

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2007 – 169



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The Costa Classica seen anchored in Rosendal, Norway.

Photo : Henry Veringa ©

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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS



The **BIBBY SAPPHIRE** seen approaching Ijmuiden
Photo : Joop Marechal ©

Greek island pollution from sunken cruise ship is negligible, says company

Pollution around the shores of the Greek island of Santorini in April from a cruise ship that sank there is "nearly minimal," the ship's owners said on Wednesday. A study conducted by the state Hellenic Centre for Marine Research based on water samples taken shortly after the shipwreck showed that "the effects on the area's marine environment are nearly minimal," Cyprus-based Louis Hellenic Cruises said in a statement.

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The study was commissioned by Louis Hellenic Cruises, which has been accused by Santorini authorities of polluting the island just ahead of the busy tourist season that draws thousands of visitors every year. The Greek government has imposed a 1.174 million euro fine on Cyprus's largest tourism and leisure firm, saying "large sections" of the coast near the site were stricken with pollutants and that rare marine species are at risk.

The 143-metre **Sea Diamond** sank to a depth of 140 metres after hitting a charted reef on April 5. The port authority of Santorini has levelled a separate fine of 9-17,000 euros per day, totalling over 560,000 euros so far.

The company counters that the fine is "entirely unfair and unfounded" and will contest it, arguing that it had already spent more than over four million euros on cleanup operations and another 4.3 million to create a fund for plaintiffs of the shipwreck. The **Sea Diamond** originally had 500 tonnes of fuel on board and more than two thirds have since been collected from the surface according to the merchant marine ministry.

The ministry insists that the situation is "under complete control" but has itself come under criticism for failing to quickly organise a fuel removal operation. Louis last month said that pumping out oil remaining in the wreck would be "extremely dangerous" given the depth and condition of the ship and that salvaging the cruiser is also viewed as a non-starter.

Some 1600 passengers and crew were safely evacuated but two French tourists -- a 45-year-old man and his 16-year-old daughter -- disappeared and are presumed dead. The **Sea Diamond's** captain and five officers have been charged with negligence, breaching international shipping safety regulations and polluting the environment.

KNRM evacueert patiënt van coaster Amsteldijk

Door : Ron Zegers – KNRM Hoek van Holland

Donderdagochtend 5 juli om 11.15 uur werd de Hoekse KNRM bemanning opgeroepen door het Kustwachtcentrum om een patiënt te evacueren van de coaster **Amsteldijk**. Het schip lag voor anker in ankergebied 5, 12 mijl west buiten de pieren van Hoek van Holland.



Om 11.30 voer de KNRM reddingboot **Jeanine Parqui** op de waterweg met een pittige Westenwind van 5 beaufort pal tegen. Buiten de pieren bleef de golfslag venijnig doorstaan met golven van 1 tot 2 meter hoogte. De kapitein van de **Amsteldijk** werd gevraagd ankerop te gaan zo lij te maken om de overname van de patiënt veiliger te laten verlopen.

Om 13.35 was de reddingboot **Jeanine Parqui** langsij de **Amsteldijk** en werd de patient met zijn bagage overgenomen. Het bleek te gaan om een Filippijnse zeeman die pijn op de borst had. Aan boord van de coaster was te weinig kennis en medicijnen om de man te behandelen. Op weg naar de vaste wal had de reddingboot wind en golven mee zodat om 13.00 uur werd aangemeerd in de Berghaven van Hoek van Holland. De bestelde taxi stond

er nog niet, de marechaussee wel om de man te controleren. Hierna is de Filippijnse zeeman naar het Havenziekenhuis vervoerd voor verder onderzoek.



The **CSAV SHANGHAI** seen approaching Willemstad (Curacao)

Photo : Kees Bustraan ©



Ship with smuggled cigs and beer seized

The Customs Department scored its biggest ever haul of contraband when it seized a 200-tonne ship ferrying 31 containers of illegal cigarettes and beer in Bintulu, Sarawak in the wee hours of Sunday.

The vessel, registered in Mongolia and had last called at Singapore, had on board RM4mil worth of beer and cigarettes. Unpaid duties for the 43,960 cartons of beer and 444,000 cartons of cigarettes totalled a whopping RM21mil. Customs director-general Datuk Seri Abdul Rahman Abdul Hamid said the ship had been under surveillance for two days by a crack team from here. "At around midnight, we saw the ship anchored at a private jetty about three nautical miles inland from the mouth of Sg Kemena in Bintulu.

"When we boarded the ship, the captain couldn't produce any documents and the cigarettes had labels purportedly from both the Health Ministry and the Customs Department. "Besides the vessel, we also confiscated five lorry trailers found near the jetty, which we suspect were to be used to ferry out the goods. "This is the biggest attempt at smuggling via sea that the department has thwarted since a similar incident in Batu Pahat in June last year involving RM3mil worth of goods," he told reporters at his office here yesterday.

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Eighteen people aged between 33 and 53, have been detained – the 10-member ship crew, which included a Malaysian, and eight locals caught at the jetty. He said the department was trying to trace the owner of the vessel and the private jetty.



The Russian icebreaker **MOSKVA** seen under construction

Photo : Tomasz Grotnik ©

PEACEBOAT arrives to Aden

Japanese cruise ship '**PeaceBoat**' arrived to Aden yesterday, carrying over one thousand Japanese and international students in order to promote a culture of peace around the world. Mr. Abpl Sato, coordinator of the voyage in Yemen, stated that the objective of the voyage is to learn about the culture and history of Yemen. He also indicated that several events have been scheduled for the students such as visiting Aden University, Yemeni Women's Union offices, and a number of schools as well as kindergartens.

The students will also visit historical sites in Aden and Taiz governorates, and will hold a football match between the cruise ship's league and one of Aden's prominent teams.

The Voyages of **PeaceBoat** take part for three months around the world; the **58th Voyage for Peace** departed Yokohama, Japan on June 9, 2007 and will return on September 20, 2007. It will visit 22 ports of call, including first ever calls to Mikonos, Greece, and Copenhagen, Denmark, and the first call in many years to the port of Aden, Yemen.

The **Peace Boat** will take an equatorial course around the world, passing through the Suez and Panama canals along the way. Additionally, it organizes its voyages on chartered passenger ships, adapting the onboard spaces to provide a unique and dynamic environment for its participants. Since June 2003, **PeaceBoat** has been chartering TSS **The Topaz** for its global voyages.



Beloved heritage tall ship is 'probably going to sink'

The **Robertson II**, a tall ship affectionately known to generations of Sail and Life Training Society grads as "the Robbie," went down on a reef off Saturna Island on the weekend.

None of the approximately half-dozen crew members and passengers was injured in the accident, but damage to the ship was significant, according to Canadian Coast Guard maritime controller Darren Morley. The ship, which was sold by SALTS in 2003, has spent the last few days listing at a near-90 degree angle near the entrance to Saturna's Winter Cove.

"It looks like it's taking on water, so it looks like it's probably going to sink," said Toby Snelgrove, a Mayne Island trauma counsellor and photographer who came upon the wreck while setting crab traps. "If you get water in the hull, and with the tide going down, the risk is pretty high. They probably don't have a hope in hell."

The coast guard sent out a ship to help rescue the crew, but wasn't able to do much else. The owners called in private salvage operators, while Transport Canada environmental response crews arrived on scene to contain an oil leak. As of press time, salvage attempts on the 67-year-old heritage schooner hadn't been successful.

Morley said the ship probably foundered on the reef at high tide because of the strength of the tides in that area at this time of year. Snelgrove agreed, but pointed out the reef is well-marked on charts.

"I can't imagine they didn't know it was there," said Snelgrove. "You're lucky when you hit a reef on a rising tide, because you might have \$2,000 damage but at least you get your boat back, but when you hit it at a high tide ... the tide's coming down now. Either it's going to float or it isn't."

The ship was reportedly heading for a lamb barbecue on Saturna Island. "Certainly we're sad to learn about this event and we wish her current owners the best of luck with salvage efforts," said Loren Hagerty, executive director of SALTS. "[The **Robertson II**] is a big piece of the history of Canada."

The 130-foot schooner was launched from a Nova Scotia shipyard in 1940. It served as a fishing boat in Atlantic Canada until 1974, when it was brought to the West Coast.

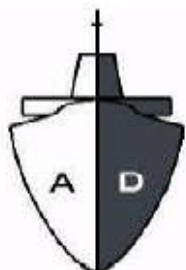
It was SALTS' first ship and served as a sail-training vessel for thousands of young people until its "retirement" from active sailing in 1995. It was used for tours of the Inner Harbour for the next few years until it was sold to Roy Boudreau in 2003, with a restoration estimate of more than \$1 million. Boudreau was unavailable for comment.

Whatever the fate of the **Robertson II**, Hagerty said, the vessel's spirit will live on in one of SALTS' current sail-training vessels: the Pacific Grace, a **Robertson II** replica.

NAVY NEWS

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Fishermen breach Nimitz security

Three inebriated local fishermen on Monday night managed to breach the elaborate security ring around the **USS Nimitz** and board one of its water taxis, berthed near the aircraft carrier.

The three fishermen sneaked aboard 'Glen DHP', one of the three water taxis brought from Singapore to ferry crew and visitors between the ship and shore. On discovering the intruders around 8 pm, the captain of the ferry alerted the special control room at the Chennai Port, which immediately relayed the information to the police patrol boat in the area.

The intruders, on spotting the patrol boat, jumped into their motorboat and started speeding away. Only after the police warned them over the PA system that they would open fire did the intruders' boat come to a halt after almost an hour-long chase.

The three occupants were taken to the local police station and on interrogation were found to be fishermen from Kasimedu in North Chennai. The three — Ramesh, Kanna and Bhaskar — who were completely drunk, disclosed that they had boarded the water taxi to retrieve their net, which had been snared by the ferry while they were fishing.

The three are being detained for further questioning. According to police sources, a huge security ring consisting of coast guard and police patrols has been active around **Nimitz** and other warships of the strike force.

"We'll tighten the security ring as we do not want another security breach. The next time it need not be some drunk fishermen," said a senior police officer. Even at the Chennai port, a heavily fortified security perimeter has been erected by the US Navy through which only authorised personnel, invitees and crew members can pass to board the water taxis or the destroyer **USS Pinckney**, which is berthed in the harbour.

USS Pinckney, incidentally, became somewhat of a consolation prize for nearly 200 guests, specially invited on Monday evening for an I-Day reception aboard the **Nimitz**.

The trip to **Nimitz**, anchored 3 kms away from the Chennai Port, was cancelled since the sea was too choppy and transferring untrained people from the water taxis to a floating platform attached to the **Nimitz** was considered too risky by the US Naval authorities. So the guests were given a tour of **Pinckney** instead.

US Navy invades Sydney as Kitty Hawk sails in

SYDNEY was gearing up for a US invasion with the arrival of the **USS Kitty Hawk** yesterday. Another three US ships followed later - bringing 7000 cashed-up sailors.

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The CV 63 USS KITTY HAWK - Photo : Nick Lampe ©

Thousands of Sydneysiders are expected to flock to Sydney Harbour to catch a glimpse of the massive aircraft carrier, which arrived around noon.

It is likely to be the final visit of the **Kitty Hawk**, which last came to Sydney in 2005. While the public will not be allowed on board, Mrs Macquarie's Chair and The Domain will provide the best vantage points for one last look at the ship before it returns to the US to be decommissioned next year.

In an embarrassing bungle by the State Government, the Daily Telegraph can reveal the security of the four visiting US warships was potentially compromised after a NSW Government agency posted sensitive details on the Internet.



Photo : USS CG 63 COWPENS – Photo : Ian Edwards ©

The arrival date, times and berthing details of the **USS Kitty Hawk**, **USS Cowpens**, **USS Juneau** and **USS Tortuga** were published by the Sydney Ports Corporation despite requests from the US to keep the information secret.

A US Consulate spokeswoman told the Daily Telegraph yesterday that the public postings were a serious security concern for the US Navy, whose warships will remain in the harbour for up to a week.



The **M-05 VIESTUS** is the former Dutch MCM **SCHEVENINGEN** seen here in Den Helder naval base prior her handing over to Lithuania

Photo : Rob Harmse ©

Brunei to sell warships worth £600m after dispute with BAE

The Sultan of Brunei is selling three corvette warships built by BAE Systems for £600 million after falling out with the British defence company. The sultanate is understood to have appointed Lurssen Yachts, of Germany, to find a buyer for the ships, which have never left their home dockyard on the Clyde.

Lurssen, which makes luxury yachts and military vessels, is expected to use the proceeds from the sale to build three ships for the Brunei Navy. However, the decision to sell the corvettes may lead to diplomatic tensions between Britain and Brunei over where they end up.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) will not want Lurssen to approach buyers, such as Iran, that would not normally gain access to high-specification British military equipment. The corvettes saga is also embarrassing for BAE, as Brunei's decision to sell without taking delivery of the ships is a clear indication of how disappointed the sultanate is with the vessels.

When BAE finished building the ships in 2004, the Government of Brunei refused to accept them, claiming that they were not up to specification.

BAE took Brunei to arbitration and three years later the matter was settled. It is understood that the arbitrator found in favour of BAE and the remaining value of the contract was paid. The ships have been moored at BAE's dockyards of Govan and Scotstoun on the Clyde ever since.

Next week the ships are expected to be moved to a temporary home, possibly in Newport, South Wales. Brunei ordered the F2000 warships in 1998 as part of a modernisation of its naval fleet. The corvettes are high-speed vessels designed for use in coastal protection, specifically the defence of Brunei's offshore oil assets.

Defence sources believe that the real reason for Brunei's dissatisfaction with the vessels is that they were overcommissioned and, therefore, too complex. The ships are armed with Exocet Block II antiship missiles, Seawolf surface-to-air missiles and a front-mounted gun.

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They have been designed with the doors and beds constructed for smaller sailors. The ships also lack heating, which will limit the number of potential buyers. Malaysia and Gulf states such as Qatar are the most likely buyers, defence sources said yesterday. A spokesman for the Brunei Government refused to comment on the sale. Lurssen was not available for comment. BAE said that the ships now belonged to the Brunei Government and the matter was settled.

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The new **Arie Visser type** lifeboat for the KNRM station Scheveningen under construction at Aluboot in Hindeloopen, the name of the vessel will become public when the vessel is delivered

Photo : Pim Korver FILM+VIDEO ©

India's L&T poised to set up shipbuilding unit

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Larsen & Toubro (L&T), India's largest engineering conglomerate, is poised to set up L&T Shipbuilding, as a separate company, within two weeks. The shipbuilding company will announce the location of its large new shipyard in August.

L&T has earlier said it will invest around \$110 million in this new yard, as part of the second phase of its entry into shipbuilding, and is eyeing vessels such as large crude carriers.

Formation of the shipbuilding company is part of what Chairman A M Naik told India's Business Standard is a "verticalization" effort under which at least five new companies will be set up. The companies will operate in L&T's new business areas of power projects, boilers, turbines, water and shipbuilding.

Each of these companies will have a CEO, a board, and finance and human resource management teams. L&T has also launched a global hunt for CEOs.

These CEOs will be a part of the group corporate management committee but would not initially sit on the L&T board. "We hope that some of the CEOs will eventually get into the main company's board," he said.

The companies will operate in L&T's new business areas of power projects, boilers, turbines, water and shipbuilding.

Warning on Chinese shipbuilding overcapacity

Officials see signs of looming overcapacity in China's shipbuilding sector, A report in China Daily says shipbuilding capacity in the country will exceed 40 million deadweight tons a year in 2010 if new yards planned by investors are completed, according to data from China Association of National Shipbuilding Industry.

As of last year, industry annual capacity was 14.6 million deadweight tons. The projected 40 million dwt figure is much larger than a government plan unveiled in September that seeks to have a total shipbuilding capacity of 23 million deadweight tons at the end of the decade.

China Daily quotes You Shumin, an official from the Commission of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense, as saying: "The government's plan is not very rigid. But 40 million deadweight tons is really too much for the shipbuilding sector."

You is quoted as saying that many projects funded by investors don't comply with China's regulations for the shipbuilding sector.. According to the rules, total input in a new shipbuilding project should reach at least 2 billion yuan, of which no less than 40 percent should come from investors themselves. The Chinese side should hold a stake of at least 51 percent in their shipbuilding joint ventures with foreign partners. Sino-foreign ventures are required to build their own technical centers.

Projects for low-and-medium-speed diesel engines for vessels are not permitted in China, according to the China Daily report. "We will implement the existing regulations more strictly and work out new measures to put the sector in order," You told China Daily. She also warned of investment risks in the sector, although the global ship market has been flourishing since 2003.

"Demand for new vessels is likely to fluctuate widely in coming years," she stressed. "Shipyards in China will suffer a lot from global market fluctuations if overcapacity cannot be prevented, as they rely heavily on orders from foreign buyers."

DOF installer exercises option at Aker Yards

DOF Installer ASA has exercised an option with Aker Yards for the construction and delivery of an additional new high-end subsea installation and construction anchor handling vessels. This is one of two options that DOF Installer was granted in February 2007. The second option has been extended to October 2007.



The vessel will be built at Aker Yards (Aukra, Norway) with delivery scheduled for October 2010 and is of Aker AH 04 CD design, developed by Aker Yards Project. The vessel will have a length of 108 m, beam of 24 m and depth to main deck of 9.8 m. It vessel will be equipped with 500 metric tonnes main winch, and a large offshore crane.

Accommodations are planned for 90 persons. The hull for the vessel will be built at Aker Yards, Tulcea in Romania and it will be outfitted at Aker Yards in Norway. Aker Yards says the value of the contract is approximately NOK 760 million (about \$131 million). DOF Installer says that total estimated project cost for the contract, including owner furnished equipment and construction supervision, amount to approx. NOK 815 million (about \$140 million).

The investment will partly be financed through a contemplated private placement of new shares in DOF Installer, raising gross proceeds of NOK 160 million, and partly through expected long-term bank debt. The subscription price in the private placement is set to NOK 130 per share. DOF ASA will participate in the private placement with NOK 70 million and will own approx. 44% of DOF Installer after issuance of the new shares.

Based on the private placement price, the post-issue market cap of DOF Installer is NOK 730 million. The subscription period for the contemplated private placement will commence immediately and last until 08:30 on 6 July 2007 the latest. However, DOF Installer reserves the right to end the subscription period at an earlier stage at its sole discretion.

ABG Sundal Collier Norge ASA and SEB Enskilda ASA have been retained as financial advisors in relation to the private Placement.

Washburn & Doughty Delivers Eleanor F. Moran

On March 12, 2007, Washburn & Doughty Associates, Inc. of East Boothbay, Maine delivered the **Eleanor F. Moran**, a 92 x 32-ft., 5100 hp, Z-Drive Firefighting Tug, to Moran Towing of New Canaan, Connecticut.

The vessel is operating at the port of Norfolk, Virginia. **Eleanor F. Moran** is classed ABS Maltese Cross A1 Towing, Maltese Cross AMS, with Escort Notation, Towing Service, Maltese Cross A1 Fire Fighting Vessel, Class 1. The Firefighting 1 classification requires two monitors to each produce 5,280 gpm for a distance of 394 ft. at a height of 148 ft., as well as a deluge system and the ability to sustain firefighting operations for a minimum of 24 consecutive hours. Firefighting 1 equipment includes two Caterpillar 3412C engines rated at 900 hp @ 2100 rpm and Nijhuis HGTFI-1-250.500 pumps located in the engine room.

The pumps supply two FFS model IM/FFS-1200LB electric FiFi 1 monitors mounted on the aft upper deck. Controls for the monitors are in the pilothouse and locally at the monitors. The firefighting system also includes a deluge sprinkler system and eight (8) fire stations located on the main deck. **Eleanor F. Moran** is powered by two EMD 12-645F7B main engines that each produce 2550 hp @ 900 rpm. The propulsion system is completed by Schottel model SRP 1215

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FP Z-Drives with 2400 mm stainless steel propellers. Eleanor F. Moran is equipped with John Deere model 6068TFM76, Tier 2 emissions certified 1800 rpm marine engines providing 99KW, 120/208 VAC, 3 phase power. One generator is normally on-line while the other is on standby. In the event that the on-line generator fails, the standby generator will automatically start and go on-line. The generator experiencing the failure will be automatically shut down.

An IPS main switchboard is provided in the engine room for distribution of 208-V 3-phase power. A Markey type DEPC-48 electric hawser winch is installed forward and a Markey model CEWC 60 electric stern hawser capstan is installed aft. The sides and stern of the main deck are fitted with Duramax 12 x 14-in. rubber "D" fender. The bow utilizes Viking 16" soft loop on the lower portion and Schuyler cylindrical rubber on the upper portion. Accommodations are located in the deckhouse and include a mess/galley, two two-man staterooms, two one-man staterooms, two heads and an assortment of lockers. Mitsubishi air conditioning systems allow for independent climate control in individual staterooms.

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ROYAL SUCCES RUNS INTO QUAY IN LOBITO

By : Geoffrey Owen



With this article some photos of damages to the harbour wall at the port of Lobito, Angola and to the vessel "Royal Success" bow. The bulk ship "Royal Success" ran into the quayside with her bow on Friday the 15th June 2007, with the vessel under pilotage. Two tugs were apparently assisting the vessel as she came alongside, but were not made fast to the vessel. The local Angolan authorities are claiming **US\$ 25,000,000.00** guarantee from the vessel. (More than what the vessel is worth.) The vessel was loaded with a cargo of bagged rice, which is to be unloaded at Lobito and another port in Africa. The vessel's IMO No. is 8029624. I expect that the vessel and her cargo will be detained until the guarantee is lodged with the port of Lobito authorities or until the harbour wall is repaired at the ship-owners expense.

7/5/2007

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This is a classic example of pilot error and a lack of experience on behalf of the Master who, knowing his vessel better than the pilot, should have overridden the pilot and slowed the vessel using the ship's engine before bouncing the ship off the quayside. Apparently there is no problem with the ship's main engine, which was running at full astern when the ship bounce off the quayside. Damages were sustained to the "**Royal Success**" bow, as can be seen in the photo right.

Further fines were levied against the vessel when the Master ordered their boat to be lowered into the water to assess the damages to the vessel, without permission from the port authorities and for working on the bow without permission from the Port authorities. Ship-owners are faced with continual harassment by port authorities in Angola. Fines are issued for doing anything "without permission". The lack of rat guards on mooring lines or chipping and painting on deck are other favorite "felonies" according to the Angolan port authorities. Should a ship-owner want to do something that they consider a need to have permission to do, then of course a "fee" is charged. I wonder who ends up pocketing the "fee".



Petra looks to buy new vessel for RM50mil

Petra Perdana Bhd has proposed to buy a new anchor handling/offshore support vessel from S K Line Co Ltd for RM49.7mil. In a filing with Bursa Malaysia yesterday, it said the proposed purchase was in line with the company's fleet renewal plan to provide marine support services to offshore oil and gas facilities.

It said the vessel was expected to be ready for delivery in June 2008, adding that it would contribute positively to the company's future earnings. In a separate filing, Petra said it had agreed to lease four anchor handling tugs and supply vessels – two each from Mount Benom LLC and Mount Tahan LLC – for 120 months from the date of delivery.

The Mount Benom vessels are expected to be delivered in October and December and the remaining two from Mount Tahan, next June and August.

The agreement also gives Petra the option to buy the vessels at the end of the lease period. The cost of the proposed acquisition and lease would be funded by internal funds as well as bank borrowings, Petra said.

Record Container Exchange at the Port of Felixstowe

XIN HONGKONG shifts record 5610 containers at port

The Port of Felixstowe is celebrating a record number of containers being handled on a single vessel, with the call of China Shipping Container Lines' **Xin Hongkong** on 28th June 2007. The Port achieved an impressive 5,610 container moves on the 9,600-TEU ship, in what is thought to be the largest ever exchange of containers at a UK port. This breaks the previous record of 5,586, set on China Shipping's CSCL America in early March 2007.

Chris Lewis, Chief Executive Officer of Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited, which owns the Port of Felixstowe, said:

"This is the second time this year that the Port of Felixstowe has broken its record for the largest number of container moves on one vessel. This tremendous achievement is testament to the ongoing improvements that we are making to our levels of productivity and customer service, and we hope to be able to build upon this success in the future. "

The 337-metre-long **Xin Hongkong** was the first of four 9,600-TEU capacity vessels introduced by China Shipping Container Lines on its AEX1 service, as part of an upgrade of its fleet with newer vessels of larger capacity. The AEX1

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service now comprises four x 8,500-TEU and four x 9,600-TEU vessels. The service makes Felixstowe its first port of call in Northern Europe, inward from Ningbo, Shanghai, Yantian, Hong Kong and Chiwan.

Robert Hughes, General Manager of China Shipping (UK) Agency Co Ltd, said of the record:

"We are very pleased that the Port of Felixstowe continues to give China Shipping the level of service that enables our largest ships to handle the increasing number of containers the Line is shipping through Felixstowe. This most recent record has occurred at the same time that the schedule of our AEX 1 service between Asia and Europe has improved, bringing further benefits to our customers."

China Shipping Container Lines commitment to Felixstowe has been further strengthened by the opening of a prestigious new multi-million-pound headquarters just outside the Port, on 25th May 2007.



The Argentinean **LIBERTAD** seen in Amsterdam – Photo : Willem Kruit ©

Pullmantur Cruises return to Malta

A press conference on board the Malta-flagged TSS **Sky Wonder**, that is presently berthed at Grand Harbour Pinto Quay, was held to mark the return to Malta of Pullmantur Cruises, whose TSS **Sky Wonder** will be making weekly calls to Valletta until 31 October.

The press conference was addressed by Tourism Minister Francis Zammit Dimech and Competitiveness and Communications Minister Censu Galea, Pullmantur's director of port operations and excursions Gianluca Suprani, the ship's captain Ivo Botica and Mondial's general manager Michael Abele.

Dr Zammit Dimech expressed his satisfaction that the cruise liner industry is developing in Malta. He said that the increasing number of cruise liner passengers not only means an increase in major economic activity, but also that all the passengers visiting Malta for a few hours while their ship is berthed will be seeing what Malta has to offer firsthand.

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Pullmantur has started operations with one of its larger vessels, TSS **Sky Wonder**, which carries 1,550 passengers and which will bring more than 25,000 tourists to Malta this year. For 2008, Pullmantur is already planning to increase its presence as it will start operations in May and is expected to have over 30 calls during the year.

Since its inception, Pullmantur Cruises wanted to create a new Spanish-Mediterranean style of cruising, emphasising a relaxed yet colourful cruise experience at competitive prices. Today Pullmantur has a fleet of seven vessels that offer cruises in the Mediterranean, the Baltic and the Caribbean.

In 2006, the world's second largest cruise liner group, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd (RCCL) bought Pullmantur Cruises. RCCL plans to invest heavily in Pullmantur in the coming years and this will see further growth of the fleet and of the product range of cruises on offer.

RCCL owns and operates 36 ships under the Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, and Pullmantur Cruises brands. All Pullmantur's ships are registered in Valletta and thus fly the Maltese flag.

Pullmantur is the first major cruise liner whose ships are registered in Malta and it was revealed by Minister Galea that efforts are being made to attract more such prestigious registrations to our country.

Pullmantur Cruises are also popular among Maltese holi-day-makers. When Pullmantur's SS **Oceanic** used to call every week at Valletta, thousands of Maltese enjoyed cruises on her.

Following Pullmantur's return to the Maltese market, for the summer of 2007, so far a total of 1,500 Maltese holiday-makers have booked a cruise on either the TSS **Sky Wonder** out of Valletta for western Mediterranean cruises, or the MS **Zenith** out of Venice or Athens for eastern Mediterranean cruises.

Pullmantur's ships offer a unique all-inclusive concept whereby almost all drinks are free in all the ship's bars and restaurants.



Farstad Purchases Vessel Under Construction

Farstad Shipping has reached an agreement with Island Offshore to buy their newbuild no. 62 at Aker Yards Brevik. Farstad will immediately enter into the contract with the yard. The newbuild is an AHTS of type UT 712L (15.900 BHP) to be delivered in September 2008. The purchase price corresponds to a vessel value of \$68.6m. Farstad Shipping has a similar vessel under construction at the yard for delivery in March 2008. During the last year the yard has delivered three of the same type of vessels to Farstad Shipping.

Galveston-Port Bolivar ferry to add new vessel

The Texas Department of Transportation is expected to add a sixth vessel to the Galveston-Port Bolivar ferry fleet, but a shortage of deckhands might still cause some delays for travelers, officials said.

The department is slated to approve next week a \$17 million, 18-month project to construct a new vessel - an addition that officials hope will improve efficiency and reduce wait times.

A department consultant studying the possibility of replacing the ferry with a bridge has reported that summer wait times can exceed two hours. Wayne Welsh, assistant ferry operations manager, said manpower is the biggest issue the ferry faces.



The ferry **ROBERT H.DEDMAN** seen arriving in Galveston
Photo : Piet Sinke ©

The department typically runs two or three boats during non-holiday weekends, Welsh said. The schedule calls for four boats Fridays through Sundays, but the third and fourth vessels depend on crew availability.

"With the competition from offshore, the pay for that is substantially higher than what TxDOT has," Welsh said.

The department pays less than the national mean for the maritime industry, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. But Debra Canady, president of Recana Solutions, which staffs the Galveston ferries, said the state's pay has become more competitive than it used to be. The ferry is the only way motorists can cross the waterway between Bolivar Peninsula and Galveston Island. The free service links two segments of State Highway 87. The boats, which hold about 70 vehicles, take 18 minutes to make a one-way trip of nearly three miles, according to the transportation department.

Department spokesman Norm Wigington said wait times will shorten once repair work is complete on two new docks at Galveston and one at Port Bolivar, bringing the total to three docks on each side.

Group Five awarded Durban harbour project



The **UNITED PROSPERITY** seen arriving in Durban, built as **LA MPASSA** for Sona Tram of Gabon in West Africa, she was later renamed **ALEXIS II** and **AFRICAN COAST** before being acquired by her present owners, Alunited Maritime Business, of Bangladesh who gave her present name. She called in Durban for bunkers.

Photo : Shiphoto International © (shack@iafrica.com)

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The Durban harbour expansion project has been awarded to South African infrastructure company Group Five, in partnership with Belgian firm, Dredging International. The R1.8bn contract forms part of State-owned utility Transnet's bigger port infrastructure upgrade initiative across 13 terminals in six ports to address increasing maritime traffic demand and growth in containerised cargo. Group Five Civil Engineering will handle the R1.1bn civil portion of the contract, which entails widening the existing harbour by 100 m and deepening the harbour by six metres, by May 2010

MOVEMENTS



The **EVER SUMMIT** seen here during the launch will arrive in Rotterdam Europoort ECT DDW during her maiden voyage July 19th 15:00 hrs.

Photo : Evergreen ©



Thijs Viegers **BEVER** seen enroute Rotterdam

Photo : Jan Verhoog ©

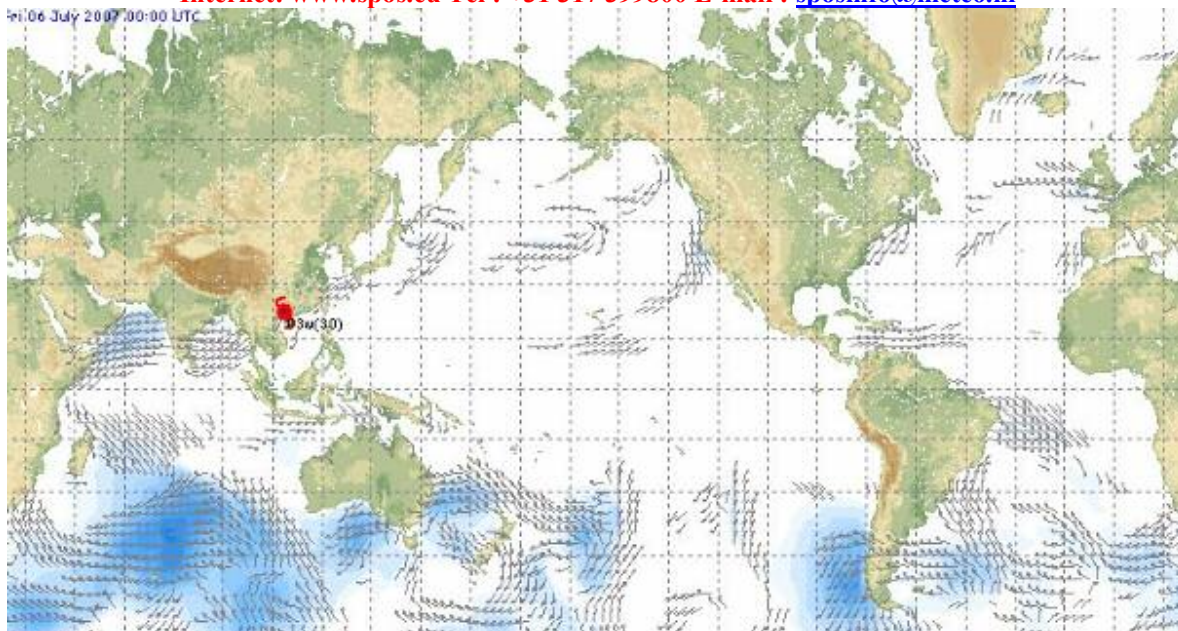
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.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The **ALFRED N** seen approaching Rotterdam-Europoort

Photo : Teun van der Zee ©

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