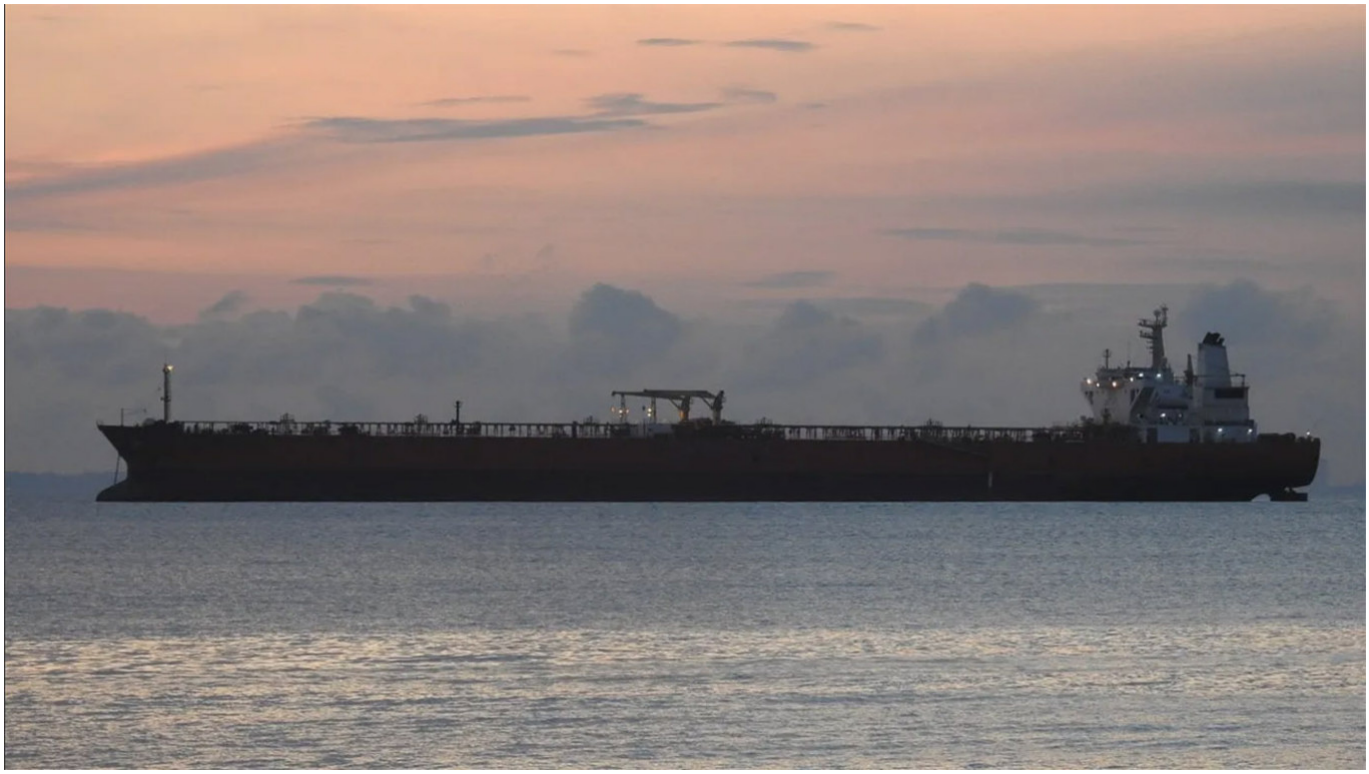
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Russian Oil Tankers Re-Route to India Despite U.S. Tariff Threats – Bloomberg

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Marcus Hand / seatrade-maritime.com

At least two Russian oil tankers that were initially expected to dock in East Asia have changed course to India, Bloomberg reported on Thursday, signaling that authorities in New Delhi may be looking to renew crude shipments from Russia despite tariff threats from the Trump administration.

The change of course comes amid turmoil in global energy markets as the war in the Middle East widens with no end in sight. Reuters reported earlier this week that the uncertainty has prompted Indian refineries to begin talks with the Indian government about new oil imports from Russia.

Bloomberg, citing ship-tracking data, reported that one Russian tanker carrying 730,000 barrels of Urals crude arrived in eastern India on Wednesday and another carrying 700,000 barrels is expected to arrive on Thursday. Both ships were supposed to have traveled further east.

A third tanker bound for Singapore may also ultimately be headed toward India after it made a sharp turn toward the country this week, Bloomberg said, noting that all three ships are under U.K. and EU sanctions for transporting Russian oil.

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In February, the White House said it would drop a puntititive 25% duty on all imports from India imposed over its purchases of Russian oil. That announcement was followed by reports that Indian refineries had pared back their purchases of Russian oil.

Chinese buyers also remain interested in Russian oil, but they have recently built up enough stocks to wait out the current energy crisis, according to Reuters.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak, who estimates that China and India purchase around 80% of Russia's oil exports, said Wednesday that Moscow was ready to increase supplies to both countries.

"Our oil is in high demand. If they buy, we'll sell," he said.

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