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Durban port pilot seen arriving by helicopter onboard the VOLVOX OLYMPIA
Photo : Crew Volvox Olympia ©

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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS



To ensure Holland wins its first Worldcup, Kris the Kissama Master had the MOU Kissama painted in Orange and berthed in Cape Town - May the best win !

Capt. Kris De Decker - Master Kissama ©

Yemen faces Qaeda, pirate threats in vital strait

On a rocky volcanic outcrop set in the deep and treacherous waters of a vital strait linking Europe to Asia, Yemen's coastguard is building a base to help secure one of the world's busiest waterways. Somali pirates trawl the sea south of the Bab al-Mandab strait off Yemen's coast, and in recent months have stepped up attacks on tankers, cargo ships and fishing vessels in defiance of a major crackdown by navies from at least a dozen countries.

But Yemen has deeper worries about security off its coast after a resurgent al Qaeda arm called for a blockade of the strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, through which 25,000 ships -- 7 percent of world shipping -- pass each year. "The geographical nature of Bab al-Mandab, of the coast and the land, its beaches and islands, makes it very sensitive security-wise," Mohamed Mubarak bin Aefan, head of Aden port management, told Reuters. Militants would struggle to block the strategic strait, experts say, but the shipping industry is still worried about possible attacks off Yemen's southwest coast. A Yemeni official said France was helping it build the base with the hope it would have a dual use in combating both piracy and al Qaeda. Yemen has seen its ports and waters targeted before. The U.S. government warned ships sailing off Yemen's coast in March of a risk of al Qaeda attacks similar to a suicide bombing of the U.S. warship Cole in 2000 that killed 17 U.S. sailors in Aden's port. Two years later, al Qaeda hit a French

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supertanker in the Gulf of Aden, south of Bab al-Mandab. Worries over the strait, through which around 3 million barrels of oil bound for Europe and the United States are shipped daily, were further stirred when Yemen boosted security on its coast against possible militant attacks. Yemen became a top Western security concern after a resurgent Yemeni al Qaeda arm claimed a failed bomb attack on a U.S.-bound plane in December, so alarming Washington that it has cranked up security assistance to the impoverished country.

In another bold attack in June that Yemen blamed on al Qaeda, gunmen killed 11 people at the southern regional headquarters of a Yemeni intelligence agency in Aden, the deadliest attack in Yemen since the Cole bombing. But the group's call earlier this year for a blockade of Bab al-Mandab to cut off U.S. shipments to Israel does not mean al Qaeda is capable of such an operation, said Jim Cameron, senior analyst at Stirling Assynt. "It's certainly a real threat although I think it's probably more an aspiration rather than a capability at the moment." In addition, it would not be easy to completely close off the 22-km (14-mile) strait, experts say. "The strait is wide and the currents are strong and complex, so it would be difficult to actually block it in a physical sense," said Roy Facey, port adviser to the Port of Aden.

"A Yemen coastguard base to support maritime interventions, and the ability of Yemeni forces to control any high land overlooking the strait gives me a lot of confidence that the threats we hear of would be very difficult to implement."

But calls to close Bab al-Mandab still impact sentiment in the region's shipping industry, reeling from pirate attacks, said Hisham al-Saqaf, general manager of shipping and marine services firm Gulf Agency Company (GAC) Yemen.

"I don't know how they would do it but of course this is a threat and ship owners take these things seriously," he said. While Yemen's Western allies and neighbouring oil exporter Saudi Arabia fear al Qaeda is exploiting instability on several fronts in Yemen for attacks in the region and beyond, piracy is the most burning concern for the shipping industry. Somali pirates are making millions of dollars in ransoms by seizing ships, including tankers and dry bulkers, in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. More than 15 ships and hundreds of sailors are being held off Somalia.

So far, Somalia's al Qaeda-linked al Shabaab rebels have not been directly involved in piracy, which has flourished in the absence of a strong government and lawlessness in the Horn of Africa nation. Business in the region's ports has been badly hit and shipping lines are having to fork out millions of dollars in higher insurance rates, extra security costs and elevated crews' wages, all this despite the strong international naval presence. The United States estimates that every day some 30 to 40 warships are involved in counter-piracy efforts from the EU, NATO and the United States as well as China, Russia, India, Malaysia, South Korea and Japan.

Serious security threats to ships at the Bab al-Mandab waterway would have global implications for the industry and could prompt an even stronger international military intervention, industry experts say. The GAC's Saqaf, whose tanker business is 50 percent down compared to 2008, said the naval intervention had improved security, but more needed to be done. "At the end of the day I want a peaceful passage, a peaceful waterway for ships to sail and to come to our ports. We need the business," he said. The number of ships calling in Aden Port has fallen around 11 percent this year from 2008, bin Aefan said. Dubai-based port operator DP World, which runs a container port in Aden, says there was no major impact on container lines but that piracy was a business worry.

"The business that we are in -- the transshipment trade -- is very, very competitive. Everyone wants a piece of it, from Aden to Muscat, Dubai and Jeddah, so any disadvantage we have against other ports is a concern to us," said Arthur Flynn, deputy general manager of the Aden Container Terminal. Aden Port's bin Aefan said the problem of piracy could only be resolved if stability returned to the pirates' countries of origin and that the international community should be more aware of the possible dangers facing Bab al-Mandab. "International and political efforts need to be aimed at the root causes and need to include an understanding of the dangerous situation this global waterway is in."

Source: Reuters

Japanese ship-owners to recruit RP seamen

Japanese ship-owners said on Friday that they would recruit hundreds of Filipino seamen to watch its ships which they plan to launch in the future, amid Japan's recovering economy The Japanese Ship Owners Association (JSA) president

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Koji Miyahara made the announcement during a courtesy call at the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) office at Intramuros, Manila on Friday. JSA is the biggest nationwide shipping organization based in Tokyo, Japan with over 105 shipping-company members. Miyahara also said they would also continue to promote the welfare of the Filipino seafarers in the new administration of President Aquino.

"Mr. Miyahara has expressed the continuing support of the JSA to the Philippines. He said JSA members will continue to employ Filipino seafarers in the next several years," Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz said in a statement. "He also gave us the assurance that the JSA continues to support the government of Japan's cooperative efforts with the Philippine government in protecting seafarers against piracy," Baldoz added.

Source: Marina Bulletin

From the bridge of MV Deltagracht (8)

Back to Polynesian roots

By Els Kroon



Entering a Tahitian harbor after an eleven day Pacific crossing without seeing any land one can most likely imagine that the Polynesians were and still are a seafaring nation. During a walk on the bridge deck of our multi-purpose motor vessel **Deltagracht** I can see large ferries of several sizes and companies, a beautiful modern sailing yacht, a cruise ship, Papeete harbor's tug boat, several container ships and numerous canoes, participating in the annual Heiva races.

In between the hustle and bustle in the harbor, one boat gracefully glides on the water.



It looks like a traditional vessel, has striking dark red sails and a straw colored twin hull.

Left : Author Els Kroon

Local photographer Werner Bringold brought it to my attention, and a search in the tourist office yielded the following information:

The **Faafaite** is one of five traditional canoes, the Tavaru fleet, built in New Zealand as a project of Pacific Voyagers, a

pan-Pacific network of voyaging societies. They were constructed on a common design, based on traditional concepts, conforming to the last and most evolved Tipaerua model of the Tuamotu and Society islands. Two more canoes will eventually be added to make a fleet of seven. Each canoe has twin fiberglass hulls 22 meters (72 ft) in length, joined by a platform supporting a small deckhouse. The

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canoe boasts two masts rising 13 meters above the deck. The Okeanos Foundation for the Sea, which is part of an international philanthropic organization created by German-born Dieter Paulmann, funded the construction of the seven canoes. They are provided at no cost to participating groups of several Polynesian islands for a period of four years to enable them to establish their own voyaging operations on a self-sustaining basis.



Inter island voyages are sailed by the groups, mostly of 16 sailors, to revitalize the traditional art of sailing, navigation and canoe building and to share this knowledge with Pacific brothers and sisters in a spirit of Polynesian kinship. The voyages also create awareness of environmental issues, like global warming, climate change, pollution, over fishing and coral degradation, faced by the Pacific peoples. On June 9th Faafaite safely arrived in Papeete harbor after a Tavaru expedition to Raiatea, the ancestral home of the Eastern Polynesian people, and Raratonga in the Cook Islands. Her imposing presence in the harbor at the time we discharged a part of our cargo added to the special experience our visit to Tahiti was. I couldn't help being immensely impressed by the hospitality and the inspiring respect Tahitian people still show for their ancient traditions and sacred places.

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Norwegian, Russian race around the North Pole

One Russian and one Norwegian sailing yacht will this summer try to be the first to sail both the North East and North West Passage in one season. The Norwegian trimaran started in Oslo in June and is now on its way around the coast of Finnmark in Northern Norway. On board are the famous Norwegian explorer Børge Ousland and three other crew members. The expedition will be a visual picture of the rapid on-going climate changes, said Børge Ousland to the newspaper Nordlys before the boat left the Norwegian Polar capital Tromsø earlier this week. No-one has ever managed to sail around the North Pole before in one season.

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But, simultaneously as the Norwegian boat "**Northern Passage**" entered the Barents Sea, another sailing yacht with the same aim, the Russian "**Peter 1**" sailed into Murmansk. "**Peter 1**" started from St. Petersburg earlier this summer. On board are captain Daniel Gavrilov and a crew of six. When "**Peter 1**" sails out from Murmansk, they hope to sail both the North East and North West passage during the summer and autumn.

The Norwegian vessel is expected to arrive in Murmansk on July 20th. According to Oceans Explorerweb, the Russian sailing boat is better prepared to meet ice than the Norwegian vessel. "**Peter 1**" has a steel hull, insulation and engine power; while the Norwegian vessel will have to do all they can to avoid ice.

The Arctic is nothing new for the crew on board the Norwegian vessel. Børge Ousland has more than 20 years experience with expeditions in the Arctic and Antarctic. He was the first one to go to the North Pole without re-supplying. He was also the first to cross the Antarctic continent alone. **Source : BarentsObserver**



The **HANJIN CASABLANCA** seen departing from the Euromax terminal - **Photo : Emile Ammerlaan ©**

Tug boat owners fits equipment in exchange for reduced fine

A tug boat owner fined by the Washington State Department of Ecology for a 2009 Columbia River oil discharge will install equipment to prevent a similar release, in exchange for a reduced fine. The settlement halves the original \$21,000 penalty imposed on Sound Freight Lines earlier this year to \$10,500. If Tacoma based Sound Freight Lines has a spill over 10 gallons in the next three years, the entire fine will become due.

Sound Freight will install an oil-water separator in the bilge of the tug Black Hawk within 120 days. Ecology determined that the tug boat discharged a mixture of oil and water that had accumulated in its bilge into the Columbia River west of Longview in January, 2009. An estimated 150 gallons of oil entered the water.

In a bilge, oil drippings from the engine can combine with water that may enter. This part of the boat must be pumped out periodically. The separator will retain bilge oil so that the pumps discharge only water. "This settlement puts in place a system that would have prevented the original discharge," said David Byers, Ecology's spill-response

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supervisor. "With due care and commitment, this solution will protect against similar discharges for many years. We encourage similar measures on other vessels." Sound Freight issued the following statement: "We are pleased to have resolved this issue with Ecology. This settlement puts into place spill prevention processes above industry standards and will keep us from being in this position in the future." Ecology will conduct annual inspections of the Black Hawk and its oil-water separator over the next three years. **Source : MarineLog**



The **REPUBLICA DEL BRASILE** seen outward bound from Antwerp and the **GRANDE ITALIA** seen enroute Antwerp – **Photo's : Cees de Bijl ©**



Dallas firm's push to help oil cleanup may not be so clear

When Dallas investment banker Fred McCallister told the Senate last week about his effort to get more foreign ships to clean up oil in the Gulf of Mexico, he blamed a maritime law that protects U.S. ship owners and workers. In fact, McCallister's effort stalled because BP didn't think the skimmers proposed by his firm, Allegiance Capital Corp., could

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do the job. Yet he told senators that he hadn't gotten any response to his offer, even though BP's response had come a day earlier.

Also left unsaid to the senators or reporters who interviewed him: Allegiance found the vessels with the help of its chairman's brother, Kenneth Mahmood, who served 18 months in prison in Washington state during the 1980s for theft and securities fraud. McCallister has become an assertive spokesman as Allegiance, a small investment firm with almost no history of political involvement, mounts a public relations offensive to urge BP to hire its vessels. The firm recruited Texas Republican Sens. John Cornyn and Kay Bailey Hutchison to its cause; they endorsed its efforts in news releases issued by Allegiance. Allegiance says it has made several offers of different ships to BP. After BP turned down its initial proposal, saying the skimmers were too small, the Dallas firm offered larger boats from Greece, Malta, France and Panama. This week, Allegiance said its boats are from the Netherlands. An Allegiance spokeswoman said Wednesday that the company might meet with BP next week about the latest group of ships. McCallister said he didn't tell the senators about BP turning down his initial offer because he didn't think it was "a final determination." McCallister, an Allegiance vice president, said he didn't know about Mahmood's criminal record. "I hope to continue the dialogue with BP," McCallister wrote in an e-mail. Even if BP turns it down, Allegiance has offered vessels directly to Gulf Coast states.

If states contract with Allegiance for its foreign vessels, the maritime law known as the Jones Act could be a problem. The law essentially prohibits foreign vessels from working within three nautical miles of U.S. shores. Ships working for the states would probably be recovering oil closer to the shore. McCallister says he applied for a Jones Act waiver on June 16. "The bottom line is, at this stage of the game, we are quite frustrated with the fact we haven't had waivers issued," McCallister told the Senate Commerce Committee on June 30.

Senate Republicans, led by Hutchison, have said his experience shows the need for legislation to temporarily waive the Jones Act. A spokesman for Commerce Committee Republicans declined to address Mahmood's background or McCallister's testimony to the committee. He reiterated the need for Hutchison's bill. "More than two months into the oil spill, there is still no clear process for Jones Act waivers, which are necessary to enable foreign-owned vessels and skimmers to help clean up the spill," spokesman Joe Brenckle said. "During an environmental crisis, applicants deserve a timely response – and, more importantly, affected communities do. Senator Hutchison's goal all along has been to make all resources available to aid in the cleanup." Obama administration officials say the Jones Act has not stood in the way of any offers of international assistance. The law does not restrict foreign vessels from working more than three miles from shore. The leaking well is more than 40 miles south of Louisiana. The administration says it has 550 skimmers working in the Gulf of Mexico, including dozens of foreign vessels that haven't needed Jones Act waivers.

Not fit for cleanup?

U.S. vessel owners have been annoyed by Allegiance's work to get foreign-flagged boats to the scene. One offshore association says the firm's vessels are not specially designed to recover spilled oil, although Allegiance insisted that they could be fitted with skimming arms and do the job. "What they are really saying is they want to bring over some **very old foreign-flagged** boats to use in the gulf when there are 70 or 80 U.S. vessels out of work," said Ken Wells, president of the Offshore Marine Service Association in Harahan, La.

"Their efforts have turned into a sideshow for the people who have actually tried to clean up this spill in the gulf." On June 18, Wells e-mailed McCallister to ask about his plan. He said he got a call from Mahmood instead. "I understood he was the guy who had the boats," Wells said. When the two discussed the Jones Act, it became apparent that wasn't the main impediment to getting the boats to the gulf. "He said, 'more than a Jones Act waiver, I need a contract.' " Wells, who has members working for BP, said he offered to help Mahmood find out what the Coast Guard or other agencies needed, but wanted to know exactly what Allegiance was selling.

Mahmood later left Wells a voice mail in which he said: "We can do this together and clean up ... we can start three miles offshore. Everything depends on a purchase order, which you are going to work to help get." Mahmood, 66, didn't return phone messages seeking comment. He was convicted in 1983 for theft and securities fraud, according to the Washington State Patrol. He entered prison in February 1987 and was paroled in July 1988, according to the Washington State Department of Corrections. According to articles in The Seattle Times, Mahmood solicited money from people to invest in two private Canadian oil and gas companies. Prosecutors charged him with taking \$45,000 from two Seattle women to invest in the companies, but instead he pocketed the money, according to the newspaper.

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Several other investors lost money in the scheme, but Mahmood was not charged for all of those losses, the newspaper wrote.

A Seattle police official quoted by the newspaper said that Mahmood was "the best con man I ever worked on." Mahmood is now president of a Seattle-based company, Commodore Inc., which markets yachts, cruise ships and ferries for sale. Its website also says the company provides vessels that house thousands of offshore workers. Chain of proposals David Mahmood, Allegiance's chairman, confirmed his brother's past trouble but said his role in finding the vessels was limited. Kenneth Mahmood handled some discussions with vessel owners and other shipping officials because he has "some of the technical knowledge and expertise," David Mahmood said. "He'll make nothing out of this deal, other than what I [as] his brother might want to provide him," David Mahmood said. "And believe me, I have helped him plenty in the past." One company that stands to profit if Allegiance finds a taker for its vessels is Chain Electric, a Mississippi electrical contractor. The company has provided air boats, ATVs and other equipment to BP.

Bobby Chain, the company's chairman, said he brought the proposal to McCallister and Allegiance in the first place, after deciding that housing vessels, skimmers and other boats were needed in the gulf. Chain said he asked McCallister and Allegiance to help find the right ships. "Just as we are working for them now and supplying a number of boats and other equipment, we would be making some profit on it," Chain said. Chain said he promoted the offer to BP through the lieutenant governor of Mississippi, Phil Bryant, who "is a good friend of mine." He said Bryant "took a copy of our offer to hand it to" the BP official. A spokesman for Bryant confirmed that he passed the proposal to BP. BP "didn't look us up to say, 'Find us some ships,' " Chain said. "We said here is some more equipment we could furnish if you like it." **Source : DallasNews**



The **AMT DISCOVERER** seen departing from Bolnes - **Photo : Marijn van Hoorn ©**



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The **CRYSTAL SKY** seen departing from Antwerp - Photo : Steven Oppeel – www.stevo.be ©

N.Korea shrugs off ship, calls for nuclear talks

North Korea said on Saturday it was willing to return to nuclear disarmament talks and signalled satisfaction that a U.N. Security Council statement did not directly blame it for the sinking of a South Korean warship. China, the North's sole key ally, urged regional powers to put the navy ship sinking behind them and return to the negotiating table to end a cycle of confrontation that has raised security tensions to new heights since late March.

On Friday, the Security Council condemned the sinking of the South Korean corvette **Cheonan** in March that killed 46 sailors but stopped short of directly blaming North Korea, an outcome hailed by Pyongyang's U.N. ambassador as "a great diplomatic victory". Six-way nuclear talks involving North and South Korea, the United States, Japan, Russia and China have been in limbo since 2007 and a 2005 disarmament deal appeared to lose relevance when Pyongyang tested a long-range missile and a nuclear device.

"The DPRK will make consistent efforts for the conclusion of a peace treaty and the denuclearisation through the six-party talks conducted on equal footing," the North's Foreign Ministry spokesman said in comments carried by the KCNA news agency. DPRK is short for the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"We take note of the ... statement saying that 'the Security Council encourages the settlement of outstanding issues on the Korean Peninsula by peaceful means to resume direct dialogue and negotiation through appropriate channels'," it added.

A South Korea-led investigation concluded that a North Korean torpedo sank the **Cheonan**. Pyongyang has denied any involvement in the incident, saying it was a fabrication by the South aimed at politically damaging Pyongyang's leaders. The Security Council statement, by not identifying an attacker, was able to win consent from Pyongyang's ally China for unanimous approval. China, which had been the host of the six-way talks that began in 2003, urged regional

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powers to "flip the page of the **Cheonan** incident" and quickly resume those negotiations. "We call for an early resumption of the six-party talks and joint efforts to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang was quoted as saying by Xinhua news agency.

South Korea and the United States have previously said the North must first admit responsibility for the **Cheonan** incident before they would consider the resumption of the six-way forum. Seoul did not immediately have comment on the North's gesture to shrug off the attack, which analysts said was carried out to divert attention from domestic economic woes and to consolidate Kim Jong-il's power to help pave the way for his son to eventually succeed him.

Washington did not immediately respond to the North's offer to resume talks at the multilateral forum. "At this point we want to let North Korea absorb the fact that the international community has condemned the **Cheonan** incident," State Department spokesman Mark Toner said when asked about North Korea's offer to return to nuclear talks.

North Korea has consistently sought talks with Washington, claiming the status of a legitimate nuclear power, and has also demanded new negotiations to replace the armistice ending the 1950-53 Korean War with a permanent peace treaty. South Korea and the United States have rejected the idea of peace talks, saying the dismantling of the North's nuclear programme in an irreversible manner must come first. **Source : The Star / Reuters**



The **FINNMAID** seen moored in Rostock - **Photo : Frank de Vries – Ch.Eng Eurodam ©**

MSC's slot capacity closes in on Maersk's, says Alphaliner

THE world's biggest container lines remain the same in new Alphaliner rankings, but the capacity of the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) has been closing in on the global leader Maersk Line in the first half of the year.

Despite the change, Copenhagen's Maersk, Geneva's MSC and Marseilles-based CMA CGM are still No 1, 2 and 3 in container line rankings, according to the Paris based maritime consultants Alphaliner. But MSC slots have shot up, increasing its fleet by 196,000 TEU to 1.7 million TEU, approaching Maersk's two million TEU mark. Statistics also show that Evergreen Line fell from fifth to sixth place, with its capacity increasing only seven per cent.

One gainer was Singapore's Neptune Orient Lines'container unit APL, which expanded its fleet 21 per cent and Hapag Lloyd was up 25 per cent. Among the world's top 20, Tokyo's NYK's fleet fell six per cent, largely because of scrapping. CSAV grew the most, rising 51 per cent. Overall, the global containership fleet grew 15.3 per cent to 13.3 million TEU because of fresh deliveries totalling 740,000 TEU and bringing back into service 1.2 million TEU of idle tonnage, but 110,000 TEU also disappeared into the scrap yards. **Source : Schednet**

T&T MARINE PROVIDES GULF CLEANUP RESPONSE

T&T MARINE SALVAGE, a leading provider of maritime support services, has responded with manpower and equipment to help clean the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

"Our crews have been working 24 hours a day, seven days a week to assist in the Gulf of Mexico cleanup effort," said



T&T MARINE SALVAGE Vice President **Kevin Teichman**. "We have flown in personnel and equipment from our response bases around the world for this ongoing project. Although we have a vast amount of assets dedicated to this spill, we also are maintaining readiness in our other areas of operation to ensure our customers are covered." **T&T MARINE's** response to the cleanup efforts includes personnel mobilized in Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas and offshore. Equipment includes spill containment boom, response vessels, skimming vessels with a total capacity of more than 20,000 GPM, offshore offloading equipment, vacuum trucks, pumping systems and heavy machinery. Operations include inland and offshore skimming, offshore oily debris recovery, offshore offloading

of smaller skimming vessels, protective booming and beach cleaning.

Fire on Maersk boxship "under control"

The fire onboard the **Charlotte Maersk** is now under control according to its Danish shipowner though it has not been extinguished as earlier reports from the Malaysian authorities suggested. "The fire on board **Charlotte Maersk** appears to be contained and under control. The fire is contained to the foredeck, in a safe distance from the bridge and crew accommodation," a spokesperson for Maersk Line said at 1800hrs local time on Friday.

Earlier reports from the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency had said the fire had been put out Thursday afternoon. The fire which is believed to have started in a box started dangerous goods on July 7 at 2100hrs has now raged for just under two days. "Our next step is to plan the extinguishing of the fire. To assist in this work, a team of eight fire fighting experts and one marine chemist is en route to the vessel. They are expected to arrive this afternoon/evening local time. Already on board is a salvage master," a spokesperson said. Svitzer Salvage, part of the AP Moller Maersk group, are understood to have been deployed as salvors.

"We cannot speculate on when the situation will be resolved and the fire extinguished. Our priority remains the continued safety of the crew, vessel and cargo, and we will take the time needed to ensure a successful resolution of the situation on board **Charlotte Maersk**," the company said. The 8,194 teu vessel is deployed on the Asia - Europe trade and was sailing from Port Klang bound for Oman when the fire broke out. **Source : Seatrade Asia**

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Above seen the **PLB Israfil Huseynov** in the process of a beach pull assisted by two AHT's **Mo** (below) and **Aura** (left) all working just off the coast of Hasar, Turkmenistan, Caspian Sea.

Photo's : Capt. Pieter C Holtes ©



VLCC owners resort to slow steaming

Such is the dramatic fall in rates for VLCCs, down 42% in the past fortnight, that energy newswire Platts is reporting some owners are resorting to slow streaming from the Middle East to Asia to soak up extra tonnage.

"Almost all owners are trying to steam [the ships] slow at the moment except the time-chartered vessels," a source with an Asian refiner told Platts.

Fearnley's latest tanker report chimed in on a similar overtonnaged note. "Even though there was approximately double the amount of VLCC fixing this week, rates in the MEG dropped further as a result of the large number of candidates still awaiting employment," Fearnleys said. "Even though the list of available vessels is reduced from what we saw last week, it is still considerable. VLCCs also had problems gaining traction in WAF where tonnage availability far exceeded demand." **Source : Seatrade asia**



The **PRINSENDAM** seen enroute Amsterdam – Photo : Joop Marechal ©

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The Submarine Deals That Helped Sink Greece

As Greece slashes spending to avoid default, it hasn't moved to skimp on one area: defense.

The deeply indebted Mediterranean nation, whose financial crisis roiled the global financial system this year, is spending more than a billion euros on two submarines from Germany. It's also looking to spend big on six frigates and 15 search-and-rescue helicopters from France. In recent years, Greece has bought more than two dozen F16 fighter jets from the U.S. at a cost of more than €1.5 billion.

Among Greece's questioned costs is more than a billion euros on new submarines. Much of the equipment comes from Germany, the country that has had to shoulder most of the burden of bailing out Greece and has been loudest in condemning Athens for living beyond its means. German Chancellor Angela Merkel has admonished the Greek government "to do its homework" on debt reduction.

The military deals illustrate how Germany and other creditors have in some ways benefited from Greece's profligacy, and how that is coming back to haunt them. Greece, with a population of just 11 million, is the largest importer of conventional weapons in Europe—and ranks fifth in the world behind China, India, the United Arab Emirates and South Korea. Its military spending is the highest in the European Union as a percentage of gross domestic product. That spending was one of the factors behind Greece's stratospheric national debt.

The German submarine deal in particular, announced in March as the country lurched toward bankruptcy, has cast a spotlight on the Greek military budget and on the foreign vendors supplying the hardware. The deal includes a total of six subs in a complicated transaction that began a decade ago with German firms. The arms sales are drawing heat from Turkey, Greece's neighbor and arch-rival. "Even those countries trying to help Greece at this time of difficulty are



offering to sell them new military equipment," said Egemen Bagis, Turkey's top European Union negotiator, shortly after the sub deal was announced. "Greece doesn't need new tanks or missiles or submarines or fighter planes, neither does Turkey."

Greece's deputy prime minister, Theodore Pangalos, said during an Athens visit in May by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan that he felt "forced to buy weapons we do not need," and that the deals made him feel "national shame."

Other European officials have charged France and Germany with making their military dealings with Greece a condition

of their participation in the country's huge financial rescue. French and German officials deny the accusations.

A spokesman for German Chancellor Merkel says the submarine transaction was the culmination of an old contract signed long before Greece's debt crisis. In May, France's defense ministry said Greek authorities have confirmed their willingness to pursue talks on several arm-procurement deals. In May, Greece's economic crimes unit began investigating all weapons deals of the past decade—totaling about €16 billion—to determine if Greece overpaid or bought unnecessary hardware.

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German prosecutors are investigating whether millions of euros in bribes were paid to Greek officials in connection with the sub deal. In May, the chief executive of one of the German companies helping to build the submarines, called Ferrostaal AG, resigned amid the probe.

For some prominent Greeks, the latest submarine deal was the last straw. In late April, Stelios Fenekos, a 52-year-old vice admiral of the 22,000-person strong Greek Navy, resigned his position, bringing a three-decade Navy career to an end. He says he did so to protest the Greek defense minister's decision to purchase the subs, as well as other decisions taken in recent months that Mr. Fenekos considers "politically motivated." "How can you say to people we are buying more subs at the same time we want you to cut your salaries and pensions?" says Adm. Fenekos, in his first interview with a reporter. He was referring to the government's 5% cut in most pensions and even deeper slashes to public-sector wages enacted in response to the crisis. The Greek Navy, he says, cannot afford to maintain the additional submarines. It currently has eight subs.

A spokesman for the Greek Ministry of Defense said Mr. Fenekos' resignation was accepted. In stepping down, "Mr. Fenekos did not refer to the submarine deal," he said. Greece became the first battleground in the Cold War, with the U.S. backing anti-Communists in the Greek civil war in the late-1940s against Communist insurgents. The conflict led U.S. President Harry Truman, in 1947, to pledge unlimited military support for nations under Communist threat, known as the Truman Doctrine.

While the rest of Western Europe used U.S. aid to rebuild its economy from the second World War, in Greece, the emphasis was on building up the military. "Greece became the front line in the Cold War, and that began, right then and there, the Greek economic crisis of today," says Andre Gerolymatos, a professor of Hellenic studies at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver.

By the mid-1950s, the U.S. pulled back aid, much of which had been in the form of military hardware, shifting much of the burden for Greek military spending to Athens. By this time, Greece's worsening relations with Turkey led to yet more arms spending. Despite being fellow members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the two nations are bitter rivals. The discovery of oil in the northern Aegean Sea and disagreements over territorial waters and airspace became the source of numerous—and expensive—altercations between the two countries.

An incident in 1996, involving a Turkish ship running aground on a rocky, uninhabited Greek islet, almost led to war. Greece later that year announced a 10-year modernization program of its armed services, costing nearly \$17 billion.

The U.S. over the years catered to the two NATO members under a 7:10 ratio, meaning for every \$7 million dollars of equipment it sold to Greece it sold \$10 million to the more populous Turkey. It was in that environment that Greece in 1998 went shopping for submarines. It decided on three German-built class-214 submarines, a state-of-the-art diesel-electric powered vessel, with the option of buying a fourth—for a total of €1.8 billion. The first was to be built at the Kiel headquarters of Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft GmbH, with the others built at the affiliated Hellenic Shipyards SA, in Skaramangas, Greece.

The arrangement, called the Archimedes Program, would preserve thousands of jobs at the Greek shipyard.

Greek officials in 2002 expanded it to include the modernization of three older class-209 submarines—work to be done at the Skaramangas shipyard using materials and help from the Germans. The increase would cost another €985 million.

The German side consisted of a company owned by German truckmaker MAN SE, called Ferrostaal, and Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft, now owned by ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems AG. (MAN has since reduced its stake in Ferrostaal to 30%.) The total cost of the new and renovated subs: €2.84 billion.

As the military expenditures rose, Greece's two main political parties used them as a political football, each trying to make the budget deficit figures look worse when the other was in charge. When the Socialist government first bought the submarines, it post-dated the accounting for them to the day when the vessels were to be delivered, rather than when they were purchased.

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The government at the time was struggling to meet budget criteria for entry into the euro zone, which it joined a year behind other members in 2001. Pushing back the expenses saddled the bill with the Socialists' successors, the conservative New Democracy party, which came to power in March 2004. The New Democracy government that year then used a similar tactic, by retroactively accounting for the expenditures on the date of purchase. That inflated the budget deficits of the previous government—while making it easier for the New Democracy government to meet its own deficit goals.

Both accounting methods at the time were allowed by the European Union. The resulting massive deficit revisions made in 2004 for the previous years—4.6% of gross domestic product versus 1.7% for 2003—triggered an investigation in 2004 by Eurostat, the European Union's statistics agency, to understand what caused the revisions. The findings did not result in any sanctions.

Military spending accounted for nearly a quarter of the difference in the 2003 figures, and even more in revisions made on the deficits for preceding years. After the Socialist party, PASOK, returned to power in October 2009, it made a similar maneuver: It announced the federal deficit was much worse than the outgoing government had let on, mainly due to public hospital debts, setting in motion the financial crisis.

Meanwhile, not one of the subs had been delivered. When Greek officials traveled to Kiel to test the first sub, called the Papanikolis, they said that they found that in certain sea conditions the submarine listed to the right. "The Navy said we cannot accept this sub," said Mr. Fenekos, the admiral who recently resigned. "But the politicians did not want to stop it because they needed the production for the workers in the shipyard here."

ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems said the criticism was baseless and was made to delay payment. By last fall, Greece had paid €2.032 billion, about 70% of the total owed. With the deal at an impasse, the German companies cancelled the contract.

Finally, in March, the two sides announced they had begun negotiating a new deal. Instead of having three older subs modernized, just one would be modernized, and Greece would buy two additional new ones, bringing the total to six new submarines—costing a total of €1.3 billion.

Abu Dhabi MAR LLC, a shipbuilding company in Abu Dhabi, would buy 75.1% of the Greek shipyard, with the expanded submarine deal a condition of the sale. The Greek government finally accepted the sub, with the understanding it would immediately resell it. No deal has been finalized. Greece's defense minister, Evangelos Venizelos, speaking to the Greek parliament in March, explained that the deal was an attempt to end the mess, to "sever the Gordian knot" that the new government had inherited.

With 1,200 shipyard jobs at stake, Germany demanding concessions on the complex deal, and Greece having already paid two billion euros without receiving a single sub, the new arrangement was necessary, he said. But in February, just as a solution appeared to be at hand, German prosecutors in Munich began turning up evidence of unsavory dealings, according to records of their investigation.

Ferrostaal executives authorized payments worth millions of euros to politicians to win the initial deal in 2000, through a Greek company called Marine Industrial Enterprises, according to the Munich prosecutor's records.

To do this, Ferrostaal used sham consulting contracts, according to the records. That company then distributed payments to "officials and decision-makers" in Greece, according to the records. The investigation is ongoing. No charges have been filed.

Adamos Seraphides, chairman of MIE Group Limited, a successor company to a division of Marine Industrial Enterprises, said he doesn't believe that the company's prior leadership was involved in bribery. In March, police searched Ferrostaal offices, in Essen, seeking evidence of bribe payments. In May, several executives stepped down.

"Ferrostaal will continue to pursue the intensive dialogue with the state prosecutor's office in Munich and has pledged full and comprehensive support and cooperation," says a Ferrostaal spokesman. A ThyssenKrupp spokesperson says the company got into the business only in 2005, when it bought Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft. Despite the tortuous,

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decade-long journey of the submarine deal—and Greece's precarious financial standing—Germany stands ready for more business.

Guido Westerwelle, the German foreign minister, in February told a Greek newspaper that Germany doesn't want to force Greece to buy anything. But "whenever it comes to the point when it's ready to buy fighter planes," a European fighter-plane consortium, which Germany represents in Greece, "wants to be considered in the decision."

A spokesman for Mr. Westerwelle says the minister didn't discuss fighter sales with the Greek government during the visit.

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WORLD CUP FEVER in South Africa with Willem Kruk and his angels at Elgin Brown and Hamer shipyard

Pipavav Shipyard settles dispute with Golden Ocean

Pipavav Shipyard has announced that negotiations with the said Golden Ocean Group and its two associate/group companies (GOGL) have been concluded successfully. This is in regard to the earlier announcement letter dated Dec. 18, 2009, regarding `outcome of board meeting` intimating that one of the customer of the company that is Golden Ocean Group had referred the shipbuilding contracts to arbitration, and that both parties were exploring the option, of resolving the issues bilaterally.

Further the company has informed that GOGL has withdrawn arbitration proceedings initiated against the company. Shares of Pipavav Shipyard gained Rs 1.8, or 1.81%, to trade at Rs 101.40. The total volume of shares traded was 130,228 at the BSE **Source: IRIS**

Contract placed for construction of CSV North Ocean 105

Houston-based J Ray McDermott and Oceanteam ASA have awarded a contract to build a high capacity rigid-reeled pipe-lay vessel **North Ocean 105**, to Metalships and Docks shipyard in Vigo, Spain.

North Ocean 105 will be able to install flexible products including submarine cables, umbilicals and flexible pipelines, rigid-reeled pipelines, subsea components and hardware, as well as deepwater moorings for floating facilities.

The anticipated delivery date of **North Ocean 105** is early 2012 and the vessel will be built under the Spanish Tax Lease structure. The vessel is fully financed and has a five year charter in place starting upon delivery between joint Norwegian shipowning company and J Ray McDermott.

Oceanteam ASA has a 25 per cent minority interest in the Norwegian shipowning company. **North Ocean 105** is the fifth vessel in the **North Ocean 100 series** and the parties expect to benefit from the efficiencies gained during the building of the previous four vessels. **Source : Offshore Shipping Online**



The **BALTIC FORCE** seen in Rotterdam – Europoort – **Photo : Rob Smith ©**

Jiangsu's shipbuilding exports surge 120pc in May

THE value of exported ships built in China's Jiangsu province increased 120 per cent in May to US\$1.4 billion, a new monthly record since 2009, Xinhua reported. From January to May, Jiangsu's ship export value amounted to \$5.5 billion, up 62.7 per cent year on year. Processed ship exports valued \$5.4 billion, up 66.9 per cent, accounting for 99.2 per cent of the total of ship export value of the province.

These ships mainly exported to the European Union, Latin America, Hong Kong and Africa. During the first five months, ships exported to the EU valued \$1.6 billion, up 17.9 per cent, representing 28.8 per cent of Jiangsu's ship export value total. Those exported to Latin America rocketed 630 per cent in value to \$990 million. Those exported to Hong Kong valued \$960 million, up 57.9 per cent. Value of ships exported to Africa soared 240 per cent to \$700 million.

In the five-month period, containerships exported from Jiangsu rose 26.2 per cent in value to \$810 million, taking up 14.8 per cent of the province's total ship export value. Bulk carrier export value surged 210 per cent to \$3.1 billion, taking up 57.1 per cent of the total. Liquid carrier export dropped 1.9 per cent in value to \$1.1 billion.

According to an unnamed Nanjing customs official, the rapid growth of Jiangsu's ship export was because the shipbuilding industry is on the way of recovery. Statistics from shipping industry researcher Clarksons, the world's new orders totalled to 114 vessels in April, with a compensated gross tonnage (CGT) of 2.1 million tonnes, up 22.1 per cent over March. China had 45 new orders with a CGT of 788,000 tonnes, second to Korea. In addition, the rebound in the global shipping market also contributed to the growth of Jiangsu's ship export. The Baltic Dry Index has been hiking from 2,991 points since early April and hit a peak at 4,209 points in late May, up 40.7 per cent.

The coming rise of steel prices and the new orders prices hitting bottom were also reasons given for the growth. Shipowners hope to order new ships before the ship and steel prices increase. **Source : SChednet**



The **JAN LEENHEER** (ex **EERLAND 26**) seen at Flushing roads
Photo : Wim Kosten – www.maritimephoto.com (c)

Fredericia Shipyard compensated by land-owner

Fredericia Shipyard has been paid DKK 16.7 million in compensation from the owner of the land, Realdania Foundation. The compensation was paid out as the shipyard is leaving the premises before the end of the contract in 2016. This means that Realdania could start the process of converting the harbour areas into a mix of offices and residential housing much earlier. Fredericia Shipyard is in the process of moving to Munkebo, near Odense. The company will also change its name to Fayard. It will take over three graving docks capable of docking ships up to 300 metres in length and 45 metres in width. The docks were previously owned by Odense Steel Shipyard. **Source :** Shipgaz

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The **MSC PROVIDER** seen in Ravenna - **Photo : Ko Rusman ©**

Enoc ceases bunkering at Fujairah

Emirates National Oil Company (Enoc) has ceased its bunkering operations at Fujairah Port, the world's second-largest bunkering port after Singapore, as it could not compete on pricing "We have stopped operations since July 1," said Khalid Hadi, Enoc's group brand and marketing manager. He said there were no more details to offer as of now, but the company will issue a statement next week. Enoc has the ability to blend the fuel necessary for the bunkers, but did not have the barges necessary for transporting it to the large ships that need to be refuelled. This was done through a third party joint venture, which was on the rocks as of late.

Traders said the state oil company is estimated to have lost around \$20 million (Dh73 million) from its bunkering operations in Fujairah and had been doing monthly volumes of about 30,000 tonnes prior to its exit. Volumes have been down from 100,000 tonnes a month last year, and from its peak of 250,000 tonnes the year before.

Sources said Enoc has been winding down the bunkering business as its barging arrangement with a third party was coming to an end on a pricing dispute. "It obviously will not be making money from this. Whatever they were making from Fujairah was not cost-effective as we saw a decline in volumes," an industry source said, adding that the oil company could not compete in the market with the current pricing on the barging deal. Enoc resumed supplying bunker fuel for offshore operations at Fujairah Port early last year after closing down in 2007, and also started operating at Jebel Ali Port. Operating under Enoc's International Refining and Marketing division, it has its own refinery and an extensive fleet of supply tankers for product delivery and discharge. Previously, it was also operating onshore bunkering services in UAE. **Source: GulfNews**



The **MSC MIA SUMMER** seen in Ravenna – Photo : Ko Rusman ©

K-Sea reaches agreements with lenders

K-Sea Transportation Partners L.P. stock rose after it reported that its K-Sea Operating Partnership L.P. subsidiary had reached agreements with lenders granting it a temporary waiver of compliance with financial covenants through August 31, 2010 on both its revolving credit agreement and a \$57.6 million term loan.

President and CEO Timothy J. Casey said that EBITDA in the partnership's June 2010 quarter "will exceed the inordinately low number we reported in our March 2010 quarter. In addition to the normal seasonal rebound, owing to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, we believe that approximately two dozen coastwise tank barges, as well as a number of inland tank barges and ocean-going tankers have been chartered. While this employment has to be viewed as temporary, it is likely that many units will be employed until the spill is cleaned up. Accordingly, we expect the market to tighten during this process and there is some evidence this is already happening. K-Sea has chartered out five

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single-hull barges and three double-hull barges along with eight tugboats to assist with the clean-up effort." **Source :** MarineLog



The **HAM 312** and **VOLVOX DELTA** seen operating in Kattupalli - **Photo : Hans van Boeschoten ©**



MPI celebrates keel-laying for new vessel

MPI Offshore in the UK says it recently celebrated the keel-laying ceremony for **MPI Discovery**, the second of two new wind turbine installation vessels currently under construction at the Cosco Nantong Shipyard in China. The complex equipment and systems that will be installed on the two vessels are being manufactured at subcontractor facilities all around the world and shipped to China for final integration and commissioning on board the vessels. **MPI Adventure**, the first of the two wind turbine installation vessels, will arrive in European waters in the first quarter of 2011, with MPI Discovery due to follow during the third quarter.

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Following their arrival in European waters, **MPI Adventure** and **MPI Discovery** will join **MPI Resolution**, MPI Offshore's first wind turbine installation vessel. **Source : Offshore Shipping Online**



The KNRM Breskens lifeboat **ZEEMANSHOOP** seen operating off Breskens yesterday - **Photo : Henk de Winde ©**

Hamburg Sud, Maersk call at Da Chan Bay on new service



DA CHAN BAY TERMINAL ONE in West Shenzhen has announced that Hamburg Sud has become its latest customer, after the carrier's new service between Asia, South Africa and the east coast of South America, jointly operated with Maersk Line, started calling at the terminal.

Photo : Jan Oosterboer ©

Hamburg Sud and Maersk each deploy five 2,500-TEU vessels on the service, which calls at key ports in South Africa and east coast of South America.

Andrew Milliken, chief executive officer of Da Chan Bay Terminal One (DCB), said: "We are glad Hamburg Sud has chosen Da Chan Bay to expand its business in South China. Increasingly, the market recognises the value propositions of Da Chan Bay."

The new service calls at Da Chan Bay Terminal One every Wednesday, on the following port rotation of Shanghai: Ningbo, Da Chan Bay, Hong Kong, Singapore, Tanjung Pelepas, Durban, Santos, Itajai, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Shanghai. **Source : SChednet**



Yesterday, 10th July m.v. **Zhen Hua 8** arrived in Dar es Salaam with 1 new QC and 2 new RTG's for TICTS (Tanzania International Container Terminal Services). The other 2 QC's and 3 RTG's are for Felixstowe UK.

Photo : Anton Klaassen ©

Odense bulker on sea trials

The fifth capesize bulker in a series of six units from Odense Steel Shipyard is currently undergoing sea trials before being delivered later this month from Fredericia Shipyard. The bulk carrier, hull no 231, is sailing under the name of **Epic** and is flying Greek flag for Nereus Shipping in the Lemos group of companies.

Nereus Shipping is also the owner of the sixth bulk carrier in the series, which will be the very last large newbuilding from a Danish shipyard. The **Epic** has an overall length of 292 metres, a beam of 44.98 metres and a draft of 16 metres when fully loaded. The 93,360 GT and 182,060 DWT vessel is powered by a MAN diesel, type 6S70MC-C, developing 18,660 kW, giving a service speed of 15.5 knots. Odense Steel Shipard's order book consists of three ro-ro vessels, one bulk carrier and three frigates for the Danish Navy.

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The **WINTER** seen in Rio Grande – Photo : Marcelo Vieira ©



The Port of Amsterdam 4 – **ATHENA** seen returning to the builders DAMEN after the yard trails
Photo : R&F van der Hoek – LEKKO ©

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



Forget all the small orange flags on board, this is the "Dutch Lion" onboard Heerema's **RETRIEVER**
Photo : Capt Jan Berghuis ©

BOEKBESPREKING

Door : Frank NEYTS

"Transport Economics".

Bij Edward Elgar verscheen onlangs de derde editie van "**Transport Economics**". Het boek werd geschreven door Kenneth Button. Dit 500 pagina's tellend boek geeft geen voorkeur aan welke transportmodus dan ook, het boek richt zich tot de lezer die interesse heeft voor economie. Het is dus geen studie over scheepsbouw, de spoorwegen of luchtvaarttechnologie, maar een economische analyse van transportonderwerpen. Veertien hoofdstukken brengen een reeks onderwerpen zoals kostprijsberekening in het transport, verkeerscongestie, logistiek en externe kosten van het transport. Ieder hoofdstuk start met basisprincipes, waarna het onderwerp ten gronde, maar klaar en duidelijk, wordt aangesneden.

Naast de impact van het transport op de samenleving, snijdt het boek ook planning en investeringen in de transportsector aan, inclusief het multiplicatoreffect dat transport met zich brengt.

In een steeds complexer wordende wereld biedt dit boek een helder inzicht in een even complex gebeuren als (internationaal) transport.

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"**Transport Economics**" (ISBN 978-1-84064-191-2) telt 511 pagina's en kost £95 als hardback en £39.95 als softback. Aankopen kan via de boekhandel, of rechtstreeks bij de uitgeverij Edward Elgar, The Lyptatts, 15 Landsdown Road, Cheltenham, Glos, GL50 2JA, UK. Tel +44(0)1242 226934, Fax +44(0)1242 262111, e-mail: info@e-elgar.co.uk.



The **JUMBO JUBILEE** see outward bound from Rotterdam - Photo : Ruud Zegwaard ©

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