

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Shipping**

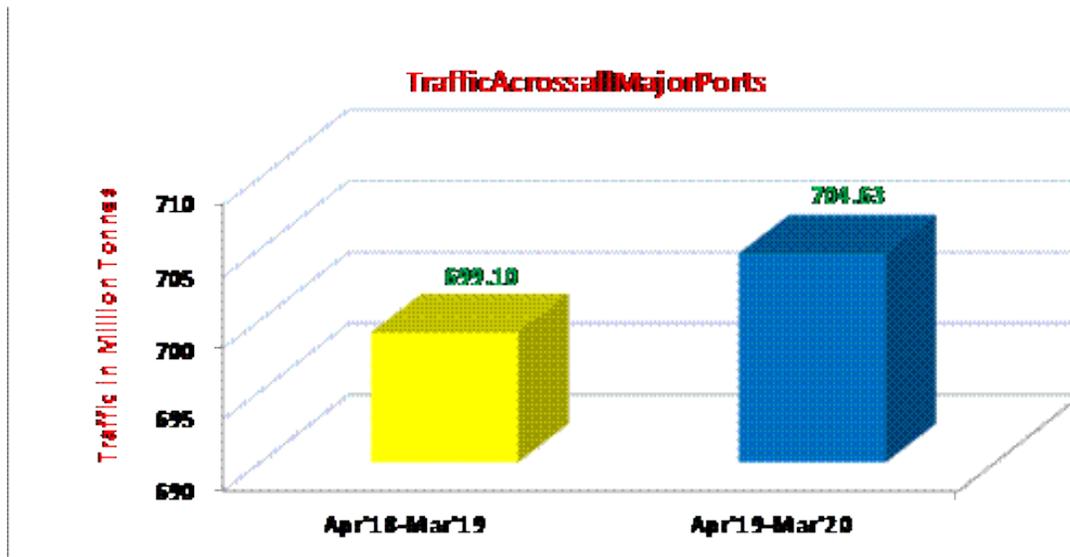
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Ministry of Shipping plays a pro-active role towards ensuring smooth shipping operations in COVID-19 situation and lockdown in the country

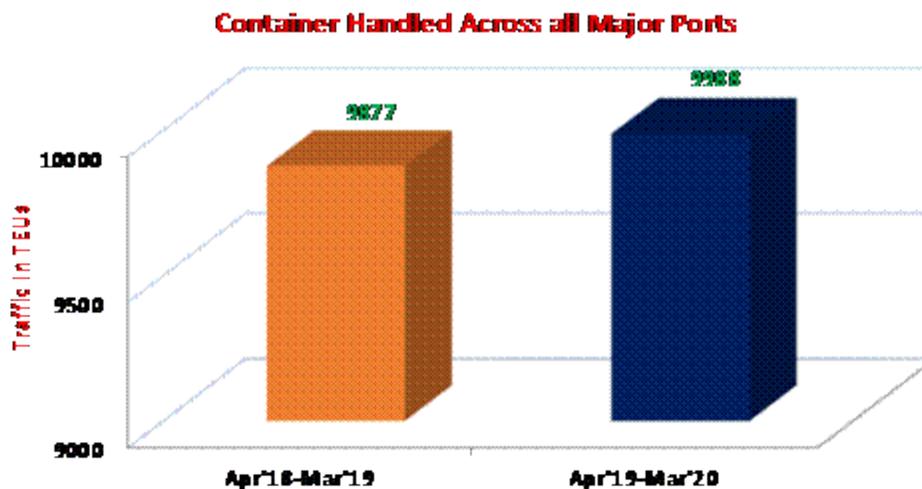
In the wake of unprecedented crisis due to Covid-19, the Ministry of Shipping has been taking pro-active steps to ensure smooth running of shipping and port operations, ease the hardships, and at the same time, following the restrictions imposed during the lockdown.

Traffic Handled by Major Ports

The total traffic handled at Major Ports from April to March 2020 was 704.63 Million Tonnes as against 699.10 Million Tonnes handled during the corresponding period of the previous year, showing an overall growth of 0.82% in the traffic handled.



During April to March, 2020, Container tonnage and TEUS were 146934 and 9988 thousand respectively, whereas it was 145451 and 9877 thousand during April to March, 2019. There was growth of 1.02% in Container tonnage and 1.12% in Container TEUs.



In March 2020, the total traffic was 61120 tonnes which is more than 57233 tonnes in February 2020 but 5.25% less than March,2019 (64510 tonnes).

No. of vessels handled

The number of vessels handled by ports during 2019-20 was around 20837, whereas during 2018-19, number of vessels handled was 20853. The vessel traffic declined slightly by 0.08% in comparison to last year.

Measures taken to handle the COVID-19

1. Thermal scanning

Total of 46,202 passengers have been scanned between 27/01/2020 to 04/04/2020 using Thermal Scanners at Indian Ports. Out of which, 39,225 people were scanned at Major Ports.

2. Waiver of penal fee

Ministry of Shipping, vide order no: PD-14300/4/2020-PD VII, dated 31st March, 2020 issued directions to the Major Ports:

- i. Each Major Port to ensure that no penalties, demurrage, charges, fee, rentals are levied by the Major ports on any port user (traders, Shipping lines, concessionaires, licensees etc.) for any delay in berthing or loading/unloading operations or evacuation of cargo caused by the reasons attributable to lockdown measures from 22nd March to 14th April, 2020.

- ii. Therefore, each Major Port shall exempt or remit demurrage, ground rent over and above the free period, penal anchorage/berth hire charges and any other performance related penalties that may be levied on port related activities including minimum performance guarantee, wherever applicable.

3. Force majeure

Ministry of Shipping, vide order no: PD-14300/4/2020-PD VII, dated 31stMarch,2020 issued directions to the Major Ports:

- i. The period for completion of any Project under implementation in PPP mode or otherwise, can be extended by the Ports.
- ii. For existing and operational PPP projects, the Major Ports can permit waiver of all penal consequences on a case-to-case basis along with deferment of certain performance obligations under the relevant provisions of Concession Agreement.

The period of Force Majeure starts from the date of order of Ministry of Finance referred above and will end when the competent authority so orders

4. Preparation of Hospitals

Hospitals across the Major Port Trusts have been supplied with the Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and the arrangement of sufficient staff round the clock has been made. In some Port Hospitals, a part of the hospital can be earmarked for Covid-19 with separate entry and exit.

5. CSR Funds transferred to PM CARES Fund

Ports and PSUs under the Ministry of Shipping have contributed more than Rs 52 Crore from the CSR funds towards PM CARES Fund.

6. Employees contribute from their salary

Employees of Ports, PSUs and other offices of the Ministry of Shipping have contributed over Rs 7 crore from their salaries towards PM CARES Fund.

7. Steps taken by DG Shipping

DG Shipping vide Order No. 02 of 2020 dated 16.03.2020, Order No.03 of 2020 dated 20/03/2020 and Order No. 04 of 2020 dated 20/03/2020 issued Instructions on dealing with novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The Directorate prepared a guidance document for shipping industry to help combat the spread of the Coronavirus. The document contains

the advice on managing port entry restrictions, practical protective measures against COVID-19 for seafarers, pre-boarding screening, and education and what to do in suspected cases of infection, hygiene measures for seafarers on ships, managing high risk exposure, case handling, isolation and cleaning, disinfection and waste Management etc. All the stakeholders including Indian Shipping companies, RPS Service providers, MTIs, seafarers were directed to strictly comply with the instructions. DG Shipping issued Addendum No. 1 to DGS Order No. 04 of 2020 dated 21/03/2020 updating countries list with mandatory quarantine and travel ban by MoHFW, Govt. of India.

a. Waiver

In order to ensure that the EXIM trade does not suffer due to certain unavoidable delays in loading and discharge of cargo due to the lockdown;

1. The Shipping lines have been advised by DGS order No 7 to not impose any container detention charge on export and import shipments of containerised cargo for the period from 22th March, 2020 to 14th April, 2020 (both days inclusive) over and above free time arrangement that is currently agreed and availed as part of any negotiated contractual terms. During this period, the shipping lines are also advised not to impose any new or additional charge.
2. In order to grant relief to the Indian EXIM trade the Shipping companies and carriers have been advised by DGS order No 8 to not charge any demurrage, ground rent beyond free period, storage charges in the port, additional anchorage charges, berth hire charge, or vessel demurrage or any other penal charge on cargo owners/ consignees of non-containerised cargo (i.e. bulk, break bulk and liquid cargo) for the period 22nd March, 2020 to 14th April, 2020 (both days inclusive) due to delay in evacuation of cargo by reasons attributable to lockdown measures since 22nd March, 2020.

b. Shipping Lines

DG Shipping vide order no. 07 of 2020, dated 29/03/2020 issued advisory to the Indian ports and Shipping lines not to impose any container detention charge on import and export shipments from 22nd March, 2020 to 14th April, 2020 (both day inclusive). During this period Shipping Lines were also advised not to impose any new or additional charge.

Relief given to the Shipping Companies:

1. Since all DGS approved Training Institutes have been closed down and the seafarers on board ships have not been able to sign off on completion of their contract, many of the Certificates of Competency (COCs), Certificates of

Proficiency (COPs) and Certificates of Efficiency (COEs) of seafarers on board or for those kept in reserve as replacement crew, have lapsed or are likely to get lapsed. In order to keep the validity of these certificates alive, DGS has on its own extended the validity of certificates expiring up to 31st October, 2020 for a period of 6 months (It means all certificates will remain valid till 31.03.2021. International Maritime Organization has been informed accordingly.

2. Similarly, the validity of safety certificates of Indian ships is lapsing. In view of the difficulties faced by ship surveyors in carrying out the requisite safety inspections of the ships during these times, the validity of ship certificates has been extended till 31st June, 2020 subject to the Master of the Ship certifying that the ship is safe to operate.
3. To deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, DGS has developed revised guidelines for sanitisation of all ships, PPEs requirements for ship staff and pilots boarding the vessels, sanitisation and PPE requirements for ship and port staff for loading and unloading of cargo at all major and minor Indian Ports, protocol for management of sick crew and dead bodies on board, protocol for sign-on and sign-off of crew in emergencies etc. The revised protocol of DGS is being used by many foreign countries also.
4. The above protocols have been dealt with in DGS orders 1 of 2020 to DGS order 9 of 2020 and addendums. The Directorate continues to constantly watch the functioning of Indian ships and ships in Indian waters.
5. Due to the proactive approach of the maritime administration all Indian ships have been kept in working condition with valid certificates, are adequately manned and are engaged in carriage of goods.