

DAILY SHIPPING NEWSLETTER 2002 - 001



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**Operation
Enduring Freedom**

Note : On request the newsletters will have, starting July 1st , a follow-up number for filing purposes.

EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS

Ship loaded with MOX fuel to leave Japan on July 4



A ship transporting plutonium-uranium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel from Japan to Britain will depart next Thursday morning, sources familiar with the shipment plans said Friday.

The ship — the **Pacific Pintail** — will transport the MOX fuel, currently stored at Kansai Electric Power Co's nuclear power plant in Takahama, Fukui Prefecture, to British Nuclear Fuels PLC.

Navy missed doomed boat

AN **Australian P3 Orion** spy plane flew over the area where survivors were clinging to the debris of their boat after it sank in October last year, drowning 353 asylum-seekers. But the navy says the plane did not spot any survivors and was unaware that the boat, known as Siev X, had sunk.

In dramatic evidence to be presented to a Senate committee next week, the navy has revealed full details of its surveillance of the waters off Indonesia where Siev X sank on October 19 last year. The Government hopes the evidence will debunk claims the navy turned a blind eye to the fate of the overloaded Siev X after it embarked for Christmas Island. It shows -- contrary to earlier Senate

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testimony -- that the navy sent P3 patrols across the stretch of ocean known as Charlie Northwest, where Siev X probably sank.

These flights, on October 19 and 20, were routine patrols and were not sent to the area specifically to look for Siev X. They show that on the morning of October 19, the day Siev X sank, a P3 flew in arcs as close as 24 nautical miles to the coast of Java. The flight detected 30 vessels in international waters -- eight merchant ships and 22 fishing vessels -- but not Siev X.



The overloaded boat sank five hours later, raising the tragic possibility it entered the Australian-monitored zone after the P3 had left the area. The next morning -- with survivors still clinging to the wreckage -- another P3 flight passed through the area but was unaware of the tragedy and did not spot any debris or survivors.

The Government says it is possible Siev X was not spotted because it sank in Indonesian territorial waters before it reached the navy's surveillance zone. However, the Government's intelligence at the time said Siev X was likely to have sunk in international waters -- inside the navy's surveillance zone.

The evidence to be presented to the committee confirms the controversial admission by the navy that it did not step up its routine daily surveillance to search for Siev X and its human cargo. The navy received intelligence information on October 18 and again on October 20 that Siev X had left Indonesia for Christmas Island, and that the boat was dangerously overcrowded.

The Australian Federal Police officer conveying the intelligence on October 20 told Coastwatch personally that he feared for the safety of the boat. However, the navy says it did not change its surveillance patterns to look for Siev X because intelligence information about the departures of such boats was notoriously unreliable and because it believed its existing aerial patrols over the area were sufficient.

News of the P3 flights near Indonesian territory appear to contrast with statements by incoming navy chief Chris Ritchie to the Senate committee this month that the navy's surveillance was focused primarily on the area near Christmas Island. "There was no reason, no cause nor, indeed, no right for (the navy) to send Australian Defence Force assets into the area where that boat subsequently foundered and disappeared," Rear-Admiral Ritchie said. "We waited for that boat to come through the funnel that we had put together, and that was how we were going to detect them."

Siev X left southern Sumatra on October 18 with nearly 400 asylum-seeker on board. The overcrowded and leaky 19m boat capsized and sank in the afternoon of October 19, drowning 353 people. The

survivors clung to the wreckage for up to 20 hours before being rescued by two passing Indonesian fishing boats. It was the worst disaster involving asylum-seekers trying to reach Australia.

S. Korean ship sunk in battle with North



SEOUL, South Korea -- North and South Korean warships exchanged fire in the Yellow Sea, killing four South Korean sailors and injuring 18, the South Korean military said.

A South Korean patrol boat sank in the 20-minute clash, said army Lt. Gen. Lee Sang-hee, chief operations officer for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He blamed North Korea for the incident and said his government was discussing possible countermeasures. He did not elaborate.

South Korea's national news agency Yonhap quoted an unidentified military source as saying one Northern warship was seen being towed in flames across the maritime border, which divides communist North Korea from the pro-Western South. It was not immediately clear if there were North Korean casualties.

Yonhap quoted its source as saying the clash occurred at 10:25 a.m. when South Korean navy vessels tried to repel two North Korean warships and an unspecified number of Northern fishing boats from well inside South Korean waters.

South Korean Brig. Gen. Hwang Ui-don said a South Korean navy speedboat took a direct hit in its steering room and caught fire.

The gunbattle followed a series of border incursions by the North Korean navy into South Korean waters in recent months. On Friday, two North Korean patrol boats briefly crossed the border in the 10th such violation this year. The maritime border between the two Koreas is not clearly marked. South Korea accused North Korea of making 12 brief border violations in the western sea last year.

The Korean Peninsula was divided into communist North Korea and the pro-Western South at the end of World War II. In 1999, a series of border violations by North Korean ships touched off the first naval clash between the two Koreas since the 1950-53 Korean War. One North Korean warship sank and about 30 sailors were believed to have died.



The United States keeps 37,000 troops in South Korea as a deterrent against North Korea.

POOLSE DRENKELINGE UIT ZEE GEHAALD



De IJmuidense loodsboot **Gemini** heeft vanmorgen voor de kust van IJmuiden een Poolse drenkelinge uit zee gehaald. De vrouw sloeg omstreeks tien uur bij harde wind overboord van een plezierjacht met negen opvarenden aan boord. De **Gemini** was als eerste ter plaatse en wist de vrouw, die onderkoeld was maar bij kennis, veilig aan boord te krijgen. Ze is met een ambulance naar het Rode Kruis ziekenhuis

in Beverwijk gebracht. – Boven : De loodstender **GEMINI** – Foto : Piet Sinke

De bemanning van de **Gemini**, bestaande uit IJmuidenaren Berend Kremers (schipper) en Paul de Witte en stuurman Herman van Trigt, keerde juist terug van zee met aan boord de loodsen Leen Kranendonk en Karel Wiegert. „Het was slecht weer“, aldus Wiegert. „Noordwestenwind met windkracht 7 tot 8, en een golfhoogte van 3,5 à vier meter.“

„We waren tussen de pieren toen de Havendienst IJmuiden meldde dat er een halve mijl uit de kust iemand overboord was geslagen. We zijn onmiddellijk teruggegaan.“



Inmiddels was ook KNRM-reddingboot **Christien** uitgevaren, maar de **Gemini** bereikte als eerste de drenkelinge. Berend Kremers: „Ze had gelukkig een gele jas aan, dat viel op. En het zicht was goed. Daardoor hadden we haar snel gevonden. We zijn voorzichtig naar haar toe gemanoeuvreerd en hebben haar aan boord gehesen. Ze was uitgeput, een beetje onderkoeld en ze had wat water binnengekregen.“

Terwijl de **Gemini** de vrouw de haven van IJmuiden binnen bracht, ontfermde KNRM-boot de **Christien** zich over het Poolse jacht, dat naar de jachthaven Seaport Marina werd gesleept. De bemanning van de boot oefent regelmatig op situaties zoals die van vanochtend. „Maar dat doe je bij mooi weer. Met die hoge golven is het nog wat anders“, vertelt Kremers. „Het was een hectisch kwartiertje.“

S.A.AGULHAS / MAGDALENA OLDENDORFF



Helicopter pilots battled to rescue scientists stranded on board an ice-bound ship before Antarctic winter storms closed in. The South African air force crews flew at the edge of their limits to evacuate 48 Russian scientists from the supply ship Magdalena Oldendorff, which has been trapped by a massive ice drift for almost three weeks.

Koreas Blame Each Other in Navy Clash

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Hours after North Korea sank a South Korean patrol boat Saturday, the president of the South and commander of U.S. forces in the country accused North Korea of violating the armistice that ended the Korean war.

A defiant North said the South fired first.

The 21-minute confrontation in the Yellow Sea is the worst border clash in recent years on the world's last Cold War frontier and killed four sailors and wounded 19. It dealt a new blow to Korean reconciliation efforts and embarrassed the South during its moment in the sun as host to the World Cup soccer tournament.

South Korean President Kim Dae-jung called an emergency meeting of the National Security Council and sent a 1,200-ton battleship to the poorly marked border, accompanied by a squadron of fighter jets.

"The military provocation of pre-emptive firing by a North Korean navy patrol ship is a clear violation of the armistice and an act that raises tension on the Korean peninsula. We cannot keep silent," Kim said.

In a statement after the meeting, Defense Minister Kim Dong-shin demanded an apology, the punishment of those responsible and a promise from North Korea to refrain from such actions in the future.

U.S. and South Korean forces were in "close contact" after the attack, said Gen. Leon LaPorte, who commands some 37,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea as a deterrent against North Korea.

"This provocative act by North Korea is a serious violation of the Armistice Agreement and could have serious implications in many areas," he said.

LaPorte's statement did not elaborate. He has asked for a command meeting with North Korean officers to investigate, but said the North has not responded.

Washington also expressed its support for South Korea.

"We support the stance of our ally against armed provocation," said Brenda Greenberg, a State Department spokeswoman.

It was unclear how the clash might affect U.S. efforts to end a prolonged suspension of security talks with North Korea. Washington had earlier proposed a resumption in the second week of July in North Korea.

There was no immediate word on North Korean casualties or missing. A Northern warship was seen being towed away from the battle scene in flames, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A Pentagon spokesman, Cmdr. Randy Sandoz, said there was no "heightened alert" and South Korea had not made any request for U.S. assistance.

The clash occurred at 10:25 a.m. as South Korean navy vessels tried to repel two North Korean navy warships and an unspecified number of Northern fishing boats, the Southern military said.

Two North Korean warships ventured three miles into the South's waters, ignoring loudspeaker

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warnings to withdraw, the military said.

One of the Northern boats then fired a heavy caliber gun from about 500 yards, scoring a direct hit on the steering room of a South Korean patrol boat with 27 sailors aboard, the South's military said.

``All of a sudden, I saw a glint of bright light from the enemy ship and a moment later, our ship was ablaze," South Korean navy Staff Sgt. Hwang Chan-kyu, told KBS-TV, a South Korean television news station, on Sunday. Hwang suffered minor shrapnel wounds and had a bandage around his head.

Hwang said the first enemy shots hit his ship's steering room, fatally wounding the commanding officer, Lt. Yoon Young-ha. Three sailors died in an exchange of fire that followed.

North Korean state-run media denied the claim, saying the northern vessel was defending itself against an intrusion into the North's waters.

``Lt. Yoon was bleeding heavily from his back but was still alive, so I tried artificial respiration on him but it wasn't helpful," Hwang said. ``A few feet away, I saw another colleague dying, and I pulled the trigger on my machine gun like a madman."

The clash was the worst in three years, killing at least four South Koreans — a lieutenant and three enlisted men. At least one South Korean was missing. The South Korean military said 22 sailors were injured, but later revised the number to 19.

The skirmish was a setback to Kim's so-called ``sunshine" policy of trying to engage the isolated, communist North, which shares a sealed, heavily fortified border with the South. The 1950-53 Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

South Korea's opposition Grand National Party, which has criticized Kim's policy toward the North as too lenient, speculated that North Korea was trying to disrupt the World Cup soccer tournament, which is being co-hosted by South Korea and Japan and ends Sunday.

Kim canceled plans with Cabinet ministers and aides to watch the South Korean team's evening playoff game against Turkey on television. Big crowds gathered in the streets of major cities to cheer their national soccer team, which lost 3-2.

``The government will take necessary steps so the people can engage in their business without concerns," President Kim said Sunday before leaving for Japan to watch the World Cup soccer final and hold talks with Japanese leaders. Kim has urged his military to be more vigilant.

U.S.-North Korean tensions have undermined Korean reconciliation efforts, which stalled soon after the first-ever Korean summit in 2000 gave rise to a flurry of exchanges. The peninsula has been divided since 1945.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles North Korea policy, said exchanges between local non-governmental groups and North Korea would continue despite the clash.

The gun battle Saturday followed a series of border incursions by North Korean navy ships into South Korean waters in the area in recent weeks.

In the summer of 1999, a series of border violations by North Korean ships touched off the first naval clash between the two Koreas since the Korean War. One North Korean warship sank and about 30 North Korean sailors died, according to South Korea. Several South Korean sailors were wounded.

French navy seize 'cocaine ship'

RENNES, France (Reuters) -- France is holding 11 crewmen of a suspected cocaine smuggling ship seized by the French navy in a dramatic high seas raid, judicial sources said on Saturday.

The "**Winner**," a Cambodian-flagged freighter, was captured in the Atlantic two weeks ago while carrying up to two tonnes of cocaine to Europe.

The crew dumped crates of cocaine in the sea and tried to ram a French naval vessel when it fired a warning shot to force them to stop, French investigators said.

A Spanish crew member was injured in the clash and evacuated to hospital in Senegal. The ship was towed to the French port of Brest, where it arrived on Friday.

French navy divers recovered between 80 and 90 kilos of cocaine from the seabed. Brest prosecutor Francois Nicot said the haul was evidence of an "organised maritime route for trafficking drugs between South America and Europe."

The 11 crew members -- two Greeks, four Romanians, two Chileans and three Ukrainians -- have been placed under investigation for international drug-trafficking, one step short of formal charges.

French authorities are expected to press Senegal for the extradition of the wounded man.

The Winner started its journey in Romania and sailed to Trinidad and Tobago and on to Cuba, where its 2,800 tonne cargo of steel was loaded, investigators said.

The crew is believed to have picked up between 1.5 and two tonnes of cocaine from an unnamed ship after leaving Cuba and was expected to transfer it to another vessel before delivering the steel to Bilbao in Spain.

Greek police last week arrested the two owners of the Winner and said they were the "brains of the smuggling ring."

SHIPYARD NEWS

Yard may land carrier contract

ONE of two new aircraft carriers for the Royal Navy may be assembled at Harland & Wolff if BAE Systems wins the order, the British defence giant indicated today.

The troubled Belfast shipyard now has an interest in both consortia bidding for the £3bn contract.

French defence company Thales, which employs 500 at a missile factory in Belfast, has also pledged to use yards in the United Kingdom and H&W is carrying out design work for the bid.

The Ministry of Defence is expected to make a decision early next year.

The 50,000 tonne, electric-powered, ships will play a central role in the surface fleet and are to be based at Portsmouth. They are expected to enter service in 2012.

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Under BAE's plans they would be built as modules at its own yards at Barrow and on the Tyne. However final assembly could be in Belfast and on the Clyde. The company estimates the plan will create 8,000 jobs.

Kevin Daniels, head of build strategy for the BAE carrier team, said: "As prime contractor we are open to making use of all possible shipyards in the UK. H&W has the capability and we are open to placing work in Belfast."

A spokesman for H&W said: "H&W is currently the only facility which is able to undertake this assembly work."

Project America Hull May Still Float

Northrop Grumman has assigned 350 workers to make the hull of the former Project America Vessel under construction at the Pascagoula, Mississippi shipyard, seaworthy. In the meantime the US government looks for a buyer after spending \$187 million to get the two ship project going. The second vessel was never assembled and lies in pieces around the yard. A proposal that the US Navy use the half-finished ship as a rest-and-relaxation ship for battle-weary troops was turned down and no further buyer has been identified. For Project America's Congressional backers, Senator Lott among them, the ships were a way to jump-start the dormant commercial shipbuilding industry. The ships were being built for American Classic Voyages' Hawaiian cruise market and fell into the government's hands after the cruise company filed for bankruptcy protection last Autumn.

ROUTE, PORTS & SERVICES

Domestic Oil and Gas Rig Count Up



The number of rigs actively exploring for oil and natural gas in the United States was up 2 this week to 840.

Of the rigs running nationwide, 697 were exploring for gas, 142 were looking for oil and one was listed as miscellaneous, Houston-based Baker Hughes Inc. reported Friday.

A year ago, the rig count was 1,275. Baker Hughes has kept track of the count since 1944. The

tally peaked at 4,530 on Dec. 28, 1981, during the height of the oil boom, but set several record lows in 1999, bottoming out at 488 on April 23, 1999.

Of the major oil- and gas-producing states, Texas gained five and Oklahoma and Wyoming each gained one. Louisiana lost five rigs and Alaska, California and New Mexico all remained unchanged.

THE SUNNY SOUTH OF FRANCE 2 RIVER CRUISE SPECIALS

Premier U.S. Internet site for canal barge and river boat cruises in Europe, eWaterways.com, is offering two luxury hotel barge cruises in Provence this fall with free air fare. Both 7-day/6-night cruises begin in the medieval walled city of Aigues Mortes, meander along the Rhone River, and include sightseeing in Nimes, Arles and Avignon and end in the bustling and beautiful city of Lyon. Your choice: The 50-passenger Chardonnay departing on November 8 - or - The 50-passenger Provence departing November 15. Both The Chardonnay and The Provence are 23-suite hotel barges, stylish, commodious and comfy. The cost of the cruise alone normally starts at \$2690. per person but eWaterways.com has packaged them at \$2199 per person to include: *Round trip air to and from most US cities; *First class TGV (fast train) between Paris and the barge; *All gourmet meals prepared on board, with wonderful wines included; *Sightseeing and 2 nights in a 3-star boutique Paris hotel with breakfasts and taxes.

P&O Takes Over Two Renaissance Ships



Peter Ratcliffe P&O chief executive and Gaston Flosse the president of the government of French Polynesia announced June 17th, in Paris, that P&O will offer cruises in Tahiti for five years starting September. P&O will operate the two former Renaissance cruise ships, **R3** and **R4**, that have been laid up in the Papeete since September 26th 2001 after Renaissance Cruises announced bankruptcy. P & O said one of the cruise ships will stay year round in the tahitian waters while the other will cruise to French Polynesia about two months of the year.

NAVY NEWS HMS SHETLAND



HMS Shetland leaves the Tyne on her final visit, she arrived in Portsmouth 28 June to pay off, Warship World reports that she is been sold to Bangladesh (??)

PLUVIER



The French **Pluvier (P 678)** seen here in Leith last week — **Photo : Dave Cullen**

MOVEMENTS MEECHING

Meeching arrived on the Tyne Saturday evening towing a small barge, not sure where from, and berthed at Devlin's Quay, Hebbur.

Photo / text : Kevin Blair



AFON LAS



Afon Las arrived at Sunderland Saturday afternoon towing the barge Sprucelight from Millford Haven. It's going to load huge concrete blocks for Scarborough.

Photo / text :
Kevin Blair

ZEUS



USNS Zeus seen at the Gareloch last week

Photo : Dave Cullen

.... SHIP OF THE DAY

ALEX CHOUEST



The **ALEX CHOUEST** entering Port Fourchon – **Photo : Piet Sinke**

The **ALEX CHOUEST** is build under yard number 172 at North American Shipbuilders at Larose (USA) and comissioned during 2000 into service, operating in the Gulf of Mexico.

ALEX CHOUEST DATA :



Lloyds number	:	277625
Callsign	:	WCZ2532
Classification	:	ABS
Flag	:	USA
Length	:	84.1 mtr
Breadth	:	18.2 mtr
Max Speed	:	15.0 knots
Gross	:	3969 ton
Net	:	1190 ton
DWT	:	4129 ton

Left : C-Port in Port Fourchon for loading, maintenance and unloading of supply vessels

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Alex Chouest detail picture — Photo : Piet Sinke



Have a look at :

<http://www.marine-marchande.com/journalier.htm>

for the ship of the day picture