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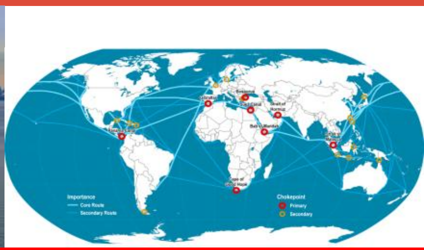

30 India-Bound Ships Cross Strait Of Hormuz As Gulf Shipping Recovers, 26 Vessels Still Await Transit

Thirty India-bound ships have safely crossed the Strait of Hormuz, while another 26 vessels linked to India are still waiting to pass through the strategic waterway, according to shipping ministry sources.

The movement comes as commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has started improving after the recent US-Iran memorandum of understanding (MoU).

The strait is one of the world's busiest shipping routes, with nearly one-fifth of global oil and LNG supplies passing through it.

Sources told The Times of India that the 30 vessels have either reached or are on their way to Indian ports. Of these, 15 were carrying liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and liquefied natural gas (LNG), eight were transporting bulk cargo and seven were crude oil tankers. Officials said shipping activity has increased in recent days. Between March 1 and June 17, 19 India-bound ships crossed the Strait of Hormuz. After the US-Iran MoU was signed, another 11 vessels completed the transit safely.
According to shipping ministry sources, the 26 vessels still waiting in the Persian Gulf include both Indian-flagged ships and foreign-flagged vessels carrying cargo for India.

Indian Shipping Industry

SCI Tanker MT Desh Suraksha Safely Transits Strait of Hormuz

India's state-owned Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) has successfully navigated its tanker MT Desh Suraksha through the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, marking a significant operational milestone amid ongoing regional tensions.

The vessel's safe passage comes during the current phase of heightened security concerns in the region, with SCI becoming the first Indian shipping company to resume vessel transits through the Strait of Hormuz following the onset of the crisis.

The achievement highlights the company's commitment to maintaining the continuity of India's maritime trade despite challenging operating conditions. Adding symbolic significance to the voyage, MT Desh Suraksha began its transit on the eve of the Day of the Seafarer, paying tribute to the courage, resilience, and professionalism of Indian seafarers serving aboard merchant vessels in high-risk waters.

Shipping from India to North Europe and Mediterranean Sea? A Heavy Lift Surcharge is going into effect on 15 July.

A Heavy Lift Surcharge from India to North Europe and Mediterranean Sea is coming up. This Heavy Lift Surcharge is applicable for all container types for all sailings commencing on **July 15, 2026** until further notice. The details of this surcharge are listed below:

- USD 250 per 20' dry container
  - Between 18.001 and 23.000 kilograms container gross weight (VGM)
- USD 500 per 20' dry container
  - Above 23.001 kilograms container gross weight (VGM)

The Ocean Tariff rates as well as Bunker-related surcharges, Security-related surcharges, Terminal Handling Charges (THCs) remain as announced and can be found **here** and are valid until further notice. Please keep in mind that local and contingency charges may also apply.

India loses key Bangladesh port project to China. Should Delhi be concerned?

Bangladesh has signed a deal with China to build an economic zone near Mongla Port on land once allotted to India. The move deepens Dhaka's engagement with Beijing, while raising India's strategic concerns in the Bay of Bengal.

Amid turbulence in ties between India and Bangladesh, China seems to be stepping into that vacuum. Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, who chose China for his first foreign visit, has signed an agreement with a Chinese state-owned company to develop an economic zone near the strategic Mongla Port, which sits close to India's eastern coastline in the Bay of Bengal. Significantly, the land was originally earmarked for an Indian economic zone, but was delisted by the Muhammad Yunus regime as ties hit rock bottom.

Mongla, Bangladesh's second-largest and second-busiest seaport after Chittagong, is just 188 km from Kolkata and sits close to the Sunderbans. The economic zone will be developed by China on 110 acres of land adjacent to Mongla Port in Bagerhat, according to a report in Bangladesh's Business Standard. China plans to set up manufacturing industries, warehouses and storage facilities in the zone.

WHY INDIA SHOULD BE CONCERNED?

For India, the concern is two-fold. First, a strategically key project has slipped out of its hands. Secondly, it opens the door for a larger Chinese presence in the Bay of Bengal and the wider Indian Ocean region.

Even though investment in a port project does not automatically mean military access, China has previously been accused of using overseas ports where it has invested for intelligence gathering and surveillance activities.

The agreement signals a major policy shift by Bangladesh. It risks kicking off a strategic contest between India and China in a region that Delhi has traditionally viewed as its sphere of influence and backyard.

Over the years, China has been actively expanding its influence across the Indian Ocean as part of its Maritime Silk Road initiative. It has invested heavily in ports from Gwadar in Pakistan to Djibouti in East Africa. In all, Chinese firms are involved in 17 Indian Ocean port projects.

A major reason is energy security. China is the world's largest crude oil importer. About 80% of China's energy imports pass through the Indian Ocean. This underscores the strategic importance of ports like Mongla for China.

HOW PORT PROJECT SLIPPED OUT OF INDIA'S HANDS?

India had recognised the importance of the Mongla Port way early. It was in 2015, during the tenure of Sheikh Hasina, that Bangladesh and India signed an MoU to develop two economic zones - one in Mongla and the other in Chattogram's Mirsarai. India was to provide a line of credit to Bangladesh for the projects.

Bangladesh wanted to modernise the Mongla Port and establish it as a capable port like Chittagong in the shortest possible time. To boost bilateral trade, the two countries also constructed a new railway line between Mongla Port and Khulna.

In 2018, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government selected the Hiranandani Group for developing the land at Mongla, as per the report. Four years later, an MoU was signed with the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza).

And then came the turmoil. Bangladesh's streets erupted in protest in 2024 as students led an uprising against Hasina over corruption. Hasina was forced to flee Dhaka and took shelter in India.

Under interim chief Yunus, Bangladesh saw a rise in anti-India sentiment. Radical Islamist leaders accused Hasina of pandering to India.

Amid the chaos, the project failed to take off. In 2025, Yunus took India off the project, delisting it. Bangladeshi officials claimed the Indian developer failed to commence work within the two years as stipulated in the agreement.

Last year, amid a strain in India-Bangladesh ties, the Chinese embassy in Dhaka reached out to Yunus with a proposal. It wanted to develop a Chinese economic zone on the same 110-acre site that was originally given to India. That agreement was finalised earlier this week as Tariq Rahman visited China.

China, which has been building a kind of port empire through strategic investments and loans, sensed an opportunity.

The developments regarding the Mongla Port economic zone project and the Teesta river signal Bangladesh's gradual pivot towards China. However, it must be noted that China has always been Bangladesh's largest trading partner. But Bangladesh cannot ignore its geographical reality, as it shares its largest border with India.

The Mongla Port project marks a crucial strategic moment. It now remains to be seen how Bangladesh balances its economic ties with China while carefully managing its longstanding relationship with India.(Source: India Today)

Adani Ports Set to Acquire Karanja Terminal in ₹625-Crore

Navi Mumbai- Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) has emerged as the frontrunner to acquire Karanja Terminal & Logistics Ltd. (KTL) after the company's lenders approved its ₹625-crore resolution plan under the corporate insolvency process.

The move is expected to revive the financially stressed terminal while further strengthening APSEZ's presence in the Mumbai harbour region. Located in the Mumbai port ecosystem, Karanja Terminal is strategically positioned to serve industrial and manufacturing clusters across western India.

The acquisition would enhance Adani Ports' container handling capabilities and complement its expanding integrated logistics network, enabling greater operational efficiencies and improved cargo movement. The terminal had been undergoing insolvency proceedings following prolonged financial distress.

High Court Approves Mangrove Trees Cutting For Vadhvan Port

Mumbai/Palghar: The Bombay High Court has paved the way for accelerated execution of the Vadhvan Port Project in Maharashtra's Palghar district by granting clearance for the removal of mangrove patches located within the approach area of the near-shore reclamation zone.

A bench of Justices Bharati Dangre and Manjusha Deshpande, in the order passed on Tuesday, said the project is of public importance and has wider economic significance.

The bench has permitted the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to fell 208 mangrove trees for the construction of an eight-lane access-controlled highway linking the upcoming port in Palghar district to NH-48.

The court added that the project proponent had secured all necessary environmental, coastal regulation zone and forest clearances, besides complying with compensatory afforestation requirements.

The project was in the larger public interest and would provide crucial connectivity to the proposed Vadhavan Port, which has been identified as a nationally important infrastructure project, High Court said.

"In our view, the said project being of public utility, would provide connectivity to the Vadhavan Port which is being developed as a major port on landlord port development model, which would open an opportunity for India to make it into the countries with top 10 container ports in the world," the court said.

The NHAI had approached the court seeking approval in view of earlier directions passed by the high court in a long-pending mangrove protection PIL, which requires prior court permission for the destruction of mangroves even in public projects.

The court, in its order, said NHAI had complied with compensatory afforestation requirements. The project proponent has undertaken the plantation of 1.33 lakh mangroves on 30 hectares of land and deposited more than Rs 4.83 crore towards mangrove compensatory afforestation, apart from other payments required under forest clearance conditions.

With this clearance, key pending issues affecting project implementation have been resolved, and it is now poised to move ahead at full pace, the Vadhvan Port Project Limited (VVPL) said in a release on Wednesday.

VVPL Chairman and Managing Director Gaurav Dayal said the clearances and parallel progress across multiple workstreams mark the beginning of a new phase for the project.

The momentum achieved in approvals, infrastructure development, and stakeholder coordination has strengthened confidence in the timely execution of the project and its commissioning within the targeted timeframe, he said.

The upcoming all-weather, greenfield port at Vadhvan near Dahanu town in Palghar district, located adjoining Mumbai, is being constructed by a special purpose vehicle formed by Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority and Maharashtra Maritime Board.

The sprawling facility will comprise nine container terminals, each 1,000 metres long, four multipurpose berths, including the coastal berth, four liquid cargo berths, a Ro-Ro berth, and a Coast Guard berth.

This mega project involves the reclamation of a 1,448-hectare area in the sea and the construction of 10.14 km of offshore breakwater and container/cargo storage areas.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Rs 76,220 crore port project on August 30, 2024. It is projected to be among the top 10 container ports in the world.

(Source: NDTV)

ED raids Delhi businessman in Mundra port drug seizure case

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday carried out raids at five premises across Delhi as part of a money laundering investigation into the 2021 Mundra port drugs haul case, officials said.

The agency raided the premises of Delhi-based businessman Harpreet Singh Talwar alias Kabir Talwar, a man named Shamshudeen and some others under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), ED officials said. Talwar, who runs popular nightclubs in Delhi, was arrested by the National Investigation Agency in the case in August 2022 and recently came out of prison after being granted bail by the Gujarat HC.

The ED had registered the money laundering case in 2021 and the latest searches are being conducted on the basis of new inputs, including allegations that narcotics trafficking proceeds were invested in some nightclubs in Delhi.

In one of the biggest drug seizures in the world, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence had seized 2,988.21 kg of Afghan-origin heroin from Mundra port in the Kutch district of Gujarat in September 2021. The consignment, worth approximately Rs 21,000 crore in the international illegal drugs market, reached Indian shores via Iran, disguised as semi-processed talc stones.

The NIA, which had separately investigated the case, had said in its chargesheet that the proceeds from the drugs network were used to fund activities of Pakistan-based banned terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba. The agency had described the consignment as a test case of smuggling a narco shipment into India under the cover of legal imports.

The case had triggered a multi-agency probe involving the DRI, ED and NIA, with investigators tracing a web of shell companies and intermediaries spread across multiple states, including a Vijayawada-based firm whose owner was later named as an accused in the NIA chargesheet.

The ED is looking into financial trail left behind by the massive drugs operation. The investigators are examining bank statements, property documents and digital records seized from the raided premises to establish links between the nightclub business and the alleged laundering of drug money.(Source: New Indian Express)

Mumbai Port unveils ₹3,541 cr projects of capacity and waterfront

Mumbai Port Authority on Thursday announced a series of projects worth more than ₹3,541.29 crore, including berth modernisation, connectivity upgrades, a marina and waterfront developments, as it looks to expand cargo-handling capacity and strengthen non-port revenue streams.

Apart from the ₹3,541-crore project pipeline, the authority already has seven projects worth ₹132.29 crore ready for inauguration and 34 projects worth ₹1,354.59 crore ready for foundation stones to be laid.

Among the key initiatives are the modernisation of berths at Indira Dock, expansion of cargo storage infrastructure, connectivity upgrades, crude oil berth expansion, solar rooftop installations, surveillance systems and digitalisation projects. The port also outlined plans to develop the Mumbai Marina, a waterfront project aimed at boosting tourism and recreational activities.

As part of its asset monetisation strategy, MbPA exchanged operations and maintenance agreements for clusters of berths at Indira Dock. The first cluster, comprising 10 berths, was awarded to J M Baxi Ports & Logistics and is expected to generate revenue of about ₹770 crore over 10 years. A second cluster of 11 berths inside the lock was awarded to M Dinshaw & Co, with projected revenue of ₹217 crore over the same period.

In FY26, Mumbai Port handled 75.15 million tonnes of cargo, up 9.5 per cent year-on-year (YoY). Mumbai Port also handles more than two-thirds of India's cruise traffic and receives more than 100 cruise vessels annually. According to Angamuthu, cruise passenger traffic currently stands at around 3 lakh a year and could exceed one million over the next four to five years as supporting infrastructure comes up.

A major focus area for the port is the proposed Mumbai Marina project worth ₹470 crore, which officials described as India's first global-standard marina. The project is expected to form part of a larger waterfront development strategy aimed at improving public access to the eastern waterfront while creating new tourism and commercial opportunities.
Other major projects include ₹940 crore worth of offshore infrastructure development, an ₹800-crore new crude oil berth at Jawahar Dweep, and a ₹350-crore Central Government Office (CGO) complex.

As part of its asset monetisation strategy, MbPA will generate lease revenue of ₹498 crore through a 30-year lease of a land parcel spanning 12,670 square metres and ₹302.23 crore through the allotment of a 6,664.3-square metre plot in Wadala on a 30-year lease.

Further, MbPA has projected revenue of ₹2,421 crore over 10 years from operating contracts and surveillance.

Cochin Port to deepen channel, hopes 1.2 mn throughput by 2029

The Port Authority has also submitted a proposal to develop a new cruise terminal at the Quay 8 and 9 at Ernakulam Wharf.

KOCHI: The Cochin Port Authority (CoPA) has submitted a proposal to increase the depth of the shipping channel from 14.5 m to 16 m, aiming to attract major mainline container vessels and increase transshipment and EXIM containers including diversion from foreign hubs.

In a recent interaction with TNIE, former CoPA chairperson B Kasiviswanathan, who took over as Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer of South Western Railways on June 20, said the proposal is under the consideration of the Ministry of Ports and Shipping.

"The plan is to increase the depth of the channel and basin to 16m through capital dredging at an estimated cost of Rs 560.50 crore. Correspondingly, the operator of the Vallarpadam International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT), will augment the terminal infrastructure with significant expansion of capacity.

With the deepening of the channel, we expect to achieve a container throughput of 1.2 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs) by 2029-30 and 1.5 million TEUs in 2035-36. The project is planned to be operational by 2028-29," he said.

Kasiviswanathan said deepening of the channel was crucial for Kochi Port. "Major shipping companies will have multiple vessels and some of them will have deeper draft. If one vessel is unable to enter Kochi Port, the operator may shift the entire services to other ports," he said.

The Port Authority has also submitted a proposal to develop a new cruise terminal at the Quay 8 and 9 at Ernakulam Wharf. The new dock will have a length of 400 m and improved cruise infrastructure of international standards. The Rs 150 crore terminal is planned to be operational by 2029. (Source: New Indian Express)

India's 50% tariff puts pressure on S.African apple exports

A 50% import tariff on apples entering India is putting pressure on the competitiveness of South African exports, particularly as competing suppliers secure reduced tariffs through trade agreements.

The warning comes from fruit exporter Tru-Cape, which says securing preferential access to the Indian market has become increasingly important, despite South African apples maintaining a leading position in India's imported apple segment.

Tariff barriers were limiting opportunities for growth in a market where demand for imported fruit continued to expand, the company said.

India remains an important destination for South African fruit exports. According to Tru-Cape, Indian importer NGK Trading imports about 300 containers of South African fruit annually, including around 220 containers of apples and pears. More than 650 000 MK6-equivalent cartons of South African apples and pears have been shipped to India so far this year.

The need for improved market access had become more urgent as competing exporting countries secured preferential tariff arrangements with India, while South African apples continued to face a 50% import duty, said Tru-Cape.

The call comes amid broader efforts to strengthen economic ties between South Africa and India through bilateral engagements and forums such as BRICS. Exporters argue that improved market access would support further growth in fruit shipments to the market.

(Source: Freight News)

APEDA starts 1st Shipment of Banganapalle Mangoes to Singapore

The consignment, comprising 5 metric tonnes (MT) of Banganapalle mangoes, was exported by M/s Osum Food Solutions LLP on 11 June 2026 and arrived in Singapore on 24 June 2026. The successful shipment marks an important milestone in promoting cost-effective and sustainable export logistics for India's horticultural produce while expanding market access for premium Indian mangoes.

The mangoes were sourced from Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)-certified orchards in Andhra Pradesh and processed and packed at an APEDA-recognised packhouse in Karnataka. The entire consignment was handled in accordance with the quality and phytosanitary requirements prescribed by Singapore.

Upon arrival, the importer, EC-Links Pte Ltd, Singapore, reported excellent fruit quality, appreciating the mangoes for their sweetness, uniform ripening, shelf life and overall phytosanitary condition. The consignment successfully met all import requirements, demonstrating the effectiveness of scientific post-harvest management practices and cold-chain logistics during sea transportation.

APEDA has been actively promoting the use of sea freight for fresh fruit and vegetable exports through market development initiatives, infrastructure support and capacity-building measures for exporters to meet international quality standards. The successful shipment to Singapore is expected to encourage wider adoption of maritime transport for horticultural exports and further strengthen India's reputation as a reliable supplier of high-quality agricultural products in global markets. (**Source: PIB-New Delhi)**

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