The first SBM Fast4ward hull named **LIZA UNITY** arrived from Shanghai in Singapore Jurong under tow of the **PACIFIC DOVE** and **PACIFIC DILIGENCE**

**Photo**: Piet Sinke [www.maasmondmaritime.com](http://www.maasmondmaritime.com) (c)

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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

Safe Bulkers enters into a scrubber service agreement with Alfa Laval

Safe Bulkers, Inc., an international provider of marine drybulk transportation services, has entered into a Service Agreement with Alfa Laval to minimize down time, enhance regulatory compliance and safeguard scrubber performance over the life-time of the vessel, the company said in its release. The Agreement provides for a flat yearly fee, lifecycle-oriented services from the Alfa Laval PureSOx 360° Service Portfolio, including remote monitoring of scrubber performance through connectivity module, service kits, minimum inventory of genuine Alfa Laval spares parts on board and ashore for remote trouble-shooting and sensor calibration by exchange. In addition, the Agreement provides for training of Company’s crew members and superintendents at the Alfa Laval PureSox training center in Shanghai, China. As of today, 15 Alfa Laval PureSOx Scrubbers have been installed at COSCO retrofit shipyards with engineering design of Alfa Marine Consulting P.C., and five more are scheduled to be installed within the first quarter of 2020 after the resumption of shipyard operations following the Chinese New Year, concluding the Company’s scrubber retrofit program. The remaining
21 vessels of Company’s fleet are operated using compliant fuels, having timely completed tank cleaning and all other related actions for such transition according to their respective Ship Implementation Plan in accordance with IMO provisions. The Company is an international provider of marine drybulk transportation services, transporting bulk cargoes, particularly coal, grain and iron ore, along worldwide shipping routes for some of the world’s largest users of marine drybulk transportation services. The Company’s common stock, series C preferred stock and series D preferred stock are listed on the NYSE, and trade under the symbols “SB”, “SB.PR.C”, and “SB.PR.D”, respectively. Source: Portnews

The TWO MILLION WAYS inbound for Amsterdam  
Photo: Ruud Coster ©

Asia-Europe rates down 5.9pc to US$1,058/ TEU, USWC slip 5.7pc at $1,543/ FEU

The CAP SAN VINCENT inbound for Antwerp passing Hansweert  
Photo: Arnoud Lievense www.flyliedutch.nl ©

SPOT rates for shipping containers from Asia to northern Europe in the week ending Friday edged down by 5.9 per cent to US$1,058 per TEU. Asia-Mediterranean rates held firm, ticking down slightly to $1,179 per TEU, according to the Shanghai Containerised Freight Index (SCFI). Rates from Shanghai to US west coast were down 5.7 per cent to $1,543 per FEU while China-US east coast put on 2.8 per cent to $2,888 per FEU. Source: portnews
SBM Offshore Blazes Trail With FPSO Design
by : Valerie Jones

The LIZA UNITY is a new build and SBM Offshore's first MPF hull ever built for the Fast4Ward program. Above seen the Swire AHT’s PACIFIC DOVE and PACIFIC DILIGENCE arriving last Monday morning at daybreak at Singapore Western Boarding Ground Bravo where newbuilding hull was handed over to local tugs for further transportation to the shipyard for fitting out. SBM Offshore is confident it has formulated the perfect recipe for designing, constructing and operating floating, production, storage and offloading (FPSO) vessels. Through its Fast4Ward approach, SBM uses a generic design for its new-build multipurpose floater (MPF) hulls combined with topsides, mooring and vessel catalogues. Essentially, the company promises clients a faster, cheaper and safer gateway to achieve first oil.

The MPF hulls, which are built ahead of projects, boast up to 2.3 million barrels of storage as well as production capability of up to 250,000 barrels of oil per day. SBM said the MPF design is flexible enough to be tailored to
fit specific project needs. So far, the approach has been successful.

SBM recently inked contracts for its fourth and fifth hulls, which will likely be deployed for work offshore Guyana and Brazil “This is historic,” SBM’s managing director Bernard van Leggelo said. “We’re the first to do this … plus we have years of experience.” He went on to say that SBM was tapping into the experience it built upon constructing the Liza Destiny FPSO (converted from a VLCC and deployed offshore Guyana) and is constantly making improvements to its Fast4Ward concept. With a presence in China dating back to 1973, SBM is focused on more growth in the region. The company said it aims to qualify up to 250 Chinese vendors by 2021 and expects to have 80 vendors by year-end 2019. “The MPFs have a large volume of work in steel and welding, which is a big strength of China,” Srdjan Cenic, SBM’s general manager for China, told Rigzone. He added that SBM has many projects in China and recruits to employ locals on these projects.

SBM’s Fast4Ward approach to FPSO design offers clients a
myriad of efficiencies, said Dirk Niers, MPF program director for SBM’s FPSO product line. One example, Niers said, is savings through OPEX.

The FPSO designs offer 13 percent more deck space than VLCCs and 30 percent more pancake space overall. Using improved architecture, including a continuous deck and less vertical modules, it reduces fatigue from workers traveling up and down several flights of stairs with heavy equipment multiple times a day. “Two stories means workers only have to go up one flight of stairs; work can now be done with fewer people. Over the years, there’s your savings,” Niers said. The Fast4Ward platform also allots SBM comparative computing power in the industry. Due to the vessel’s standard design, it’s easy to compare vessels, Niers explained. If every unit was different, we couldn’t compare. For the oil companies, the most compelling efficiency is the time to first oil. “Our clients want the performance and they want it delivered early,” said van Leggelo. SBM said Fast4Ward can save up to 12 months on a new build FPSO schedule. On Friday, Exxon announced that it lifted its first oil from the Liza field offshore Guyana ahead of schedule. The Liza Phase 1 development features the Liza Destiny. The Liza Unity will support Liza Phase 2 development. As for now, all three hulls Rigzone visited at the SWS and CMIH yards are allocated for projects. Source: Rigzone

The 2014 built Singapore flagged Pacific Dove at the SB side ready to let go the towing gear, the Pacific Dove and her 7 sisters are the D Class
vessels within the Swire Pacific Offshore group fleet with installed 17,614 BHP with a bollard pull upto 238 ton and are built to Clean Class, SPS 2008 and ice notations. Equipped with 500 / 400-tonne RRM Brattvagg winches, these vessels are fuel-efficient and are equipped with the latest Dynamic Positioning (DP) technology and have the power to support the latest generation semi-submersible rigs operating in harsh deep water environments and have sufficient cargo capacity and clear deck space for a wide range of offshore applications the impressive D Class units are equipped
with and Anchor Recovery Frame (ARF) and Deck travelling cranes, all of which contribute considerably to improving safety during demanding deck anchor handling operations. The vessels are designed to be fuel-efficient, to reduce environmental impact in whatever role they are deployed to perform.

All above photo’s : Piet Sinke www.maasmondmaritime.com (c) CLICK at the photo’s & hyperlinks in text to view and/or download the photo(s) !

Report details risks to N.C. coastline from planned offshore drilling

A report by a North Carolina-based research center claims the Trump Administration’s proposal to open much of the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic Oceans could endanger the environment and the health of coastal communities. Environment North Carolina Research and Policy Center's December report said the expansion of offshore drilling off North Carolina's coast will endanger public health. Its reliance on onshore pipelines, waste disposal facilities, ports and refineries pollute the air, water, and threaten wildlife and ecosystems.

In December 2016 the Obama administration issued a permanent offshore drilling ban along the Atlantic and Arctic coasts to try and set a precedent for environmental protection in the future. But in January 2018, the Trump administration announced a plan to reinstate offshore drilling practices along both American coasts, proposing to open 90 percent of previously restricted American coasts to offshore drilling. Offshore drilling is a process that typically involves drilling into coastal or near-coastal waters in search of a valuable commodity, normally a fossil fuel. The report found that drilling could pose environmental costs to the state. “Further onshore, pipelines may be routed away from urbanized areas, which...”
might mean going through pristine natural areas. In North Carolina, for instance, many undeveloped coastal areas include nature preserves or state parks," the report said. Source: dailytarheel

The GPO GRACE departing from Rotterdam-Calander canal heading for Abu Dhabi (UAE) Photo: Peet de Rouw - De Nachtdienst © CLICK at the photo + hyperlink in text!

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New Knowledge On Battery Safety Can Promote Green Solutions Within The Maritime Industry

DMA has gained new knowledge on battery safety through a report with focus on risks related to fire. The report outlines different methods of fireextinguishing along with the effect of ventilation systems in battery compartments in case of fire. The Danish Maritime Authority has participated in a comprehensive project that has resulted in a report concerning safety in battery installations. The report supports the rapidly moving technological developments currently taking place in the maritime industry and it provides new and relevant knowledge on battery safety to the Danish Maritime Authority as well as the maritime industry.

Senior ship surveyor Denis Cederholm-Larsen from the Danish Maritime Authority says: “Ships of the future need more environment-friendly solutions but we also have to focus on safety right from the beginning” and adds that “this new report provides us with a general overview which can be beneficial to the Danish Maritime Authority as well as the industry”. This Joint Development Project started back in 2017 and was coordinated by DNV GL. It has been a close cooperation between Norwegian, Danish and American maritime authorities, different battery manufacturers, shipping companies, shipyards, fire extinguisher manufacturers, and system suppliers. “The project is quite unique and the results are for example based on laboratory tests” senior ship surveyor Denis Cederholm-Larsen says and continues “the project gives us an even better depiction of what can be expected in case of fire in a battery installation”. The full report including its results and conclusions can be downloaded from the Danish Maritime Authority’s website or from DNV GL’s website. Guidance on the Danish Maritime Authority’s guidelines for battery installations for ship operations can be found HERE. Source: Danish Maritime Authority
Orange Marine cable ship **LEON THEVENIN** which is based in Cape Town. **AMSOL** provide a crewing service to her Owners *Photo: Capt Toralf Grapow ©*

### Longest containership yet to call Colombia

Puerto Aguadulce in the Port of Buenaventura has received a call from CMA CGM’s 13,392 TEU **APL ESPLANADE**. Mesuring 369m long and 51m wide, **APL ESPLANADE** is the largest ship to date to call at any Colombian terminal. Intake is 13,892 TEU. Last month SPIA hosted a call by **MSC FAITH**, which as an intake of 14,436 TEU and is 366m long.

“Shipping companies continue to build larger and larger capacity vessels, and receiving this type of vessel is an honour and a great responsibility,” said Miguel Abisambra, general manager of Sociedad Puerto Industrial de Aguadulce SA (SPIA), the ICTSI/PSA International operator “We work under our vision of being a strategic ally of the Colombian economy.” **APL ESPLANADE** is deployed in CMA CGM’s Asia Central South America (ACSA1) service, which links East Asia with Central and South America. *Source: worldcargonews*

### India Revises Directive On Single-Use Plastics

The Indian Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) has issued Addendum No.1 to its earlier DGS Order No. 5 of 2019 on the carriage, use and discharge of single-use plastics and, the subsequent revision of its implementation schedule for the order permitting all ships to continue operating in Indian waters and ports and, discharge plastic waste to port reception facilities in accordance with MARPOL Annex V. The addendum is intended to ease implementation of the prohibition order through a phased in approach over 2020, and to provide clarity with respect to the definition of Single Use Plastics. As part its efforts, DGS issued a notice stating that its seeks comments on proposed mandatory requirements concerning port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships and disposal of such wastes. Comments must be received by 20 January. *Source: Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia*

### Pre-Chinese New Year box spike fails to take off, activity subdued
US containerised imports from Asia have seen some increased activity at the start of the year but it pales in comparison to years previously. FreightWaves Maritime market expert Henry Byers opined: "The continued tariff threats from the Trump administration, coupled with an earlier-than-normal Chinese New Year, which officially begins January 25, has likely led many US importers to move much of their volume in 2019.

"This means that US container ports are not likely to receive the typical bump in volumes they're used to." If pricing is a rough proxy for demand, Freightos' trans-Pacific indices covering the late 2019-early 2020 period should not rise as much as in prior years, American Shipper reported. A year ago, the index tracking container shipments from China to North American west coast ports such as Los Angeles/Long Beach grew by 26 per cent between January 1 and January 6 2019. Two years ago, rates increased 25 per cent between December 29 2017 and January 2 2018. In contrast, rates have gone up by four per cent between January 1 and January 6 2020. The same pattern prevails with the index tracking prices from China via the Panama Canal to US east coast ports such as New York/New Jersey. A year ago, this index increased by 22 per cent between January 1 and January 6 2019; two years ago, by 32 per cent between December 18 2017, and January 2 2018; and this year, by six per cent between January 1 and January 6 2020. According to Freightos chief marketing officer Eytan Buchman: "Chinese New Year is spurring demand, but not like in past years. The final run-up [to the holiday], combined with carriers' concerns of recouping some of their IMO 2020 fuel costs, has pushed rates up. But 2019's story of the year - the trade war - continues in 2020 and has dampened pre-Chinese New Year demand as well."

Source: Schednet

Capital Ship Management takes delivery of M/ T 'Aitolos'

Capital Ship Management Corp. took successful delivery of the newbuilding vessel M/T 'AITOLOS', a 115,000 dwt, eco-type crude oil tanker, built by Daehan Shipbuilding Co., Ltd, S.Korea. It is the first of two sister ships to be delivered in 2020, the company said in its release. Source: Portnews
SAL adds further to its digitalization strategy and appoints spearhead

SAL Heavy Lift is taking further steps to strengthen and develop its digital landscape by creating a new executive function that focuses on Information Technology and Digitalization. With the dawn of the new year, SAL is taking action to ensure its further growth strategy, by strengthening its efforts towards digitalization. SAL and owners Harren & Partner have appointed Claas Matthies, Managing Director, as the new group Chief Information Officer (CIO). He takes on the leadership of the group’s digital strategy combined with responsibility for Group Accounting and Merger & Acquisition activities. “Digitalization of business processes is becoming an ever more competitive parameter and we see great...
potential in developing our digital landscape even further from today. As a modern and dynamic shipping group, information technology plays a vital role in our further growth and development. I am happy to see Claas taking on this challenge in combination with his other activities within Group accounting and our M&A activities,” states Dr. Martin Harren, CEO, SAL Heavy Lift.

This move aims to contribute to the increased profit growth and strategic development of SAL and Harren & Partner. Alongside this new position comes the appointment of a new Group Chief Financial Officer (CFO), in the form of Mr. Soeren Bibow who joins SAL and Harren & Partner after a more than 20-year long career with leading German corporate banking institutions at which he oversaw shipping and maritime investments. Dr. Martin Harren goes on to state: “We are extremely pleased to see Soeren joining our management team. His tremendous experience and wide-ranging connections to the international banking world, paired with deep knowledge about Corporate Finance and Controlling, underlines that Soeren will play a key role in developing and executing on our strategic growth targets.” Soeren Bibow will take on the responsibility for the areas Financing, Treasury and Controlling and be part of the Group Executive Team.

“I look forward to being part of this highly experienced and motivated team and to take on the future challenges and the great work that lies ahead of us. I relish the task of continuing the successful development of SAL and Harren & Partner,” says Soeren Bibow. The appointments were effective as of 6th January 2020.

Update To New Requirements For Service Suppliers In China

Applicability: shipowners, ship operators, ship managers, ship masters and agents.
As per Class News 15/2019, from 1 August 2019, new regulations came into force for the control and monitoring of service suppliers in China.

*Note: China MSA have issued clarification of the requirements, so that foreign service suppliers who only conduct services on foreign-flagged ships, which do not require a fixed location workshop (such as thickness measurement, non-destructive testing, LSA servicing on board), are not required to be a “registered company in China” or issue certificates through the China MSA web-based system.

Service suppliers undertaking such applicable* services in the ports and waters of China are now required to be official registered companies in China.

Classification societies are now required to record recognised service suppliers on the web-based database of the China Marine Safety Administration (MSA) For the servicing of the applicable* categories and equipment, either in workshop facilities or on-board ships in Chinese waters, the service suppliers are required to issue certificates through the China MSA web-based system, which will be validated by the surveyor.

What should owners and operators do now?
Owners and operators must ensure that all applicable* servicing done in China for the categories and equipment is undertaken by service suppliers that are not only registered on the China MSA database, but also acceptable to Lloyd’s Register and/or the ship’s flag Administration. For further information, please contact your local Service Delivery Office in China Click here to download a PDF copy of 01/2020 Class News. Source: Lloyd’s Register

The **MAERSK CASABLANCA** outbound from the Pasir Panjang Container terminal in Singapore entering the Sinki Fairway heading for Tj Pelepas (Malaysia)

*Photo : Piet Sinke www.maasmondmaritime.com (c) CLICK at the photo to view and/or download the photo !*

*The **EAGLE BINTULU** arriving off Gibraltar for bunkers Photo : Francis Ferro ©*

**Australia sends in the Navy: Warship is deployed in the Strait of Hormuz to protect oil tankers from Iranian attacks**

Australia has sent HMAS Toowoomba to protect oil tankers in Strait of Hormuz
Australia has deployed a navy frigate to defend oil tankers from Iranian attacks in the Strait of Hormuz. The warship set sail for the six-month mission on Monday against a backdrop of deteriorating relations between the United States and Iran. Foreign Minister Marise Payne said the safety of those aboard the HMAS Toowoomba was a high priority. ‘Australia is very focused on ensuring the safety and security of men and women who represent us internationally ... the deployment of HMAS Toowoomba is no exception to that,’ she told reporters. The federal opposition supports the deployment, just as it did when Australia sent a surveillance plane and handful of troops to the Middle East late last year. But Labor will not support sending any more resources to the Persian Gulf. ‘I support our deployment to assist passage economics in the Strait of Hormuz but I don’t support any further escalation of our engagement,’ Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese told Triple M Hobart. It comes following Iran’s missile attacks on two US-led military bases in Iraq. The airstrikes came in retaliation for the US assassination of elite Iranian general Qassem Soleimani. A Ukrainian passenger plane was later shot down by Iran, with officials in Tehran claiming the aircraft was mistaken for a US bomber. Source: Daily Mail

Evangelos Marinakis snaps up 14-year-old Japanese VLCC

By: Grant Rowles
Evangelos Marinakis’s Capital Maritime and Trading has moved to further take advantage of solid VLCC rates up around the $100k per day mark, by acquiring 2005-built 300,000 dwt VLCC Jin Ei according to brokers. Advanced Shipping &
Trading and Seasure Shipbroking are both reporting that Capital have acquired the tanker from Japan’s Kyoei Tanker, with Advanced reporting a price of $35m and Seasure a price of $34.5m. The vessel currently has a market value $35.8m according to VesselsValue.com, up sharply from a market value of $27.2m just six months ago. The Jin Ei will join six other VLCCs in the Capital Maritime and Trading fleet, and leaves Kyoei Tanker with four VLCCs on the water. The Japanese company is awaiting imminent delivery of three newbuild VLCCs, two from JMU and one from Namura. 

Source: Splash 247

Navigating the Upper Bay at New York the tug and barge combination DOUBLE SKIN 302 with the pusher tug FELLS POINT which pusher tug is built in 2014 by Chesapeake Shipbuilding Corporation of Salisbury, Maryland (hull #115) for Vane Brothers Company of Baltimore, Maryland. Photo: Wouter van der Veen ©

Safe Bulkers extends partnership with Alfa Laval through a PureSOx Service Agreement including connectivity

In June 2018, Greek dry bulk operator Safe Bulkers selected Alfa Laval to retrofit 20 of its vessels with Alfa Laval PureSOx scrubber systems for exhaust gas cleaning. The company has now gone on to sign a long-term Alfa Laval Service Agreement, which will safeguard compliance through connectivity and more. Safe Bulkers ordered PureSOx retrofits for 12 Post-Panamax vessels, 6 Kamsarmax vessels and 2 Capesize vessels, with deliveries running until March 2020. Almost 15 of those systems, which comprise open-loop scrubbers configured for multiple inlet sources, have now been installed at COSCO retrofit yards with engineering design of Alpha Marine Consulting P.C. Throughout the process, Alfa Laval has partnered closely with the yards, providing support through locally based project managers with strong backing from PureSOx product centre in Nijmegen, Netherlands.

“Alfa Laval’s project management has really been first-rate,” says Dr. Loukas Barmparis, President of Safe Bulkers. “Not only was there no time difference or language barrier in working with our yards, there was never any question about scope or responsibilities. Alfa Laval’s team worked with us proactively to solve issues as quickly as possible, and they brought additional resources to the yard whenever time or flexibility became a concern.”

Taking the cooperation further

With the majority of the PureSOx retrofits completed, Safe Bulkers is now looking ahead to secure trouble-free operation. Recently, the company signed a tailored Alfa Laval Service Agreement that will deepen the partnership between the two companies. The agreement includes connectivity and lifecycle-oriented services selected from the Alfa Laval PureSOx 360° Service Portfolio, provided for a flat yearly fee. “We feel very satisfied with the scrubber project execution, and we want to be equally successful in the operation of our PureSOx systems,” says Dr. Barmparis. “The Alfa Laval Service Agreement
will help us safeguard long-term performance, for example by using data analysis to keep systems performing at their peak.”

Services to safeguard performance over time
Safe Bulkers’ forward-thinking ambitions are reflected in the scope of the Service Agreement. In addition to genuine Alfa Laval spare parts, service kits and sensor calibration by exchange, the agreement includes services that will make corrective maintenance more plannable and maintenance costs more predictable. “Hands-on training will lay a foundation for safe, compliant and cost-effective PureSOx operation,” says Dr. Barmparis. Safe Bulkers crew members and superintendents will be trained at the recently opened Alfa Laval PureSOx Training Centre in Shanghai, China, where a full-size PureSOx system is installed. “On top of that foundation, we will use data-driven PureSOx Connect services for compliance and performance monitoring.”

PureSOx Connect services will let Safe Bulkers prove compliance easily, generating automatic reports for handover to local authorities. In addition, the scrubber data will be analysed with advanced algorithms, enabling health monitoring, root-cause identification and remote service support when needed.

“Scrubber connectivity will give us deeper insights and keep our systems optimized,” says Dr. Barmparis. “Alfa Laval will perform yearly Condition Audits of our PureSOx installations, but PureSOx Connect will help us take preventive actions and minimize the corrective needs they find.”

Partnership for long-term compliance
“We want to protect our uptime and eliminate any risk of non-compliance,” says Dr. Barmparis in summary. “Alfa Laval was the natural choice to help us do that, and their clear service offering made it easy to find the right services for our needs. René Diks, Director for Exhaust Gas Cleaning at Alfa Laval, is pleased to see the cooperation between Alfa Laval and Safe Bulkers being taken to the next level and further strengthened. “As in all projects, we’ve worked hard to meet Safe Bulkers’ expectations during the sales and order execution phases,” Diks says. “Now that the orders are nearing completion, we will continue working hard to provide Safe Bulkers with support and services that will keep their PureSOx systems compliant and in top shape. More than scrubber deliveries, we see this as a long-term partnership.”

Costa Atlantica - first of two Costa ships to transfer to CSSC Carnival Cruise Shipping

By : Katherine Si

The 85,861gt COSTA ATLANTICA transferred to CSSC Carnival Cruise Shipping, a joint venture between China State Shipbuilding Corp. (CSSC) and Carnival Corp. & plc, at Shanghai Wusongkou International Cruise Terminal on Saturday.
The delivery marks the operational start of CSSC Carnival Cruise Shipping and is a significant step for the cooperation between CSSC and Carnival Corporation, said Yang Guobing, chairman of CSSC Carnival Cruise Shipping. **COSTA ATLANTICA** will be deployed on itineraries to Southeast Asia and Japan in the initial operating stage, and is also planned to open new routes. A second cruise ship, **COSTA MEDITERRANEA**, will also transfer to the JV CSSC Carnival Cruise Shipping in due course. The JV is also constructing two 133,500gt newbuilds at CSSC Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding, with technical and design support provided by Fincantieri. The first ship is scheduled for delivery in 2023. **Source:** Seatrade Cruise News

**Svendborg Bugser A/ S changes name to NH Towage A/ S**

Niels Ove Henriksen's tugboat company Svendborg Bugser A/ S has experienced strong growth in recent years. The growth is a result of an increased focus on the international market. Although the name Svendborg Bugser A/ S is well known and has been synonymous with Niels Henriksen's tugboat business since 1977. The company has now chosen to change the name to the more appropriate international "NH Towage". Name change will take effect as of today. NH Towage has 6 tugs, 1 CTV and 3 barges - and employs up to 70 employees, including 8 at the Danish based office in Svendborg.

**EnQuest submits North Sea decommissioning plan less than five years after first oil**

The bulker **CUMA** assisted by the **Port Towage Amsterdam** operated tugs **LYNX** and **TRITON** into the Ijmuiden Locks. **Photo:** Peter Maanders port Towage Amsterdam ©
EnQuest has submitted plans to decommission a North Sea development and its production vessel less than five years after achieving first oil. The UK-listed operator started up the Alma-Galia fields in October 2015 as tie-backs to the EnQuest Producer floating production, storage and offloading vessel (FPSO). However, the firm has now submitted plans to the UK government to shut down the fields and take the vessel to shore for recycling, despite hopes it would be in production for up to 15 years after first oil.

EnQuest said the project, first sanctioned in a higher oil price environment, has been hit by a combination of “electric submersible pump (ESP) failures” and more natural decline than expected. Despite replacing three ESPs in 2018, the lower performance and costs of any further remedial work made the project “uneconomic to continue producing”, the firm added. In 2013, EnQuest said the cost of the FPSO had increased by around £126m to a total of £757m, with upgrades “expected to extend the FPSO vessel life materially (up to 15 years)”. The firm is exploring reuse options so the decommissioning plans could change if these are “found to be viable and more appropriate”. Both fields currently produce oil through the FPSO via pipelines around a mile-long.

EnQuest is the third operator to develop Alma, which lies around 192 miles south-east of Aberdeen in the Central North Sea. The field was originally called Argyll, developed by the Hamilton Brothers Oil Company in 1975 and continued production though until 1992, before being redeveloped as the Ardmore field by Tuscan from 2003 until 2005. Elsewhere, Galia, which lies three miles west, was first known as the Duncan field, producing oil from 1982 until 1992. When EnQuest came to first oil for the Alma/Galia redevelopment in 2015, it estimated just 30% of the 307 million barrels initially in place had been tapped. The firm is now preparing to cease production for the fields in a window between the second quarter of this year and Q1 of 2021, however sail away of the EnQuest Producer is currently expected in Q3 of this year. Decommissioning work will be carried out over the next seven years to 2027, with the schedule extended to allow “flexibility” on when operations would be carried out A spokeswoman said: “By phasing the decommissioning programme over a reasonable timeframe, we are able to explore the potential for cost and efficiency synergies as other operators also enter the decommissioning phase for their assets. “In the meantime, we are exploring opportunities for the re-use of the Floating, Production, Storage and Offloading Vessel.” Well decommissioning activities are expected to take place in 2025 or 2026, with the cessation of production plans now under consideration by the Oil and Gas Authority. Formed in 2010, EnQuest operates a host of fields in the northern and central North Sea as well as offshore Malaysia.

Source: energyvoice
He described the successful completion of the fabrication of the project components by Belmet 7 as significant milestone for local oil and gas service providing companies. “The pigging skid component of the project, which regulates the flow and cleaning of the pipelines of the vessel, is the first ever topside FPSO module that has been wholly manufactured in the country. This will open the door for more FPSO modules to be fabricated locally in Ghana,” he said. Theophilus Ofori, Site Manager of Subsea 7, said the initiative was a boost in the local content participation requirements of the Petroleum Commission, with the attendant revenue flow to local content providers. He mentioned that the project had provided an avenue for skills transfer and capacity building in a very strategic area of the oil and gas sector. He added that about 80 local workers and supervisors were engaged for the project. Source: Modernghana

New Quay lifeboat rescues fishing vessel in awful conditions

By Dave Parkinson

NEW Quay's all-weather lifeboat was called out on Friday night (January 10) to rescue a stranded trawler. The alarm was raised at 6:41pm and the fishing vessel was located 17 miles north west of New Quay. Weather conditions were described as poor and deteriorating with strong winds throughout the night. Due to the size of the vessel and the poor weather conditions, Fishguard lifeboat was also tasked. New Quay lifeboat was first on scene and established a tow. By midnight, conditions had deteriorated to force 9 and, with Fishguard lifeboat standing by, they started a 28-mile tow, arriving in Fishguard at 3am. With conditions worsening the crew stayed in Fishguard and arrived back at New Quay around 11am the following morning – 16 hours after setting out A spokesman for the Ceredigion Lifeboat Campaign to save New Quay Lifeboat said: “This shout shows just how important it is to retain an all-weather lifeboat in New Quay.” Source: tivysideadvertiser

Caldwell Adjustable Spreader Beam Lifts Rothera Wharf Frames in Antarctica
Rockford, Illinois, U.S.-based The Caldwell Group Inc. has customized an adjustable, 101,413-lb. (46t) capacity lifting beam for the latest phase of the wharf modernization at British Antarctic Survey's Rothera Research Station. Caldwell specifically designed and manufactured the lifting system to suit the harsh, cold environment. The model 24S-46t-315 adjustable bail lifting beam was delivered by Caldwell’s UK-based partner, Bishop Lifting, to BAM, who is working in partnership with the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), part of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), to deliver civil projects associated with the new RRS Sir David Attenborough, a research vessel owned by NERC and operated by BAS for scientific research and logistics projects. Principally, a new wharf will provide safe berthing and efficient operations for the iconic ship. The 8,217mm (27ft.)-long beam was designed by Dan Mongan, special application support, new product development specialist at Caldwell. Due to the cold weather in the Antarctic, steel alloy selection, welding processes, and type of paint were all important considerations at the outset, he said. The beam was based on the standard model 24 adjustable bail lifting system, but offered higher capacity. ‘Bail’ refers to the center item that the crane hook attaches to. It was 1,372mm (4.5 ft.) wide, 1,920mm (6.3 ft.) high and weighed in at 10,100 lbs. (4.58t). It was provided along with two patented model 52-58 adjust-a-leg wire rope slings with 6,705mm (22 ft.) reach. The rig will eventually be used to lift 20 wharf frames, the lightest weighing 77,162 lbs. (35t).

Ben Gates, business development director at Bishop Lifting Equipment, said: “The challenge was, in simple terms, to lift heavy loads, each with different centers of gravity. The adjustable bail solved the problem in that it can be adjusted in one direction and the adjust-a-leg slings in the other.”

Mongan said: “The successful utilization of the product on such a marquee project showcases our ability to engineer and ship below-the-hook solutions globally. Further, it serves as an example of what Caldwell and Bishop can achieve together; this project involved an extensive design phase, multiple Skype calls, and a collaboration of all relevant parties to arrive at the eventual rigging solution.”

As an aside, Mongan explained that adjust-a-leg slings can be locked into place for constant lifts and are ideal for use in rigging applications and machinery moving. They are often used, he said, for loads that are balanced and symmetrical, but with lifting points not located in a position for a level lift. They are also suited for use when lifting loads at any desired angle, simply by lifting the with sling legs at that desired angle. Over the next decade, British Antarctic Survey’s Research Stations will undergo a comprehensive modernization program to ensure that facilities continue to enable world-leading research. The new wharf is scheduled to be built over two Antarctic seasons, starting in November 2018 and completing in spring 2020, in order to improve ship and boating operations. The rear section of the new wharf was constructed in the first season, then the front section attached during the latest phase. Gates added: “This is a very interesting project. At Bishop Lifting we have been delighted to play a part—albeit a small one.”
US-Iran standstill brings a more stable outlook for oil & gas industry

The current standoff between the US and Iran, if it remains, will lead to a more sustainable oil price movement and a more stable outlook for the oil and gas industry, according to MIDF Research. The research house said some 20% of the world’s oil supply originates from the Middle East. Therefore, any tensions surrounding the region and Strait of Hormuz will disrupt world trade and oil supply. Members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) in recent interviews with various news agencies stated that they are vulnerable to regional conflicts and unable to cope should there be an attack by Iran on their oil facilities. As recent experience has shown; the drone attack on two of Saudi Arabia’s oil facilities effectively wiped out half of the kingdom’s oil production. “Due to this, we reiterate our view that the situation is unlikely to escalate further at this juncture and we expect oil price to trade between the US$60-65 per barrel range and to average at US$65 per barrel in 2020,” said MIDF. However, MIDF cautioned that a further escalation of the US-Iran crisis will potentially result in attack on US-related assets and oil-related assets. This, in return could lead to a temporary disruption in oil supply and rise in oil price. “We believe there will be a temporary knee-jerk reaction towards the oil price - should there be an escalation of attack.”While in general a higher crude oil price is favourable to encourage the continued spending of oil and gas exploration and production (E&P) producers, MIDF opined that a stable and sustainable oil price will be even more favourable to the oil and gas companies in the current operating climate. It is to
enable a proper planning for future capital expenditure to be conducted using predictable parameters rather than projecting numbers in an extreme environment. Looking at the current operating climate, MIDF reiterated its view that local oil and gas services companies that are involved in drilling, fabrication and vessel providers (FPSO and OSVs) will continue to benefit from the upbeat offshore activities going into 2020. For the upstream services segment, it remains bullish on Dayang Enterprise Bhd as the company can expect to benefit from its synergy with Perdana Petroleum Bhd in providing vessels to exploration & production players and more active offshore maintenance works. It also likes Bumi Armada Bhd due to its improving operational conditions as well as its position as the largest FPSO provider in Malaysia. It is also favourable towards Dialog Group Bhd specifically due to its stable recurring income from its tank farm business and due to it being one of the main beneficiaries of the soon-to-be operational Pengerang Integrated Complex. For the downstream subsector of the O&G industry, it remains positive on Petronas Chemicals Group Bhd, Petronas Dagangan Bhd and Gas Malaysia Bhd as despite industry-specific challenges. It opines that demand for downstream products remains robust and that the external disruptions are temporary in nature which will not halt the respective companies’ growth going forward. Source: The Sundaily

Hyundai shipyard develops fuel-efficient AI-based ship management system

Using new technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data and internet of things, Hyundai Heavy Industries, the world's largest shipbuilder, has developed a smart ship management system that efficiently manages the fuel consumption of ships installed with its trademark marine diesel engine, HiMSEN. The system can save the cost of fuel by more than 10 percent by allowing human managers to work remotely from a control tower using artificial intelligence (AI), big data and internet of things (IoT) to monitor the operation of ships and engines in real-time and find the optimized routes to save fuel, the shipbuilder said on Monday. Since HiMSEN was commercialized in 2001, it has become one of the world's best-selling engines. Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) and other shipyards in South Korea have strived for a competitive edge in the global market by developing technologies related to smart engines and smart ships. To ensure that shipping is cleaner and greener, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a U.N. maritime safety agency, has adopted mandatory energy-efficiency measures to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from ships. Innovative solutions are needed to reduce CO2 emissions from ships. IMG regulations will increase the preference for digital total solutions that support efficient navigation systems. Smart shipping can be divided into unmanned ships ruled by an operator from a control center onshore and autonomous ships that use a computer on board that takes decisions about the route, speed, fuel consumption, maintenance and even mooring in the harbor. In December 2019, Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering agreed to work with Hyundai LNG Shipping to develop smart ship technology for LNG ships. Samsung Heavy Industries has used a 5G-based test ship to verify technology for autonomous sailing. Source: AJU business Daily

Russian diluent heads for Venezuela via Gibraltar STS

By: Michelle Wiese Bockmann

Oil volumes shipped to Venezuela from Russia using ship-to-ship transfers off Gibraltar soared in the final quarter of 2019, as the Maduro administration imported much-needed diluent from its closest ally to offset sanctions on US supplies. Nearly 1m tonnes was exported to either Venezuela or Aruba in the three-month period, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence data. That compares with less than 270,000 tonnes in the prior quarter, and negligible volumes in the five
years before that “The vessels are loading via STS in the Gibraltar harbour and surrounding STS areas, and taking the oil to Aruba or Venezuela where it is discharged via STS,” said Lloyd’s List Intelligence analyst Selwyn Curtis. “AIS [Automatic Identification System] is often off for long periods of time around Venezuela while they do this covertly.”

Sanctions drawn up by Washington prohibit US companies from supplying Venezuela with refined products including diluent — used by national oil company PDVSA to reduce the viscosity of heavy crude oil so it can be transported for export. Before sanctions were imposed in January 2019, the US was the largest supplier of diluent, typically naphtha, providing some 100,000 barrels per day. Vessel tracking shows that Russia’s state-owned oil company Rosneft has stepped up to supply diluent via multiple STS shipments and voyages in which vessels ‘go dark’. These vessels do not transmit AIS signals for all or part of the voyage to obfuscate the origin and destination of imported diluent. The latest vessels tracked are the handymax product tanker Meronas (IMO 9798351), which loaded at the port of Novorossiysk on December 19 and was then seen alongside suezmax tanker SEA BEAUTY (IMO 98006627) on January 3. SEA BEAUTY is now sailing across the Atlantic on a similar trajectory to its last voyage, where it discharged via STS off the coast of Aruba. Aruba, the surrounding islands of Curacao and Bonaire, as well as waters off Trinidad and Tobago, are all used for subterfuge shipments of crude via STS transfers. Rosneft charters some 80% of vessels lifting Venezuelan cargoes, according to Caracas Capital, with the Russian oil major now an established intermediary for oil sales. This trading role is used offset money owed via loans to PDVSA. The US government imposed harsh sanctions on Venezuela’s shipping and oil industry from last January in an attempt to oust the government of Nicolas Maduro and endorse an interim leader. Exports plunged to less than 850,000 bpd in December, and shrank by a third over 2019, Lloyd’s List Intelligence data show. STS transfers of Venezuelan crude exports off the West African coast of Togo, as well as Malta, Malaysia and Gibraltar have been observed over the last 10 months. Imported diluent has been tracked from Russian Baltic and Black Sea ports, often via STS through Malta and Gibraltar, data show.

Source : lloydslist

UK ports expect smooth Brexit, as volumes decline after stockpiling spike

By: David Osler

Brexit is likely to roll out smoothly on the UK waterfront on the last day of this month, although throughput volumes are on a continuing downward trajectory following a stockpiling spike in the last quarter of 2018, according to ports industry sources. While Britain is formally departing from the European Union on January 31, existing arrangements on customs, excise and value added tax rules and regulations remain in place while the details are hammered out. That should make life easier for port operators in the next few weeks. The UK government is aiming to complete relevant negotiations by the end of the year. But from a port user perspective, no noticeable changes are anticipated in the short term. The Withdrawal Agreement Bill is due to undergo its second reading in the House of Lords today. Assuming ratification, as is widely expected, the UK will enter into a transitional period on February 1, with the UK staying within most EU institutions such as the single market and the customs union until 31 December. After that, UK and EU customs arrangements will
presumably diverge, meaning that new border procedures will need to be introduced from 2021. The status at that time of British trade with Ireland —both the republic and those parts that remain within the UK—is one of the major points that still needs to be agreed. Tim Morris, chief executive of the UK Major Ports Group, commented: “Although we've been assured that with the passing of the government’s Brexit Bill that it’s business as usual around the 31January departure date, what the border arrangements will be for January 1, 2021 are a whole different kettle of fish. “We're all going to need to work very hard and at pace —government, industry, agencies, intermediaries — to put in place a whole new framework in only 11 months. Some of this, such as moving freight to and from Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is wholly new, and has not even been contemplated in necessary detail yet.” Meanwhile, official statistics from the Department for Transport show that overall throughput at UK ports rose to 122m tonnes in the final quarter of 2018, and then steadily fell to 113m tonnes in the third quarter of 2019, the last trimester for which figures are available. That's a drop of 7% The figures are for both imports and exports, and reflect world trade, which was sluggish last year, rather than trade specifically with the EU as such. Nevertheless, ports professionals say it is legitimate to see them as an indication of stockpiling activity ahead of the originally scheduled Brexit deadline last March, followed by a subsequent tail-off.

Richard Ballantyne, chief executive of the British Ports Association, said: “There has been a Brexit effect. If you go and speak to the ro-ro specialists at Immingham and Dover, they've all seen it. “Particularly on the Humber, there has been loads of stockpiling in the run-up to the first deadline, and then some stockpiling in the run-up to the end of October.” The ports and logistics sectors now hope that the political turmoil that has accompanied Brexit will calm down, although investment decisions will likely await final agreement with the EU. A spokeswoman for Dover —by far the biggest gateway for ro-ro trade between Britain and the EU—said that the port is expecting business as usual on January 31. Dover last week announced plans for an unspecified number of redundancies among its hundreds of employees, although it is unclear whether or not Brexit played any part in the decision.

“Given the prevailing market conditions and the impact on our business, we must take steps to be able to operate as efficiently as possible whilst still delivering our services, maintaining our assets, performing our statutory duties and being in a position where we are able to grow again in the future,” it said in a statement. “Clearly, it would be entirely inappropriate to say anything further before the process has completed and the impacts of what are only proposals at this stage are known.” Mick Cash, general secretary of RMT, which organises both dockers and seafarers at Dover, said that the union will “continue to monitor the situation at Dover Harbour Board very closely for any impacts on our members in the port and on the short sea ferry fleet.”

Source: Lloydslist

H.Vogemann orders six handy bulkers at Yangzijiang

By: Jason Jiang

German owner H.Vogemann has placed an order at China's Yangzijiang Shipbuilding for the construction of six 40,000 dwt open hatch handy bulkers. Shipbroking house Clarksons reported that the vessels will be built at the New Yangzijiang yard and deliveries are scheduled between October 2021 and June 2022. H.Vogemann operates a fleet of 14 ships and it has another handy bulker under construction at Taizhou Catic Shipbuilding. Source: Splash 247
The ARASHI after being sold showing the Svitzer flag whilst navigating the port of IJmuiden

Photo: Marcel Coster ©

High-sulphur fuel stocks drop at ports for ships with scrubbers

The number of ports at which high-sulphur fuel oil (HSFO) is offered is reducing and could be limited for ships equipped with scrubbers in the first months after 1 January 2020, when the International Maritime Organization (IMO) sulphur regulation takes effect, according to Marine Bunker Exchange, MABUX, which follows the global bunker market closely. As the global bunker market adapts, and players observe how demand for the different types of bunker fuel will pan out in the first months after 1 January 2020, high-sulphur fuel oil (HSFO) inventories are reducing at a number of ports, as the use of non-compliant fuel will drop significantly under the new regulation, data from MABUX shows. “We are seeing high-sulphur fuel oil stocks going down now, and the space for manoeuvring for the ships that are equipped with scrubbers is becoming narrower as a result,” says Sergey Ivanov, director at MABUX. “We forecast that the HSFO market may be very
small after 1 January 2020. If we look at the situation for HSFO, we see that inventories are reducing globally at the moment.”
Ivanov says the same process is being observed in many other main ports in Asia, such as Shanghai, Hong Kong and South Korea, and that HSFO sales in Rotterdam were down from around 1,941,000 cbm to 1,693,000 cbm in October.

**On standby**

MABUX believes that around 700 refineries globally are currently producing HSFO. By the end of this year, and at the beginning of 2020, however, the bunker exchange forecasts that at least around 200 refineries could announce that they will stop producing HSFO, at least until the market has settled and adapted to the new environment. The situation could change again in the second half of next year, when the trends of the global bunker market will become more visible. “But the first half of next year will be the big question in terms of availability,” says Ivanov.

He believes the decision of whether to continue offering high-sulphur fuel oil – and how much – in 2020 and beyond could also be affected by uncertainty about future legislation of open-loop scrubbers, which have been banned in some ports because of fears of their effect on the environment. It is estimated that around 80% of all scrubbers installed are open loop, while about 18% are hybrid and 2% closed loop. As a result of the IMO sulphur regulation, which puts a 0.50% sulphur limit on fuel from 1 January, the US Department of Energy expects that the share of HSFO consumed by the US ocean-going bunker fuel markets will decline from 58% in 2019 to 3% in 2020, after which it will rebound to 24% in 2022. *Source: BIMCO Bulletin-December 2019 issue*

**SHIPYARD NEWS**

**MARAD to make $19.6 million available for Small Shipyard Grants**

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Maritime Administration (MARAD) has announced the availability of $19.6 million in federal funding to support capital improvements and employee training at small U.S. shipyards. The Small Shipyard Grant Program helps modernize eligible shipyard operations by improving efficiency and fostering quality ship construction, repair, and reconfiguration. “The Department of Transportation will be investing $19.6 million to help shipyards across the country improve their facilities and maintain their efficiency,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao. The private American shipyards that build and repair America’s military and commercial fleets contribute billions of dollars to U.S. economic growth. In 2013, the private shipbuilding and repair industry supported nearly 400,000 direct and indirect jobs nationwide, $37.3 billion in gross domestic product, and $25.1 billion in labor income. “U.S. small shipyards are the economic backbone for communities throughout the country. They are a proven, wise investment, leveraging the skills and expertise of our shipyard community, which in turn empowers our entire maritime industry,” said Maritime Administrator Mark. H. Buzby. Available to U.S. shipyards with fewer than 1,200 production employees, the Small Shipyard Grant Program supports a variety of projects, including capital and related improvements and maritime training programs to foster technical skills and operational productivity. Since its inception in 2008, the Department’s Small Shipyard Grant Program has awarded more than $223 million through 244 grants. *source: Marinelog*
The New **ZWERVER 1** support vessel currently under construction at Kooymans shipyards here seen at the Hoebee location in Dordrecht. Will become an impressive vessel. Details on website www.hvsds.nl  Photo : Arie Boer (c)

**China securities authority approves CSSC restructuring**

By Jason Jiang

China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) has given approval to a major internal restructuring deal of CSSC, paving way for the merger of state-owned shipbuilding conglomerates CSSC and CSIC. Under the deal, CSSC will acquire 100% stake of Jiangnan Shipyard, 36.27% stake of Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding and 21.46% stake of Chengxi Shipyard from a group of companies including its parent China State Shipbuilding Group. The total value of the transactions is RMB37.36bn ($5.41bn). CSSC will also issue new shares to up to ten specified institutional investors to raise RMB3.86bn to fund the acquisitions. In October, China’s State Council had officially given approval to the merger between China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) and China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation (CSIC), after the two shipbuilders confirmed a plan for a long expected merger in July. The new shipbuilding super group will retain the brand name of China State Shipbuilding Corporation and control nine listed companies with combined assets worth over RMB800bn ($112bn). In December, CSSC terminated the restructuring of its technology unit after the potential deal was rejected by CSRC.

**Jason Brown Promoted to Huntington Ingalls Shipbuilding Division VP, CIO**

By Matthew Nelson

Jason Brown, who has held managerial positions within the information technology organization supporting Huntington Ingalls Industries’ (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division, has taken new roles as the division's vice president and chief information officer. The company said Friday Brown will be based in Pascagoula, Miss., and oversee Ingalls Shipbuilding's IT functions that include application development, project implementation and platform standard management. He will report to Bharat Amin — executive VP and CIO of HII — concerning IT matters and work with Tom Stiehle — Ingalls VP of business management and chief financial officer — on other objectives of the division. Brown's previous roles have included business and IT service delivery manager as well as program and financial analyst at HII's two shipbuilding businesses. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Old Dominion University and an MBA from University of Southern Mississippi. Source: govconwire
Unique Group invests in Indian diving and life support facility

A multi-million rupee investment to enhance its Diving and Life Support division in western India will see Unique Group company Unique Hydra strengthen its infrastructure and increase customer accessibility in the region, the company said in its release.

The 10,000 sq. ft facility in Vadodara, Gujarat, will offer assembly and manufacturing services along with a dedicated engineering and design team to support customers' diving requirements. The state-of-the-art manufacturing facility will be equipped to manufacture integrated saturation and air diving solutions, HBOT systems, diver launch and recovery systems (LARS), and decompression chambers - as well as containerised air and mixed gas diving systems. Complying with international standards including IMCA, Lloyds Register, ABS and DNV, the facility will also manufacture Unique Group's Oceanwide S.a.S brand of Self-Propelled Hyperbaric Lifeboats (SPHL), bringing the Group's global expertise to the Indian marketplace.

The new and upgraded facility in Gujarat is a valuable addition to the Group's “Make in India” initiatives and will provide a base from which to support contractors and the Indian defence sector's diving equipment and support needs. Products and services from Unique Group's partner companies, Kirby Morgan and Cortland Fibron, will also be delivered from the new location with a dedicated service team to provide after sales support to clients.

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Chinese city steps up corridor building to Russian port

Hunchun, a border city in northeast China’s Jilin Province, will upgrade existing highway that leads to Russia’s Zarubino Port in 2020, the provincial government said. Hunchun is home to four national-level rail and road ports, and only 71 km away from Zarubino Port. Jing Junhai, governor of Jilin, said in the government report that the international transportation corridor, named “Binhai No. 2,” will be steadily advanced this year. The projects that will begin construction within the year include upgrading of the highway linking Hunchun and Russia’s Slavyanka Port, and expansion of Kraskino Port, which will greatly promote clearance and cross-border transportation efficiency, said Zhang Liang, deputy head of the city's shipping administration bureau. Source: Xinhua
.... PHOTO OF THE DAY .....