DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2016 – 082

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News reports received from readers and Internet News articles copied from various news sites.

Iskes Towage & Salvage BEVER seen outbound from Amsterdam with the Crane barge CONQUEST MB-1 bound for the Gulf of Mexico for her next assignment
Photo: Danny Plug ©

Due to travelling in Australia this week the newsclippings may reach you irregularly

EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

Seaway Heavy lifting's **OLEG STRASHNOV** seen loaded with monopoles in Scaldiaharbour in Vlissingen
Photo: Hans van der Linden www.facebook.com/AerolinPhoto

Petrobras seen returning to profit despite oil price slump

Petróleo Brasileiro SA probably returned to profit in the fourth quarter, a majority of analysts said on Friday in a Reuters poll, even as Brazil's state-controlled oil producer struggles with the impact of a slumping currency, low oil prices and a corruption scandal. Analysts are divided over whether one-time charges could result in a profit or loss as Rio de Janeiro-based Petrobras (PETR4.SA) fine-tunes accounting and governance policies in an attempt to recover from a price-fixing and bribery scandal. Petrobras probably earned 3.859 billion reais ($1.07 billion) in net income last quarter, compared with a net loss of 26.6 billion reais a year earlier, according to the estimates of six analysts in the poll. One analyst expects the company to post a loss of 6.987 billion reais in the quarter. It was unclear whether all the estimates included one-time expected writedowns or not.The company will publish fourth-quarter results after markets close on Monday.Petrobras' distribution unit likely benefited in the quarter from a government policy of keeping prices at Brazilian gas pumps high even as oil prices fell on global markets, giving the overall company a boost.Profit could also be bolstered if Petrobras books a one-time gain for the sale of a 49 percent stake in a natural gas distribution unit to Japan's Mitsui & Co, the poll showed.Still, downside to profit estimates will hinge on how much lower oil prices damaged existing field operations or triggered massive asset impairments, said Caio Carvalhal, an analyst with Banco Brasil Plural. Crude oil LCOc1 fell 42 percent last quarter.The year-earlier loss was driven by scandal-related impairments stemming from the overpricing of contracts between Petrobras and engineering firms. The scandal has sparked political turmoil in Brazil and calls for the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff - who was Petrobras's chairwoman for most of last decade.Net revenue is seen at 85.065 billion reais, according to the poll. Stagnant output and a steep recession has caused fuel sales to fall, the poll showed.Petrobras' practice of setting domestic fuel prices above world levels to make up for longtime subsidies to Brazilian consumers should insulate refining and marketing operations from the oil price drop and recession, said Luana Sigfried, analyst with Raymond James & Co in Houston. **Source: Reuters (Editing by Guillermo Parra-Bernal, Bernard Orr)**

Men stranded at sea rescued by lifeboat

TWO men were rescued by the Littlehampton RNLI lifeboat after their leisure cruiser suffered a total engine failure.

The coastguard received a radio call from the crew of a leisure cruiser at around 8.45am reporting total engine failure and that they were stranded seven and half miles south of Littlehampton harbour. The volunteer crew of Littlehampton RNLI lifeboat were paged at 8.49am. The RNLI station's Atlantic 75 **BLUE PETER 1** lifeboat was launched at 9.02am and headed out in overcast weather towards the stranded vessel.

A spokesman for Littlehampton RNLI lifeboat said: "On arrival at the scene the lifeboat came alongside the vessel and the volunteer crew rigged a tow line in preparation for its recovery.

"The vessel and two male crew were taken under tow and commenced the journey back to the harbour, where it was returned safely to its moorings."The owner of the cruiser thanked the volunteer crew for their assistance and made a donation to the RNLI."The lifeboat returned to the station at 11.14am where it was refuelled and made ready for service." **Source: littlehamptongazette**

Fred Olsen's **BALMORAL** seen inbound at the Wersterschelde
Photo: Hans van der Linden www.facebook.com/AerolinPhoto (c)

Kon-Tiki2 Raft Expedition Rescued by Bulker

The crewmembers of the **KON TIKI-2** balsa raft expedition were rescued Friday by the wood-chip bulker Hokuetsu Ushaka. After 114 days and 4500 nautical miles in the south-east Pacific, they elected to end their voyage in rescue, due to a slower than expected rate of travel and a foul weather forecast ahead. The expedition requested assistance from the Chilean Navy, which coordinated a rendezvous with the Ushaka. The raft crew removed their equipment and dismantled their rafts, Tupac Yapanqui and Rahiti, before departing.The goal of the expedition was to show that balsa rafts could sail from South America to Easter Island and back. The expedition reached Easter Island after 43 days at sea, but the return voyage proved more difficult due to what the organization described as atypical winds.“In a normal year, we would have reached South America by now. Instead, we are still 900 nautical miles from land and the weather forecasts are not promising. The crew is at good health and spirit, and there is no emergency situation,” said expedition leader Torgeir Higraff. “Needless to say, it is sad to end the expedition without reaching South America.”

The rafts left Lima, Peru on November 7, 2015, and arrived on Easter Island just before Christmas. On January 6, 2016, they started the return voyage.

“We have made good progress . . . but this is an El Niño year and the weather patterns we have encountered have been atypical. We realize that reaching South America will take too long and we prefer to evacuate to ensure safety for all,” said Higraff.The rafts were also equipped as data-gathering platforms for climate and oceanographic research. “From a scientific point of view, it has been particularly interesting that the expedition took place in one of the strongest El Niño years recorded, even if El Niño now contributes to the termination of the expedition,” said Cecilie Mauritzen, the expedition's chief scientist. The expedition had encountered gale-force weather earlier in their journey, resulting in damage to the rafts and water infiltration reaching some stores, including one raft’s supply of flour. **Source: MAREX**

Oil rigs rise by one, ending months-long slide

US oil drillers added one rig back to a desolate oil patch this week, according to the latest Baker Hughes rig count.

The number of oil rigs chasing crude rose by one to 387 in the week ending March 18. Rigs drilling for natural gas fell by five to 89. Combined, the rig count fell by four to 476.The oil rig remains down 75.9 percent from its October 10, 2014 peak and down more than 53 percent from this week last year. The last time producers added rigs was in the week of Dec. 11 through Dec. 18, when the count rose from 524 to 541. Today's rock-bottom rig count, and the declining production it has driven, has helped pushed oil prices back above $40 per barrel. On Friday, oil was hovering around $40 per barrel after briefly touching a high of $41.19 per barrel. Shortly after the count was released, oil traded down 20 cents or 0.5 percent to $40.00 per barrel. **Source: Fuelfix**

The **INLAND SEA** into Port Chalmers to load logs for Asia. **Photo: Ross Walker ©**

Eni Plans Deeper Cost Cuts, Asset Sales to Weather Oil Plunge

Eni SpA, Italy's largest oil producer, plans additional asset sales valued at 7 billion euros ($7.9 billion) by 2019 and deeper cost cuts as it seeks to offset the impact of the plunge in oil prices.The explorer targets production growth of 13 percent to 2019, while reducing upstream capital expenditure by a further 18 percent compared with last year's plan, Rome-based Eni said in a strategy update Friday. Savings from measures including contract renegotiations and synergies with existing assets have brought down break-even costs for new projects to $27 a barrel of oil equivalent from $45, it said.Eni and its peers are trying to adapt to the worst crude-market collapse in a generation by cutting spending. The company reported a fourth-quarter loss last month, even as oil and gas production rose to the highest in five years."Our industry is facing a very complex challenge: reducing costs to fulfill short-term constraints while enhancing long-term value,'' Chief Executive Officer Claudio Descalzi said in the statement. "We are well positioned to meet this challenge through a competitive cost structure, an efficient operating model and a flexible asset portfolio.''
Eni confirmed its 2016 dividend of 80 euro cents ($0.90) a share. **Source: Bloomberg**

Market Conditions Dampen West Africa's Deepwater Outlook

By: Velda Addison, Hart Energy

Project delays and cancellations coupled with less spending and lower oil prices are casting clouds on future oil and gas development in West Africa's deep water, prompting an energy consultancy to lower its production forecast for the region. However, the short-term forecast is bright as companies move on with projects sanctioned before market conditions worsened.Douglas-Westwood now believes production will peak at about 2.8 million barrels of oil equivalent per day (MMboe/d) in 2019, a 44% fall from its previous deepwater drilling forecast. Production is expected to drop further, hitting about 2.5 MMboe/d by 2021.

The revised forecast delivered March 17 came in response to market conditions that have dramatically changed since a year ago."At the time, Brent crude was rebounding toward a mid-2015 peak of over $60 per barrel," Douglas-Westwood said in a statement. "However, in the months since this peak, oil prices plummeted once more, with Brent reaching lows of $26 per barrel in January 2016."Although Brent crude's front-month jumped 2.3% to $41.27/bbl on March 17 as West Texas Intermediate futures rose 3.5% to within 25 cents of $40/bbl at about noon ET, damage to companies' profit margins has already been done. The costs cuts, layoffs and search for greater efficiency and improved contract terms continue. Healthy activity offshore West Africa was expected to result in about 483 deepwater development wells through 2021. Now, the firm predicts deepwater wells drilled offshore West Africa could drop from 89 this year to 23 in 2020. "Should low oil prices persist in the medium term, DW does not expect to see a recovery to activity levels similar to that of recent years until well into the next decade," Douglas-Westwood said.Deepwater projects in just about all parts of the world have been impacted, but many of the stalled deepwater projects are offshore West Africa. These include projects led by Royal Dutch Shell Plc (NYSE: RDS.A) and Total among others. In its fourth-quarter 2015 release, Shell said it postponed a final investment decision on the Bonga South West deepwater project offshore Nigeria. "Many of these slippages have been high-profile developments for their respective operators," Douglas-Westwood said before pointing out Eni's Etan, where development is not expected to begin until the 2020s. In addition, Maersk Oil has paused development of Chissonga offshore Angola, Douglas-Westwood said. But the revised outlook was not all bad news. Projects sanctioned before the downturn are bright spots. These include:

The Kaombo ultra-deepwater project offshore Angola. The Total-operated project is due to start up in 2017 with an estimated oil production capacity of 230Mbbl/d. Total said it is tapping oil deposits in six fields for the development, which will utilize two FPSO units that were once crude oil carriers.

Eni's Offshore Cape Three Points oil and gas project offshore Ghana where first oil is expected in 2017. Gas production is scheduled to start up in 2018. Eni and its partners envision peak production of 80Mboe/d in 2019.

The ultra-deepwater Egina Field, set to start production in 2018. The Total-operated development offshore Nigeria will be connected to an FPSO vessel using umbilicals and risers. The field is expected to produce about 200Mbbl/d.

The Tullow Oil-operated Tweneboa-Enyenra-Ntomme (TEN) deepwater development offshore Ghana, expected to begin production between July and August 2016.In addition, Tullow also has given the Greater Jubilee Full Field development plan to the government of Ghana. Its strategy is to increase reserves, but the plan was revamped "given the current environment to reduce the overall capital requirement and allow flexibility in the timing of the investment," Tullow said in its 2015 full-year results.Focus remains on keeping operating costs low. Tullow, for example, said its operating costs per barrel in West Africa averaged $10/bbl for Jubilee and $15/bbl across its West Africa nonoperated portfolio in 2015.

The company said it "is working to maximize Jubilee and TEN operational synergies in Ghana where combined operating costs are expected to reduce to [circa US]$8/bbl in 2018." **Source: EP Magazine**

Ministry of Shipping of Republic of India : Port led development can create 1 crore jobs over the next 5 years – Nitin Gadkari

Union Minister for Shipping, Road Transport and Highways, Mr. Nitin Gadkari has said port and shipping sector has potential to create nearly 40 lakh direct jobs and 60 lakh indirect employment opportunities over the next 5 year. Speaking at the curtain raiser press conference of the India Maritime Summit in Mumbai today, Mr. Gadkari said 'all the developed countries have a vibrant port sector, but unfortunately, our maritime sector remained neglected over the years, despite having immense potential'.

Recalling Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi's thrust on port led development, Mr Gadkari said his Ministry has drawn up projects with investment potential of Rs 1,20,000 crores, (US $ 18 billion) which will be showcased at the India Maritime Summit to be held in Mumbai from April 14 -16. These include 27 port based industrial clusters, promotion of coastal shipping and development of inland waterways as part of the Sagarmala Project.The Minister said there was an urgent need to bring down the logistics costs to make our products as well exports competitive. 'Currently logistics costs in India is about 18%, while it is 10-12% in Europe. Our focus is on bringing down the logistics cost from 18% to 12% by developing coastal shipping and inland waterways. Needless to mention that water transport is the cheapest mode of transport' he added.Giving details of major initiatives taken by the Government, Mr. Gadkari said new green field ports will be coming up at Vadhavan, near Dahanu in Maharashtra, Colachal near Kanyakumari in Tamilnadu and Sagar Island in West Bengal, entailing an investment of Rs 20,157 crores. He said port modernization programmes, hinterland connectivity and multi-modal logistics also offer huge investment opportunities. The Shipping Ministry has also identified two marine clusters at Saurashtra in Gujarat and Ennore, Tamilnadu for ship building, ship repair and recycling. Similarly coastal steel clusters are planned at Southern Maharashtra and Northern Tamilnadu. Mr. Gadkari said the development of 111 inland waterways also offers huge investment opportunities in the fields of dredging, fairway development and terminal construction.Secretary, Shipping Mr. Rajive Kumar said the Maritime India Summit in Mumbai will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister on April 14th which will be followed by Investors Summit, panel discussions, B2B and G2B meetings. South Korea is the partner country of the Summit. Delegates from 57 countries are expected to attend the summit.'The Summit will showcase latest technologies, products and services as well as help disseminate knowledge about the latest development in Maritime Sector. It will provide a platform to interact closely with leading global Maritime organisations to explore business opportunities and create awareness about opportunities in India' Mr. Kumar added.The Venue of the Maritime India Summit is the Bombay Convention & Exhibition Centre, Goregaon (East).**Source: Ministry of Shipping of the Republic of India**

Van Oord's **NEXUS** seen moored in Beverwijk (The Netherlands) **Photo : Patrick Deenik ©**

Siemens-Gamesa merger puts French offshore wind deal at risk

Siemens has no plans to build a turbine factory in France after it merges its wind assets with those of Spain's Gamesa, nor does it want any jumbo turbine technology developed by Areva, two sources said.The German and Spanish companies plan to combine their wind assets to form the world's biggest wind farm manufacturer ahead of Denmark's Vestas, but the project has stalled over how to deal with Gamesa's existing venture with France's Areva. That venture won contracts to build wind parks with 1.5 gigawatts of capacity off the French coast, on condition that Areva develops and builds a jumbo offshore turbine in France.But the planned Siemens deal with Gamesa has cast doubt on that venture, called Adwen, and risks derailing French ambitions to create a national champion in a sector now thriving after years of overcapacity and losses."Siemens has no need for Areva's technology. It is developing its own big turbines," one source familiar with the matter said.A second source said Siemens, which is Europe's market leader for offshore wind power turbines, could not build a factory in France for just two contracts. Adwen's two contracts are a 1 gigawatt offshore park in consortium with Engie (ENGIE.PA) and a 500 megawatt (MW) farm with Spain's Iberdrola (IBE.MC) - with Areva due to build the turbines in both cases.Siemens Chief Executive Officer Joe Kaeser, who met French Industry Minister Emmanuel Macron on Monday in Paris, declined to comment on the Gamesa deal on a conference call on Friday.France awarded Areva the contracts - which together are worth nearly 6 billion euros to the consortiums - in 2012 and 2014, buying the power at the above-market price of about 200 euros per MW with a view to creating an offshore wind champion. But Areva, which is chiefly a state-owned nuclear power company, is now virtually bankrupt after five years of losses and is being bailed out by the state.One of the sources said France had few options to influence Siemens, but given the offshore wind farm contracts were conditional on turbine factories being built in France it could still cancel them."That is the only weapon the government has," one source said, adding that

Siemens was talking to the government about the conditions under which the contracts could proceed. Talks are also underway with General Electric, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Mitsui about buying part, or all of Adwen, the two sources said.Attempts to turn French energy company Alstom into a national wind power champion ended when it sold its energy division to General Electric The U.S. giant has inaugurated the first two of four planned wind turbine factories in France for an EDF-led consortium which is building a 1.5 GW wind park off France's Atlantic coast. **Source: Reuters (Additional reporting by Hans Seidenstuecker in Frankfurt and Jose Elias Rodríguez in Madrid; editing by David Clarke)**

TSHD BRABO OPERATING IN SRI LANKA

from (Left to right) bulkcarrier "**TABERNACLE STAR II**" , launch "**JAHARATA**", tug "**SINHABAHU II**" and Trailing suction hopper dredger (TSHD) "**BRABO**", which last vessel is deepening the berthpocket and maneuvering area for **Tokyo Cement PLC**. A full Sri Lanka company in contrary to what it's name suggests. Left: a close passage of a fishingvessel in front of the bow of the "**BRABO**". **Photo's : Floor van Kleef ©**

Rs 2000cr dredging operation by JNPT for berthing of bigger vessels

JNPT board has approved Rs 2000 crore dredging operation of the channel between BPT and its own end to facilitate bigger ships docking/berthing at the port premises. The port had dredged the channel earlier increasing the depth from 12 to 14 meter. The new proposal is to increase the depth to 15 meter. JNPT deputy chairman, Neeraj Bansal said Saturday, "a cabinet nod will be required post work order, the channel deepening work will take couple of months. It is expected to be complete by the end of 2016-17 fiscal or beginning of 2017-2018." Sources said one fifth of the cost will be borne by BPT that is a multi cargo port.JNPT made news when a terminal (NSIGT) recently done by DP world hosted largest container vessel MSC Francesca measuring 363 meter in length Friday with a carrying capacity of 11000 teus (20 ton equivalent units).Bsanal said a bigger container cargo vessel from the same Swiss shipping company is scheduled to berth on April 1. This will be biggest to berth in the country. The future is that of bigger vessel for economies of transportation and the shipping industry was geared towards being future perfect. JNPT is the biggest container cargo handling port in the country and also the hub of PM's Make in India project. **Source: timesofindia**

The **VICTIS ISLE** arriving in **Djen Djen (Algeria)** **Photo : Jan van Vuuren ©**

Cargo ferry between Costa Rica, El Salvador to start in July

A new cargo ferry service with the capacity to transport up to 100 semitrailers each trip between Costa Rica and El Salvador will launch operations in July, Public Works and Transport (MOPT) Vice Minister Sebastián Urbina said Thursday. The ferry will travel three times a week each way between the Puntarenas port of Caldera and La Unión port in El Salvador, both on the Pacific coast.MOPT estimates a one-way trip will take about 16 hours, compared to the current driving time of up to five days by road.“Add to that the countless hours truck drivers must spend at customs at every border,” Urbina said.The vice minister said the new ferry route would boost competitiveness in the region. For Costa Rica it will help reduce costs, decongest traffic at the Peñas Blancas border with Nicaragua and considerably reduce time spent complying with red tape.Spanish shipping company Naviera Odiel will manage the ferry route, with departures from El Salvador on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from Costa Rica on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.Odiel President Javier Villafante said the new ferry would benefit commerce across Central America. The company initially expects to move 60 semis on every one-way trip and reach 100 within the first six months of operation.The reduction in the number of trucks circulating across the country will also have a positive effect on the environment and on the conditions of the national roadway system.“It also will improve safety for drivers who face constant dangers while passing through many insecure areas of the region,” Urbina said.The vice minister last year said a passenger ferry is planned for the project’s second phase, although a timetable for that is still under evaluation. **Source: ticotimes**

Capt. Antonio M. Padrón y Santiago, "IMO Maritime Ambassador" and Maritime Authority of Tenerife participated in the presentation of the SANTACRUCEROS Festival, organized by Cohesion City-Port Factory (FACOCIP). FACOCIP is a non profit organization that works with the main objective to achieve successful integration of port life with city life.
FACOCIP works on different lines with the main aim to promote and disseminate among citizens and tourists the transcendental importance of the port and encourage our visitors to know the cities, appreciating its friendly face.

Alaska lawmaker suggests privatizing parts of ferry system

Sen. Pete Micciche, a Soldotna Republican, said at the mid-session summit of Southeast Conference that some Prince William Sound routes of the Alaska Marine Highway System could easily be managed by private or nonprofit organizations, The Ketchikan Daily News reporte The ferry system serves 33 communities along Alaska's southern coast. Critics of Micciche's plan say privatization is easier in theory than in practice and that contracting outside companies to operate service around Prince William Sound could affect the system's unions. A better option would be to contract out expensive ferry services like hotel and food services, Inter-Island Ferry Authority General Manager Dennis Watson said. IFA sails between Ketchikan and Prince of Wales Island. Most ferry system employees are members of one of three unions: Masters, Mates and Pilots, Inlandboatmen's Union or Marine Engineer's Beneficial Association."There's a lot of labor issues there," Watson said. "There are contracts, and labor has to be at the table when we talk about all of this."Robert Venables, a member of the Alaska Marine Transportation Advisory Board and an employee of Southeast Conference, said he worries privatizing parts of the system would only increase problems."We want to make sure that we don't have the have and have-nots and Balkanize the system to where it's not able to fulfill its mission," Venables said.The suggestion comes as the Legislature considers a new budget. The ferry system is facing reductions of more than $4 million at least and about $10 million at most.The system's summer schedule will continue as planned through September regardless of cuts from the state, ferry system general manager John Falvey said Wednesday.**source: Ketchikan (Alaska) Daily News**

Spotted in Djen Djen port in Algeria a **Damen Shipyard group** built **DAMEN STANTENDER 1350**
Photo : Jan van Vuuren ©

Chinese vessels ram PH fishers' boat at Panatag

Chinese Coast Guard rubber boats rammed and damaged a boat carrying 11 Filipino fishermen at Panatag Shoal (international name: Scarborough Shoal) in early March, in a move likely to heighten tensions between the Philippines and China in the hotly disputed South China Sea. The fishermen, who arrived here early Saturday after a 16-day fishing trip to Panatag Shoal, said they were driven away by the Chinese Coast Guard twice, on March 5 and 6. China seized the shoal from the Philippines after a two-month standoff between Chinese and Philippine vessels in 2012. It has since cordoned off the shoal, driving away Filipino fishermen from their traditional fishing ground.

Without military muscle to retake the shoal, the Philippines filed a case in the United Nations Permanent Court of Arbitration in January 2013, asking the tribunal to invalidate China's claim to almost all of the South China Sea.The Philippine move angered China, which started to build artificial islands in the South China Sea to bolster its claim to the strategic waterway.With a ruling expected from the arbitral tribunal in coming weeks, China has started activities at Panatag that the United States, which has detected Chinese movements around the shoal, says could be a precursor to more land reclamation in the South China Sea.Adm. John Richardson, head of US naval operations, reported the Chinese activity at Panatag on Thursday, expressing concern that a ruling by the UN tribunal in favor of the Philippines could be a trigger for Beijing to declare an exclusion zone in the South China Sea. Richardson said the United States was weighing responses to such a move by China in the strategic waterway where $5 trillion in global trade passes every year and where islets, reefs and atolls are believe to be sitting atop vast energy reserves.

Junmar Pumicpic, 25, captain of the FB Bubhoy, said they were fishing near the shoal around 9 a.m. on March 5 when Chinese coast guards in rubber boats arrived and drove them away. The shoal is located 230 kilometers from Masinloc, Zambales province, well within the Philippines' 370-km exclusive economic zone.It is also known as Bajo de Masinloc to residents of this coastal town."One of their rubber boats carried three men in uniform. [They] approached us and told us in English to leave," Pumicpic said."This is China Coast Guard. Go back to Subic," he said, quoting one of the Chinese coast guards as saying to them."We were surprised that they knew we were from Subic. After telling us to leave, they returned to the shoal and we thought [that was it]," Pumicpic said. But after a few minutes, the boat returned and rammed the fishing boat several times, he said."We were all traumatized by what they did to us. Some of us were shaking. We thought they were going to sink our boat," he said.The boat held, but it was damaged in the ramming, he said. Another member of the fishing trip, Reynante Caitum, 22, said the Chinese coast guards engaged them in a "tug of war," pulling the rope tied to a small boat that was aboard the fishing vessel."They wanted to get our service boat, but we resisted. We lifted the anchor to pull away and save our lives," Caitum said. Pumicpic said the Chinese coast guards came again on March 6 and drove them away shining blinding laser devices and powerful lights on them.The incidents were captured on video, Pumicpic said.“We gave the video to the Philippine Coast Guard detachment in Subic. I hope they will make an official report about it,” he said. Pumicpic said the fishermen showed no fear, taking out knives and harpoons to defend themselves.“We feared for our lives and we thought of our families. But if they intended to kill us, we were determined to fight back,” he said. DFA has no information In Manila, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said it had no information about the incident.**source: globalnation.inquirer**

Condor Liberation ferry sets sail after being detained

A ferry detained for urgent repairs has set sail after passing an inspection, the operator has confirmed. Condor said the **LIBERATION** set sail from Poole earlier on Saturday after being detained since Tuesday. Safety issues were found on the vessel, which is heading for Jersey and Guernsey, by Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) inspectors. But a spokesman for Condor said the boat now reached the "highest standards of safety".The operator said contingency plans retained the "lifeline passenger links" to the Channel Islands, with about 70% of passengers offered travel on their booked day and all passengers travelling within 24 hours of their booking. Inspectors found 11 deficiencies, with four giving grounds for detention; the main engine operation, steering gear operation, fire doors and ISM (International safety management code). **Source: BBC Photo: David Proud ©**

Wärtsilä signs cooperation agreement with China’s leading ship design house

Wärtsilä’s Ship Design unit has entered into a cooperation agreement with **Shanghai Merchant Ship Design & Research Institute (SDARI),** China’s leading ship design house. SDARI is a part of the China State Shipbuilding Corporation group (CSSC). The agreement was signed in December 2015 and will cover the designs for various types of vessels for the offshore oil & gas industry. There is also the possibility to extend this cooperation to other vessel types as well.

The agreement provides a means for the two companies to combine their strengths in order to provide customers with a better value proposition. The joint collaboration will give customers access to the industry's most extensive ship design portfolio combining both the Wärtsilä and SDARI offerings. The cooperation will also enable the same supplier to manage the interface risk between the basic and detail design, which has traditionally been handled by two separate companies.Hence, the overall relationship with ship owners and Chinese shipyards will be strengthened through shorter design development times, an in-depth knowledge of all applicable global rules and regulations, and production design capabilities. **Source: portnews**

Boskalis recently acquired KMAR 404 **UNION BEAR** left the drydock at **Damen shiprepair** in Schiedam ready for action **Photo : Leen van der Meijden ©**

Port of Gothenburg starts operation of new crude oil storage cavern

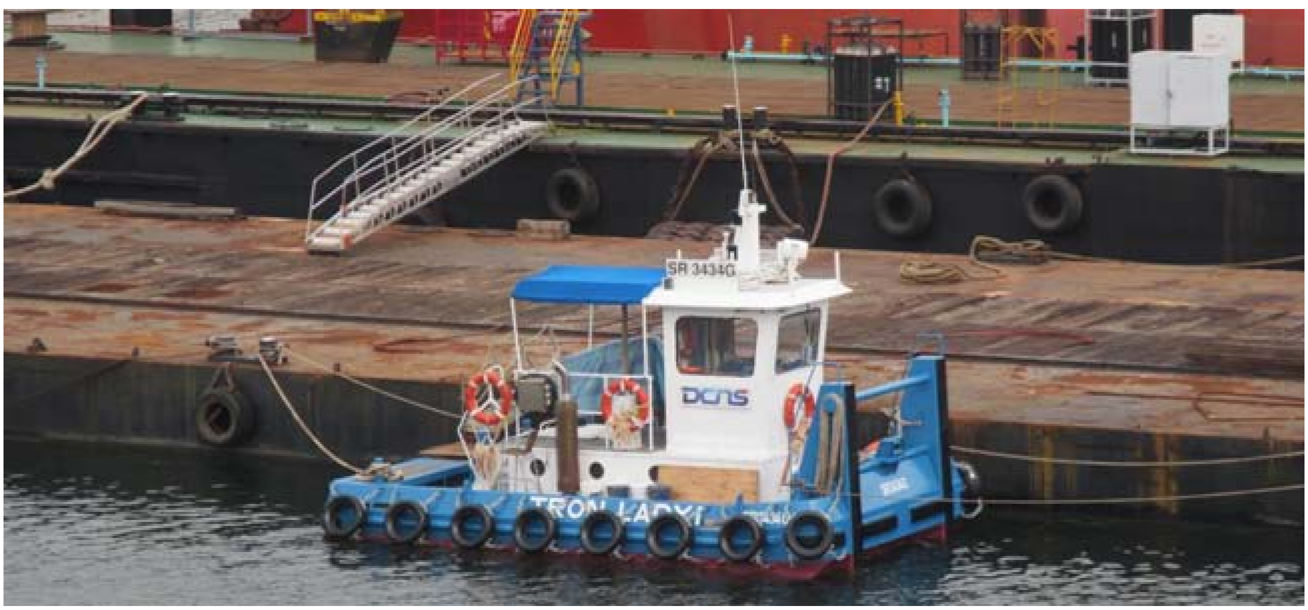
A new underground cavern will be brought into operation at the Port of Gothenburg. The cavern is 600,000 cubic metres in size and will be used for interim storage of crude oil. The operator will be the independent storage company Scandinavian Tank Storage, the company said in its press release. Located immediately beside the Port of Gothenburg is an underground storage facility. Gothenburg Port Authority has two caverns at its disposal, each 600,000-800,000 cubic metres in size.One of them was opened for crude oil storage in 2009. The second is about to be brought into operation. An agreement has been signed with Scandinavian Tank Storage, which will operate both caverns.

The caverns are located at the Tor Harbour, one of three energy harbours in Gothenburg. This is also the deepest point at the port – 20.5 metres. The first vessel carrying crude oil for the new cavern is due to arrive approximately one year from now.**source: portnews**

MSC FANTASIA arrived in Haifa for her 1.5 day visit. **Photo : Peter Szamosi ©**

Sri Lanka eyes Chinese partners for Hambantota port, Mattala airport

Sri Lanka is in talks to forge partnerships with Chinese firms to make Hambantota port and Mattala airport built with Chinese debt commercially viable, State Minister for International Trade Sujeewa Senasinghe said. At the moment Sri Lanka Ports Authority cannot generate cash from Hambantota port to repay its loans and Mattala airport is also a drain on the finances of Airport and Aviation Services, a state-run airport agency.Senasinghe said the Hambantota port and airport along with an investment zone for Chinese will be an overall package that will bring large volumes of investments to the country later this year.He said talks with Chinese government was progressing and he could not yet name the specific firm that will partner with the airport.Sri Lanka is expecting to iron out agreements on the airport and ports as well as a 1.4 billion US dollar 'Port City' sea reclamation by the time Prime Minister Ranil Wickemasinghe visits China, he said. China's Cosco Shipyard Group Company Ltd and China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd are studying the feasibility of building a 600 million dollars shipyard in Hambantota.There is already an existing memorandum of understanding signed during Chinese President Xi Jinping to build a container terminal in Hambantota on a supply operate transfer (SOT) basis. **Source; economynext**



The **IRON LADY** seen moored next ST Marine, Singapore **Photo: Crew HAM 310**

Most Powerful Seismic Ship Named

The third of four Ramform Titan-class vessels, the **Ramform Tethys,** was celebrated in a naming ceremony at the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Shipbuilding yard in Nagasaki, Japan last week. The **Ramform Tethys** is the most powerful and efficient marine seismic acquisition vessel in the world, and along with the first two Ramform Titan-class vessels, **Ramform Titan** and **Ramform Atlas**, the widest ships ever at the waterline.These first two vessels were delivered to PGS in 2013 and 2014. The **Ramform Tethys** has been upgraded to include small modifications relating to equipment handling on the back deck and to have an increase in engine power up from the 23,040 kW of the earlier vessels. On **Ramform Tethys**, mutually redundant twin engine rooms provide a total power pack of 26.4 megawats to drive three 6,000 kW controlled pitch propellers. She can tow a full spread of dual-sensor recording equipment

using just two of them. Two stern-launched work boats permit safe streamer maintenance also in marginal weather. Maritime and seismic equipment maintenance can increasingly be carried out at sea without impairing operations. Drydocking interval is 7.5 years. "With the increased power output and the back deck modifications we are enhancing the Ramform Titan-class acquisition platform further. Productivity, safety, stability and redundancy are the key benefits of these vessels. Their ability to tow many streamers gives high data quality with dense cross-line sampling and cost efficient acquisition with wide tows," says Per Arild Reksnes, EVP Operations. The design dovetails advanced maritime technology to the imaging capabilities of the GeoStreamer seismic acquisition technology. The vessel's 70 meter broad stern is fully exploited with 24 streamer reels: 16 reels aligned abreast and eight reels further forward, with capacity for 12 kilometer (7.5 mile) streamers on each reel. With such capabilities, the Ramform Tethys has tremendous flexibility and redundancy for high capacity configurations, says PGS. Increased work space and advanced equipment handling mean safer and even more robust operations. The Ramform concept design is made by Roar Ramde.
Ramford Tethys carries over 6,000 tons of fuel and equipment. **Source: MAREX**

The Boskalis units **UNION PRINCESS** and **UNION MANTA** outbound from Rotterdam enroute to their next project, note the "*Luctor Et Emergo* " flag at the fwd mast of the **PRINCESS**
Photo : Leen van der Meijden © CLICK at the photo to see Kees Torn's movie and hyperlinks in the text

Port of Cork bids to attract more cruise liner visits

By: Sean O'Riordan

The Port of Cork has this week embarked on an effort to attract more cruise liner visits to the famed harbour. It launched a travel brochure showing what the region has to offer during the cruise industry's premier showcase event in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Officials from the company have attended Seatrade Cruise Global. A key event in the cruise calendar, it guarantees to bring together every facet of the business including cruise lines, suppliers, travel agents, and others. The Port of Cork attended as an exhibitor on the Cruise Ireland and Cruise Europe stand. The port's commercial manager Michael McCarthy said the Fort Lauderdale spectacle was the epicentre of the cruise industry.
He said some of the industry's most knowledgeable delegates will attend and speak at the conference, so networking opportunities are substantial. "The Port of Cork's cruise strategy for the next five years will focus on promoting the region and all it has to offer to potential cruise passengers, as well as expanding our business," said Capt McCarthy.
"Our relationship with the cruise lines is excellent and they are very aware of what the port can handle in terms of ship size. Our challeng now is to make sure the cruise companies know exactly what there is to see and do for their passengers while visiting Cork and that is why we will be marketing the Cork city and county region at Seatrade Cruise Global." This year, the port will welcome 58 cruise liners to Cobh. Over the next five years, it aims to increase cruise visits to 75 per annum. Capt McCarthy said the company was exploring the feasibility of building a second cruise berth in Cobh, which would greatly enhance Cork's ability to attract more liners."This global cruise event is a key opportunity to further sell Cork as cruise destination and to interact and liaise with the key decision makers within cruise companies," he said. Capt McCarthy, a speaker at the conference, is also the current chairman of Cruise Europe and says having a presence was vital."The cruise industry is difficult to enter, but once you do you must work hard at maintaining relationships and keeping informed of the opportunities and threats to the industry. "It's important for any

port to ensure their cruise offering is kept alive and fresh, as with many cruise companies some passengers are repeat passengers who want to experience something different and new on every cruise." **Source : irishexaminer**

The **OLEG STRASHNOV** outbound from the Scaldiaharbour in Vlissingen for the Dudgeon project
Photo: Loes van Surksum ©

COAST GUARD REPATRIATES 42 CUBAN MIGRANTS

The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter **ROBERT YERED ,** a 154-foot fast response cutter, repatriated 42 Cuban migrants to Bahia de Cabañas, Cuba, Friday. These repatriations are a result of two separate migrant interdictions at sea in the south Florida Straits. In each instance, the Coast Guard helped secure the U.S. border and prevented these perilous sea voyages from ending in tragedy. On Monday, an Air Station Clearwater HC-130 aircrew located a rustic vessel northeast of Bahia Honda, Cuba, with 24 Cuban migrants aboard. The Coast Guard Cutter **VENTUROUS** arrived on scene and safely embarked all the migrants with no reports of any injuries.On Tuesday, a Customs and Border Protection maritime patrol aircraft detected a rustic vessel southwest of Marquesas, Florida, with 18 Cuban migrants aboard. The Coast Guard Cutter Venturous arrived on scene and safely embarked all the migrants with no reports of any injuries.In another case that occurred today, 18 reported Cuban migrants were picked up by the Royal Caribbean's Brilliance of the Seas cruise ship west of Marco Island, Florida. The 18 migrants were reportedly suffering from severe dehydration and claimed they left Cuba 22 days ago where nine of the migrants perished at sea during the journey. The 18 migrants are scheduled to be taken to the cruise ship's next port of call in Conzumel, Mexico."Our deepest condolences to the families of the nine people who recently did lose their lives," said Capt. Mark Gordon, chief of enforcement for the Coast Guard 7th District. "Unfortunately, tragedy is all too common when taking to the sea in homemade vessels with no safety or navigation equipment. The dangerous waters of the Florida Straits can be unforgiving for the unprepared on ill advised and illegal voyages. Immigration policies have not changed and we urge people not to take to the ocean in unseaworthy vessels. It is illegal and extremely dangerous."The Coast Guard has observed a steady increase in illegal maritime migration attempts from Cuba to the Southeastern U.S. since the U.S. announcement of normalized diplomatic relations with Cuba in December 2014, nearly 15 months ago. In the month of

February 2016, 269 Cuban migrants have attempted to reach U.S. shores. Since Oct. 1, the Coast Guard 7th District estimates that 2,420 Cubans have attempted to illegally migrate via the sea. These numbers represent the total number of at-sea interdictions, landings and disruptions in the Florida Straits, the Caribbean and Atlantic. **Source : USCG**

CASUALTY REPORTING

The **VICTORIAN RELIANCE** from Port Melbourne for Burnie for a rough ride **Photo : Bill Barber ©**

NAVY NEWS

Admiralteiskie Verfi launches Veliky Novgorod submarine built for RF Navy

On March 18, 2016, Admiralteiskie Verfi launched the **VELIKY NOVGOROD,** diesel-electric submarine built for RF Navy, the Company says in its press release. The **VELIKY NOVGOROD** submarine, the fifth one in the series being built by Admiralteiskie Verfi shipyard, was laid down in October 2014. The submarine has been built under the long-term plan of RF Defence Ministry on Black Sea Fleet's combat readiness recovery and the plrogramme on improvement of diesel-electric submarines for Russian Navy. All six submarines of the series are named after Hero-Cities or Cities of Military Glory. The solemn ceremony has been attended by Director General of Admiralteiskie Verfi Aleksandr Buzakov and other officials.The **NOVOROSSIYSK**, the lead submarine of the series, and the **ROSTOV-ON-DON** joined the Black Sea Fleet of RF Navy in August and December 2014. Two more submarines, the **STARY OSKOL** and the **KRASNODAR**, were delivered to RF Navy in July and November 2015. The **KOLPINO**, the sixth and the last submarine in the series, is to be launched in May.Submarines of the modified 636 projects feature enhanced (compared to previous projects) combat characteristics. Non-nuclear powered submarines of **improved Kilo-class** (NATO reporting name) or **Varshavyanka class** advanced project 636 feature an optimal combination of stealth capabilities and target detection range, the newest navigation system, modern automated information management system, powerful high-speed torpedo and missiles. The boats are mainly intended for anti-shipping and anti-submarine operations in relatively shallow waters. Admiralteiskie Verfi has been building submarines from 1932. Over this period the shipyard has built over 400 submarines and different deepwater vehicles. Admiralteiskie Verfi OJSC (Admiralty Shipyards) is a key enterprise of shipbuilding, a centre of conventional submarine building of Russia. The shipyard is affiliated with the United Shipbuilding Corporation OJSC. A number of contracts are being successfully implemented at the shipyard for domestic and foreign customers. Four series of submarines are under construction now for RF and foreign Navies. Besides, icebreaker **ILYA MUROMETS** is under construction. The Company's staff numbers 6,500 persons. **Source ; Portnews**

Russian nuclear submarine to take to sea for combat training

Russia's Project **885 Yasen-class** lead submarine **SEVERODVINSK** has completed operational trials will soon take the sea for combat training, Russia's Northern Fleet Spokesman Vadim Serga told journalists on Saturday."Operations trials of the **SEVERODVINSK** submarine are over and the submarine is ready to fulfill its designated missions. The **SEVERODVINSK**'s crew is currently completing measures necessary to put the submarine into service and to take to sea for planned combat training sessions," he said. He said the crew has fulfilled all elements of basic training. "The Severodvinsk multi-purpose submarine has completed operational trials, including deep submergences. The crew has drilled the skills to operate surfacing escape chamber," Serga said. Navy Deputy Commander-in-Chief Vice-Admiral Alexander Fedotenkov said on Friday the Yasen-class lead submarine **SEVERODVINSK** has completed operational trials.The Project 885 nuclear-powered submarine **SEVERODVINSK** armed with missiles and torpedoes was laid down in 1993 and delivered to the Russian Armed Forces for operational evaluation in late 2013. The next submarine **KAZAN** is being built under the updated 885M project. It was laid down in 2009. **Source: TASS**

US Navy submarines arrive in Arctic for training exercises

Two U.S. Navy submarines have arrived in the Arctic for regular exercises intended to train crews how to operate in extreme, frigid conditions. **USS HARTFORD,** from Groton, Connecticut, and **USS HAMPTON**, from San Diego, will spend five weeks on the mission known as Ice Exercise 2016.The Los Angeles-class attack submarines arrived this week at U.S. Navy Ice Camp Sargo, a temporary station on a floating ice sheet in the Arctic.The Navy says the operations help sailors maintain a working knowledge of a region that is different from any other ocean in the world. The Navy is also helping to collect data on changes in the environment. U.S. Navy submarines have conducted operations under the Arctic ice for more than 50 years. **Source ; Stars & stripes**

USCG commissions 16th Sentinel-class fast response cutter Winslow Griesser

The US Coast Guard (USCG) has commissioned its 16th fast response cutter (FRC), **WINSLOW GRIESSER,** in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Built under the USCG's Sentinel-class FRC programme, **WINSLOW GRIESSER** is the fourth FRC constructed by Bollinger shipyard. It was delivered in December last year. This vessel was christened after Winslow W

Griesser, a keeper of the Buffalo, New York, lifesaving station. He was awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal for rescuing a man thrown into the sea when two large boats broke loose from their moorings in 1900. "The 154ft-long vessels boast flank speed of 28k, while also featuring the latest command, control, communications and computer technology." Set to replace the aging 110ft-long Island-class cutters, the Sentinel-class FRCs can house a crew of 22 and deploy rigid-hull inflatable boats (RHIB) to carry out rescue and interception missions. Designed to link the capability to comply with the potential mission necessities, the FPVs are capable of supporting a range of missions, including port, waterways and coastal security; fishery patrols; search-and-rescue; and national defence. Additionally, the cutters can be used for potential drug and migrant interdiction missions. The vessels are equipped with advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance equipment; stern cutter boat launch; and have enhanced habitability and seakeeping. Earlier this month, the USCG took delivery of the 17th FRC, **DONALD HORSLEY.** **Source : naval-technology**

SHIPYARD NEWS

OVATION OF THE SEAS was docked March 19th in Hamburg in the famous Blohm & Voss dock 17 for some finishing work before delivery by Meyer Shipyard to Royal Caribbean International (RCI). Third unit of the **Quantum class,** she will be followed by two more sisters in 2019 and 2020. At a length of 348 m and 168800 gt, she features a total of 16 decks and will accomodate 4180 passengers. Following delivery, **OVATION OF THE SEAS** will sail a few cruises in Europe and then reposition to her base at Tianjin, China. RCI will also receive **HARMONY OF THE SEAS**, the new largest cruise ship in the world, later in May from STX France. **Photo: Martin Lochte-Holtgreven ©**

No plans to merge engineering unit: Samsung

Samsung Heavy Industries (SHI) said Friday that the country's leading shipbuilder has no plans to merge with Samsung Engineering "Currently, SHI has no plans to merge with Samsung Engineering," SHI CEO Park Dae-young told reporters on the sidelines of the company's shareholders' meeting in southern Seoul The remarks are a major reversal a few months after the CEO's remarks last September that the two firms should eventually merge. SHI's 2014 takeover attempt of Samsung Engineering had failed due to shareholder opposition. But the scenario for the merged

entity is still a top issue in the domestic shipbuilding industry, as Samsung Group is accelerating its efforts to transform its corporate structure focusing on consumer electronics, finance and biotech by unloading unprofitable businesses and merging key group units. SHI CEO Park was reinstated, securing his CEO post for another three years after last year's management overhaul. SHI reported historically high operating losses in 2015. The CEO, however, remained positive that the group's shipbuilding affiliate will turn a profit this year. "The situation is desperate. If ship orders pay for the return of ships, which were being built in SHI's shipyard in Korea, then I am very much confident that SHI will return to the black," said Park. Despite the continued liquidity problems, SHI said it has no plans to raise additional capital by selling new shares."The number of company executives was halved in the last two years," Park said. "SHI is on track to improve financial soundness by cutting costs and selling none-core assets A huge number of company executives took responsibility for the disastrous corporate performance." SHI hired former Samsung Electronics global technology center chief Kim Jong-ho, in what officials say is a move to overhaul the shipbuilder's key manufacturing process.
Source: Korea Times

The CSD **DE BIESBOSCH** seen fiiting out at **Royal IHC** in Sliedrecht , the CSD is under construction for **van Oord**
Photo : Jan van Heteren Fotografie ©

Rosneft signs Chinese suppliers for Zvezda shipyard

Nantong COSCO Heavy Industry Co. Ltd. (CHIC) has signed a contract to supply nine cranes to the Zvezda Shipbuilding Complex in Russia's Far East in the Bolshoi Kamen Bay. The contract was signed by Evgeny Kraynov, Zvezda project leader and Zhao Zengshan, general manager of CHIC, in the presence of Rosneft's Igor Sechin, while the chairman of the Management Board was visiting Russia.A consortium of Rosneft and Gazprombank are heading up the Zvezda shipyard project, which Rosneft said is at the request of Vladimir Putin, president of the Russian Federation. Zvezda claims it will be the country's first "modern shipyard" to meet the needs of domestic customers, being outfitted with equipment previously unused on other Russian yards. It also says it will specialize in the construction of large vessels, plans to construct oil and gas production platforms to serve offshore in the Russian continental shelf.According to the contract, CHIC will supply the equipment to the Zvezda shipyard's construction site during 2016-2017. Under the document, the cranes will be one 1,200-metric ton (1,322-ton) Goliath crane; four 320-metric ton (352-ton) cranes; and four 100-metric ton (110-ton) cranes. In addition, Zvezda and Suzhou Dafang Special Vehicle Co. Ltd. have signed a contract for the supply of five self-propelled heavy transporters.Suzhou Dafang Special Vehicle is to supply two 650-metric ton (716-ton) transporters; two 320-metric ton (352-ton) transporters; and one 150-metric ton (165-ton) transporter.The Zvezda project is said to be beginning this year and will be ongoing until 2018. **Source : pennenergy**

Ministers consider state help for Clyde shipyard

By ; Michael Glackin

SNP wants to 'level the playing field' with European rivals SNP wants to 'level the playing field' with European rivals
THE Scottish government is examining ways to provide state-backed financial guarantees to the Clyde's last remaining commercial shipyard to "level the playing field" with European rivals. The move comes after Jim McColl, chief executive of Clyde Blowers Capital, which owns Ferguson Marine Engineering, said more needed to be done to enable the company he rescued from administration to compete with shipbuilders in Germany, Poland and Finland.Following discussions with the Scottish government McColl, one of Scotland's most successful entrepreneurs, has formulated proposals that include seeking powers to enable the largely state-owned Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) to underwrite contract guarantees for Scottish and UK manufacturers. **Source : thesundaytimes**

ROUTE, PORTS & SERVICES

320 ships transit Suez Canal with cargo load of 16.4m tonnes in week of 11 to 17 March

The average number of ships that transited the canal per day reached 45.71 ships, with an average cargo load of 2.34m tonnes

Suez Canal traffic data revealed that over the last week—extending from 11to 17 March 2016—320 ships transited the Suez Canal with a total cargo load of 16.4m tonnes. The average number of ships that transited the canal per day reached 45.71 ships, with an average cargo load of 2.34m tonnes.

The average cargo load per ship reached 51.250 thousand tonnes during the past period. Compared to July 2015, the month prior to the inauguration of the Suez Canal, there was an average of 47 ships that transited the canal daily, with an average cargo load of 2.758 million tonnes per day.In the past week, two Danish container ships—the "**MOREN MAERSK** " and "**MUNKEBO MAERSK** "—transited the channel with a cargo of 200,360 tonnes. There were 170 ships that transited the canal from the western entrance—coming from the Port Said entrance in the North—a daily average of 24.3 ships. The total cargo load reached 9.1m tonnes, a daily average of 1.28m tones. There were 150 ships that transited the canal from the east–coming from the southern entrance of the Suez Canal—a daily average of 21.42 ships. The total cargo load was recorded at 7.3m tonnes, a daily average of 1.04 million tonnes.

Cargo load is the main standard to calculate the volume of trade in the Suez Canal, as transit fees are calculated by tonnage. In 2015, the revenue collected through the Suez Canal declined to $5.175bn, compared to a reported revenue of $5.465bn in 2014. The decline of $290m is thought to be due to the rise Special Drawing Rights (SDR) against the US dollar, in addition to the drop in oil prices and the slowdown of the global economy. **source : dailynewsegypt**

Safe Carriage Of Laterite Nickel Ore: Judgment In Chinese Courts

Members may be interested in the attached Wintell & Co. legal briefing, Safe Carriage of Laterite Nickel Ore – Latest Judgment of Chinese Court. The attachment is in both English and new Mandarin. In this case, charterers alleged that the vessel's master had made an unjustifiable deviation due to his concerns for the safety of his vessel, based on his belief that the transportable moisture limit (TML) of the cargo had been exceeded. The charterers claimed that the delay in delivery of the cargo led to significant losses in its market price, and sought damages.The vessel owner defended the decision, and the measures taken by the master. They included delaying the vessel's departure to sun-dry the cargo and, later, while on passage to the discharge port, calling at an alternative port for further sun-drying of the cargo before finally heading safely on to the vessel's final destination for discharge. The owner asserted that these measures were reasonable for the common safety of the vessel, cargo and crew. The Supreme Court of the People's Republic of China ruled that the IMSBC Code did indeed apply to the carriage of laterite nickel ore, despite the cargo not being listed as a cargo prone to liquefaction as set forth in Appendix 1 of the Code (Group A). The Supreme Court further ruled that:

1. the master's actions to sun-dry the cargo and alter course while en route to the destination were reasonable; and
2. the appeals court had reasonably concluded that the vessel's diversion to the Philippines was justifiable; and
3. the receivers had failed to establish their claims for alleged losses.

For complete newsletters, do retrieve it from below link
http://www.american-club.com/files/files/MA_031716_Safe_Carriage_Laterite_Nickel_Ore_Judgment_in_Chinese_Courts.pdf
Source: The American Club

FPSO Kwame Nkrumah shuts down for

The Floating Production Storage and Offloading Vessel (FPSO Kwame Nkrumah) has been shut down for inspection and maintenance. The Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo) in a statement said the shutdown will last for about two weeks.

Below is a copy of the full statement ;

SHUT DOWN OF FPSO KWAME NKRUMAH

The **Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo)** wishes to inform the General Public that, the Floating Production Storage and Offloading Vessel (FPSO Kwame Nkrumah) has been shut-down by the operators of the facility for Mandatory inspection and maintenance. The shut-down is expected to last for about two weeks. Consequently, Gas flow from the Atuabo Gas Processing plant to the Aboaze thermal enclave has been curtailed and expected to commence upon resumption of production from the FPSO. In a related development, Gas flow from the West African Gas Pipeline Company (WAPCo) pipeline has reduced to only 6mscf from the contracted volume of 120mscf resulting from vandalism on some pipelines in Nigeria.As a result of this, engineers have commenced the process of converting all dual fuel thermal plants to run on Light Crude Oil to mitigate the challenge emanating from the setback.The conversion process which involves cleaning of fuel Nozzles and other preparatory works could take a couple of days to complete. During this period, the transmission system may experience some challenges thereby affecting power supply stability. We wish to use this opportunity to assure the general public engineers are working around the clock to bring supply to normalcy as soon as possible. Any inconvenience that may arise during the switch over process is deeply regretted. **Source : ghanaweb**

OMV, ADNOC, Occidental to explore offshore Abu Dhabi oil, gas fields

OMV has signed a four-year programme to evaluate offshore oil and gas fields northwest of Abu Dhabi with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company and U.S. firm Occidental Petroleum, the Austrian company said. The fields the companies will analyse through seismic, drilling and engineering studies include the Ghasha and Hail areas with a view to appraising and developing them. OMV is already working with ADNOC on the appraisal of the Shuwaihat field. OMV under new Chief Executive Rainer Seele is increasingly looking towards Russia and the United Arab Emirates, the home of its second-biggest shareholder IPIC, for future output. **Source : Reuters (Reporting by Shadia Nasralla; editing by David Clarke)**

Crude Prices Fall From 2016 Highs As US Oil Rig Count Rises

Crude oil prices settled lower on Friday after the U.S rig count rose for the first time since December, renewing worries of a supply glut after an output freeze proposal helped boost the market to 2016 highs and multi-week gains. U.S. energy firms this week added one oil rig after 12 weeks of cuts, according to data by industry firm Baker Hughes. The addition, coming after oil rigs had fallen by two-thirds over the past year to 2009 lows, showed crude drilling picking up again after a 50 percent price rally since February. "The rig count and crude prices have a direct relationship for sure," said Pete Donovan, broker at Liquidity Energy in New York. Brent crude finished down 34 cents, or 0.8 percent, at $41.20 a barrel, having risen $1 earlier to a 2016 high of $42.54. U.S. crude settled down 76 cents, or 1.9 percent, at $39.44, after also gaining $1 to a year high of $41.20. It continued to fall in post-settlement trade, losing nearly $1. Despite the retreat, oil posted multi-week gains, with Brent up for a fourth straight week and U.S. crude a fifth week in a row. Both benchmarks rose about 2 percent this week. Global oversupply in oil had knocked crude prices down from mid-2014 highs above $100 a barrel to 12-year lows earlier this year, bringing Brent to around $27 and U.S. crude to about $26. Over the past two months, prices rallied to above $40 after the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) floated the idea of a production freeze at January's highs. The combination of declining oil output, smaller crude stockpile builds and surging gasoline consumption in the United States also helped the recovery, although some analysts said the rally had been overdone. "The market is probably too long here and needs a correction," said Scott Shelton, energy futures broker with ICAP in Durham, North Carolina. Money managers raised their bullish bets on U.S. crude to a five-month high during the week to March 15, data from the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission showed. Some traders who had been bearish oil and lost money recently were eyeing fresh bets to price crude lower. "I think this rally will stall," said Tariq Zahir, who profited mostly over the last year on bets that U.S. crude for nearby delivery will fall against longer-dated contracts. "I took off several shorts and booked losses but on the first sign of weakness, I'm jumping back in." **Source : Reuters (Additional reporting by Simon Falush in LONDON; Editing by Frances Kerry, Meredith Mazzilli and Dan Grebler)**

Huge Petronas Canada LNG project runs into further delays

A major liquefied natural gas export project in Canada ran into another delay on Saturday when the federal environmental assessment agency was granted an extra three months to finish an impact study. Ottawa did though commit to announcing a final decision on the project this year, which would end a long-running saga for Malaysia's state-owned oil giant Petronas The firm and its partners have been waiting nearly three years for a permit to build the Pacific NorthWest LNG facility in northern British Columbia, on the Pacific coast. News of the latest delay broke on Saturday, when federal Environment Minister Catherine McKenna agreed to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's request (CEAA) for the extra three months. The CEAA - which had been due to deliver its report to McKenna by March 22 - said it needed more data from the project's backers after they handed over a series of documents and observations on March 4.A spokeswoman for McKenna said the federal cabinet would announce a decision three months after the backers had handed over the requested additional information.The ambitious plan to build Canada's first LNG export terminal faced challenges from the start, including controversy over its chosen site, which local aboriginal and environment groups said would destroy a critical salmon habitat.It is also the first major project to have an environmental assessment completed under new rules that include the impact of upstream production on project emissions.A spokesman for Pacific NorthWest did not immediately respond to a request for comment.Petronas, battling a profit-sapping slump in prices that could produce heavy losses, can ill afford to splurge on future supply.But neither can it afford a lengthy and inconclusive process with authorities in Canada, where the project is seen as a test of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's green credentials.Trudeau's Liberals came to power last November promising to do a much better job of protecting the environment than the previous Conservative government.But the Liberals, who say Canada must cut emissions of greenhouse gases, are also under pressure to push through approvals of projects in the energy sector, which is losing jobs due to the slump in oil and gas prices. "The agency has requested additional information from the proponent in order to determine whether the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects," it said in the statement.The request for more time to complete the impact study raises the prospect of more conditions on construction. This could simply make the project economically enviable, analysts say, leaving Petronas to write off billions already invested.For Petronas, and Malaysia, the conditions have changed dramatically since it launched the project, long considered a front-runner among dozens proposed for British Columbia.Gas prices are currently a quarter of 2014's peak. Last month, Petronas cut jobs and announced some $12 billion in spending cuts over the next four years - the same sum analysts estimate it has sunk into the Canadian project.And Malaysia's economy too is cooling, dampened by China and a domestic financial scandal. Petronas is one of the country's biggest employers and accounts for nearly a third of the government's oil and gas-related revenue.The stakes are also high for Canada, which is seeking to kick start the local LNG industry, said Wood Mackenzie analyst Chong Zhi Xin, speaking before Saturday's announcement.But those ambitions come as Trudeau promises to transform Canada's environmental image. If built, environmental campaigners say the Petronas project would tarnish that. **Source; Reuters (Editing by Nick Zieminski and Bernard Orr)**

ZIKA Virus: Regulations For Vessels Calling At China And South Korea

In response to the growing spread of the Zika virus, both China and South Korea have recently developed preventative measures and issued notices to prevent and control the Zika virus. A "Disinfection Certificate" and "The Self-Disinfection Certificate" are required in Chinese ports and Korean ports respectively for vessels arriving from the countries and territories identified as infected by Zika virus. It is recommended that members contact their local agents for more updated information prior to arriving ports in China and Korea in order to avoid any delays.

New Regulation for ships visiting China :

On 2 March 2016, the Chinese Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau together with the Ministry of Transport and other six relevant authorities jointly issued "Notice on Prevention and Control of Zika Virus". This Notice takes effect from 2 March 2016 and will be valid for 12 months.

The notice provided that "3.Transportation vehicles as well as containers from ZIKA affected countries or areas shall have conducted effective mosquito eradication measures. Where there is no proof of such measures, immediate mosquito eradication will need to be performed under the supervision of the inspection and quarantine authority". The Zika affected area includes 40 countries.

The Club's correspondent in China has advised the Club that the CIQ in Chinese ports will follow the Directive to inspect the documents proving the mosquito has been eradicated and furnished when the vessel from Zika affected area arrives at the Chinese port. The correspondent's circular is attached and the official notice in Chinese is available here:

http://www.aqsiq.gov.cn/xxgk_13386/jlgg_12538/zjgg/2016/201603/t20160307_462268.htm

New regulations for ships visiting South Korea

South Korea issued Zika virus guidelines that strengthened quarantine inspection requirements at Korean ports are currently in force for vessels arriving from 24 countries and territories identified as infected by Zika virus.Vessels which have called at one of the listed countries prior to arrival in Korea within the previous 14 days are to submit the Self-Disinfection Certificate prior to arrival at a Korean port and to have an on-board quarantine inspection and to submit the Health Questionnaire (including monitoring temperature/fever) completed by the crews/passengers, and vessels which have called at one of the listed countries prior to arrival in Korea within 15 days ~ 30 days to submit the Self-Disinfection Certificate prior to arrival at Korean port and to have Ship Sanitation Control Inspection afterwards.

Important note:

· If the Self-Disinfection Certificate is not submitted prior to arrival, the vessel will be required to carry out disinfection by a local disinfection company and the ship's movements maybe restricted

· If the vessel comes from infected/outbreak countries as a transit, disinfection is considered to be completed by submitting the certificate dated within the 30 days prior to the date of arrival at Korean port

· Cargo operation can be started after completion of the disinfection

· If there is any mosquito, larvae or mosquito eggs found during the on board quarantine inspection, the vessel is to carry out disinfection by local disinfection company

Available Zika virus information and guides:

On 19 February 2016, the ITF has issued an information factsheet including advice on the current outbreak of the Zika virus disease to help seafarers travelling to affected countries to avoid contracting the disease. The advice is attached.

On 8 February 2016, IMO has issued a circular to provide guidance on the Zika situation report issued by the World Health Organizaton (WHO). At present the Emergency Committee, convened by the World Health Organization's Director-General under the International Health Regulations (2005), has found no justification for restrictions on travel or trade. The circular is attached. On 5 February 2016, USCG issued an updated bulletin regarding Zika virus precautions, reflecting the changing nature of the understanding of this situation. This change advises that the virus may be spread via blood transfusions and sexual contact, in addition to mosquito bites. **Source: World Health Organizaton (WHO) Source: Skuld**

U.S. Eases Security For Ships Visiting Cuba

The United States is removing Cuba from its list of countries deemed to have insufficient security in their ports, eliminating a major impediment to free flow of ships in the Florida Straits. The move marks one more step toward normalized relations ahead of President Barack Obama's historic trip to Cuba. The shift clears the way for U.S. cruise ships, cargo vessels and even ferries to travel back and forth with much less hassle. No longer will all ships have to wait to be boarded by the U.S. Coast Guard for inspections, though the Coast Guard still can conduct random inspections. The Coast Guard, in a notice to be released Thursday, said Cuba now has effective security measures in its ports. The U.S. also is removing the requirement that American vessels maintain a higher level of security for access to ships while in Cuban ports. Removing Cuba's designation under maritime rules designed to fight terrorism also addresses a sore spot in the painful history between Cuba and the U.S., which dominated the island before relations were cut off amid the Cold War. It was only last year that the U.S. removed Cuba from the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. Other countries on the list include **Syria, Yemen, Libya** and **Iran.**

Obama has been easing restrictions on U.S. travel and commerce in Cuba since he and Cuban President Raul Castro moved to restore relations between their two countries. Obama has quickened the pace in the days ahead of his trip to Havana, which starts Sunday. It's the first U.S. presidential visit to the communist country in nearly 90 years.

Ahead of his trip, the Obama administration this week lifted the last meaningful restrictions on Americans visiting the island by allowing people to travel individually for loosely defined educational trips designed to increase interaction between Americans and Cubans. The U.S. also cleared the way for Cubans to earn salaries in the U.S. in most circumstances, a move that could lead to Cubans playing Major League Baseball and other professional sports one day soon.

U.S. cruise lines including Carnival are gearing up to start sailing to Cuba as Americans, long prevented from travelling to Cuba under the U.S. trade embargo, take advantage of the relaxed travel restrictions that Obama has put in place. The Obama administration has started giving approval to U.S. cruise lines to operate there, though they need corresponding approval from the U.S. government. Millions of Americans are expected to visit Cuba in the coming years in a sharp increase, although a formal U.S. ban on tourism technically remains in effect. The requirements being lifted meant stricter requirements for any vessels that had been in Cuba during its last five ports of call. Those requirements included boarding of all ships by Coast Guard officials prior to entering U.S. ports. **Source: The Globe And Mail**

…. PHOTO OF THE DAY …..

The **PRACTICO 06** embarking the Havana pilot after piloting the **MSC OPERA**, with the **CELESTYAL CRYSTA**L in the background. **Photo: David A. Bowley ©**