

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Cyclone Biparjoy: Major cargo pile up at ports, 11,000 trucks stranded as operations shut

TNN | Jun 14, 2023, 12.11 PM IST



AHMEDABAD: As the Cyclone Biparjoy is gradually approaching towards the Gujarat coast and expected to make a landfall along the Kutch-Saurashtra region, major ports including those at Kandla and Mundra have shut following the issuance of signal number 10. Sources at these ports confirmed that the activities at the ports including vessel berthing have been halted until further notice. With the ports shutting down suddenly and cyclonic conditions prevalent along the Gujarat coast, at least 11,000 trucks have been stranded outside the ports, indicate estimates by Akhil Gujarat Truck Transporters' Association (AGTTA).

“At Kandla Port, around 8,000 trucks are stranded. Of these, some 40% of the containers including tankers are loaded with goods that were supposed to be exported, whereas the remaining ones were going to the port to collect the goods that had arrived. The customs brokers and transporters present locally have helped truckers with necessary food and supplies. Trucks are also stranded along the road near Samakhiali,” said Mukesh Dave, president, AGTTA.

On the other hand, some 3,000 trucks are stranded outside the Mundra Port, Dave confirmed. There is no major cargo pile-up outside Hazira and Pipavav ports, he said.

“In isolated places of coastal Saurashtra region, many truckers were compelled to park their vehicles and wait till the situation improves. Many of them were carrying essential commodities including medicines,” Dave added.

The AGTTA has issued a circular to the members and the clients to not transport goods at the cost of safety and ensure necessary precautions while ferrying shipments.

“Both Kandla and Mundra ports have been shut since Monday evening, according to an advisory issued by the port authorities. APSEZ has also issued a circular to all the exporters and customs brokers, stating that port operations in terms of cargo vehicle movement through port gates and SEZ gates will be stopped,” said Manoj Kotak, secretary, Mundra Customs Brokers’ Association.

As a precaution, industries located in Saurashtra and Kutch regions have taken necessary measures to evacuate people and stop operations and safeguard equipment to prevent any damages from the cyclone.

Officials of Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) are also stationed at ports for necessary assistance, sources confirmed. “We have issued advisories to all our employees, dealers, C&F agents, and our transporters outlining precautionary and safety measures. Additionally, we have set up dedicated control rooms at our corporate office and at our plant to closely monitor the situation and respond promptly if needed,” said a spokesperson of Sanghi industries.