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France

Paris introduces “dummy” freight trams

Paris has introduced since the 14th November and up to the 10th December, “dummy” freight trams on the city’s tramway network. An empty tramway operates during off-peak hours, making two return journeys each day from Mondays to Saturdays. The authorities will evaluate if the network can cope with additional traffic without having a negative impacting on passenger services.

If successful, the project may be implemented and will help in the distribution of goods in Paris while reducing road congestion.

Freight flights between Chengdu in China and Paris-Vatry Airport

Paris-Vatry Airport could become a secondary cargo hub to Paris Roissy-CDG after Chinese cargo airline Yangtze River Express, a subsidiary of Hainan Airlines, has agreed to operate as from March of next year, a cargo service. A Boeing 747 will service Paris-Vatry Airport at a frequency of three times a week from Chengdu, the capital of the province of Sichuan.

The flight will stop over at Shanghai and between 20 000 and 25 000 tonnes of goods, mainly electronic goods, are expected to be air freighted to European countries, during the first year.

Air France schedules direct flights between Paris and Wuhan in China

Air France will start to operate as from 11 April 2012, scheduled flights between Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport and Wuhan in China. Air France will be the first air carrier to offer direct flights between Wuhan and Europe.

Wuhan is located in central China. It has a population of 9 million inhabitants and the city is driven mainly by the automotive industry. A Boeing 777-200ER will take off from Paris three times each week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The flight will return from Wuhan the following day.



INDIA

Indian Railways has asked the government for a 5% rise in freight surcharge

This increase might cause an increase in the price of goods transported by rail.

According to some members of the Indian parliament, the proposed hike may add Rs 100 or 2 US dollars on every tonne of merchandise carried by rail from the ports to the distant states such as that of Kerala.

The World Bank will grant a US \$ 975 million loan to set up an Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor

The total length of the corridor dedicated for electric trains, will be of 1 839 km. It will contribute to the faster movement of goods between the northern and eastern parts of India.

The project will be developed in three phases. The first phase will run over 343 km between Khurja and Kanpur. The trains will be able to move to speeds up to 100 km per hour.

India's freight traffic is expected to grow by more than 7% annually in the years to come. The government of India wants to decongest the saturated roads and encourage freight forwarders to shift from road to rail transportation.

Delhi Airport accommodates the largest cargo plane

Currently, Delhi Airport handles an average of 10 to 20 freighters per day and its terminal 3 has become since the beginning of this month, the first airport in India to accommodate the largest cargo plane, the Boeing 747-8. British Airways has started to operate flights with this freighter on the London (Stansted)-Hong Kong-Delhi route.

With this development, Delhi Airport is expected to handle one million metric tonnes of cargo by 2014/ 15 compared to 0.6 million metric tonnes in 2010/11.



MADAGASCAR

Air Madagascar will launch three hubs for its local network

Air Madagascar will bring changes to its local network. Its Managing Director, Hugues Ratsiferana told the press that three hubs will be launched namely at Toamasina, Morondava and Antsohihy. A plane will be permanently based at each of these hubs to service destinations where the demand is high either because of economic or tourism factors.

At the port town of Toamasina, two daily flights to Antananarivo will be scheduled and this frequency may reach 5 flights per day.

Visit of a delegation of Turkish economic operators

A delegation of about forty Turkish economic operators, has visited Madagascar to look for business opportunities. They are in the agricultural and food sectors, in mining, textile as well as in construction activities.

The Ambassador of Turkey in Madagascar, Ercüment Ahmet Enç has announced the launching of a club, the *Malagasy & Turkish Businessmen Club (MTBC)* which will enable businessmen from both countries to exchange their views so as to promote commercial and cultural relationships.

Shrimps to be exported to China

The Unima group has restarted the breeding of shrimps at Besalamy after a closure that lasted three and a half years.

That decision comes at a time when demand from China has greatly increased.

The Besalamy breeding farm will produce about 2 500 tonnes of shrimps per year that will be air freighted.



MAURITIUS

Tenders for a strategic partner for CHC, are being finalised

The tenders for finding a strategic partner for the Cargo Handling Corporation (CHC), are being finalised by the International Finance Corporation, an organisation operating under the World Bank.

Answering to a question in parliament, the Prime Minister of Mauritius revealed that the outstanding debt on CHC loans contracted for the development projects, stood at one billion and one hundred and seventy three million rupees (Rs 1,173 billion) as at the 30th September 2011.

The strategic partner will bring in capital by buying shares in the Cargo Handling Corporation.

Direct flights between Russia and Mauritius

The Russian air carrier Transaero has resumed since the 30th October, its direct flights between Domodedovo airport in Moscow and Mauritius. Two flights on board a Boeing 777-200ER are scheduled each week, with the take-off from Moscow on Wednesdays and Sundays and landing the next day at Plaisance airport.

The private Russian company interrupted its direct flights last March.

A new runway at the island of Agalega

The Government of Mauritius will finance up to Rs 250 million, a new runway at Agalega, an island belonging to the Republic of Mauritius and located 1 070 km at its north. The current runway is unfit for use as its asphalt has been damaged.

In a second phase, a control tower, offices, fuel storage tanks and a fire station, will be built. Planes like the ATR 72, will be able to land at Agalega.



MOZAMBIQUE

Essar Group plans to develop a port in Mozambique

The Indian company Essar Ports Ltd intends to develop a port in Mozambique. It already operates 2 ports at Hazira and Vadinar in the province of Gujarat in India.

“Mozambique is a mineral rich country. We are working towards signing a concession agreement in that country,” said Rajiv Agarwal, Chief Executive Officer of Essar Ports Ltd.

Mozambique will ask Japan US \$ 300 million to finance Nacala port

Mozambique will ask the Japanese government US \$ 300 million to fund the repairs of the export port of Nacala. The works may begin in 2013 if the talks are successful.

The port which was damaged by a cyclone in 2001, will either return to its original handling capacity of 400 000 containers a year or have its current capacity doubled.

Furthermore, the Japanese company Nippon Steel has stated to the press that it will start extracting coal in Mozambique as from 2014.

Refurbishment of the Sena rail line completed by early 2013

Rosario Mualeia, the chairman of CFM, Mozambique's ports and railways company, said that the refurbishment of the Sena rail line which links the port of Beira with the Tete province, will be completed by early 2013.

"Some 95 percent of the traffic of goods are done by road because the railways are in such a bad condition," Mualeia told the press.

"We still need to upgrade the line, the track, the signalling system and also rehabilitate the Machipanda line to Zimbabwe ... about US \$ 80 million will be needed to complete all the work."



OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD

A new container terminal will be built at Cadiz Bay in Spain

The Port Authority of Cadiz Bay in Spain, will invest 92 million euros in the construction of a new container terminal in a separate area from where the cruise vessels berth.

Cadiz Bay is strategically located between the Europe-Africa and US-Mediterranean trade lanes. It ambitions to position itself as a gateway to Southern Europe.

Drop in freight rates from China to Europe or the United States

According to Shanghai Containerised Freight Index rates, on the routes between China and Europe and the west coast of the United States, freight tariffs have dropped to US \$ 649 per TEU and \$ 1,494 per Feu respectively in October 2011, down from \$1,381 and \$2,031 at the beginning of 2011.

Exports from China have been declining since the last four months mainly due to domestic inflation (above 6%).

Electronic airway bills for Emirates SkyCargo at its Dubai hub

Since the 31st October, Emirates SkyCargo uses electronic air waybills for all shipments from its Dubai hub.

This is in line with the IATA e-AWB initiative to eliminate every paper document and certificate from the airline industry by the end of 2014.

The air companies are expected to save US \$ 4.9 billion on paper each year and achieve better operational efficiency to the supply chain.