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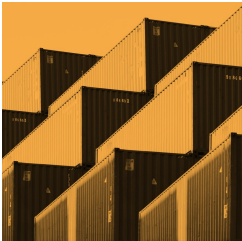
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Baltimore Bridge Disaster to Test Trucking, Port Flexibility Yet Again



By [Brendan Murray](#)
March 26, 2024 at 8:08 AM EDT

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An economic disruption along the US East Coast is unfolding with potentially tragic human consequences after a container ship struck the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, sending nearly the entire roadway structure crumbling into the water.

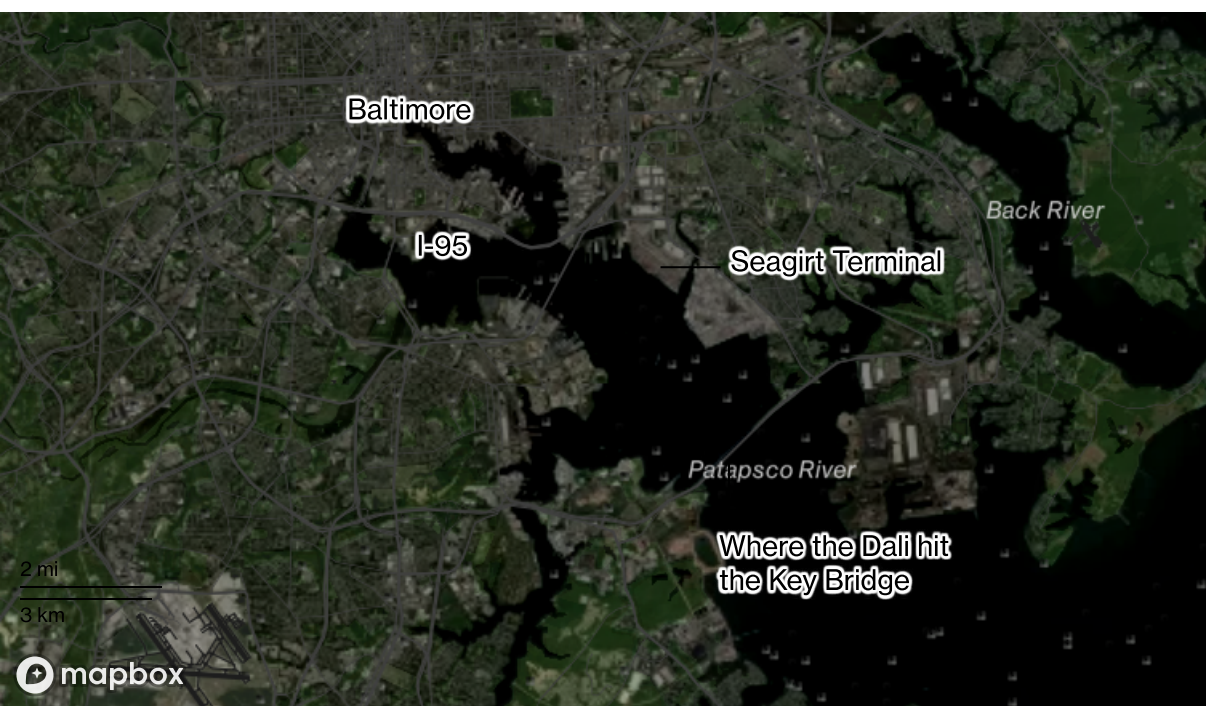
The immediate priority of the rescuers is finding people who may have been on the bridge either working or driving across. The ship, the Singapore-registered Dali, was operated by charter company Synergy Group and is time chartered by Maersk carrying Maersk customers' cargo.

Video: Baltimore Bridge Collision and Collapse

Of secondary concern in the days ahead will be tough questions about the effect on business, commuters, holiday travelers and the economy across the region.

The Port of Baltimore – the biggest handler of US imports and exports of cars and light trucks – looks to be out of commission indefinitely. The resulting bottleneck could accelerate a shift of goods through West Coast ports. Another crucial question: Which other ports have spare capacity to handle the Ro-Ro vessels that carry automobiles if Baltimore is closed for an extended period.

Baltimore's Key Bridge Collapses after Container Ship Hit



Source: IHS Markit, Bloomberg

With the Key Bridge in ruins ahead of the Easter weekend, trucks and passenger vehicles that would normally take Interstate 695 will face long detours and delays along the busy highway corridor that links Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York.

I-695 was an alternate route for hazardous materials and oversized vehicles that are prohibited from going through the more direct drive through the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel.

Aside from the gridlock for regional traffic that the bridge closure will cause, several prominent companies have distribution warehouses or other facilities in an industrial park on the north end of

the bridge. They include Amazon.com, FedEx, Under Armour, Home Depot, BMW and Volkswagen Group of America, according to Google Earth.

Video: Baltimore Bridge Collapse – What We Know

Maersk said none of its crew and personnel were on the vessel. Shares of the Danish carrier fell as much as 5% in Copenhagen.

“We are horrified by what has happened in Baltimore, and our thoughts are with all of those affected,” the company said in an emailed statement.

Almost two years ago, an Evergreen container vessel got stuck in the Chesapeake Bay near Baltimore, and it took salvage crews weeks to free it.

Ship collisions that do major structural damage to bridges are relatively rare. Though the cause will take months to determine, the Dali incident recalls a tragedy in Tampa, Florida, in 1980 when a freighter dealing with fog and strong wind struck the Sunshine Skyway, reportedly killing 35 people who fell in their vehicles from the bridge deck into the water.

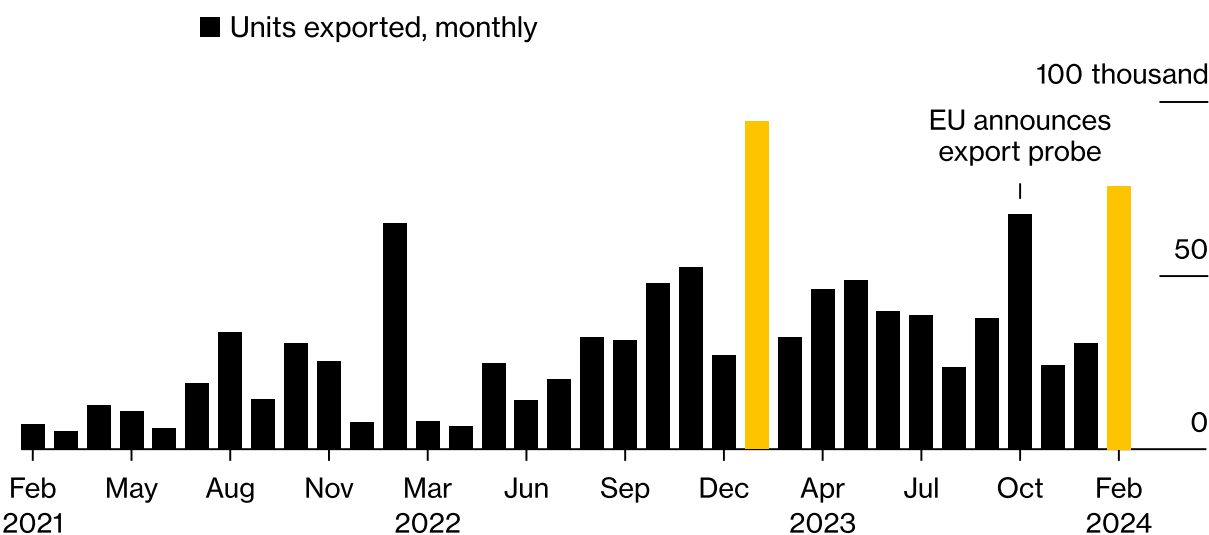
—Brendan Murray in London

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Charted Territory

Drop in China Electric Vehicle Exports to EU

Exports of pure EVs in January-February down nearly 20% on-year



Source: China Customs; Bloomberg

Note: Refers to exports under customs code 87038000. January and February data combined due to lunar new year

Export decline | China’s exports of electric vehicles to European Union countries dropped by nearly a fifth during the first two months of the year, according to official Chinese data, amid a probe by Brussels into

unfair subsidies of the industry. Just over 75,600 EVs shipped to the EU's 27 member countries in January and February, Chinese customs data showed, down 19.6% from last year.

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- The United Auto Workers is petitioning for a unionization vote at Volkswagen's Tennessee plant, teeing up a crucial test of the recently reinvigorated labor group's clout.
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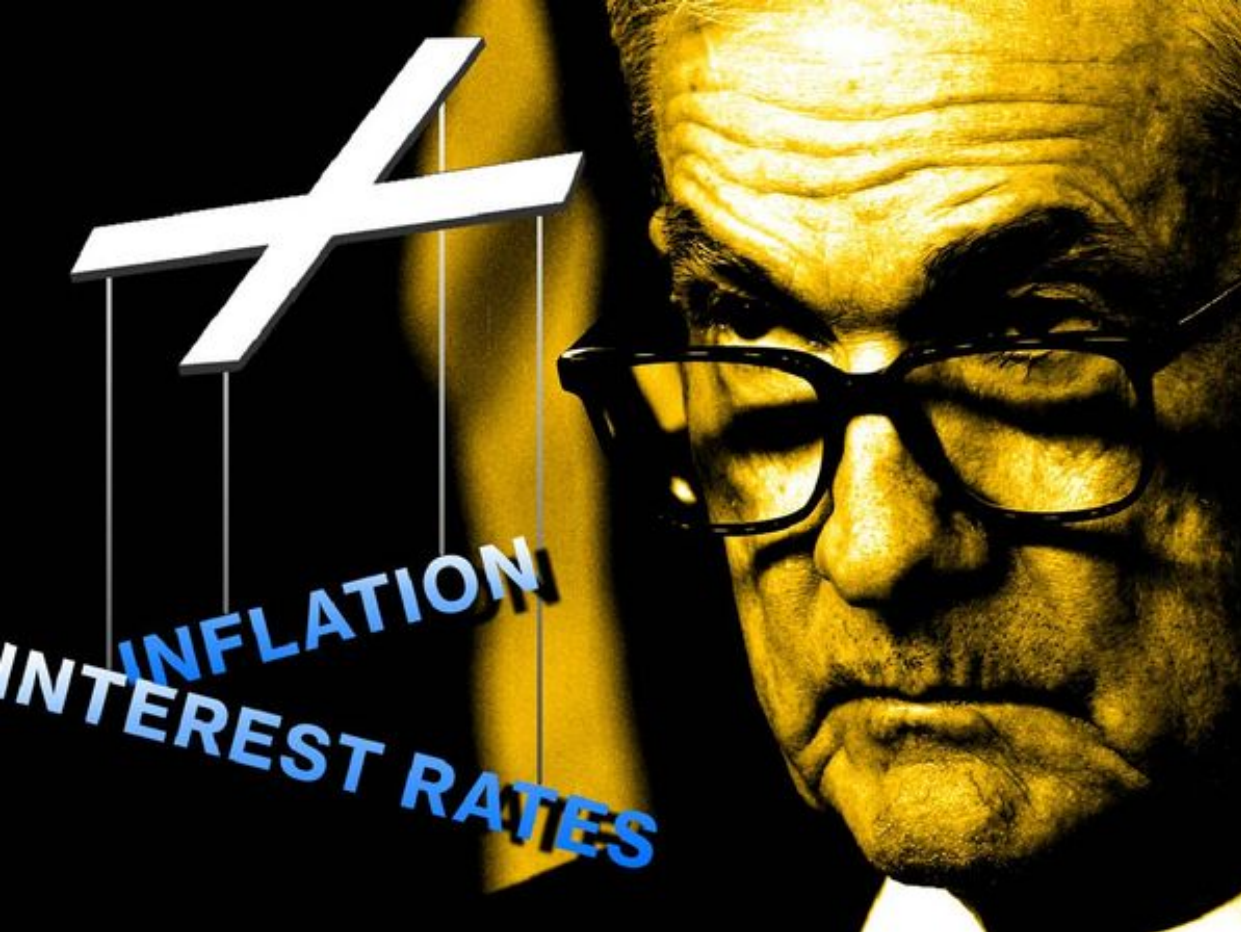
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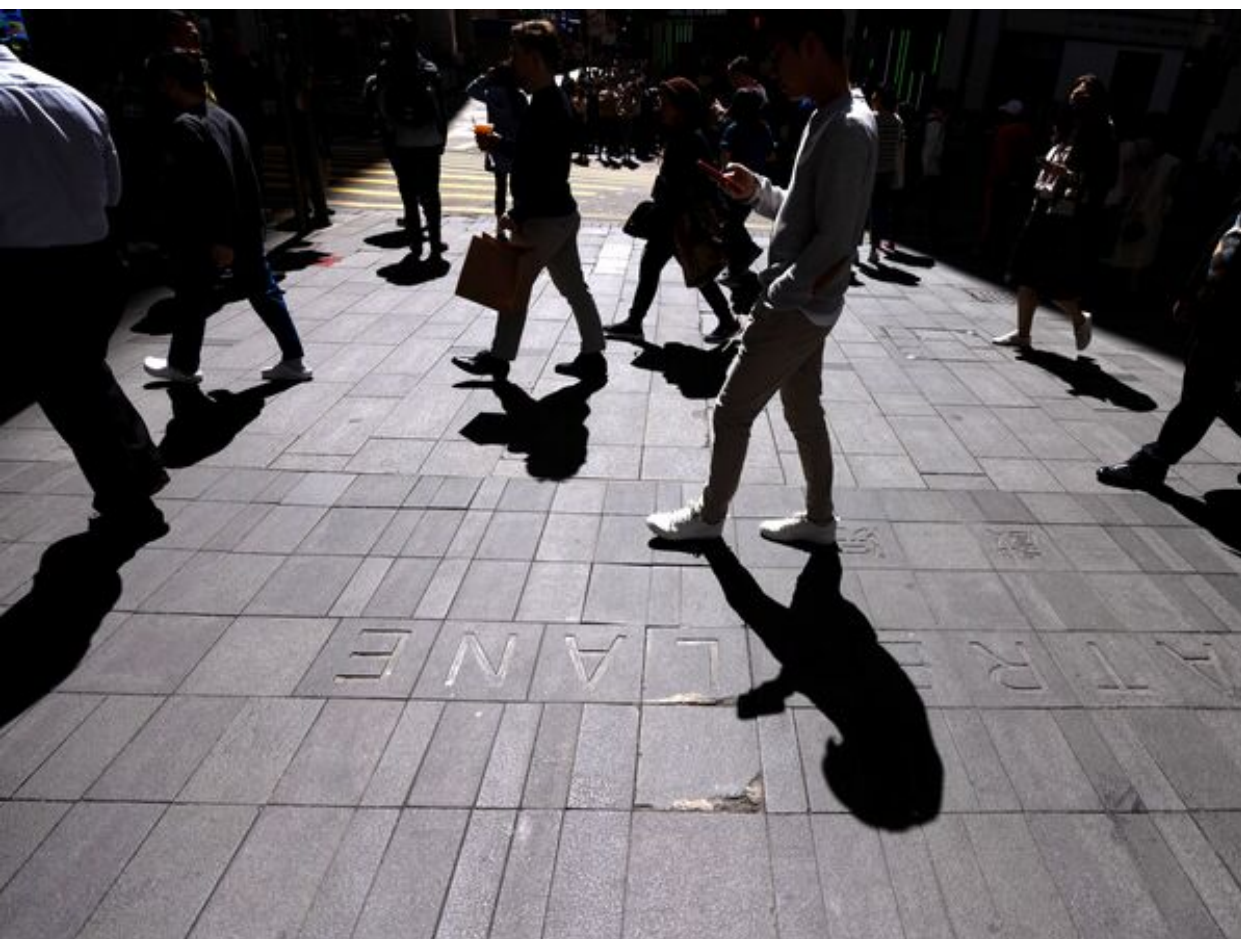
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