



Sections

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Democracy Dies in Darkness

Inside America's Broken Supply Chain

How industry failures to collaborate and share information left the system vulnerable

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REPORTING FROM LOS ANGELES AND JOLIET, ILL.

The commercial pipeline that each year brings \$1 trillion worth of toys, clothing, electronics and furniture from Asia to the United States is clogged and no one knows how to unclog it.

This month, the median cost of shipping a standard rectangular metal container from China to the West Coast of the United States hit a record \$20,586, almost twice what it cost in July, which was twice what it cost in January, according to the Freightos index. Essential freight-handling equipment too often is not where it's needed, and when it is, there aren't enough truckers or warehouse workers to operate it.

...

On Sept. 1, 40 container ships belonging to companies such as Hyundai, NYK Line and Evergreen were anchored off California, waiting for a berth. (Less than three weeks later, the number reached 73.) Some vessels sit for two weeks or more, effectively cutting capacity on trans-Pacific shipping lanes and driving up costs.