

< Panelist (Panel Discussion and Q&A) >



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I like to comment on the background of the chaos in the current international logistics network, the reasons the chaos is dragging on, and future trends considering them.

Firstly, for the last 30 years, ships have become bigger, terminals and port facilities have been developed, and railways, trucks, and warehouses have been expanded, and precarious day-to-day management has been continued. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it impossible to maintain or secure a labor force for these conditions, and chaos is occurring.

After cargo temporarily decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the movement of containers increased rapidly, driven by consumer electronics, toys, and other items in response to people staying at home. However, ports could not function properly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was demand, but supply decreased, and there was a lack of containers. As a result, container ships that once stopped at ports weekly no longer entered ports. The inability to carry cargo became the norm, and the chaos was prolonged.

Future trends are linked to the trends of the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation has been moving back-and-forth. For example, the Port of Shanghai, the world's largest, was locked down for two months. It is difficult to estimate how long the chaos continue, but it is expected that certain end will be reached this fiscal year. Even though, if a strike would occur due to the expiry of the labor-management agreement of the industrial association in the United States west coast ports at the end of June 2022, it could be an obstacle for the recovery of international logistics.