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Theme : ASEAN region in the context of global logistics

An understanding of the world economy is needed to understand logistics. The current world economy is centered in Europe, North America, and East Asia, and the logistics that link these areas account for a considerable proportion of the total. Regarding logistics in Asia, growth in the ASEAN region and South Asia, especially India, has been remarkable.

In a world ranking of container handling volume in 2020, Shanghai was first, Singapore was second, and seven Chinese ports were in the top 10, so China boasts a large share. As for the ASEAN region, ports in Malaysia and Vietnam ranked in the top 20 due to their locations along the main route connecting East Asia and Europe.

In the maritime transportation field, ships continue to increase in size. Shipping costs per item are dropping, but shipbuilding requires a huge amount of money. As a result, container shipping companies that run global operations have combined into three large groups, resulting in a typical oligopoly market.

On the east coast of North America and in Europe as well, the trend towards larger ships is remarkable. Even in Southeast Asia, efforts are underway to increase the size of ships, and ports that cannot handle these increasingly larger ships will no longer be used.

Against this backdrop, the ASEAN region has four advantages for international logistics: (1) an advantageous geographical location adjacent to China and India, (2) the ease of port calls by large ships due to their location along key routes, (3) population and economic potential, and (4) diverse growth stages and resources.

On the other hand, the ASEAN region has two issues: (1) the handling of the national borders and language and cultural differences that exist between the 10 member countries, and (2) the guarantee of seamless intermodal transportation between land and sea in the ASEAN region.