

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2010 – 003



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The BEVER seen enroute Dordrecht > Gorinchem to be fitted out at the Damen yard
Photo : Michel Kodde ©

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The Malta Dockers Union orders industrial action at Tug Malta



The Malta Dockers Union has directed Tug Malta employees not to work on tugs crewed by fewer than four persons. It said that yesterday the company laid down that crewmen on leave or sick leave would not be substituted, with effect from today.

The union said this was in breach of the collective agreement and directed crewmen to ignore the company's order and not go out to sea if fewer than four crewmen are on board **Source : Malta Independent**

Photo : Cpt. Lawrence Dalli -
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PASSENGERLINERS SEEN IN WILLEMSTAD (CURACAO)



Above seen the **ENCHANTMENT of the SEAS**



The **GRAND PRINCESS**



The **DEUTSCHLAND**

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China tops Greece

China has beaten Greece as the largest buyer of dry-cargo vessels in 2009 as it snapped up over a quarter of the ships sold, a renowned Greek broker says. Chinese owners bought 186 bulkers in 2009, 66 more than the traditionally market leading Greeks, according to figures from Allied Shipbroking.

China also topped the spending league, splashing out \$2.46bn on bulkers in 2009, compared with the \$2.33bn invested by Greeks. Allied's latest weekly report says almost half of the bulkers bound for Chinese companies were built in the 1980s. By contract, Greek buys were spread more evenly among the age range as Hellenic owners took the opportunity to renew their fleets.

In all Allied says 634 bulkers were traded in 2009, of which 42 were resale deals. The figure topped the 586 ships sold in the sector a year ago. It adds 1980s built tonnage accounted for nearly 40% of the sales, while vessels built in the past decade made up 17% of the total.

The 13 tankers, 10 containerships and two reefers also on the way to China gave it the overall title of the number one buying nation. Its 211 ships pushed Greece into second place, despite its owners topping the tanker buying table with 32 vessels. Greek owners were the biggest spenders overall, investing \$3.21bn to buy 167 ships. Chinese owners spent \$2.86bn in the sale and purchase market this year, Allied says. **Source : Tradewinds**

Floating crude, distillates storage play to be consistent theme in 2010

There is little incentive for trading companies to use large ocean-going oil tankers for storage of both crude oil and distillates, based on the current relatively flat forward price curves, tanker rates, bunker costs and huge capital outlays. However, Credit Suisse said in its 2010 market outlook report that offshore tanker storage is expected to be a consistent theme throughout next year.

The amount of oil in tanker storage will remain a moving target due to several financial factors. OPIS reported in mid-November that about 85.35 million bbl of distillates were stored onboard ships, based on a list of ships booked for long-term storage about a month ago. The bank said that the prospect of easy money from storing oil onboard ships to take advantage of the oil price contango has brought more than a few financial players into an arena that is traditionally dominated by major oil companies due to the large capital outlays.

With oil prices hovering around \$80/bbl, the cargo alone for a Very Large Crude Carrier costs about \$160 million. A VLCC has the capacity to hold about 2 million bbl of oil.

Besides a large capital, the contango price spread for distillates has weakened in the past year due to ample supply, less-than-stellar distillates demand and an excess hydrotreating capacity. The six-month price spread needs to be above \$7/bbl to make crude storage profitable, and the same gap needs to be above \$20/bbl for gas oil storage. Currently, these forward price gaps are relatively narrower compared with a year ago. The six-month price gap for crude and gas oil are at only \$3/bbl and \$10/bbl, respectively. While tanker charter rates, bunker costs, and capital costs play a role in a trader's decision to store oil on a tanker, the driving factor is the contango in the oil curve.

Nevertheless, there are other reasons tankers are used as storage despite the relatively flat price curves compared with a year ago. In the summer of 2008, the Iranians had 15-20 tankers storing Iranian crude. The two main reasons cited for the oil being stored on tankers were the discrimination against the oil by importers, due to geopolitical tensions; and the lack of a discount for the heavy sour grade. Other factors to keep the floating storage trend going in 2010 are the projected weak tanker rates for next year, a record new tanker fleet delivery and the phasing out of single-hulled tankers. The combination of moderately improving global oil demand and above-average fleet growth next year should lead to another year of below mid-cycle tanker rates. This should augur well for the use of tankers as storage, because many

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owners will most likely be more willing to secure a steady stream of cash flow in the form of a long-term storage contract, as opposed to trading their vessels in the traditional tanker market, Credit Suisse said. The forward freight agreement (FFA) market indicates that VLCC rates are expected to average in the low \$20,000 per day range next year. "We note that the FFA market is fairly illiquid and that we expect tanker rates to average about 20% above indicated FFA rates, but the key takeaway is that sentiment is for a very weak tanker market in 2010," the bank added. A weak outlook by some owners may lead them to lock up their vessels on long-term storage contracts to avoid having to operate in the spot market in 2010. Additionally, the phasing out of non-double hull vessels may lead to an increased willingness of owners to put their vessels on storage.

Also, with a record number of new crude tankers scheduled for delivery from shipyards in 2010, the bank expects some of this newly delivered tonnage to be used as storage tankers before entering the traditional tanker fleet.

Source: Opis



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Mac Mackay New Year's resolution for 2010 was to establish a tug blog. It is called Tugfax and it is now on line

<http://tugfaxblogspotcom.blogspot.com>

It will not replace his Shipfax blog, but will compliment it he hopes. <http://shipfax.blogspot.com>
It will feature news, oldies and other things related to tugs and towing from Mac's perspective in Halifax, and beyond.
Just lift the links shown above and enter them into your browser.

Have a look and enjoy, **Mac Mackay**

Pirates seize second UK-flagged vessel in days

A UK-flagged cargo ship with 25 crew has been seized by pirates off Somalia, media reports say. The **Asian Glory** was taken 620 miles (1,000km) off the Horn of Africa nation's coast, the Bulgarian foreign ministry said.

The ship, which has a multi-national crew, is the second UK-flagged ship hijacked in days, after chemical tanker the **St James Park** was seized on Monday. The waters around Somalia are among the most dangerous in the world. As well as eight Bulgarians, the other nationalities making up the **Asian Glory** crew are said to include Ukrainians, Romanians and Indians. The 13,000-tonne ship was reportedly transporting cars from Singapore to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia.

It is estimated the ship could take up to three days to reach the Somali coast, from where pirates usually hold ransom talks. The **St James Park** is currently anchored off the Somali coast, where negotiations for its release are expected to start. Source : BBC

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GMB asks Platinum II agent to remove the 'wreck' ship from Alang shipyard



The Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) has asked the agent of the **Platinum II** ship that contains hazardous material and radioactive substances to remove it from Gopnath near Alang where it is anchored. The agent has declared the ship as wreck which could not be set afloat again.

According to GMB officials, the agent of the ship has been asked to remove the **Platinum II** ship which is now a dead vessel, before the onset of monsoon. The Centre in November had asked the Gujarat government not to allow beaching and breaking of the ship as a technical team had found high levels of toxic material and radioactive substances in it.

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"The ship was declared a wreck by the agent who brought it here. It cannot be refloated and could cause obstruction to port traffic as it is anchored on a busy route," said chief nautical officer, GMB, S P Mathur.

"We have asked the agent to remove the ship which is a wreck, before the onset of monsoon, that is, by May 15," he said, adding that it was necessary to remove the ship as it could pose grave danger in case of a cyclone or storm in the Arabian sea. Mathur said that the Centre has asked the state to remove the ship from Gopnath near Alang where it is anchored.

"But since the cost is very high we have asked the agent to do it," he said. In a letter to GMB in November, the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) had said the ship violated the United States Toxic Substances Control Act.
Source : Press Trust of India

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RoRo ship escapes disaster

ANOTHER roll-on-roll-off vessel was reported to be in distress before dawn last Thursday when it ran aground off Bayubod Port in Sta. Cruz, Marinduque with 222 passengers and an undetermined number of crewmen on board.

The Philippine Coast Guard said that by seven a.m., rescue operations for **MV Torrejos** were already completed and no casualties or damage to property were reported. There was also no sign of oil spill.

The management and crew of **MV Torrejos** are just waiting for high tide to free her. Initial investigation showed that at about 2:55 a.m. yesterday, **MV Torrejos**, a RoRo passenger cargo vessel with 195.90 gross tons, ran aground near Buyabod Port.

MV Torrejos is owned and operated by Sta. Cruz Shipping Services Corporation and was skippered by Zaldy Galvan. It departed Talao-talao Port, Lucena City with passenger load of 222 and two rolling cargoes bound for Buyabod Port, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque at 11:45 p.m. Wednesday.

While enroute to Buyabod Port, **MV Torrejos** encountered strong winds and current that caused the vessel to run aground. Upon being informed of the accident, the Coast Guard coordinated with the distressed ship's owner which dispatched **MV Torrejos'** sister ship **MV Vanessa** to aid the stricken vessel.

All vessels in the accident area were called on to join the rescue operation. **MV Vanessa** picked up all passengers of **MV Torrejos** and brought them to Buyabod Port. In another incident, **MV Starlite Navigator** with 222 passengers and 26 crews suffered engine trouble off Matuco Point, Batangas City. Coast Guard District Southern Tagalog Luzon immediately sent help and safely brought the drifting ship to Calapan Port in Oriental Mindoro. **Source : Journal online**

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CASUALTY REPORTING



In the Dutch port of Harlingen a sailing yacht sank at new years eve after some people had thrown some "fireworks" close to the yacht into the water.

Photo : B. Brouwer ©

NAVY NEWS

The submarine kickbacks Pandora's box reopened

The post-1996 probe into the Agosta submarine deal, which led to the removal of the then-Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Mansurul Haq and a corruption reference against Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari, was an alleged cover-up to save many key officials of the Pakistan Navy, besides turning a blind eye to a controversial \$550 million deal of minehunters signed in 1992 during Nawaz Sharif's first tenure.

Documents available with The News show grey areas that remained untraced, while a key naval officer of that time told The News the cover-up in the submarine deal was meant to save the skin of many in the Pakistan Navy and was done by Senator Saifur Rehman, who was only interested in fixing Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari.

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The most interesting aspect of the whole affair was the statement of the then-director general Naval Intelligence (DGNI), who was instantly turned into an example for others when he was recalled from an overseas course, retired prematurely, court martialled and harassed to keep his mouth shut.

The documents show the naval authorities charged DGNI Commodore Shahid Ashraf of getting Rs 1.5 million from a naval officer, who was alleged to have got illegal gratification and kickbacks from foreign suppliers of naval vessels, etc., but made an approver against the DGNI, who had given to the authorities a list of naval officers who had allegedly received kickbacks but were never touched and promoted as rear admirals instead.

According to a source, the DGNI knew too much and, therefore, he was silenced. The NAB sources also confirmed the existence of a Feb 17, 1995 letter issued by SOFMA (the French company that was involved in Agosta deal) that talked of making payment of \$40,000 to each of four naval officers whose names were mentioned in the same letter. Instead of probing the four officers, each one of them was later elevated as Rear Admiral.

A statement of the DGNI submitted before the Board of Inquiry (BoI) was explosive but was ignored. When approached, Shahid Ashraf owned all that he had stated in the documents available with The News, and offered to present himself before a commission to spill the beans and uncover the faces, who, according to him, were alleged to have done wrong but were never touched.

According to Ashraf, the Agosta deal was never struck by Adm Mansurul Haq, who had actually received kickbacks after the award of the contract for its smooth implementation. Those who had received the kickbacks before the award of the contract, he said, were never formally questioned.

In his statement, he had told the BoI: "It needs no emphasis that lions share of kickbacks was paid before the award of the main contract. I had received information as the DGNI that Adm SM Khan, R Adm IH Naqvi, V Adm AU Khan, R Adm A Mujtaba, R Adm Jawed Iftikhar had received gratifications in connection with the award of contract for Agosta 90-B, for favouring the Agosta 90-B submarine acquisition by the Pakistan Navy."

He also revealed: "Col Ejaz Ahmad was actively pursuing the interest of the contractor and obliging officers concerned from time to time. My sources had intercepted information that Mr DEVENSAY of DCN (French company) had issued instructions in the form of a letter to Col Ejaz stationed in Rawalpindi as agent of DCN to pay \$40,000 each to following officers of the Pakistan Navy: a. Cdre Mushtaq Ahmed, b. Cdre Khushnud Ahmed, c. Cdre SV Naqvi, and d. Cdre Naveed Ahmed". All of these officers were said to be members of the committee for evaluation of technical specification of onboard equipment.

He stated: "A copy of this letter was shown to me by R Adm Sarfraz Khan during investigation by Col Zafar in the presence of the Commanding Officer (Cdr Qazi), Cdre Shahid Nawaz (DGNI) and Cdr Shafiq Ahmed, Registrar Naval Court of Appeals. The copy of this letter was marked to Zafar Iqbal, stationed in Washington as agent of SOFMA, who was arrested by FIA. Mr DEVENSAY had directed him to release an amount of \$160,000 out of special fund in favour of Col Ejaz for payment to these (four) officers."

He also stated: "Cash pay-off to officers was discussed in the Command and Staff meeting held immediately on return of CNS (Naval Chief) Adm Mansurul Haq from France in early 1995. The CNC informed the members that Cdre Shahid Ashraf had called me (Mansurul Haq) in France and seriously upset me by reporting that foreign currency was to be doled out to some serving officers of the PN. However, the investigation remained inconclusive as the Chief of Naval Staff deemed it appropriate to abandon the investigation for reason known to him."

Shahid told The News he had shared the same information with the then-acting Chief V Admiral AU Khan.

Shahid, in his statement dated Aug 23, 1999, also disclosed: "As far as I can recall, evaluation teams comprising R Adm IH Naqvi, R Adm Jawed Iftikhar and R Adm SA Mujtaba visited China, France, England and Sweden. This team recommended Swedish submarine as FIRST choice. Then another team comprising of R Adm AU Khan, R Adm SA Mujtaba, Capt Mushtaq Ahmed, Capt SV Naqvi and Capt Naveed Ahmed visited France, England and Sweden. Serious deliberation took place at Naval Headquarters to finalise the recommendations. Cdre Khushnud Ahmed (then DNWOP),

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Cdre Mushtaq Ahmed, Crde Naveed Ahmed (DSMM), Cdre SV Naqvi (then DSMO), Capt ZU Alvi (DNC) remained actively involved in the evaluation process with both the team visited abroad.”

He added: “It should be noted that R Adm Mujtaba was made member of both the teams that visited abroad. The depth of his involvement in the contract before and after its award can be gauged from the fact that he went out of his way in supporting the inclusion of Capt ZU Alvi in the first project team in France despite the fact that Capt Alvi did not qualify the criteria laid for the selection of the project mission team. He had also persuaded the then-CNS (Naval Chief) to override the observations made by the intelligence against Capt Alvi ...”

He revealed intelligence sources had also reported that Col Ejaz Ahmed, agent of SOFMA in Rawalpindi, had been in continuous liaison with the evaluation team and other officials in NHQ (Naval Headquarters) and MoD (Ministry of Defence). “I, as DGNI, issued certain instructions to impose restrictions on the agents of foreign firms getting involved in negotiations/agreement.” He noted the whole process to acquire submarines from France took place during the time of Admiral SM Khan, who remained Chief of the Naval Staff from November 1991 to Nov 1994.

He also placed it on record that after he had protested against his “wrongful” retirement to the defence minister, a round-the-clock surveillance was placed on him; he was arrested on the orders of Cdre Rashidullah and detained for several days for recording of the summary of evidence while all other officers were free. “Several coercive measures were taken against me to force me into pleading guilty,” he added.

According to Shahid, he was fixed on the basis of a statement of Capt Alvi, who became approver although there is no provision in the PN Ordinance or PN Rules for approver. Alvi, in his statement dated 17th of Oct, 1998, given under Section 337 of PPC before the additional deputy commissioner, Islamabad, had admitted to have received over Rs 4 million as illegal gratification and kickbacks from foreign suppliers and alleged to have paid some of the amount to Shahid and another officer Capt Liaquat Malik. Shahid said Alvi did not mention the name of many others whom he had paid heavy amounts.

“The BoI (Board of Inquiry) may like to deliberate as to why did he make a statement taking only two names of officers who have been hurriedly tried, forced into pleading guilty and awarded harsh sentences,” the former DG NI said in his statement.

Interestingly, the approver had admitted to have received kickbacks from foreign suppliers of naval craft, stores to Pakistan Navy and transfer of technology to the navy in return of favours shown to them by him in drawing up of contracts, negotiations, supervisions of constructions of sites and otherwise facilitating the contracts between the navy and the suppliers and manufacturers of such naval craft and stores and transfer of technology.

Shahid, according to the charge-sheet served on him, was accused of having obtained money from Capt Alvi, who in all charges was in contact with the foreign suppliers, etc. One of the charges levelled against Shahid also talked of Capt Alvi to have received gratifications in MCMV project meant for the purchase of \$550m worth Minehunter special crafts.

According to the former DGNI, this project was finalised during Nawaz Sharif’s first tenure as prime minister but was never probed either by Senator Saifur Rehman, Pakistan Navy or by the NAB. Shahid said the cover-up in the submarine deal to save the skin of many in the Pakistan Navy was done by Senator Saifur Rehman, who was only interested in fixing Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari. **Source : TheNews.pk**

Navy tests new waters with N-sub, indigenous carrier

Unlike the Army and Air Force, the Navy has its modernisation plans on track and the coming year will see a massive addition in capabilities of the country’s smallest armed force. On all fronts — underwater, on the surface, in the air and even outer space — the Navy is set to acquire and add new platforms and assets that will widen its edge over maritime forces of neighbouring countries. While the Navy has reached blue water capabilities, the absence of a few

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vital assets has constrained it from showcasing its true potential. The biggest asset the Navy is set to get in 2010 is the **Nerpa** nuclear attack submarine on a 10-year lease from Russia.

After several delays and hiccups, the re-entry of a nuclear powered platform in the Navy (after the **INS Chakra** that was also leased from Russia in the 1980s) will be a massive force addition. Besides the obvious benefits of having a stealthy submarine that can stay underwater for several weeks and even give US warships a run for their money, the **Nerpa** will be a vital training platform. The **Nerpa** will help train Indian Navy personnel on nuclear submarine operations, a skill that will be needed to be imparted to a large number of officers and men who will operate the indigenous Arihant class of nuclear submarines in coming years.

While **Nerpa** will shake things underwater, the Navy will also get longer legs in the coming year that will enable it to deploy ships for longer periods, in further waters than ever before. The induction of a modern tanker ship, which is currently being built by Italian firm Fincantieri, by the end of 2010 is being keenly watched by players in the region.

Source : Indianexpress

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Shipyard takeover a New Year gift to Vizagites

The year that has come to an end did not give much scope to cheer about for the Vizag-based industries but the Union Cabinet's nod to transfer Hindustan Shipyard Limited from Ministry of Shipping to Ministry of Defence was a landmark gift by the UPA Government. Recession cast its shadow on the growth of industries in the region as many struggled to achieve their targets. Apart from HSL takeover decision, the commissioning of Gangavaram Port, under public-private partnership programme, was yet another bid to augment infrastructure in the city.

The Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, made an all-out effort to overcome the challenges posed by market meltdown. The cost to double its capacity also escalated from Rs.8,600 crores to Rs.12,000 crores due to variety of factors. Only good news for RINL is the progress made towards achieving strategic control over Bird Group of Companies. This will help RINL in getting much-needed raw material security.

Orissa Mining Corporation, a subsidiary of Bird Group of Companies owns huge iron ore deposits. Bharat Heavy Plate and Vessels, which was taken over by BHEL as a holding company in 2008, hopes that the constitution of board of directors at the fag end of the year will pave the way for faster decision-making and more orders to improve its financial health. Recession adversely hit the road map for the ambitious Petroleum, Chemical and Petrochemical Region (PCPIR) with Mittal Group backing out of \$9 billion refinery and petrochemical project near Atchyutapuram.

Another major casualty was the take-off with regard to alumina refineries by Jindal South West Aluminium Ltd and Anrak Aluminium Ltd. There is slowdown in the progress of units at Pharma City and Brandix Apparel Park due to recession. Both the units as well as IT firms including Wipro failed to provide the promised employment to the locals as per the norms stipulated for land allotment. "The problems notwithstanding, we hope that the signs of improvement

in the economy will help attract more investments to Brand Vizag,” says B.P. Acharya, who till recently worked as Chairman and Managing Director of APIIC. **Source : The Hindu**

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Piling coal stocks forces Paradip Port to turn away ships

Paradip Port Trust is unable to accept any more coal ships in view of the huge built-up of coal stocks, more than two million tonnes, within the port premises. The limited availability of railway rakes for evacuation of coal imported so far has created the accumulation and there is no space left where more coal can be dumped. “We’ve already refused permission to two ships carrying coal for steel plants”, Mr K Raghuramaiah, Chairman of PPT, told Business Line. “We may have to say the same thing to others also if the situation does not improve”. Right now PPT has more than 200 indents, i.e. demand for more than 200 rakes. PPT took up the matter with the Railway Board a few days ago, emphasising the need for placing more empty rakes for early easing of the accumulated stock, though not with much success. “Almost every day we’re pleading for empty rakes”, the Chairman said. “We’re hoping that our appeal will not go entirely unheeded and something will be done shortly”.

Meanwhile, the Nobel group, which has been awarded contract for construction of deep draught iron ore berth in the port, it is feared, may not be able to start work from January 1, as stipulated in the contract.

The Environment Ministry is yet to give the coastal zone clearance. “Unless the clearance is available within the next few days, there will be delay to start the work of the ore berth”, said the Chairman. The similar clearance for the deep draught coal berth to be built by the Essar group was also awaited, he added.

It may be noted that the Nobel Group has objected to the PPT's bid to mechanise the port's CQ3 berth, saying such mechanisation will harm its interests. “We’ve held meetings with the Nobel Group but the issue is yet to be resolved”, said the Deputy Chairman, Mr Biplav Kumar. **Source: Hindu Business Line**



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Major expansion of port on the way

The Port of New Orleans has some major projects to look forward to in the New Year. The renovations are geared toward taking advantage of the upcoming expansion of the Panama Canal. By 2014 some of the largest ships now sailing the seas will be coming through the expanded Canal from the Pacific Ocean, which in turn could make for booming business for the ports of Louisiana.



The **TAI HAPPINESS** seen outward bound at the Mississippi River passing New Orleans

Photo : Piet Sinke ©

Officials say further development of local ports will be necessary to handle the super sized freighters that will head through the expanded Panama Canal. Port President Gary LaGrange says it starts with \$27 million from the State Legislature to purchase giants cranes built in South Korea. He says that the full local build-out of the port will take about a quarter-billion dollars. "Extending gate hours and merging work crews and gangs out on the docks and that nature, we think we can probably do it for \$250 million," according to LaGrange. LaGrange says it is money well-spent, since the port will cash in on "booming" business for many years to come. **Source: WWL**

Throughput in Port of Rotterdam shows signs of recovery

In 2009, goods throughput in the port of Rotterdam fell to 385 million tonnes. This is 8.5% down on 2008. Imports shrank by 13% to 272 million tonnes; exports increased by 5% to 113 million tonnes. Bulk was 29% down on the previous year; general cargo fell by 9%. There was less incoming and outgoing trade in agribulk (-22%), ores and scrap (-47%), coal (-12%), other dry bulk (-13%), crude oil (-6%), other liquid bulk (-16%), roll on/roll off (-11%), other general cargo (-16%) and containers (-6%). Only the handling of mineral oil products showed a positive trend (+23%), actually achieving the biggest absolute increase (13 million tonnes) ever.

Hans Smits, Port of Rotterdam Authority CEO: "Considering the circumstances, we cannot be dissatisfied. After hitting rock bottom in the second quarter, throughput has been improving slightly every month and virtually all the investments are going ahead. Moreover, Rotterdam is doing better than its main rivals. But I am not unconcerned. Many of our clients are having a difficult time and that will not be much different in 2010. The best medicine for this is growth, partly through an increase in our market shares. We therefore intend to continue with our active commercial

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policy. As a result of this, among other things, I hope that we will be able to break through the 400 million tonne barrier again next year. That means growth in throughput considerably over 3%”.

Dry bulk*

The total quantity of dry bulk handled was down by 29% to 67 million tonnes.

The quantity of coal handled fell to 25 million tonnes. In the first few months of the year, coal imports remained reasonably stable due to the cold winter, ongoing contracts and the effects of trade. After the winter, energy consumption fell in both the Netherlands and Germany and coal's share declined more strongly than that of the other energy sources. Throughput of cokes coal, about 40% of coal imports into Rotterdam, reflected the plummeting steel production. With the recovering economy and a mine closure in Germany, modest growth in coal throughput is expected in 2010.

Ore and scrap throughput almost halved (-47%,) to 23 million tonnes. Falling demand for steel led to the temporary closure of many blast furnaces in Northwest Europe and a dramatic decline in the handling of ore. Most of the blast furnaces have started operating again, but under capacity. In 2010, the utilisation rate can be increased to 80%. As a result, ore imports could increase to a possible 30 million tonnes.

Other dry bulk was 13% down, to just over 10 million tonnes. The main consumers in this sector, the chemical and metal industry, are suffering from the economic crisis. The decline is still being compensated for to some extent by the gradual export of a few million tonnes of asphalt from a storage facility in the port area. Without this incidental flow, but with slightly increasing demand for minerals, ores and concentrates, throughput figures for other dry bulk could end up at 9 million tonnes next year.

The handling of agribulk (grains, oil seeds, derivatives) fell sharply: - 22% to just over 8 million tonnes. Europe had a good 2008-2009 harvest. As a result, fewer imports from overseas were necessary. In Rotterdam, the accent is on imports. In addition to this, imports were influenced negatively by a ban on genetically modified maize and reduced milk production. Due to the low milk prices, farmers used more grass and hay and less - imported - oil seeds.

Liquid bulk

The volume of liquid bulk handled rose by 1% to 196 million tonnes. Imports of crude oil fell by close on 6% to 95 million tonnes. Demand for oil products was down and refining margins fell, as a result of which it became unavoidable to limit production. In comparison with other regions, however, Rotterdam did noticeably better thanks to the strength of the petrochemical cluster. This and the anticipated increase in the refining margins counterbalance the high commodity stocks and the slow increase in demand in the OECD countries. In 2010, therefore, slightly higher throughput figures for crude oil (96 million tonnes) are expected.



Photo : Rob Smith ©

Imports of oil products increased by 17% to 42 million tonnes, exports by 32% to 30 million tonnes. In total, a record quantity of 72 million tonnes (+23%) was handled. Comparable growth percentages have already been seen four times since 2000, but the absolute growth of 13 million tonnes is the largest ever. This is attributable for about two-thirds to gas oil/diesel throughput. Forward prices for this commodity were higher throughout the year than the spot prices ('contango'), so that storage paid off. Up to the end of the summer, there was also good 'arbitrage' (price differential between two regions minus freight costs), which attracted cargo from Asia, Russia and America to Europe. Thirdly, extra jetty and tank capacity was created, as a result of which the port was able to handle more cargo. A little

more fuel oil – in absolute terms the most important product – was handled: around 36 million tonnes. Naphtha throughput fell slightly and that of kerosene was up by about 10%.

There was a 16% decline in other liquid bulk throughput, to 30 million tonnes. The main cause of this is the 20-30% fall in production in the chemical industry. The handling of vegetable oils was up again, thanks to imports of crude palm oil for the refineries. However, there was a substantial decline in the handling of soybean oil, sunflower oil and rapeseed oil. Biofuels (biodiesel, ethanol and ETBE) were also down. The moderate sugar harvest put pressure on Brazilian exports of ethanol. This was compensated for partly by imports of ethanol from Spain and France via Rotterdam. Imports of biodiesel fell due to the European measures taken against the American B99 mix. This made way for the import of more biodiesel from Argentina, however.

General cargo

The general cargo sector had a poor year as a consequence of declining world trade, although the total fall of 8% to 122 million tonnes is a reasonable result in comparison with rival ports. This definitely also applies to the handling of containers, which was 6% down on last year, but managed to remain just above 100 million tonnes. As fewer empty containers were handled, the decline in units was -10% to 9.8 million TEU. Rotterdam is doing well in the largest 'trade' in quantitative terms, that between Europe and Asia. Shipping lines combined services and deployed the biggest possible vessels to reduce costs. What Rotterdam has to offer (location, depth, hinterland transport, port tariffs) is tailored well to this and means that the port can benefit from the trend. Container traffic within Europe, mainly to the major destinations such as England, Ireland and Spain, was hit quite hard, however. The services to North and South America are sharing in the malaise. The Baltic trade, mostly involving feeder traffic linked to the Asia services, is really flourishing, however. The roll-on / roll-off sector is geared virtually solely towards the British market. The crisis, which hit there early and hard, has not led to an earlier onset of recovery. This is further hampered by the value of the pound in relation to the euro. England and the Rotterdam services are focused very much on imports. In addition to the imbalance, the North Sea is characterised by the fierce competition between ferry services and with the container services and the Channel Tunnel. In the slightly longer term, the investments related to the Olympic Games offer positive prospects, which will buttress the investments in the expansion of capacity for Stena and Cobelfret, among other things. Other general cargo, -16% to 6 million tonnes, was hit quite badly by the crisis. The handling of steel and non-ferrous metals accounts for around 70% of volume in the sector. Both depend heavily on those sectors hit hard by the crisis, such as the construction and automotive industry. The decline in non-ferrous metals remained limited, but steel throughput was down by a third. Storage is on the increase, however. The handling of paper products and fruit fell slightly and project cargo remained stable. The number of cars driven off the ships plummeted by about 70%. **Source: Port of Rotterdam**

StealthGas sells 2

StealthGas has revealed that it struck deals to sell two LPG carriers and took losses on both transactions. In a securities filing, the Nasdaq-listed owner said it sold the 3,510-cbm **Gas Fortune** (built 1995) in October and the 3,210-cbm **Gas Natalie** (ex-**Fountain Gas**, built 1997) in November.

In both cases, the buyers are described only as "unaffiliated third parties." Contacted by TradeWinds, StealthGas chief executive Harry Vafias declined to name the vessels' buyers. The **Gas Fortune** went for \$5.6m, leading to a loss of \$2.5m, Athens-based StealthGas said on the final page of a 21-page US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filing.

The Watanabe Zosen-built ship was delivered to its new owners on 9 December. The **Gas Natalie**, meanwhile, has fetched \$6.8m. StealthGas says its fourth-quarter books will show a \$3.66m impairment charge for the vessel, which will be delivered on 20 January.

The Shitanoe Zosen-built **Gas Natalie** was among 10 LPG carriers that StealthGas said it purchased in March 2008. TradeWinds reported in September 2007 that StealthGas paid \$10.5m for the ship. StealthGas lists a fleet of 39 LPG carriers, including the **Gas Natalie**, and three products tankers. **Source : Tradewinds**



As mentioned yesterday in the newsclippings, **Smit Internationale NV** announces completed the acquisition of all shares of **Minette Bay Ship Docking Ltd.** in Prince Rupert, Canada. Minette Bay is active in the port of Prince Rupert with three ASD tugs, from which 2, named the **TP 2** and **TP1** are seen. Minette Bay honorably performed the shipdocking services for Ridley Island Coal Terminal for 25 years. This acquisition enhances SMIT Marine Canada's current harbour towage operations on the West Coast of Canada. **Photo : Cor Fontaine ©**

Welcome at SAIL 2010

The 8th edition of SAIL will take place from **19 to 23 August 2010**. For five days long, the Amsterdam IJ harbour will serve as the backdrop for a festive programme full of music, culture and nautical riches. Preparations are in full swing and the event promises once again to be an unparalleled nautical spectacle which includes:

- an impressive fleet of Tall Ships from all around the world
- a unique collection of Dutch sailing heritage a variety of modern ships
- various impressive naval ships and replicas an extensive, accompanying programme on the wharfs
- activities, performances and expositions for young and old
- a unique atmosphere with thousands of boats on the water
- a daily closing ceremony with a breath-taking fireworks show
- and much, much more...
-



SAIL Amsterdam 2010 will be a magnificent nautical celebration for everyone,

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About SAIL



SAIL Amsterdam is the largest event in the Netherlands which is free to the public. In 2005 the event drew 1.8 million visitors, who gave SAIL Amsterdam 2005 high marks. SAIL Amsterdam 2010 will take place from Thursday 19 August to Monday 23 August 2010 on and around the IJ river.

SAIL's main attraction will be the impressive fleet of Tall Ships, sailing heritage craft, modern ships, naval ships and replicas. In addition to this, every day there will be a varying programme of all kinds of cultural and sports activities. The theme of SAIL 2010 is "a nautical encounter between the past, present and future". The idea behind SAIL Amsterdam originated during preparations for the celebration of Amsterdam's 700 years of existence in 1975. After the huge success of SAIL Amsterdam 700, organisers decided to hold another SAIL Amsterdam in 1980. In order to effectively manage the organisation, the permanent SAIL Amsterdam Foundation (SSA) was established in 1977. Since then, the SSA has successfully organised SAIL Amsterdam in 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2005 and is now focussing

on the 8th edition of the event.



Programme

The impressive fleet at SAIL will be accompanied by an extensive sports and cultural programme. Every day during SAIL, there will be all kinds of activities at various locations which are free to the public. SAIL is thus one big celebration for everyone - and you don't even need to be a boat lover or water sports enthusiast! All age groups have been taken into account, so children will have no reason to be bored at SAIL either.

Photo's : Piet Sinke ©

A few of the programme's highlights include:

- SAIL In: the welcoming parade for Tall Ships
- Crew parade through the city
- Guided tours on the Tall Ships
- Musical performances on stage and on board
- Dance shows
- Expositions
- SailSation: competitive sailing area
- Pieremachochel row boat parade
- Sailing lessons for children
- Skûtsje-sailing with traditional



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ONGC loses Algeria oilfield to Chinese firm

State-run Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has lost an oilfield in Algeria to a consortium led by a Chinese oil firm.

ONGC teamed up with Turkish Petroleum Corp (TPAO) and UAE's Dana Gas to bid for the hotly contested Hassi Bir Rekaiz acreage in Algeria's latest licensing round, sources said.

It however lost the prized property to a consortium of China National Offshore Oil Corp (CNOOC) and Thailand's PTTEP. Spain's Cepsa and Russia's Gazprom were the other bidders for the acreage. Hassi Bir Rekaiz in the Berkine Basin was relinquished by Australia's BHP Billiton after a 2005 award.

Algeria awarded three permits in its bid round for 10 exploration areas that closed on December 22, they said.

Source : Times of India

OLDIE – FROM THE SHOEBOX



Above seen the 1937 built magnificent **BOISSEVAIN** (14285 grt) of RIL sailing from Durban on her final departure in 1968 bound for Yokohama, The vessel and her sisterships **RUYS** and **TEGELBERG** operated on the Far East-South Africa run, were troop transports during WW2 and transferred in the late 1940s to the newly-formed Koninklijke Java-China Paketvaart Lijnen, or Royal Inter-ocean Lines. The route was extended from South Africa to the east coast of South America.: Nagoya (optional), Osaka (optional), Kobe, Hong Kong, Singapore, Port Swettenham and/or Penang, Mauritius, Lourenço Marques, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Rio de Janeiro, Santos, Buenos Aires. And the return voyages: Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Santos, Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, Mauritius, Belawan (one call each, otherwise optional), Singapore, Manila (**Boissevain** called once, otherwise optional), Hong Kong, Kobe, Osaka (optional), Nagoya (optional), Yokohama

The **Boissevain** was scrapped in 1968

All the best for 2010 !!

Photo : Trevor Jones ©

Voor de Nederlandse lezers :

Walburg Pers heeft het boek met de titel **Boissevain Ruys Tegelberg** uitgegeven, wat een beknopte biografie van drie zusterschepen is, als auteur tekende Henk Slettenaar, Henk (1936) werkte in verschillende rangen als scheepswerktuigkundige, zowel aan boord van de **Boissevain** als van de **Tegelberg**.



Midden in de crisistijd besluit de **Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij (KPM)** een risicovolle scheepvaartverbinding te openen tussen Nederlands-Indië en Zuid- en Oost-Afrika. De lijn blijkt zo'n groot succes dat de rederij in 1936 opdracht geeft tot de bouw van de passagiersschepen **Boissevain**, **Ruys** en **Tegelberg**. Deze uitgave belicht de levenscycli van de drie beroemde zusterschepen (1938-1968), die in Zuid-Afrika bekend staan als 'The Great White Yachts'.

Tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog doen de drie – grijsgeschilderd – dienst als troepentransportschip en nemen ze deel aan de landingen in Noord-Afrika en Italië. In '46/'47 verschepen ze het merendeel van de Nederlandse dienstplichtigen, die in Indië worden ingezet bij de politionele acties. Ook de

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terugreizen, waarmee vele Indische repatrianten naar Nederland worden gebracht, komen in deze uitgave uitgebreid aan bod, inclusief de 'mouterij' op de **Boissevain**.

Nadat het drietal in '47 is overgegaan naar **Royal Interocean Lines (KJCL of RIL)** wordt de lijn uitgebreid met de zeer lucratieve dienst Azië - Zuid-Afrika - Zuid-Amerika: de **Asia South America Service (ASAS)**. Met het oog op de groei in de luchtvaart legt de RIL zich als een van de eerste rederijen toe op het stimuleren van vakanties aan boord van haar schepen. Lees hoe deze eerste cruise-passagiers in de watten werden gelegd en hoe de Nederlandse officieren en Chinese bemanningen aan boord functioneerden.

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.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The **SPIRIT OF TASMANIA I** seen arriving in Devonport, Tasmania after a day sailing across Bass Strait.

Photo : **Cody Williams** ©

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