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The latest 86 mtr long newbuilding yacht of Oceanco with yard number **Y 706** seen passing Spijkenisse enroute to Moerdijk for DP and anchoring trials, upon completion the yacht returned to Oceanco in Alblasterdam

Photo : Lia Mets ©

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The **WEC VERMEER** seen enroute Moerdijk - Photo : Marijn van Hoorn ©

Response to EC offshore licensing suspension call

Responding to the European Commission's recommendation that member states should consider suspending offshore licensing in advance of possible new EU-wide safety standards, Norrie McVicar, Chair of the ITF's Offshore Task Force Group (OTFG), said: "This is the wrong position to take and the wrong time to take it. The EC should be protecting the

safety gains made in the UK offshore sector, not eroding them by dumbing them down to a lowest common denominator."

He continued: "One very positive feature of the UK industry is OSPRA, the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Advisory Group, which brings together regulators, industry bodies and trade unions such as Unite and the RMT in a joint effort to ensure that we get the oil and gas we need as safely and cleanly as possible. It's that kind of good practice that we'd like to see adopted by the rest of the global oil and gas sector, not weakened here in Europe."

Lars Myhre, President ICEM Energy Industry Section, added: "You can never be too safe and we would never condone complacency, but the British and Norwegian sectors are generally good examples of best practice. They should be studied, learned from and, where necessary, improved. They shouldn't be remodelled into a one size fits all – but not very well – Euro model."



The **ATLANTIC CONCERT** seen enroute Antwerp
Photo : Richard Wisse – www.richard-photography.nl (c)

Attack Against Oil Tanker Shows Why Terrorists and Pirates May Join Forces

One night in late July, the Mitsui-owned MV **M. Star**, a Japanese oil tanker laden with crude and headed for Japan, experienced a "blast" against its hull as it approached the Strait of Hormuz. It was accompanied by a "flash of light," several crew members reported. Omani and United Arab Emirates authorities quickly dismissed the Japanese assertion that the ship had been attacked. They claimed a freak wave induced by an earthquake was to blame, then that the ship had either collided with a submarine, Somali pirates had bungled a hijacking attempt or an old stray mine had hit the tanker.

Only after U.S. Navy divers got a look at the tanker's hull was the Japanese claim corroborated. Her hull showed residue of homemade explosives. Investigators concluded that the tanker was the victim of a failed attack by a suicide bomber piloting a waterborne improvised explosive device, or IED. A previously unknown faction of al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula then took credit for the MV **M. Star** attack. What was most interesting was how the Japanese claim was dismissed by Omani and United Arab Emirates officials, while most maritime security experts remained largely quiet in public. Even the experts did not want to believe that terrorists would and could target oil tanker traffic in the Strait of Hormuz. Maritime security experts seem unable to anticipate these events. Before 2008, when Somali teenagers wearing flip-flops and toting AK-47s hijacked a super tanker, the MV **Sirius Star**, the experts had said it would never happen. Today, pirates prey on maritime commerce 1,000 nautical miles from Somalia and attack ships closer to India than to Africa.

A terrorist attack against an East Asian oil tanker inside the Persian Gulf was truly a surprise. That Oman and the United Arab Emirates were so quick to dismiss the Japanese claim of an attack, however, is not surprising. When the oil tanker **Limburg** caught fire in October 2002, the Yemeni government engaged in similar denial tactics. The reasons were obvious. When it was confirmed that the **Limburg** was indeed the victim of a suicide bomber piloting a waterborne IED, Yemen lost millions of dollars in port fees as ships shunned it for months. Oman and the United Arab Emirates did what they could to avoid a replay of the MV **M. Star** incident. Whether the MV **M. Star** was in fact attacked in an assault similar to the **Limburg** was perhaps the most important question being debated behind closed doors. After Lloyds List reported that U.S. Navy divers concluded that the damage was caused by a waterborne IED attack, most experts remained silent. Furthermore, when a previously unknown al Qaida group took credit for the attack, experts were quoted in the press as dismissing the claim. Eventually, the Emirates' state-controlled press issued a report confirming that traces of homemade explosives had been found on the tanker and that local authorities were agreeing with the U.S. Navy that the damage was the result of a waterborne IED attack. One wonders why a terrorist attack against a large crude carrier was so hard for the experts to acknowledge and discuss. The Japanese were not reluctant to report the facts. Often shipmasters prefer not to file a report, if only to avoid the delays and costs of pulling into the next port and ultimately paying higher insurance rates. The Japanese were wise to have dropped anchor 14 nautical miles outside the Emirates' port of Fujairah while awaiting the U.S. divers for an independent inspection. It's not unthinkable that had the tanker pulled into the port without waiting, local authorities might have impounded her as a "crime scene" and then let the unwelcome evidence degrade. The United Arab Emirates government was none too happy with the claims. Analysts are simply being overtaken by the speed of developments in the northwestern Indian Ocean. They are not able to see into the future. In early 2009, warnings that Somali pirates would pivot out of the Gulf of Aden and redirect attacks off the east coast of Africa were met with indifference. In late 2009, there were warnings that pirates would deploy even farther afield in response to attempts to deter their attacks in the Somali Basin and around the Seychelles. The energy sea lanes supplying East Asia with Persian Gulf oil and gas were already being scouted by advance Somali pirate units. Attacks against tankers just off India began in earnest this year.

This is a complex issue, to be sure. Before 9/11, security analysts tended not to see a plausible terrorist plot in every piece of suspicious intelligence. As a result, some valid clues were ignored. After the attacks, it became a career-saving path to push any and all possible terrorist plots up to the next level. Americans overcompensated compared to Europeans. As a result, Americans earned a reputation for suspecting terrorist plots where others did not. So when the Japanese claimed their tanker was attacked, many foreign experts didn't want to believe it, while U.S. experts suspected the worst. At yet another level, the problem is even more daunting. For many professional analysts, serious difficulty persists in distinguishing piracy and terrorism. U.S. analysts are often quick to find that pirates and terrorists collaborate, or even that they are one in the same. On the other hand, foreign experts often argue that terrorists and pirates don't collaborate. From this perspective, the debate about what happened to the Japanese VLCC (very large crude carrier) was an inkblot test for maritime security experts: They saw what they expected to see. A more reasonable conclusion is that piracy and terrorism are distinct. The first is a criminal enterprise meant to maximize profits, the second is a paramilitary operation meant to pursue political objectives. But both share a common "gray infrastructure" — pirates as well as terrorists traffic in and smuggle arms, people, drugs and money. This shared infrastructure provides opportunities for the two to collaborate, as long as their respective primary missions are not compromised too much. The question then is how much is too much. Somali pirates, for example, collaborate with al Shabaab (the Somali al Qaida affiliate) by smuggling into Somalia weapons and foreign Islamist fighters on the run from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Certain pirates will even hand over part of their ransom as protection money to Islamist groups so as to keep using ports they control, like Kismayo or now Harardheere.

On the other hand, even if Shabaab puts pressure on pirates to help it conduct attacks against tankers in the Gulf of Aden, many if not most pirates will not cooperate, because that would only drive away their "bread and butter." Pirates need ships coming through the Gulf of Aden. If ships start catching fire and sinking regularly, the fact that ships can use the long way around the Cape of Good Hope will bring pirates a bleak bottom line. So attacks in the Gulf of Aden have been and will remain pretty much an al Shabaab or al Qaida production. More importantly, regardless of what is ultimately and officially concluded about the attack on the MV **M. Star**, a close analysis of the bigger picture says that this attack was an early warning about what's in store for global energy maritime commerce near and in the Strait of Hormuz. In that area, pirates and terrorists have an opportunity to collaborate. The key to analyzing Hormuz is that there is no detour (at least not until major pipelines are built across the United Arab Emirates). Unlike the Gulf of Aden which can be avoided by going the long way around the Cape, or unlike even the Strait of Malacca which can

be avoided by taking cuts through the Indonesian archipelago, the Strait of Hormuz is all that is left for those trying to get oil tankers in and out of the Persian Gulf. This will make pirates more willing to work with terrorists around Hormuz. Pirates are more likely to provide logistical support, maritime training and other assistance because tankers will still be coming and going, even if they are attacked regularly. Tankers have no alternate route.

Only if and when tankers take more precautions to avoid attack near Hormuz will pirates moonlighting by aiding terrorists begin to think twice. Some tankers are now transiting the Strait of Hormuz only in the daytime. Tankers are the preferred target of Somali pirates as they ride low and slow — and therefore are easiest to board — and because they fetch the highest ransoms on average. A fully laden VLCC can earn pirates easily twice what any other ship can. Terrorists also find they make excellent targets to attack and set afire. If self-help measures fail, though, a corridor through the Strait of Hormuz protected by warships may be the only effective option. The world's maritime powers, starting with the United States, need to get ahead of the curve and nip this ominous development in the bud, lest energy supplies to the West and the East get disrupted. The global economic recovery is at stake. **Source: National Defense Magazine**



The outgoing from the Nieuwe Waterweg Rotterdam **ADMIRAL BULKER** from messr J.Lauritzen
Photo : Joop Bartels ©

Bulgarian seaman sentenced to eleven years in prison

A 47-year old Bulgarian has been sentenced to eleven years in prison by the court in Svendborg, Denmark, for an attempt to smuggle 22 kilos of cocaine into Denmark via Fredericia. The cocaine was found on board the 39,407 DWT bulk carrier **Svilev Russev** upon arrival in Fredericia in October 2009 from Argentina. The cocaine was found in one of the cabins. The now convicted seafarer's fingerprints were detected on the cocaine package. The cocaine has a street value of around DKK 10 million. **Source : ShipGaz**



The **AZURA** seen in Le Havre - Photo : philippe.p.brebant@sfr.fr ©

CAPT. WILLEM HARLAAR 50 YEARS YOUNG



Today is newscippings reader & contributor **Capt. Willem Harlaar** turning 50 years of age, on behalf of all the readers worldwide of the newscippings I would like to congratulate Willem with this milestone, en hope many more healthy years to come .

Willem have a nice day with your family and friends!!

Willem is sailing for **ISKES tugs** from IJmuiden and left he is seen on "his tug" **TELSTAR** operating in the IJmuiden locks

Photo : Jan Plug ©

Naval Gazing

In the waters of the Indian Ocean, international warships keep watch against Somali pirates – but in the long run, newly arrived navies from India, China, Russia and elsewhere may be as much rivals as allies. The U.S. Navy estimates that on any given day as many as 30 to 40 warships are engaged in operations to keep shipping safe from young Somalis in skiffs with AK-47s and ladders.

While U.S., NATO and European Union forces make up the majority, the last two years have seen a growing presence from China, Russia, India, Japan, South Korea and others. While piracy — which has redrawn shipping routes and driven up insurance costs — is seen the main driver, all are seen also wanting to stake a claim to increasingly important sea lanes. Certainly, the build-up says much about the way some powers are taking a more muscular role in

world affairs. But none of the relatively new entrants yet comes close to challenging the regional military dominance of the United States, which usually has at least one aircraft carrier in the area with enough firepower to sink almost all the other navies.

"These are still relatively smaller forces," said Christian la Miere, naval expert at London's International Institute for Strategic Studies. "But if you're looking forward over the next few decades, there is no doubt Asian navies will have a larger presence in the Indian Ocean relative to Western forces." The region is seen as becoming increasingly important. It accounts for 20 percent of global sea trade — and a much higher proportion of energy and container shipments. It is the key shipping route for oil supplies from the Gulf, Chinese and Asian exports to Europe, and African resources — potentially food as well as minerals. Western forces in the region may have their other agendas as well — from keeping tabs on potential Iranian weapons smuggling to monitoring extremists and militants in Somalia and Yemen — but for the emerging powers the key interest is seen as trade. "The Indian Ocean is becoming a central sea lane," said Nicolas Gvosdev, national security studies professor at the U.S. Naval War College. "China does not trust leaving this vital link in the hands of the U.S. Navy, and wants to guarantee its access." China's task force — a permanent presence of three ships running convoys most days via Aden — is its first in the area since eunuch admiral Zheng He sailed in the 15th century. Beijing's modern naval commanders have suggested opening regional naval bases to support antipiracy operations on top of other new port projects in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. That will alarm India, which has long regarded the ocean as its backyard. Like most Asian powers, it is building its naval forces just as Western navies cut back.

Russia's presence, usually a couple of ships, also marks an increase in naval deployment outside its immediate region. Japan's presence of ships and patrol aircraft is described by analysts as the first of its kind since World War Two. Admirals point to the deployment as a promising example of international cooperation. While there is no one overall commander of international efforts, there is coordination through monthly meetings and a secure Internet chat room.

Some complain some of the emerging navies are too closely focused on safeguarding only their own national shipping, and could be used more effectively if coordination was better. Most emerging nations concentrate on simply escorting their own national flag shipping — although India is particularly keen to stress it has escorted vessels of all nationalities. Certainly, while the warships have had some success disrupting attacks, the number of pirates is seen still rising. But overall, shippers say the naval build-up is good news. "This is about protection of the trade routes," said Peter Hinchcliffe, secretary general of the International Chamber of Shipping. "We absolutely welcome the naval cooperation. Navies that were if not actually at war with each other then definitely rivals are working together and are comrades in arms." But some also see the rush of warships to the region — which largely began in 2008 after the hijacking of a Saudi oil tanker and a Ukrainian ship carrying battle tanks — as partly fuelled also by a worrying growing international rivalry.

"I don't think it necessarily has to be one or the other," said Naval War College's Gvosdev. "It can be both." Meanwhile, cannier governments around the region may use the new focus on the Indian Ocean to their benefit. Chinese financial support was key to Sri Lanka's victory in its three decade war with Tamil Tiger rebels after Western countries pulled back support over alleged human rights abuses. To the concern of New Delhi, Beijing has helped fund a port at Hambantota on the island's southern tip — although Sri Lanka has been keen to stress its civilian nature. For those already concerned by rising international tensions over currencies, commodities and cyber warfare, Indian Ocean rivalry could yet prove another potential flashpoint. "I do not want to join the dots on this because I do not like the implications," said Michael Power, global strategist for South African Investec Asset Management. **Source : ShipTalk**

African Union turns attention to improving maritime security and safety in Africa

Africa has thirty-eight (38) countries that are either coastal or island states, the African Union (AU) Commissioner for Peace and Security has pointed out. Briefing the AU Peace and Security Council on maritime security and safety during the its 242nd meeting held on 4 October 2010, the commissioner said: "Africa borders the major sea lanes of the world and is therefore strategically situated. This in and of itself demands great attention on the part of Africa's coastal states in terms of protection of the maritime domain that had so far not been comprehensively secured for the African

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people. As the backbone of international commerce, oceans and seas are vital to African expectations in peace, in security, in economic development, transportation, trade, environmental and scientific research, historical and cultural heritage.”

The AU says that over the past decade maritime security and safety has become a major challenge for several African coastal countries. Piracy has become a major threat, generating or exacerbating political and social instability in the surroundings. Drug and human trafficking, financing the purchase of weapons, oil spills and other environmental crimes, to name a few, are threats that weaken the continent.

In this regard, Mr Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission has been invited at the headquarters of US Africa Command (Africom) in Stuttgart, Germany, in order to address these issues.

Conscious of the impact of maritime security and safety on Africa's growth the AU has put together the African Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIM-Strategy) aiming to achieve a comprehensive understanding of existing and potential challenges and allocation of resources to identified priorities. It also aims at designing a comprehensive, concerted, coherent and coordinated approach that improves maritime conditions in respect of environmental and socio-economic development. – **source: AU statement**



The **JORK RANGER** seen awaiting repairs moored in the Wilton harbor in Schiedam – **Photo : Jan Oosterboer ©**



NAVY NEWS



An **F/A-18 Hornet** launches from the aircraft carrier **USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72)**. The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group a scheduled deployment to the U.S. 5th and 7th Fleet areas of responsibility supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts to establish conditions for regional stability.

Photo : US Navy

Thales wins HMAS Newcastle Maintenance Contract

The Defence Materiel Organisation today announced it has signed a multi-million dollar contract with Thales Australia for the scheduled repair and maintenance of **HMAS Newcastle**. The contract is worth approximately \$8.7M and is anticipated to engage in the order of 100 Thales personnel with further support from subcontractors.

This is further evidence of Defence's commitment to ensuring the on-going repair and maintenance of Navy ships occurs in Australia. As previously stated, Defence has budgeted to spend approximately \$79M on ship repair and maintenance in the Sydney region this year and \$81M in 2011. This contract is part of that planned expenditure. Last week the Defence Materiel Organisation also announced that \$12 to \$17 million worth of work would be undertaken in HMA Ships **Kanimbla** and **Manoora** in the Sydney region over the coming months. Source: Thales

French Carrier Heads Home a Day into Anti-Piracy, Afghan Mission

A technical fault has forced France's flagship and only aircraft carrier to return to port less than a day after it set off to fight piracy and terrorism in the Indian Ocean, the navy said Oct. 14. Naval spokesman Capt. Hugues d'Argentre said the nuclear-powered **Charles de Gaulle** would be back in its home port of Toulon later in the day and it would take a

few days to carry out the necessary repairs. "A fault was found in the insulation of an electrical cabinet in the propulsion system," the officer said. The **Charles de Gaulle** and its escort group - two frigates, an attack submarine and a refueling tanker - set sail from Toulon on Oct. 14 and had been due to spend four months patrolling the Indian Ocean.

France is the only country apart from the United States to operate a full-size nuclear-powered carrier capable of launching fixed-wing jets, but the ship has been plagued with technical problems since it was launched in 1994. In November 2000 the **Charles de Gaulle** limped back to port after one of its huge propellers snapped off in mid-Atlantic, and between July 2007 and December 2008 it was taken out of service for a major refit. In all, the battle group carries 3,000 sailors and 27 aircraft: 10 Rafale F3 fighters, 12 Super Etendard attack jets, two Hawkeye early warning planes and three helicopters.

Rear Adm. Jean-Louis Kerignard, commander of the group, said the force would help allied navies fight piracy off the coast of Somalia and send attack jets to support NATO troops fighting insurgents in Afghanistan. The ships will also train alongside allies from Saudi Arabia, India, Italy, Greece and the United Arab Emirates, and make two stopovers at the French base in Djibouti before returning to France in February. **Source : DefenseNews**



Above seen the French Navy Forbin (Horizon) Class Destroyer **FS CHEVALIER PAUL D621** entering Grand Harbour, Malta Friday 15th October 2010, the first ship of this type here in Malta

Photo : Capt. Lawrence Dalli - www.maltashipphotos.com ©

U.S. Navy Amphib San Antonio To Miss Deployment

The U.S. Navy amphibious transport ship **San Antonio**, sidelined all year for repairs to the engineering plant, will miss a scheduled deployment next year in order to complete the work, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFF) said in a statement released late Oct. 14. San Antonio's sister ship, **Mesa Verde**, which returned in August from a seven-month, 35,000-mile deployment to the Persian Gulf, will take the **San Antonio's** place and deploy next summer with the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group, USFF said. Problems have plagued the San Antonio since the ship was delivered

in August 2005 from Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding. Although similar issues have, to varying degrees, affected follow-on ships in the class, the *San Antonio*, first in its class, has consistently been a problem ship - a fact the Navy acknowledged when it accepted the vessel after a prolonged fitting-out period. The Navy and Northrop have long grown exasperated in trying to manage and deal with the ship's problems, which have included poor electrical wiring installations, bad welds, a dysfunctional engine control system and faulty hydraulics in the stern door.

A persistent problem cropped up on all the ships of the class with contaminants in the engine lube-oil system. Earlier this year, while the *San Antonio* was undergoing an overhaul at Earl Industries in Norfolk, Va., engineers investigating the root cause of vibrations in the drive train - the engines, reduction gears and propeller shafts that drive the ship - discovered that bolts in the foundations of the diesel engines and the main reduction gears were improperly installed. If not fixed, officials said, the vibrations could eventually wreck the propulsion system.

Over the ship's career, Navy inspectors also have cited the crew for poor maintenance procedures, and criticized training programs for insufficient instructions on how to operate the ship's systems. Last fall, Adm. John Harvey, head of Fleet Forces Command, ordered a Judge Advocate General investigation, known as a JAGMAN, to be carried out to get to the root of the *San Antonio's* problems. The investigation, completed in January, concluded that a host of issues contributed to problems on the ship, including inadequate workmanship, poor quality control during construction, shortcomings in the ship's design, and problems with the crew's management of engineering troubles.

The ship completed her only fleet deployment in March 2009. The overhaul at Norfolk begun early this year was expected to take about four or five months and cost \$5 million. But largely due to the engine foundation problems, the work is now expected to take about 11 months and the cost has risen to at least \$39 million, according to the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA). The final bill will be higher when all the work is factored in. But Harvey and NAVSEA seem determined to fix as many problems as possible during the current work package. "We went to ground zero with the ship," Harvey said in September. "We wanted to try and get over the hump of incremental discovery," Rear Adm. Jim McManamon, NAVSEA's vice commander of the surface warfare directorate, said Sept. 30 during a phone interview. "To do it right, we're taking a very deliberate approach." The Navy is working "to ensure that *USS San Antonio* returns to the fleet as a fully operational and deployable platform, and that the Navy has given her crew the proper tools and training necessary to use *San Antonio* to its fullest capability," USFF said in the statement. "*San Antonio* will deploy when it is operationally sound and ready to go," Harvey said in the statement.

Navy officials said they were not aware of any new problems that have caused the ship to miss next year's deployment. Rather, they say, the delay is due to the year-long overhaul. Even though the repair work is continuing, the ship moved Sept. 10 from the shipyard to Naval Station Norfolk, Va., where she remains. NAVSEA officials expect the work to be finished about mid-January, after which the ship will need to go through a lengthy period of recertifications and crew training to return her to operational effectiveness. *Mesa Verde* is the third ship in the *San Antonio class*, and is considered by the Navy and Northrop to have been delivered in much better shape than the *San Antonio* and the second ship, *New Orleans*. Commissioned in late 2007, she carried out a cruise to South America before conducting a full deployment with the Nassau Amphibious Ready Group that began in January with disaster relief work in earthquake-stricken Haiti. Five ships of the *San Antonio class* have been commissioned, and a total of 11 are expected to be built, all at Northrop's Gulf Coast shipyards. The 25,000-ton ships represent an enormous advancement in capability over the 1960s-era Austin-class amphibious ships they are replacing. Source : DefenseNews

SHIPYARD NEWS

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At the Damen yard in Gorinchem last week the **COASTAL VANGUARD** was launched, the workvessel is under construction for **ACTA Marine** in Den Helder

Photo : Henk van Milligen ©

Søby Værft to build new ferry for island service

Søby Værft A/S has signed a contract with Faaborg/Midtfyn municipality for a new ferry for the island service from Faaborg to Lyø and Avernakø in the archipelago south of Fyn. The new ferry, with a price tag of DKK 44 million, will be ready for service in April 2012. The ferry will have a slightly larger capacity than the current ferry, the **Faaborg II**. The old ferry was built in 1965 in Aukra and was a second-hand purchase in 1989. Through the years, this ferry has been a rather expensive investment due to high maintenance costs and the replacement of its two engines in 1995. In recent years, the shipyard Søby Værft has been building patrol vessels for the Homeguard fleet. The yard's previous ferry newbuilding was the **Christina**, which was delivered in 2002 to the Fejø-Kragenæs service. Source : ShipGaz



The **E-WHALE** (sister to the **A-WHALE**) seen fitting out , she is the fifth ship out of a series of 5 built by Hyundai voor TMT, the tankers are 319869 DWT are 340m long and 60m width - Photo : Wouter van der Veen ©

Croatia: Brodosplit delivers hull 464

Brodosplit shipyard from Split, Croatia, delivered product tanker '**Stena Penguin**' to Swedish company Concordia Maritime.



'**Stena Penguin**' is a product tanker (P-Max), ice-class 1A for carrying oil and oil product through ice areas built for Swedish company Concordia Maritime. Hull 464 is the third of four P-Max that Brodosplit has built for the same Swedish owner in this series.

'**Stena Paris**', '**Stena Performance**' and '**Stena Progress**' have been recognised internationally as "Ships of the Year" in their category.

The '**Stena Penguin**' measures 182.99 metres in length, 40 metres in breadth, with a depth of 17.90 metre depth and weighs 65,056DWT. The vessel will be able to reach speeds of 14.5 knots, driven by two engines MAN-B&W type

6S46 MC-C, each of 7,860kW at 129 r/min, built in Brodosplit's diesel engine factory.



Photo : Cees de Bijl ©

The "**Max**" concept means that the vessels are designed for maximum loading capacity in shallow waters. They have been designed according to a new concept for safer oil transportation with double main engines in two completely separate engine rooms, double rudders and steering gear, two propellers and double control systems. **Source : Baird**

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Tidewater acquires anchor handlers from Sanko in Japan

Tidewater in the US has acquired five AHTS from Japanese shipowner Sanko. The vessels are: **Sanko C class** anchor handlers with are 9,517 bhp and bollard pull of 120 tonnes. According to Fearnley Offshore Supply the price was US\$25 million for each vessel. Tidewater has also acquired 2 x 8,000 bhp AHTS from **POSH**, the new names being **Ozren Tiden** and **Sabando Tide**. Source : Offshore Shipping Online



The dredger **RIO ORINOCO** seen anchored at the Orinoco river near Puerto Ordaz (Venezuela)

Photo : Crew HAM 316 ©

Transas Marine signs an unprecedented multi-million Euro VTMS contract

with Libyan Ports and Maritime Transport Authority (PMTA)

The VTMS contract between Transas and the PMTA to supply and install the national scale Coastal Surveillance System was signed on 14th October in Tripoli, Libya. Eminent guests attended the signing ceremony, including Capt. Hannibal Mouamar Gaddafi, Dr Mohammed Sweidan, the Libyan Minister of Transportation, representatives from the French, Spanish, Portuguese and Maltese embassies and high-ranking officials from all over Libya. The system will provide the

total coverage of the whole Libyan coast, which is almost 2,000 km, from Tunisia to Egypt as well as cover areas of responsibility of the 15 main ports in Libya.

The project includes a combination of 15 Local VTS incorporated under management of two National Control Centres in Tripoli and Benghazi, which perform vessel traffic and coastal surveillance services. In addition, 8 remote sites will also form part of this solution. Newly released Transas Navi-Harbour 4.3 software, being at the heart of the project, will ensure continuous surveillance of the territorial waters, safety of navigation, reduction of illegal immigration and protection of the marine environment. Significant qualitative improvements in Libyan ports' operations, service and traffic management are on their way. This sophisticated infrastructure will reinforce the implementation of port operations management with an aim to be in full compliance with Part B of the ISPS Code. Transas is recognized as an experienced and reliable partner with a proven track record in delivering monitoring, surveillance and vessel traffic management systems, which live up to the expectations of the most demanding customers. The Libyan VTMS project represents a significant success for Transas Marine, and the end result will be one of the most modern and powerful coastal surveillance systems installed. That is why we are confident to say that Libya will get one of the most modern VTS solutions in the world. The plan will then be to develop further coverage as an extension to this system, by adding additional sites in the future. "it is an honour for Transas to have been awarded such a prestigious contract and our partnership with the PMTA will develop over many years to come", Christopher Loizou, Managing Director of Transas Mediterranean.

Seacor Grant sold to Norwegian KS

Fearnley Offshore Supply reports that the AHTS **Seacor Grant**, built in 2008/10,800 bhp, DP2, Fi-Fi 1, has been sold to a Norwegian Limited Partnership (KS) for approximately US\$36 million.

Seacor will maintain an interest in the vessel and remain managers of the vessel. The vessel will continue its long term charter to Sonangol, Angola. **Source : Offshore Shipping Online**



The **BEATRIX** seen in IJmuiden – **Photo : Erwin Willemse ©**



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The Dutch Chemical tanker **Venezia D.** at anchor in Moa Bay, Cuba, awaiting berth

Photo : Capt Erik Grootjans – Master Miro D ©

Tuapse CSP handles 13.9m tons, last year's cargo volume

Freight flows through JSC Tuapse Commercial Sea Port in January-September, 2010 totaled 13.9 million tons, which corresponds to the last year's results, the stevedore company's press service reported. However, nine-month imports volume grew more than 2 times, to 378,000 tons thanks to bulk cargo, in particular, handling of raw sugar increased from 180,000 to 373,000 tons.

In the reporting period, there was a decline trend in export cargo segment - from 13,6m to 13,5m tons, largely oil cargo – to 10,5m tons (-1%). Transshipment of coal rose by 11% to 2,5m tons. Grain volume surged 35%, to 525,000 tons due the Tuapse Grain Terminal, this early February. From January to September the stevedore handled 593 vessels (of which 282 at oil-loading area, 311 - at the dry cargo area) and 51,900 rail cars. Tuapse Sea Commercial Port JSC (TCSP OJSC) is the major operator of one of the largest Russian ports - the sea port of Tuapse. The main

stockholders of JSC TCSP are Universal Cargo Logistics Holding that owns a 65.06-percent stake and Russ. Govt. holding 25% of shares through the Federal Agency for Federal Property Management. **Source : PortNews**

Chennai to compete with new “mega terminal”

The Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure (CCI) has approved the development of a “mega container terminal” at Chennai Port under a Public Private Partnership (PPP). The terminal will have a concession period of 30 years at an estimated cost of INR36.860 billion (US\$332.5 million). The project is expected to boost exports and imports in the region with savings in freight and ship cost to the shippers, according to the Press Information Bureau of India..

Considering the steady growth in the container volumes at Chennai Port, the container throughput demand is expected to outstrip the available capacity of 2.0 million TEU per annum by 2017-18. The capacity of the proposed terminal would be 4.0 million TEU per annum. In addition to handling the projected volume of container traffic, the terminal will also be able to handle ultra large container vessels, which are expected to dominate the container trade.

The port wants to compete with other international ports and attract deep drafted vessels to the Chennai Port thereby reducing the need for transshipment at the ports of Singapore and Colombo, Sri Lanka. The construction of the project is expected to be completed within seven years from the date of award of concession. **Source: Baird Maritime.**



The **SO 117 JOHANNA MARIA** seen moored in IJmuiden – **Photo : Erwin Willemse ©**

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Baltic Excellent on charter to UPM

The Mariehamn-based shipping company Birka Cargo Ab Ltd and the Finnish forest industry UPM-Kymmene have agreed on a long term charter for the ro-ro vessel **Baltic Excellent**. The vessel is on a charter with the Swedish forest industry Holmen Paper until the end of 2011. Due to a logistical restructuring at Holmen, the vessel will enter UPM-

Kymmene Seaways' traffic already at the beginning of next year of the year. From 2012, the Baltic Excellent will be chartered directly from Birka Cargo by UPM. The vessel sails under the Finnish flag and will mainly be employed with shipments of forest products from Finland to the Continent **Source : ShipGaz**



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Tanzanian concern over loss of maritime personnel

The number of qualified Tanzanian maritime personnel is declining fast, it was revealed in Dar es Salaam recently.

According to All Africa news journal, the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) Director, Ephraim Mgawe, said at present there are 32 ship's masters and 19 marine engineers in Tanzania. He said most of the experts in the field are at advanced age. "This situation is not encouraging at all. We need to find a solution to the problem as soon as possible," Mgawe said.

"It takes about ten years to train a marine officer or an engineer. We must act swiftly." Mgawe was speaking at the World Maritime Day held at Harbour's Club in the city. The chief guest, the Minister for Infrastructure Developments, Dr Shukuru Kawambwa, who failed to attend due to election campaigns was represented by the ministry's Deputy Director of Marine Transport, Saad Fungafunga.

Fungafunga acknowledged that the situation needed immediate intervention, but pointed out that funds to that effect would soon be available. "The cost of training these specialists is high. We need a special fund to train such professionals as is the case with pilots," he said.

Ship's master Captain Juma Saire, who has a masters degree in marine studies, said grooming of the marine experts was being ignored due to lack of a state-owned shipping company where the training and field practice could be carried out.

"There is no point of going to school while relying on a single employer – TPA (Tanzania Ports Authority)," he said. "This discourages potential sailors to come aboard." This was echoed by the Tanzania Seamen's Union (TASU) Chairman Kinemo Momboka who pleaded with the stakeholders to find jobs for graduates of Dar es Salaam Maritime Institute. – **source : Waves**

AHT Mubarak Challenger for FSO Maintenance contract



MUBARAK MARINE recently delivered the 2010 built 5000BHP AHT **Mubarak Challenger** for FSO maintenance and terminal support. Outfitted with fifi 1 system, 200t pull DD AHT winch, tow pin, shark jaw, and Rolls Royce Aquamaster propellers (driven by Rolls Royce Bergen Engines) 2 x 750HP each bow thrusters, 16 ton lift capacity deck crane and bow towing winch; built by sister company Dubai Shipbuilding and Engineering.

New Ore Carrier Ore Amazonas Delivered

On October 13, **Ore Amazonas**, a new 300,000 DWT class ore carrier built by Nantong COSCO KHI Engineering Co. Ltd. (NACKS), was delivered to NYK. This vessel is the third 300,000 DWT class ore carrier for NYK. At the naming and delivery ceremony, Micheal Zhu, director of sales, iron ore at Vale, Gurinder Singh, shipping director at Vale, and Hidenori Hono, representative director and senior managing corporate officer at NYK joined a number of others in attendance to celebrate the vessel's maiden voyage. **Ore Amazonas** is the first 300,000 DWT class ore carriers for Vale and will be chartered exclusively to Vale over the next 20 years to transport 1.3 million tons of iron ore annually from Brazil. NYK continues to its efforts to provide stable transportation of natural resources. **Source: NYK Line**

Grimaldi returns to West Africa

Italy's Grimaldi is returning to the Mediterranean/West Africa trade after an absence of 11 years with a new ro-ro service starting at the end of October. The new Mediterranean Express route will begin with the sailing of the 20,881gt, 1978-built **Thebeland** on 26 October. It will directly link the ports of Salerno, Genoa, Marseilles and Valencia with Dakar, Lome, Lagos and Cotonou. Sailings will be offered every 18 days. Grimaldi, which operates a fleet of 25 ro-ro multipurpose vessels, had serviced such routes from the middle 1970s until 1999. The new service will be augmented in early 2011 with the replacement of **Thebeland** by the 42,000gt **Repubblica di Roma** and the addition of a space sharing accord for the 17,000gt **Medcoa Lome**, operated by French shipping company Navitrans. The new service is aimed at rolling cargo, containers and project cargo of up to 150 tonnes per freight unit.

Source: Fairplay



The Passenger vessel **MARCO POLO** and car carrier **TORONTO** sharing Tilbury landing stage.

Photo : John Morgan ©

Brightoil Petroleum takes delivery of two 115,000 DWT ocean-going oil tankers

Brightoil Petroleum (Holdings) Limited, one of the largest service providers of marine bunkering in China, announced that the Group has today taken delivery of two ocean-going oil tankers purchased in August 2010 for the consideration of US\$57.5million each (equivalent to approximately HK\$448.5million), at a total consideration of US\$115 million (equivalent to approximately HK\$897 million). Each of the double-hulled Aframax oil tankers, with a capacity of 115,000 DWT, has an overall length of 250 meters, breadth of 44 meters and moulded depth of 21.35 meters. Built by Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction in Korea in January and March 2009, each tanker is coupled with 3 sets of cargo pumps, each of which having a discharge rate up to 3,000 m³/hr and hence totaling a maximum discharge rate of 9,000 m³/hr. Both vessels were built to Common Structural Rules (CSR), the latest standard for newly-built tankers, featuring increased strength requirements and durability of hull structures requirements, making the vessels more environmental friendly, safer and with longer lifespan.

The oil tankers will mainly be used for transporting fuel oil or crude oil internationally. From November 2009 to August 2010, the Group purchased 9 ocean-going oil tankers with sizes ranging from 107,500 DWT to 318,000 DWT for the purpose of supporting its marine bunkering and petroleum products trading businesses. The Group intends to streamline the procurement process for its core marine bunkering business worldwide in order to maximize the economy of scale. Also, the Group plans to charter out any spare capacity of the oil tankers to generate additional revenue. Dr. Sit Kwong Lam, Chairman and CEO of the Group, said, "With two 115,000 DWT ocean-going oil tankers in place, it will further enhance the oil transportation capability of Brightoil. It is also represent a step forward to build our high quality marine transportation business. This, along with the oil storage facilities and terminal projects in Dalian and Zhoushan, as well as the Tuzi gas exploration and production project, shows that we have progressively started the four businesses we have previously envisioned. The Group strives to become one of the leading global energy conglomerates in the world." **Source: Brightoil Petroleum**



The **BORCOS FIRDAUS 4** seen in Miri – Photo : Capt. Jelle de Vries ©

Containership Co. to Expand China-LA Service

The Containership Co. next month will expand its Great Dragon service from China to Los Angeles by adding a call at the Port of Qingdao in northern China. The service will now call in Qingdao, Ningbo and Taicang in China and at the TraPac terminal in Los Angeles. Cargo interests that support TCC's no-frills, port-to-port service have asked the carrier to expand the Great Dragon service to Qingdao, said Franck Kayser, chief operating officer. "With a fast 14-day transit time, combined with a schedule reliability of 96 percent, we are now able to provide such a service," he said. The first sailing from Qingdao is scheduled for Nov. 15 with the 2,900-TEU Shenzhen Dragon. TCC launched the trans-Pacific service on April 17 with the business plan being to appeal to shippers that want a reliable, port-to-port service. "Our customers simply want equipment to be available, and then have it moved reliably from A to B. This is exactly what we are providing them from Taicang, Ningbo, Qingdao and Los Angeles," Kayser said. **Source: Journal of Commerce Online**

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'SA has shortage of 34000 seafarers'

South Africa has a shortage of 34000 seafarers who were needed to handle more than 4 million tons of cargo, the transport minister said on Saturday night. "South Africa requires at least 36000 seafarers based on the over 4 million tons of cargo that we currently handle but we currently stand at 1800 seafarers, said Sibusiso Ndebele.

He was speaking at the launch of the South African maritime safety authority's centre for seafarers and fishing at Durban's Albert Luthuli ICC. The centre will provide assistance regarding welfare, health, training and safety of seafarers and fishermen. The centre will also add impetus in South Africa's endeavour to be more competitive in the maritime industry.

It will also provide dignity to people involved in fishing. "Year in and year out, this sector has been losing lives through vessels capsizing, vessels colliding, largely due to poor training and overworked watch-keepers," Ndebele said. He announced that the SA Agulhas, which will soon reach the end of its life span, will be used to train maritime graduates. The vessel was used to conduct expeditions in the Antarctica and other islands. Ndebele said the process of buying the vessel would start soon.

"The process [of buying the vessel] is anticipated to be finalised in 2012 when the department of environmental affairs takes ownership of a new vessel which is under construction." **Source : Sapa**

Now, take a 'naturist holiday' with 7-night naked cruise

A London-based tour operator has come up with a new idea to holiday - a seven-night naked cruise for 22 bold holidaymakers. eWaterways, which specializes in river and coastal cruises, will run its first cruise for naturists in August 2011, exploring the Croatian coastline.

Highlights on the 500 pounds (807dollars) holiday include a visit to Rab, often described by travel agents as "the island of love", and a trip to Zadar - home to the famous Zadar Sea Organ.

eWaterways claims to be the first company to offer nudist cruising in the Adriatic. "Naturist holidays are popular and Croatia has a lot of nudist beaches - so it's a great match," the Sydney Morning Herald quoted a spokeswoman as saying.

"Passengers will get undressed for swimming and sunbathing, but will be clothed for dinner," she added. The company said it expects the cruise to appeal to a variety of European nationalities - but particularly Germans, as they are "really into naturism". The "intimate" ship features a bar, a spacious sun deck and a small restaurant, which will be serving traditional Croatian cuisine. **Source : Newstrack India**

Cruising along the Rajang

BORNEO, the world's third largest island, remains a mysterious place on earth and constantly draw adventurers from around the globe. One of the best ways to explore Borneo, particularly Sarawak, is by cruising along the Rajang river, the nation's longest at more than 770km.

The Rajang, which is also the major river transport route in the state's central region, has been playing host to a luxury 30-cabin colonial-style steamer, the **RV Orient Pandaw**, since July 1, 2009.

In a short span of 14 months, more than 1,400 passengers from different parts of the world have boarded the ship to experience the nine day-eight night 'Into The Heart of Borneo' cruise. It starts from Sibu which is located at the



confluence of the Rajang and one of its main tributaries, the Igan. There are three departures a month - on the first, 10th and 20th.

StarMetro was recently invited by ship owner Pandaw Cruises Management Pte Ltd to experience the increasingly popular cruise. "The Rajang is about nature and culture and tourists are fascinated by the unique and colourful cultures of the tribal people living along its banks," Pandaw chief executive officer Yim Choong Hing explained.

Yim added that Sarawak was one of the parts of the world which remained largely untouched by tourists. "Most know Sarawak because of its connection to Borneo and many of them remember Sarawak for its headhunting past," the

Kedah-born American pointed out.

He said the **RV Orient Pandaw** was specially designed to provide comfort for tourists while they experience an exciting and memorable cruise. Yim said money was not an obstacle to his passengers as the majority were successful professionals who were now pensioners. "Our priority is on how to enhance our services so as to allow the passengers to travel in a luxurious manner while still enjoying the nature and culture." Asked why he left the hotel industry to join Pandaw Cruise, he said he wanted to look for something different after serving with two international hotel chains as CEO for nearly 30 years.

"I am also re-living a second childhood - going for camping, jungle trekking and travelling up and down the river by boat as I used to do in Kedah," Yim enthused, adding that he was happy to move away from a very formal and hectic corporate life to a corporate life that gives him freedom to travel to uncharted areas not meant for ordinary tourists.



Sibu is the largest city along the Rajang River approx 70 km upstream – **Photo : Piet Sinke ©**

"I am a working bachelor with my wife and daughter still living in the United States," he quipped. Contrary to popular perception, the Rajang still had a lot of tourism potential for the more adventurous foreign tourists, he said, adding that his company was constantly trying to upgrade and enhance the quality of the services to attract more tourists to Sarawak.

He also attributed the success of the Rajang cruise to the hardworking crew who at most times multi-task. Rosa Minggu, the only female crew member, is a full-time administrative officer but she helps out in the kitchen as well as serving the passengers.

"I love this job. I enjoy meeting and helping the passengers," Rosa said proudly. The company recently sent her to Vietnam for a 10-day training course on a sister ship and while there she managed to convince 17 passengers she met on the Pandaw Mekong cruise to come over to experience the one here this year. Retired maths and science teacher Nancy White from Colorado said she came here looking for a completely new travel experience. "Our group of 19 tourists booked the cruise through travel agents several months ago. Although we have been to many other parts of Asia, Sarawak certainly is a very unique and beautiful country." White confessed that prior to placing her booking, she knew nothing about the Rajang and her knowledge of Sarawak and even Borneo was very limited.

"We're however very satisfied and happy with the excellent service and food aboard and also the various short excursions organised for us such as jungle trekking and visiting places of interest while on shore," said White. Janet Lewisham said she didn't expect to see much before coming to Sarawak. "I have read and heard about the forest destruction in Borneo. Although the muddy and yellowish water in the river was a disappointment, it was heartening to know that there are still a lot of trees and there are definitely concerted efforts by the authorities to conserve the forests especially through the establishment of national parks as well as wildlife sanctuary programmes."

Lewisham, who is a travel agent based in Auckland specialising in outbound tours to Australia, the Pacific Islands, the Mediterranean and the US, added that she would strongly recommended the 'Into The Heart Of Borneo Cruise' to friends and clients upon returning to New Zealand. **Source : The Star**

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The **BANGKOK EXPRESS** seen assisted by the **BUGSIER 5** seen in Hamburg
Photo : Bram Plokker ©

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