence is the publisher of Sunday Spotlight, a container shipping market analysis series covering liner capacity, vessel deployment and network changes.

Cai Mep, Hai Phong ranked among best performing container ports

According to the 2025 Container Port Performance Index (CPPI), jointly published by the World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence, Cai Mep and Hai Phong both scored 122 points, ranking 11th and 13th globally, respectively.

The result places Vietnam's two major seaports among the world's most efficient container ports, alongside leading maritime hubs such as such as Fuzhou (China), Dalian (China), Salalah (Oman), Ma Wan (China), Xichuan (China), Tanger Med (Morocco), Ningbo (China), Hamad (Qatar), Hong Kong (China) and Kobe (Japan).

Unlike rankings based primarily on cargo throughput or port size, the CPPI measures operational efficiency. The index evaluates factors such as vessel turnaround time, cargo handling speed, terminal productivity and overall port performance – the criteria that have become increasingly important for global shipping lines and logistics operators.

China's ports are by far the most efficient in the world: World Bank

Seven Chinese ports including Hong Kong ranked among the world's top 10 in the report, which tracks how quickly trade hubs process ships

China's ports continued to dominate global efficiency rankings in 2025, with seven Chinese trade hubs placing in the top 10, according to a study by the World Bank and S&P Global released on Wednesday.

The latest edition of the annual report comes at a time when ports are playing a more vital role in the global economy than ever, as facilities strive to handle intense disruptions to global supply chains amid the aftermath of the Red Sea crisis and the ongoing fallout from the US-Israel war on Iran.

Launched in 2020, the Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) compares the efficiency of more than 400 ports around the world by measuring how long vessels spend in each trade hub on average, as a longer processing time indicates a higher chance of delays and supply bottlenecks.

China's ports once again led the way in terms of efficiency last year, with Fuzhou in the southeastern Fujian province claiming top spot, followed by Dalian in northeastern China in second place and Oman's Salalah port in third. Hong Kong placed ninth.

Ports in East and South Asia remain world-leading due to a range of factors, including the regions' strong focus on exports, intense inter-port competition, and sustained investment in infrastructure, according to the report.

Ningbo in China's eastern Zhejiang province provided a good example of how Asia's ports had been able to navigate fluctuating global supply chain stresses, with the facility able to maintain stable ship turnaround times due to its robust capacity, automation and operational discipline, the report said.(Source: South China Morning Post)

Asian Logistics Sector

Thailand active with Land Bridge mega-project to boost regional logistics

Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn said the project is a key component of the Southern Economic Corridor and a strategic logistics network linking Thailand's transport system with international freight routes.

Bangkok (VNA) – The Thai government is moving ahead with the Land Bridge project, one of the country's largest infrastructure mega-projects, to enhance Thailand's logistics capabilities, strengthen connectivity between the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea, and position the country as a key link in global trade routes.

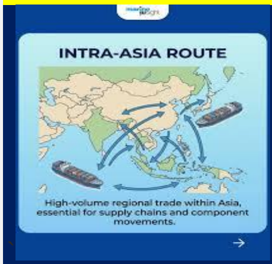
In a statement on June 5, Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn said the project is a key component of the Southern Economic Corridor and a strategic logistics network linking Thailand's transport system with international freight routes.

According to the official, claims that the government would have to spend nearly 1 trillion THB (30.6 billion USD) on the project are inaccurate. He affirmed that most construction and operating costs would be borne by the private sector through a public-private partnership model, while state funding would mainly be used for land acquisition.

The government said it has been gradually preparing supporting infrastructure through the development of a double-track railway network. The double-track railway from Bangkok to Chumphon has already been completed while the fiscal 2027 budget plan includes investment in sections linking Chumphon with Surat Thani, Hat Yai and the Malaysian border, creating a continuous double-track railway corridor for domestic and cross-border cargo transport.

According to Thai officials, the latest version of the project aims not only to connect the eastern and western coasts of southern Thailand but also to establish a large-scale north-south logistics corridor. Goods, particularly containers from southern China, could be transported by rail through Nong Khai, Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai before being transferred via the Land Bridge for onward maritime shipment to the Middle East and Europe.

In addition, Bangkok expects the project to help the country regain a larger share of regional freight transport. Currently, around 300,000 containers from southern Thailand are shipped annually through Penang port in Malaysia. If successfully implemented, the project could reduce Thailand's reliance on the Malaysian port and enable Ranong Port to serve as a hub for direct exports to China and India./.



Intra- Asian Trade

Korean oriental melon exports to Japan rise 39%

Japan's fruit market is centered on products such as peaches and watermelons in summer, and mandarins, strawberries, apples, grapes, and melons in autumn and winter. Within this market, Korean oriental melon, or chamoe, remains a relatively unfamiliar product for many Japanese consumers, although availability in major retail chains has increased in recent years.

Marketed in Japan as Chame (チャメ), Korean oriental melon has recorded growth in exports. Last year, exports to Japan reached 271 tons and US$1.055 million, up 39.0 per cent and 31.4 per cent, respectively, from the previous year. Growth continued in 2026, with exports through April reaching 99 tons and US$492,700, up 37.1 per cent and 32.2 per cent, respectively, compared with the same period last year.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) and the Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation (aT) have selected Korean oriental melon as a strategic export item for the Japanese market in 2026 and launched promotional activities across Japan.

From late May through the end of July, tasting and promotional events are being held at approximately 400 retail stores across Japan. Dedicated displays and sampling areas have been established at retail chains including AEON Retail, Don Quijote, and Makiya.

Promotional activities focus on the fruit's texture, taste, and the presence of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA). The product is registered as a Foods with Function Claims (FFC) product with Japan's Consumer Affairs Agency. Industry sources note that fresh produce accounts for less than 3 per cent of registered FFC products in Japan.

According to aT, Japan remains the largest export destination for Korean oriental melon, with marketing efforts focused on expanding consumer awareness and supporting further export growth. (Source: The Chosun Daily / Maeil Business)

Thailand promotes GI fruit exports in China

Thailand's Department of Intellectual Property (DIP), under the Ministry of Commerce, led a trade mission to Shanghai, China, aimed at expanding export opportunities and improving market access for geographical indication (GI) agricultural products.

As part of the visit, Thai producers participated in a business matching event with more than 16 Chinese fruit importers at Huizhan Fruit Wholesale Market, a distribution centre in Eastern China with annual trade exceeding US$3.06 billion.

During the mission, producers of Sisaket Volcano Durian signed a memorandum of understanding with Huizhan Market covering the advance purchase of 500 tons of durian. The delegation also promoted GI products from six provinces in Thailand.

Thailand currently has more than 260 registered GI products, generating over US$3.56 billion in economic value. Fruit accounts for approximately 45% of all registered GI products. According to the department, demand in China for products with quality, safety, and traceability attributes continues to support opportunities for Thailand's GI sector.

The delegation also met with Huawei Technologies to discuss the use of artificial intelligence, cloud systems, and digital technologies in intellectual property administration. Discussions focused on trademark and patent examination processes, as well as Huawei's approach to intellectual property management and innovation.

According to the information presented during the visit, Huawei allocates 21.8% of its annual revenue to research and development, employs more than 114,000 research and development personnel, and holds over 165,000 patents worldwide. Source: Pattaya Mail

New Zealand gains 32,500-ton apple quota in India

New Zealand's horticulture sector have expressed support for the recently signed FTA with India during the Fieldays agricultural event held in Hamilton from June 10 to 13.

According to Horticulture New Zealand, the agreement is expected to provide opportunities for sectors including **kiwifruit, apples, persimmons, and avocados** through lower tariffs and expanded market access.

India is already one of the top export destinations for New Zealand apples and pears. Under the agreement, the current 50% tariff on apples will be reduced to 25% for 32,500 tons from the first day of implementation, increasing to 45,000 tons over six years. Danielle Adsett, chief executive of New Zealand Apples and Pears, said exports to India have been increasing since the announcement of the agreement.

The kiwifruit sector is also expected to benefit. Under the agreement, the 33 per cent tariff on kiwifruit will be eliminated for 6,250 tons from day one, with the quota increasing to 15,000 tons over six years. Exports above the quota will receive a 50 per cent tariff reduction to 16.5 per cent once the agreement comes into force.

In addition to tariff concessions, New Zealand and India have agreed to establish Centres of Excellence focused on kiwifruit, apples, and honey. These centres will support grower training, orchard management, postharvest practices, supply chains, and food safety.

Industry representatives said the centres are intended to support Indian production while providing market access opportunities for New Zealand exporters through tariff-rate quotas, minimum import prices, and seasonal import arrangements.

Michael Fox of Zespri said New Zealand and India have complementary production seasons. He noted that New Zealand will focus on sharing expertise related to production and supply chain performance while supporting Indian growers of green kiwifruit varieties.

The agreement has also attracted attention from other export sectors. Representatives from New Zealand's timber industry reported increased interest from Indian buyers following the signing of the deal.

India's recently appointed High Commissioner to New Zealand, Muanpuii Saiawi, said future participation in Fieldays is planned as both countries continue to develop their trade relationship. (Source: Indian Newslink/Fresh Plaza)

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

AFGED
YOUR GATEWAY TO GLOBAL BUSINESS

Dr. Sham Choughule. Shamc2001@yahoo.co.in

Director (International Business, Logistics, and Maritime Transport)

Association for Global Economic Development-India

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

15th June 2026