

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2007 – 057



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The FOTIY KRYLOV arrived in Willemstad (Curacao)

Photo : Kees Bustraan ©

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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS



The **ANDROS WARRIOR** seen at the Clyde
Photo : Tommy Bryceland – Scotland ©

Somali police arrest four ship hijackers: UN

Somali authorities have arrested four men they said were members of a gang of pirates who hijacked a ship chartered to carry UN food aid and are still holding the crew, a UN agency said on Tuesday.

Gunmen used speedboats to intercept the Kenyan-owned **MV Rozen** on Sunday, storming the freighter and taking hostage its six Kenyan and six Sri Lankan crew, in the first hijacking reported since a December war ousted Islamists from Somalia.

The ship, chartered by the U.N.'s World Food Programme (WFP), has been anchored off Bargal, a port in Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland region, since the hijacking.

The WFP said four men were arrested when they went ashore to buy supplies, leaving four other gang members aboard the ship.

'The arrest is welcome news, but the safe release of the crew and the vessel remains our chief concern,' WFP Somalia's country director Peter Goossens said in a statement.

'We very much hope this ordeal will finish soon. We are appealing for the safe return of the crew and the vessel as soon as possible, and for people to respect the need for humanitarian delivery corridors.'

The WFP said there were reports the vessel was surrounded by five police boats and was sailing southwards.

A maritime group said authorities were negotiating with the hijackers, who had apparently attacked the wrong ship.

'Negotiations are going well,' Andrew Mwangura, director of the Mombasa Seafarers Assistance Programme, told Reuters.

'They might be released any time ... The gunmen might be released by the authorities and given free passage home as they are the same clan as the Puntland authorities.'

The ship, chartered from Mombasa-based Motaku Shipping Agency, was seized after unloading 1,800 tonnes of food aid at two northern Somali ports. It was the third hijacking in two years of a ship hired to carry relief supplies by the WFP.

Somali pirates seized three Motaku vessels in 2005, holding one and its crew hostage for nearly 100 days. Two of those ships had been carrying WFP cargoes.

The WFP said the **Rozen** was attacked last year off Marka, a port south of Mogadishu, but dodged the pirates that time. Pirates, who had made Somalia's coastline one of the most dangerous in the world, vanished from Somali waters while a battle for control of the nation raged on land.

Experts say a band of pirates based in Harardheere port have regrouped and are thought to have been behind Sunday's attack and two unsuccessful hijacking attempts earlier this year.

The Islamists, who ruled much of southern Somalia for six months and applied strict sharia law before being ousted by government and Ethiopian troops, had cracked down on piracy, in part to protect their weapons shipments.

APL to Ship 70 Antique Jaguars

The Jaguar Daimler Club of Holland is shipping 70 antique Jaguars from Rotterdam to New York City on a series of APL vessels next month. On May 9, the cars' owners will convoy to Chicago and from there, they'll begin a nostalgic 12-day antique automobile rally through the American heartland on Route 66.

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The car club members will follow a route immortalized in the 1946 pop music classic "Get Your Kicks On Route 66," a tune made famous by Nat "King" Cole. As the song says: It winds from Chicago to L.A., more than 2,000 miles all the way."

But the Route 66 journey - the club's 30th anniversary commemoration - actually begins at the Port of Rotterdam, where the vintage Jaguars will be loaded onto vessels in APL's westbound Atlantic service to New York. Two cars each will be placed into 40-foot containers for the 10-day voyage to New York.

The first vessel laden with antique Jaguars sails from Rotterdam March 1st. The last one departs March 30th. Timing is crucial if the 70 Jaguar owners are to arrive at Santa Monica Boulevard in Los Angeles May 27 at the end of their rally.



Helderberg's replacement ready to sail

On Friday (February 23) Safmarine advised that the **SA Helderberg**, which was involved in an incident with the 77 356 DWT, Singapore-registered oil tanker **Ocean Sapphire** off the coast of Singapore a week ago, remained at anchor off the coast of Singapore, in Malaysian waters. A salvage crew was on site to effect the necessary repairs to the vessel.

While efforts to complete the repairs are ongoing, the **SA Helderberg** continues to generate its own power. All reefer containers remain operative.

The vessel will enter the Singapore Port once permission is granted by the authorities for her to proceed alongside, after which her cargo will be discharged. "With the necessary construction of a cofferdam and its fixation to the vessel at sea; subsequent authorisation from the Singapore Maritime Authority (MPA); and actual transfer of the ship from current position to the Port of Singapore, March 3 remains the absolute earliest date on which we estimate the discharging of cargo aboard can commence," said Antwerp-based PR and communications executive, Victor Shieh. "We will advise customers of the onward schedule for eastbound cargo as soon as this is available," he said.

For westbound cargo awaiting loading on the replacement vessel, the **Luetjenburg 2AZ**, the departure dates have been delayed by two days due to the need for shippers to make necessary changes in their documentation for customs purposes.

The Port Louis, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town estimated times of arrival remain unchanged.

Bonden wijzen handreiking SMIT wederom af

Naar aanleiding van uitspraken van de bonden in diverse radio uitzendingen waarin wordt gesteld dat men "bereid is te bewegen" heeft SMIT de bonden wederom uitgenodigd in gesprek te gaan voor verdere onderhandelingen.

Deze handreiking is wederom niet aangenomen. SMIT kreeg geen antwoord op de vraag waar bonden dan bereid zijn te bewegen. Bonden stelden dat SMIT eerst met een viertal punten zoals in hun oorspronkelijke voorstel gesteld akkoord moest gaan, alvorens een totaalbod te willen bespreken. De eerder aangegeven bereidheid om te bewegen was hiermee van tafel.

Havenslepers Rotterdam staken opnieuw

De medewerkers van havensleepbedrijf Smit in Rotterdam leggen woensdagochtend om 10.00 uur het werk neer. De staking duurt 24 uur, maar mogelijk loopt deze uit. Dat meldt bestuurder Cees Bos van FNV Bondgenoten. De medewerkers willen een loonsverhoging van 45 euro per maand en een eenmalige uitkering als tegemoetkoming in de reiskosten en in de kosten voor de zorgverzekering.

Bos zegt dat de eisen van de werknemers bescheiden zijn gezien de winst van het bedrijf. "Het is eigenlijk absurd dat een staking nodig is", zegt hij. "De mogelijkheden zijn er, maar de directie wil niet. Die heeft de sleutel in de hand, ze moeten hem alleen nog omdraaien."

Vorige week staakten de werknemers van Smit ook al 24 uur, uit protest tegen de huidige cao. Zaterdagochtend hervatten de 240 personeelsleden het werk. Smit beloofde hun een loonsverhoging van dertig euro per maand over dit jaar en veertig euro extra voor volgend jaar. Maar met die voorstellen gingen de bonden niet akkoord.

Smit regelt ruim twee derde van de sleepwerkzaamheden in de Rotterdamse haven. Bij een staking komt de Rotterdamse haven voor een deel plat te liggen. FNV Bondgenoten liet in de aanloop naar de staking van vorige week al weten dat meer acties zouden volgen als de werkonderbreking niets zou opleveren.

Indonesian ferry had just passed annual inspection

Tragedy struck once more on Sunday as the Indonesian ferry that had went on fire with the deaths of at least 42 people last week capsized off Jakarta as officials and media people inspected the charred vessel. Further details about the ship are also emerging.

At least one person has been killed and five others are missing according to witnesses and media sources.

Lt Col Hendra Pakan told journalists that the ship had almost completely disappeared into the sea and that the movement of the ship had been sudden.

The dead man is reported to be a TV cameraman and one other cameraman, two safety officials and two police officers are missing. Lativi Television of East Jakarta confirmed that the dead man was one of their cameramen.

The ship had been moved to a location some 10 km off the port of Jakarta and a spokesman for the Indonesian Navy said that the ship had been listing. Earlier the death toll had risen to 42 after fisherman found more bodies. It is feared many more missing people could have perished.

The **LEVINA 1** had been on her way to Bangka Island off Sumatra. A fire had taken hold on board soon after dawn on Thursday 50 miles from Jakarta. Relatives of people on board are reporting they have not heard from their loved ones since the tragedy occurred.

A problem for authorities it is alleged is that it is quite common for people to board the ferries in Indonesia unrecorded, usually by sneaking aboard and avoiding paying for their tickets. Also it has been reported that babies and children are not recorded as they do not pay for tickets.

Indonesia's Transport Minister Hatta Rajasa has said that this is a problem he is going to tackle, saying it was a 'big, big mistake' by the ferry companies. The fire is believed to have started when a truck on the car deck caught fire. The truck was also thought to have been carrying a load of inflammable chemicals.

She 1791 grt ship is believed to be the former Japanese Ro-Ro ferry **HAYAZURU MARU**, built in Japan in 1981 by Fukuoka Shipbuilding Co., Ltd . Meanwhile kompas.com are reporting that the ship had recently undergone annual

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inspection the week before the fire for the Classification Bureau of Indonesia (Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia) at PT Dok dan Perkapalan Air Kantung dockyard

Jacob Bassang head of quality control said that the ship had passed inspection and was seaworthy in all respects. All inspections, including the sea water valve for the provision of water to fight fires, had proven satisfactory for the Class bureau,. He said the only work they had been required to do on the vessel was paintwork and servicing.



The **FAIRMOUNT SUMMIT** seen anchored off Dubai
Photo : Reinier Meuleman ©

India launches probe into crew shortage after officer's suicide

INDIA's Union Government is launching a probe into service conditions for seamen employed on Indian ships, following the death of a 26-year-old marine officer on board a SCI ship, which is also being investigated.

The officer is believed to have been at sea for 11 months without break. He is alleged to have taken his life by jumping overboard after being informed that the man due to relieve him had yet to report for duty.

A report by the Business Line said the young man was extremely homesick and had threatened to commit suicide earlier if he was not granted leave. According to a seamen's union official, seafarers are not allowed to spend longer than seven-month stretches at sea. In the event that there is no one available to relieve the seafarer, he would work up for to two more months on request.

The problem is believed to stem from a shortage of marine officers to man ships in India.

Twintig jaar geleden zonk de Herald

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door Ronald Verstraten.



Al vroeg op die vrijdagavond van de zesde maart kwam de schok. In de haven van Zeebrugge was een schip gezonken, meldde de BRT.



De **Herald of Free Enterprise** ligt op zijn kant na de fatale manoeuvre. Gekapseisd, amper na het vertrek naar Dover, met een onbekend aantal, voornamelijk Britse passagiers aan boord.

Over mogelijke slachtoffers was nog niets bekend.

Een onwerkelijk bericht. Een scheepsramp, vlak voor onze door techniek beheerste wereldvoordeur. Binnen de korste keren schoten allerlei verschillende hulpdiensten te hulp. Redders en sleepers en op het water, andere helpers op het land.

Zeebrugge bood die avond een spookachtig aanzicht. Af en aan rijdende hulpdiensten huilden rampspoed en de alras donker wordende nacht kleurde blauw van de zwaailichten. Honderden auto's parkeerden langs toegangswegen, want verderop was er geen doorkomen meer aan.

Maarten van der Eijk weet nog precies waar hij was. Hij was die morgen net van boord gekomen na een week op de **Fighter** en stond te biljarten in een Terneuzens café. Zijn collega Piet Oppeneer met wie hij in wisseldienst de sleepboot bemande, was nu een weekje kapitein.

Binnen een kwartier was de Terneuzense sleper op weg vanuit Vlissingen. Zowat tegelijkertijd koersten reddingsboten als de **Javazee** uit Breskens en de **Tuimelaar** uit Cadzand richting Zeebrugse haven. Ze kwamen daar in een onbeschrijflijke chaos terecht.

Er was geen enkele coördinatie, alles voer door elkaar heen: vissersschepen, sleepboten, reddingsboten. In het schip dat op zijn kant op een zandbank lag, vchten honderden mensen voor hun leven. Omdat de **Fighter** er zo snel bij was, konden tientallen worden gered. "Ramen stuk slaan, ladders laten zakken. Die waren gelukkig voorhanden, omdat het zo dicht bij de haven lag", weet Van der Eijk. Ambulances vlogen voortdurend heen en weer tussen de haven en ziekenhuizen in de omgeving. De mannen van de **Fighter** borgen 34 stoffelijke overschotten. En er was soms een twijfelgeval. "Piet had een jong meisje in zijn armen, meer dood dan levend en hij wist niet of ze het nog zou redden. Maar een half jaar later kregen we een kaartje van haar uit Engeland. Dat heeft jarenlang in de **Fighter** opgehangen," vertelt de inmiddels gepensioneerde Van der Eijk (63).

Met zijn bemanning loste hij een week later de eerste ploeg af. "Toen waren de voorbereidingen van de berging al bezig. Ze waren gestopt met zoeken naar slachtoffers. Er zaten er nog wel genoeg in, maar ze konden er niet bij. Wat

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wij nog deden, was gericht op de berging van het schip, bakken aanbrengen, sleepwerk en dergelijke." Er waren nog wel een paar man aan boord gebleven van de eerste ploeg. "Daar hoorden wij dan verhalen van. Ik zal niet zeggen dat ik heb zitten huilen, maar daar word je toch wel even stil van. Voor die mannen die er de eerste 24 uur bij waren, was het toch heftig. Slachtofferhulp was er toen niet. Ze moesten dat zelf maar verwerken." Het was nog steeds onbekend hoeveel mensen er aan boord waren geweest. "Dat was het grote probleem. Door dat geval zijn die bemannings- en passagierslijsten in het leven geroepen. Daarvóór werden die boten maar volgestampt en zo voeren ze naar Engeland. Maar hoeveel erop zaten, dat wist geen mens. Hoe voller, hoe beter." Bij het lichten werden er naar schatting nog stoffelijke overschotten van negentig mensen uit het wrak gehaald.

Na het zinken van de Herald werden overal maatregelen genomen om een dergelijke ramp te voorkomen. Die richtten zich vooral op de boegdeur, die bij het vertrek was blijven openstaan en waardoor grote massa's water naar binnen konden. Dat werd sindsdien nooit meer toegestaan.

Op roll-on-roll-off boten, zoals ook de Zeeuwse veerponten, werd het aantal stroken voor auto's teruggebracht, zodat die minder dicht tegen elkaar stonden en er meer ruimte was. De Herald was eigendom van P&O Ferries, maar voer voor Townsend Thoresen, dat enkele maanden eerder door P&O was gekocht. Na de ramp werd dat ook de naam voor de veerdiensten.



Van de bemanning van de **Fighter** die op de avond van de ramp te hulp schoot, kreeg aanvankelijk het enige Belgische lid een onderscheiding in eigen land. Pas later - na protest - ook hun Nederlandse collega's. De **Fighter** vaart niet meer en wordt binnenkort gesloopt. Bruikbare onderdelen gaan naar tweelingsleper de **Boxer**, die voorlopig nog wel blijft varen.

Foto : Pim Korver FILM+VIDEO ©

Bij de ramp in Zeebrugge op 6 maart 1987 kwamen 193 van de ruim 600 passagiers om. De meeste mensen

stierven door uitputting en onderkoeling in het water dat slecht 3 graden celsius was. De **Herald of Free Enterprise** was zeven jaar oud. Het schip was 132 meter lang, had een diepgang van bijna zes meter en een maximum snelheid van 22 knopen (bijna 40 kilometer per uur). De Herald kapseisde in enkele minuten op nog geen 200 meter van de laadbrug.

Foto : Pim Korver FILM+VIDEO ©

Het schip is in 1988 gesloopt. De zusterschepen **Pride of Free Enterprise** en **Spirit of Free Enterprise** gingen onder een andere naam varen.

Er waren 80 bemanningsleden aan boord. Er zou alcohol zijn gebruikt. Het schip



zonk doordat het te snel voer en de boegdeur open stond. Bovendien waren de ballasttanks niet geleegd. Die tanks waren niet leeg, omdat de laadbrug niet hoog genoeg was voor de **Herald**, die normaliter niet in Zeebrugge lag.

ZEESCHIP MET BESCHADIGDE VERPAKKING VERHAALD

Dinsdagavond 27 februari om 18.00 uur is het schip Hertfordshire verhaald van de Waalhaven naar steiger 2 in het Calandkanaal omdat er sprake was van een beschadigde verpakking.

Het zeeschip was afkomstig uit Italië met aan boord 2200 'big bags' (800/900 kg) met asbesthoudend afval. De lading moest worden overgeladen in binnenvaartschepen om naar het buitenland te worden vervoerd, conform een vergunning van VROM. Omdat er sprake was van meerdere beschadigde 'big bags' had overslagbedrijf Rhenus BV de Arbeidsinspectie, de Inspectie Verkeer & Waterstaat en vervolgens de DCMR ingeschakeld. De Arbeidsinspectie en Inspectie V&W hebben vervolgens de werkzaamheden officieel doen staken en aan de betrokken schepen een vaarverbod opgelegd. De bewuste schepen moeten worden schoongemaakt en de beschadigde lading moet opnieuw worden verpakt. Dat mag van de DCMR conform de Wet Milieubeheer niet in de Waalhaven. Het schip gaat nu op uitdrukkelijk verzoek van de havenmeester naar steiger 2 in het Calandkanaal (havennummer 5385). Dit is één van de openbare wachtplaatsen van het Havenbedrijf voor kleine zeeschepen waar ook met mobiele kranen kan worden gewerkt en die ver van de bebouwde kom ligt. Ook het betrokken binnenvaartschip zal naar steiger 2 worden verhaald.

Nederlands marineschip onderschept 530 kg cocaïne

Een counterdrugsoperatie van diverse eenheden onder leiding van de Koninklijke Marine te Curaçao resulteerde op vrijdag 23 februari in een drugsvangst van ruim 530 kilogram cocaïne. De drugs werd aangetroffen op een go-fast ten noorden van de benedenwindse eilanden.



De **Fokker-60** van de Koninklijke Luchtmacht detecteerde in de nacht van donderdag 22 februari op vrijdag 23 februari een verdacht vaartuig ten noorden van de ABC-eilanden. Terwijl het maritiem patrouillevliegtuig het bootje bleef schaduwten, stoomde het stationsschip **Hr.Ms. Zuiderkruis** op naar de doorgegeven locatie. Bij ochtendgloren kreeg het stationsschip opdracht om de go-fast te onderscheppen en te onderzoeken.

Links : De 18 balen cocaïne op het dek van **Hr.Ms. Zuiderkruis**.

Met behulp van de boordhelikopter en Amerikaanse plus Franse eenheden werd het verdachte vaartuig tot stoppen gemaand. Aan boord trof het 'Law

Enforcement Detachment' – een speciaal boardingteam van de Amerikaanse kustwacht dat aan boord van het Nederlandse schip gestationeerd is – 18 balen cocaïne aan. De zes opvarenden van de go-fast zijn aangehouden en

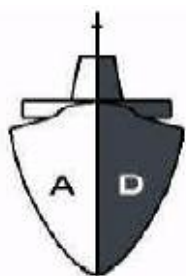
overgedragen aan de bevoegde Amerikaanse autoriteiten. Zij worden aangeklaagd en vervolgd volgens het Amerikaanse rechtssysteem.

De gehele counterdrugoperatie werd gecoördineerd vanuit het operatiecentrum van de Koninklijke Marine te Curaçao, het hoofdkwartier van de Amerikaanse kustwacht te Washington D.C. en vanuit de '**Joint Interagency Taskforce South**' (de Amerikaanse drugsbestrijdingorganisatie) te Key West.

NAVY NEWS

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Northrop Grumman Completes Main Mast Installation On USS Carl Vinson



Northrop Grumman completed a significant work performance milestone on the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier **USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70)** with the installation of the final section of the ship's main mast. Northrop Grumman Corporation completed a significant work performance milestone on the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier **USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70)** with the installation of the final section of the ship's main mast on Feb. 21. The carrier is undergoing a refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) at the company's Newport News sector, the nation's sole designer, builder and refueler of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers. An important aspect of this availability includes modernizing the ship's island with the latest technology and installing a new main mast. The 70-ton structure provides a platform for radar and communication systems high above the ship for maximum coverage. During refurbishment, the original round mast pole was removed and replaced with a modified, tapered square pole to increase strength and keep electrical and piping systems enclosed for survivability purposes. It is also larger, which allows for waist-high safety rails and easier access to all areas by internal ladders. **USS Carl Vinson's** new main mast is similar to what was installed on **George H. W. Bush (CVN 77)**, the newest Nimitz carrier under construction.

The removal and reconfiguration of the island structure and main mast began shortly after the ship arrived on Nov. 11, 2005. The **USS Carl Vinson** is undergoing its refueling and complex overhaul at Northrop Grumman's Newport News sector. The project is scheduled to last more

than three years and will be the ship's one and only refueling and complex overhaul in a 50-year life span. **Vinson** is the third ship of the Nimitz class to undergo this major life-cycle milestone.

Australian navy to hunt for lost WWI submarine

The Australian navy began a search for the nation's first submarine in a bid to end the mystery over what happened to the vessel which disappeared in the Pacific in the first months of World War I.

The submarine, the **AE1**, vanished in September 1914 with the loss of all 35 crew while patrolling near Rabaul on the island of New Britain, now part of Papua New Guinea.

It was the first major loss of Australian life in World War I, and followed Australia's first military action of the conflict when troops had captured a German radio base at Rabaul.

"I am hopeful that this search will shed some light on to the whereabouts of the AE1 and provide some answers to the relatives of those brave crew members," assistant defence minister Bruce Billson said in a statement.

The loss of the **AE1** has been one of Australia's enduring mysteries. A brief search in 1914 found no trace of the vessel, while reconstructions of German fleet movements indicate it was unlikely the submarine was attacked.

Billson said investigations suggested that the submarine could have sunk after running aground or colliding with a submerged object near the Duke of York Islands.

The **AE1** and its sister ship, the **AE2**, were purchased from Britain and arrived in Australia in May 1914. Both were commanded by British officers with a mix of British and Australian crew.

In August 1914, five days after Australia declared war on Germany, the **AE1** was dispatched to support the military operations against German forces on New Britain. The **AE2** was also lost during World War One.

It sank in April 1915 in Turkey's Sea of Marmara after penetrating the Dardanelles during the Gallipoli campaign. Unlike the **AE1**, the **AE2's** crew all survived. Australian submarine hunters found the wreck of the **AE2** in 1998.

SHIPYARD NEWS

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Approval for STX Vietnam yard project

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Vietnam's state controlled Vietnam News Agency reports that the Prime Minister has approved a project that will see Korea's STX Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. build a shipyard in the Van Phong economic zone in the central province of Khanh Hoa.

According to the head of the economic zone's Management Board, Nguyen Trong Hoa, the shipyard will be the largest in the region with an initial investment capital of 500 million USD.

The yard will be build on a 300 hectare site in southern Van Phong port. In the first phase of the project, it will be capable of building 15 ships with a total capacity of about 900,000 DWT.

The shipyard will be capable of building 25 ships with a combined capacity of 2.5 million DWT when the second phase of the project is completed.

Romania tries again

German yard group ThyssenKrupp's Blohm + Voss unit is interested in buying the Santierul Naval Mangalia (SNM) shipyard in Romania.

The news comes less than a year after neighbouring Korean-controlled shipbuilder Daewoo Mangalia pulled out of the privatisation last year. "Blohm + Voss representatives have come here for us to present them the company as they are interested in the privatisation terms," Teodor Atanasiu, head of state privatisation authority AVAS, told the Rompres agency.

The German group has inquired about the possibility of moving a road bridge which runs over part of the yard and which prevents ships higher than 25.5m entering its facilities.

"I have told them that this is possible depending on what they want to do there and the investment volume," added Atanasiu. He envisages a tender in March and a new owner in place by late June or early July. Daewoo agreed to buy SNM for RON 13.19m (\$4.7m) and pledged to invest in upgrades to the tune of at least EUR 3.5m (\$4.29m) over three years.

There were reports the Korean company quit because of the yard's new management, which favored a strategy of intensive development instead of expanding activities.

Daewoo explained its move by saying it had disagreed with the Romanian government over the clearing of the shipyard's debt. SNM, one of the smaller shipyards in Romania, swung to a \$396,000 loss in 2004, from a small profit the year before.

Daewoo wanted the yard to provide components for its Romanian unit, which specialises in boxships.

ROUTE, PORTS & SERVICES

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The **BOW FARGUS** seen at DOW Chemicals in Terneuzen

Photo : **Henk de Winde ©**

V. Ships Leisure to manage Windstar vessels

Ambassadors International, Inc. (NASDAQ:AMIE) says that its subsidiary Ambassadors International Cruise Group has selected V.Ships Leisure to manage the vessel operations of Windstar Cruises following its acquisition which is anticipated to be completed in April 2007.

David Giersdorf, President of Ambassadors International Cruise Group, stated, "We are looking forward to utilizing the services and resources of V.Ships to support our effort to deliver the iconic Windstar experience to our guests and enhancing the ability of our officers and crew to achieve that goal. With the support of V.Ships, we will continue to operate Windstar as the award winning, luxury cruise line that everyone knows it to be."

Lorenzo Malvarosa, CEO of V.Ships Leisure, added, "We are happy to support the operation of this exceptional fleet. Ambassadors International and V.Ships Leisure share the same commitment to quality, service and excellence vital to this particular segment of the market."

Under the agreement, V.Ships Leisure will provide services which include insurance, deck, engine and hotel crew management, port operations, procurement and technical and hotel operations.

LOW FREIGHT RATES, HIGH BUNKER COSTS HIT NOL

SINGAPORE-based container shipping, transportation and logistics company Neptune Orient Lines (NOL) made a net profit before non-recurring items of US\$344 million for 2006, down 57% from 2005.

The group's Core EBIT (Earnings before Gross Interest Expense, Tax and Non-Recurring Items) was US\$401 million, 55% lower than the 2005 Core EBIT. Revenues were steady year-on-year at US\$7.3 billion. NOL group president and chief executive officer, Dr Thomas Held, said: "NOL delivered a solid performance in 2006 in the face of a difficult

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operating environment. Our results show the combined impact of lower average freight rates and increased fuel costs over the past year."

He noted that freight rate and fuel price factors have adversely impacted the operating results of the whole industry, with a number of companies reporting significant drops in profitability.

The NOL Group's Return on Equity for the year was 18%, and Earnings per Share were 25 US cents. "In our liner shipping operations, we again executed well our approach of keeping our network tight and maximising yields," said Dr Held.

"We achieved high utilisation rates, averaging 96% in the headhaul direction for all trade lanes, in line with the previous year. Our liner operations faced very significant upward cost pressures during the year as a result of higher fuel prices. On the logistics side, this was a year of realigning our business with some growth in our Asian-origin business."

We continued to realign our logistics activities to focus on international conveyance and to diversify the service offering and portfolio of business," said Dr Held. NOL says it took a "cautious" approach to expansion in 2006, recognising the challenging environment that existed, but plans to accelerate its growth this year, with a total of seven ships entering APL fleet and pushing capacity up by 10%.

Dr Held said: "Building upon our existing strong global footprint and broad capabilities, we are well placed to capitalise on the robust growth occurring across the Asia region. As we move into 2007, we will seek to create long-term value for our shareholders through a strategy for profitable growth and innovation. This will be built around organic growth and we will also be on the lookout for merger and acquisition opportunities. NOL Group will continue to innovate and expand its global presence. "

Looking ahead NOL notes: "Most analysts take the view that the market will remain in oversupply. At the same time, continuous cost pressures can be anticipated from high fuel and landside costs."



The **BLUE MARLIN** seen in submerged position at the Cromarty Firth (Invergordon) whilst discharging the rigs **Rowan Gorilla 6** and the **GSF Galaxy 2** which arrived from Halifax.

Photo : Willem van der Kort ©



FRONTLINE REPORTS LOWER EARNINGS

JOHN Fredriksen-controlled, Bermuda registered tanker operator Frontline made a 2006 net profit of US\$516.0m and earnings per share of US\$6.90. This was significantly below the very high 2005 figures of US\$606.8m net profit and earnings per share of US\$8.11. The company also reports a weakening of the market in Q4 with net operating profit of US\$220.4m, including a gain on sale of assets of US\$73.8m, compared to US\$184.7m in Q3 when there was no sale of assets. The average daily time charter equivalents earned in the spot and period market by the company's VLCCs, Suezmax tankers and Suezmax OBO carriers were \$48,000, \$31,200 and \$34,200, respectively compared with \$59,800, \$40,000 and \$30,800, respectively in the third quarter.



The **FRONT STRATUS** seen moored at the MOT in Rotterdam-Europoort
Photo : Piet Sinke ©

Frontline notes: "The results show a continued differential in earnings between single and double hull tonnage. The results also reflect the dry-dockings of four vessels in the quarter, that Front Sunda was off hire for the full quarter, together with other unscheduled off hire creating approximately 298 days in lost income. Operating costs continued at above normal level caused by the fact that the dry-dockings were expensed in the quarter."

As of February 2007, the Frontline has cash breakeven rates on a TCE basis for VLCCs and Suezmaxes of \$30,200 and \$22,600, respectively.

Harms Bergung sells PSVs

Seabrokers reports that Harms Bergung has sold the VS 470 Mk II PSVs **Aeolus**, **Cerberus** and **Centaurus**.

Fellow German company Nordcapital has bought the vessels and will re-name them **E R Arendal**, **E R Bergen** and **E R Kristiansand**. The deal was due to be completed by the end of February.

Sovcomflot Invests in Newbuildings

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The Sovcomflot Board of directors examined the progress and prospects of the group's shipbuilding program realization at their meeting on February, 26 of the year 2007. Special attention was paid to cooperation with Russian shipbuilding companies, reports the press-service of Sovcomflot.

Sovcomflot places orders only for technologically advanced ships, which is profitable for home shipbuilding companies. Moreover, it will help them in their competition in the international shipbuilding market, notes Sergey Frank, general director of Sovcomflot.

The Board of directors is satisfied with the development of Sovcomflot's relations with Russian shipbuilding companies, points out Igor Shuvalov, Chairman of the Board. In 2006 the group invested above \$115 mn in the Russian shipbuilding industry. During 2007-2011 the investment amount can reach \$1 bn.

S. Frank emphasizes that this figures refer to ice-strengthen chemical tankers, LNG tankers and other ice-strengthened tankers to work on the shelf of the Arctic and Far Eastern seas in Russia. Such is the development strategy of the company.

Maersk upgrades Asia-Red Sea service

MAERSK Line will introduce a new extended version of its Asia-Red Sea service (FM5) in March.

A company statement said the benefits offered by FM5 will include significantly improved transit time from China to Aqaba (Jordan) by up to seven days and a direct service from east and south China to Salalah (Oman), Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), and Aqaba. In addition there will be more port calls on both the westbound and eastbound service.

The FM5 service will be launched with the first westbound call in Ningbo on March 6, with additional port calls at Hong Kong and Aqaba. On the eastbound service, the ships will add calls at Malaysia's Port Klang and Tanjung Pelepas



The **BENCHUGUA EXPRESS** seen at Tenerife – Photo : Bob Kok ©

KPT dredging company faces legal hurdles

The Karachi Port Trust's plan to form a separate dredging company has run into snags as its legal experts try to find out ways to provide support for the creation of the sister organisation under the framework of KPT Act, inside sources revealed to The News.

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The federal government has already issued directives, saying beyond 2008, no port authority would be allowed to award dredging work to any firm registered outside the country.

Following the government's announcement, the KPT started work for the constitution of a dredging company as its subsidiary in collaboration with foreign consortia having international reputation and dredging experience.

According to the KPT plan, the port authority will contribute its equipment and skilled staff to the new company.

At present, massive development is underway at both the ports - Karachi and Bin Qasim - that has increased the need for dredging work.

To run the operations smoothly at the Karachi port, 2.5 million cubic metres of dredging is required annually. At Port Qasim, this requirement is 4.5 million cubic metres, at Gwadar one million cubic metres and at Ormara Naval Base one million cubic metres.

However, due to the development work at the Karachi port, the dredging requirement is estimated at 50 million cubic metres, 20 times of normal level. Giving foreign firms dredging contracts means drain of foreign exchange. That is why, the KPT wizards are trying to set up a new company as early as possible. But they face legal obstacles before moving to invite letters of intent from consortia of international repute.

However, the KPT officials hope to receive legal support from the prime minister and are busy in preparing the data for available equipment (quantity, quality, type, working condition, capacity, etc) and skilled manpower (numbers, standard of skill, ability, pay scale, etc).

Besides the legal hitch, the KPT is also facing hardships in finalising the nomenclature of the new proposed organisation. The KPT wants to keep the operational and executive powers with its nominees. But other interested companies insist on getting executive powers with their nominees, sources say. According to the KPT development plan, it aims to deepen the existing depth of the port from 12 metres to 13.5 metres, reconstruct berths, establish a new Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) port and a coal terminal.

Besides, Pakistan Deep Water Container Port will be established. To handle container ships of fifth and sixth generation, the new port is being set up at the strategic location of Keamari Groyne.

Berths will be built at a depth of 18 metres, with 3.75km quay wall. The KPT has also planned to build a cargo village spread over 1,303 acres, port tower, cruise terminal and KPT office and commercial tower.

Onderzoek reserveveer Westerschelde

De provincie Zeeland onderzoekt de mogelijkheid om zelf een reserve veerboot aan te schaffen. Die zou ingezet kunnen worden als één van de huidige veren tussen Vlissingen en Breskens uitvalt.

De Willem Alexander is al weken uit de vaart vanwege een motorstoring en dit weekend lag ook de Prinses Maxima aan de kant. Dat betekende dat er helemaal geen veerdienst was. Bouwer van de veren Damen Shipyards moet van de provincie op zoek naar een tweedehands veerboot

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The **ARCADIS** seen arriving in Willemstad (Curacao)

Photo : Kees Bustraan ©

AIRCRAFT / AIRPORT NEWS

De Britse prijsvechter easyJet betreedt de Belgische markt. Vanaf juni vliegt de luchtvaartmaatschappij dagelijks tussen Brussel en Genève, vanaf september worden dat twee vluchten per dag. Dat heeft easyJet dinsdag gemeld.

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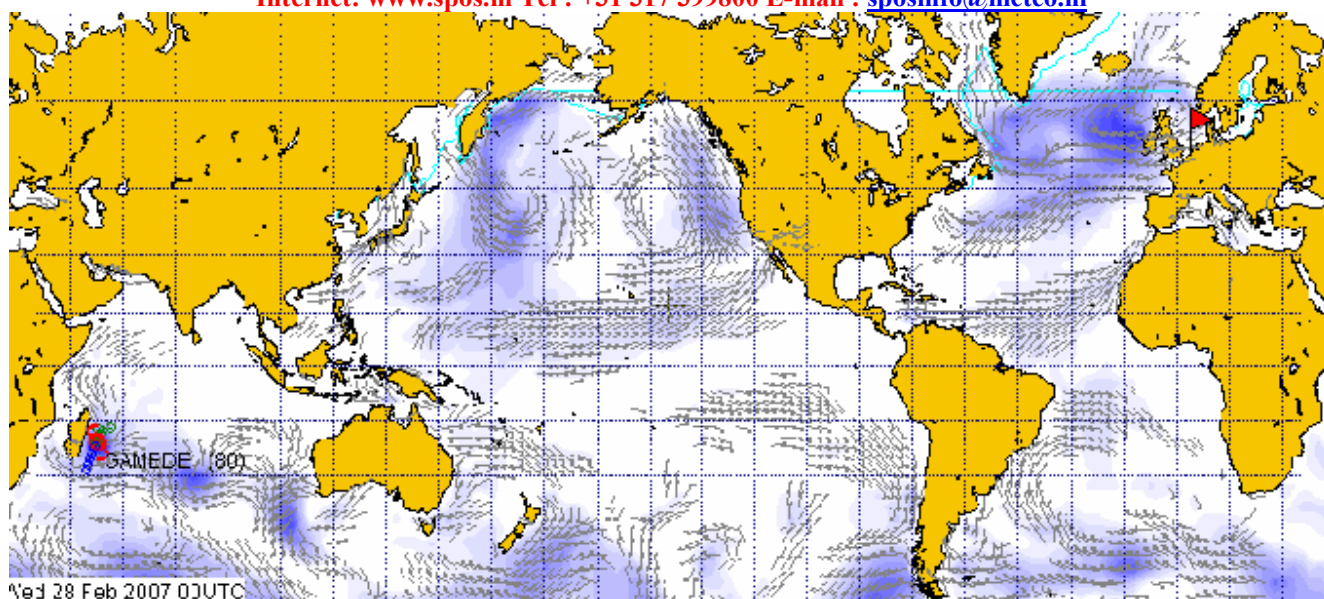
De vervoerder zegt straks een "lacune" in zijn netwerk te hebben gedicht. Vooral zakenlui zullen gebruik maken van de easyJet-vluchten, is de verwachting van het bedrijf.

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Today's wind (+6Bft) and wave (+3m) chart. Created with SPOS, the onboard weather information & voyage optimisation system, used on over 500 vessels today.

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY

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View of the **Port of Puno** in Peru. **Puno** is situated at the borders of Lake Titicaca, the highest (**3850 metres**, 12500 feet) navigable lake in the world. The vessels seen on the photograph have been built at sea level and assembled at the lake. One of them (on the right) is more than a hundred years old Peruvian coastguard vessel, used to patrol the Peruvian/Bolivian boarder.

photo : Jan Kloos ©

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