
Strike hits cargo handling at Kochi Port

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BL reported that the issues connected with the new manning scales in the Kochi Port seem to persist, as is evident from the recent strike launched by a group of workers in the cargo handling section other than the container terminal.

The workers belonging to a composite gang numbering around 350 are on strike since last Tuesday in protest against curtailing the number of laborers deployed for loading and unloading of bulk and break bulk cargo. This has affected the unloading of wooden logs from a vessel which arrived from Indonesia and also cargo handling in other berths, except in the container terminal.

3 rounds of discussions carried out by the port management with the unions had also failed.

Sources in the shipping circles pointed out considering the drop in the port's revenue, it has to concentrate more on bulk and break bulk cargoes. If the situation continues, there may be possibility of diversion of these vessels to neighboring ports, adding that 3 more vessels laden with timber logs and a vessel carrying soda ash are scheduled to arrive in a couple of days.

However, leaders of the Thuramukha Samrakhana Samity, a forum of trade unions in the port maintained that the number of workers engaged in unloading of timber was reduced to four from 10 following the order of the National Industrial Tribunal Award, and it would be difficult to operate the timber logs with the small number of workers.

(Sourced from Business Line)

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