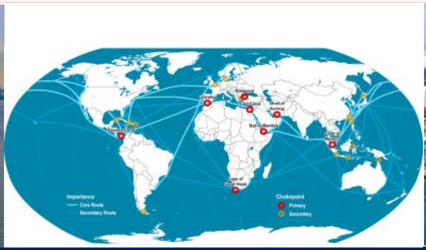
ASSOCIATION FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Asian Maritime News Express



24th June 26 Mumbai-India

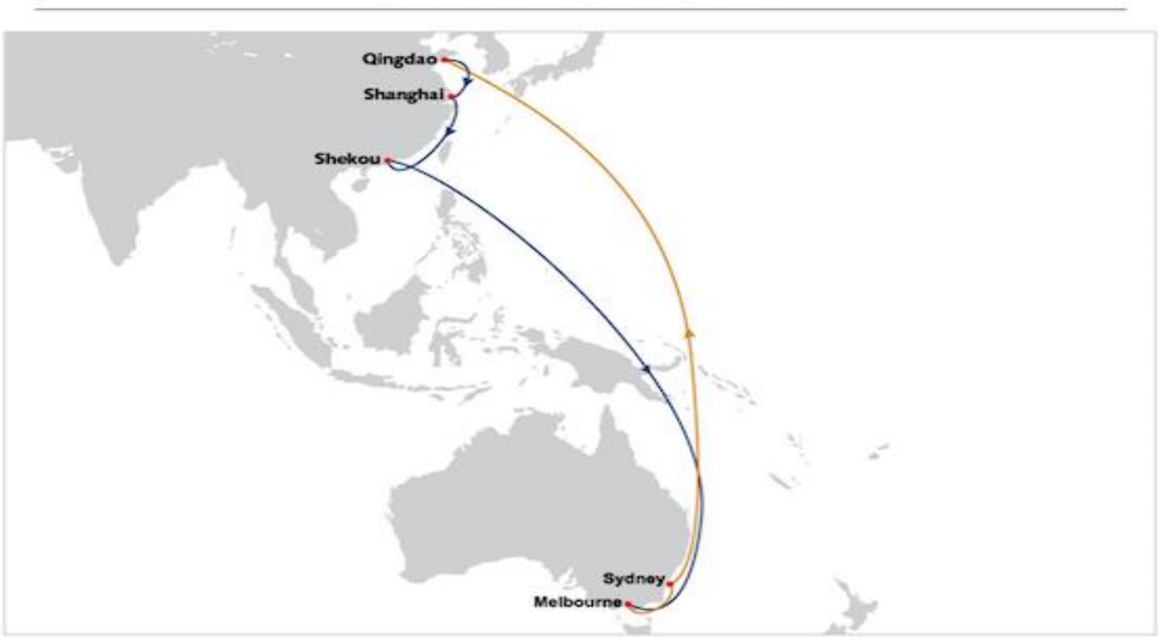
Global Maritime Trade & Transport

OOCL announces new China Australia Express Loop (A3X)

OOCL has announced the launch of its new China Australia Express Loop (A3X), with the maiden sailing scheduled from Qingdao on 27 July 2026.

The A3X service is a key enhancement to OOCL's established A3 network, providing customers with greater flexibility, improved transit options, and expanded market access. With the introduction of A3X, OOCL will offer four weekly sailings across its A3 network, increasing service frequency and capacity for both importers and exporters and reinforcing its leading position in the Northeast Asia–East Coast Australia trade.

China Australia Express Loop (A3X)



Service Rotation

Southbound: Qingdao – Shanghai – Shekou – Melbourne – Sydney

Northbound: Melbourne – Sydney – Qingdao – Shanghai – Shekou

(Source: American Journal Of Transport)

Iran’s Receives First Container Ship After US Lifts Naval Blockade

Iran’s Shahid Rajaee Port in Bandar Abbas has received its first container ship since the lifting of a US naval blockade. The vessel has already begun unloading its cargo, according to IRIB.

The ship is carrying auto parts. Iranian government broadcasting authorities confirmed its arrival, saying the “first container ship has arrived at Shahid Rajaee Port.”

Shahid Rajaee Port is located in Hormozgan Province in southern Iran and is one of the country’s main container terminals.Iranian media say the development follows a memorandum of understanding signed remotely on June 18 between Iran and the United States. It is described as ending a military conflict that began on February 28.

According to these reports, the agreement includes provisions for the United States to lift its naval blockade and for Iran to regain navigation rights through the Strait of Hormuz.

The reports also say Iran has agreed not to pursue nuclear weapons, with nuclear talks to continue separately. Both sides are expected to hold discussions within 60 days, with possible sanctions relief for Iran mentioned as an outcome.

These claims have not been independently confirmed.

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world’s most important shipping routes, especially for oil and cargo traffic. Any changes in access or restrictions in this region can affect global shipping costs, insurance, and route planning.

Shahid Rajaee Port is Iran’s main container hub and handles a large share of the country’s industrial imports and exports. (**Source: Marine Insight)**

Pacific International Lines christens first two 13,000TEU ships

Singapore-based Pacific International Lines (PIL) has formally named the first two ships in a new series of 13,000TEU container vessels ordered by the company from China State Shipbuilding Corporation subsidiary Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding.

Kota Elok and *Kota Elan* will be deployed on PIL's service connecting Asia and South America, which the company said is a key trade corridor experiencing strong and sustained growth.

Both ships are equipped to operate on LNG as well as low-sulphur fuel oil, allowing for significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

The vessels also feature a suite of advanced technological and energy-saving features, including an optimised hull form to improve hydrodynamic performance, energy-efficient systems and hull coatings that reduce fuel consumption.

Both vessels are also equipped with digital technologies, including artificial intelligence and IoT capabilities, to enhance operational performance and enable greater automation on board.

Kota Elok features a bow windshield to improve aerodynamics, contributing to improved fuel efficiency and lower emissions over the course of long-haul voyages.

PIL said the vessels have been designed with seafarers in mind, offering a safe, modern and comfortable onboard environment that supports crew well-being and welfare.(Baird News)

Japanese Ro-Ro Cargo Ship Runs Aground Near Tokyo's Izu Islands

A Japanese cargo ferry carrying vehicles and other goods remains stranded off Toshima Island in the Izu archipelago after running aground during a voyage from Osaka to Tokyo.

The Niraikanai II, an 11,687-ton roll-on/roll-off cargo ship operated by Ryukyu Kaiun Kaisha, ran aground at around 3:30 a.m. local time on June 19 while sailing south of Japan's main island of Honshu.

The vessel was headed to Tokyo from Osaka when it hit a rocky area on the western side of Toshima Island, a small volcanic island. Authorities said there was no immediate sign of flooding or oil leakage. The Shimoda Coast Guard Office also confirmed no fuel spill had been detected.

The crew sent an emergency message reporting the grounding. The Japan Coast Guard sent a patrol vessel to the site and began an investigation into what caused the incident.

The ship remains stuck after early efforts to refloat it failed. Ryukyu Kaiun Kaisha is now preparing diver inspections and salvage work, but it is not yet clear when the vessel will be able to continue its voyage. (**Source: Marine Insight)**

Philippine dive yacht refloated following grounding

A dive yacht that ran aground in the western Philippines earlier this month has been successfully refloated and towed to port.

The 173GT *Philippine Siren 2* was removed from a shallow portion of the Tubbataha Reef National Park at around 06:10 local time on Saturday, June 20. The vessel was towed to Puerto Princesa City on Palawan Island and arrived there at noon on Monday, June 22.

The Philippine Coast Guard Parola-class multi-role response vessel (MRRV) BRP *Cape Engaño* escorted the convoy to Puerto Princesa. The MRRV had also been one of the first assets to arrive in the area following the grounding.

The yacht suffered cracks and breaches in multiple areas as a result of the grounding, hence the decision of local authorities to have her refloated and removed to prevent damage to the surrounding marine environment.

Philippine Siren 2 was at anchor some seven nautical miles off Palawan's Tubbataha Reef National Park on a scheduled dive trip when a sudden squall caused her to run aground on the morning of June 14.

All 14 of the yacht's passengers and four of its 10 crewmembers were later safely evacuated onto another yacht that had diverted to the area. This other yacht transported the rescued occupants to Puerto Princesa City later that same day while the six other crewmembers stayed behind to monitor the situation.

Opposition ask Indian Govt to clarity on ownership structure in Great Nicobar transhipment port project


The present environment at the proposed port site

New Delhi: Congress leader Jairam Ramesh wrote to Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, raising concerns over the proposed international container transshipment port at Galathea Bay in Great Nicobar Island.

In his letter posted Monday on X, Ramesh said he was writing as one among the many people concerned about the 'ecological devastation' from the Great Nicobar Island Project.

> A transshipment port on Galathea Bay is at the heart of the Great Nicobar Island Project that will have devastating ecological impacts. Here is my letter to the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways on the port that may well become part of the gigantic Modani empire pic.twitter.com/KjVLYTHraS
>
> Jairam Ramesh (@Jairam_Ramesh) June 22, 2026

Referring to discussions held by the Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC) of the Finance Ministry on 17 and 19 March, Ramesh highlighted that the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways itself had identified two major risks associated with the proposed transshipment port.

Ramesh said that these competing ports were likely to be Colombo, Singapore and Port Klang (Malaysia), all of which are major transshipment centres in the region.

"It is extraordinary that even while recognising these huge risks—quite apart from the certainty of ecological devastation that will be caused by its construction—the transshipment port is being pushed through," the former Union minister said in the letter.(**The Print)**

Ningbo Ocean seeks $160m for container ship expansion in S.E.Asia

Ningbo Ocean Shipping's 742-teu pure-electric feedermax container vessel Ning Yuan Dian Kun (built 2026) departs Ningbo-Zhoushan port on its maiden commercial voyage on 15 April 2026. The vessel is billed as the world's largest and China's first 10,000-tonne-class pure-electric intelligent container ship.Photo: Ningbo Ocean Shipping

Shanghai-listed Ningbo Ocean Shipping is seeking to raise up to CNY 1.09bn ($160m) through a private placement to buy container vessels and boxes as it expands in South East Asia. According to a revised prospectus published on 22 June, it plans to spend CNY 891.8m of the proceeds on ships and CNY 194.4m on containers. (**Source: Trade Wind)**

Trade Connectivity And Human Capital Challenges In Singapore's Maritime Industry – Analysis

Connectivity for a trade dependent island nation like Singapore, is critical, where trade-to-GDP ratio consistently exceeds 300%. Singapore is a key maritime hub that connects East Asia with South Asia, the Middle East and beyond. The Port of Singapore moved a

record 44.66 million TEUs in 2025, an increase from 41.12 TEUs in 2024. Significantly, the maritime sector contributes approximately 7% to Singapore's total GDP and employs more than 170,000 people across over 5,000 establishments (MPA website). It forms a cornerstone of the nation's economy, integrating port operations, shipping, marine services, and maritime technology (My Careers future website).
This article will examine the challenges facing Singapore's Maritime industry amidst the disruptions caused by geopolitical conflicts such as in the Middle East and the need to expand its capacity despite the shortage of human capital. The most pressing issues affecting operations in Singapore can be categorized into four main areas:

First, severe port congestion and delays caused byglobal upstream port disruptions due to geopolitical tensions that have led to clustering of vessel arrivals. This congestion dramatically deteriorates schedule reliability, forces vessels to wait longer at anchorages, and stresses turnaround efficiency (Straits Times, 26 March 2026).

Second, shipping lines are heavily pressured to decarbonize, but they face major bottlenecks like the high cost of green fuels, supply shortages, and unproven scalability of alternative energy sources (Marine Policy, Vol.171, 25 January).

Third, as the Port of Singapore and regional fleets transition toward autonomous vessels and integrated digital platforms (such as Oceans-X), the sector faces mounting exposure to cyber threats and challenges in validating new maritime technologies (Straits Times, 21 April 2026).

Fourth, there is an acute need for professionals skilled in data analytics, AI, and green technology. The industry actively grapples with bridging the gap between legacy knowledge and the newly required operational expertise for electric harbour craft and smart ports (Singapore Maritime Foundation Website).

With fewer young Singaporeans choosing long-term seafaring careers, the traditional pipeline of experienced mariners transitioning to shore-based leadership has narrowed significantly, forcing companies to find alternative ways to build maritime operational knowledge in pure office workers. The shortages in transport and related coordination sectors are acute, with job vacancy rates 2.4 times higher than pre-COVID levels (Singapore Business Review, 14 September 2023).

However, without adequate manpower, the port might not be able to manage significant challenges in absorbing increasing volumes due to severe geopolitical disruptions, infrastructure constraints, and rising competition. Despite salaries that ranges approximately from SGD $ 2750 to $10000 for most workers and with Senior Executives from $8500 to $14000, the maritime sector faces an ongoing talent shortage, (My Careers future website). Around 85% of maritime employers are struggling to hire due to severe skill shortages and changing compensation expectations (faststream website).

Attracting local shore-based talent for Singapore's maritime hub is an acute challenge, primarily because traditional maritime roles are rapidly transforming into high-tech positions that compete directly with the mainstream technology, banking, and green energy sectors (Straits Times, 13 April 2026). As the international maritime centre transitions toward automated terminals, smart shipping platforms, and alternative fuel supply chains, the bottlenecks are no longer at sea, but in office-based operations.

HCMC to waive port infrastructure fees for 3 years:otherfirms by $272mn

The fee waiver applies to all organizations and individuals subject to port infrastructure charges under the city's existing regulations.

It is aimed at reducing logistics expenses, supporting import-export activities, improving business competitiveness, and facilitating cargo flows through the city's port system.

The city government said about 94,053 businesses currently pay the fees, with projected collections for 2026 estimated at VND2.39 trillion ($90.8 million), or about VND25.4 million ($965) per company on average.

Authorities said the proposal was introduced as businesses continue to face pressures from geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, higher shipping, fuel and insurance costs, as well as domestic financial, warehousing and transportation expenses.

Under the resolution, goods that passed customs-supervised areas before the new policy takes effect will continue to be subject to declaration, collection, refund or recovery procedures under existing rules to ensure continuity and transparency during the transition period.

Asian Logistics Sector

Logistics Management SupplyChain Management Review

Cambodia starts overland fruit exports to China via Laos.

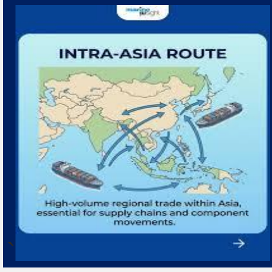
Cambodia has launched its first overland agricultural export route to China through Laos, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

MAFF Undersecretary of State and spokesperson Khim Finan said a shipment of four containers of fresh durians departed Cambodia for the Chinese market via the new route.

"This is a new route for transporting Cambodian agricultural products to China," Finan said in a video statement. "It has not only shortened our transit time to just one week—down from 15 to 20 days—but has also boosted the competitiveness of Cambodian agricultural products."

According to Finan, the route reduces transit times from 15 to 20 days to approximately one week. The overland corridor is expected to support exports of a range of agricultural products, including durians, yellow bananas, mangoes, coconuts, and Pailin longans.

The new logistics route provides an additional export channel for Cambodian agricultural products destined for China. Source: Khmer Times



Intra- Asia Trade

Iran open to oil supply talks with Malaysia as waiver takes effect

Iranian Ambassador to Malaysia Valiollah Mohammadi Nasrabadi. - File pic

KUALA LUMPUR: The 60-day waiver on the sale of Iranian crude oil in the global market has opened the door for Iran and Malaysia to further strengthen economic cooperation, particularly in the energy sector.
Iranian Ambassador to Malaysia Valiollah Mohammadi Nasrabadi said the waiver allows countries to purchase Iranian crude oil and petroleum products without restrictions, creating opportunities for deeper collaboration.

Any country now can buy oil and oil production from Iran, and there is no ban on such cooperation. For this reason, Malaysia also can, of course, come and buy oil from Iran," he told reporters on the sidelines of the Global Maritime Economics Conference 2026, organised by the Maritime Institute of Malaysia here today.

The conference, themed "Advancing Resilience and Accelerating Sustainable Maritime Growth", explores trends shaping global maritime economic growth amid ongoing geopolitical uncertainty. (**Source: Strait Times-Singapore**

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24th June 2026