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Number 042 * COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS *** Friday 11-02-2011**

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Heerema's **Hermod** busy with pre-heavy lift check on SB crane at Bombay High North Field with tug **Retriever** seen moored alongside.

Photo : Capt. Jan Berghuis – Master Husky ©

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STENA TRANSPORTER VISITED CAPE TOWN



Above seen the **STENA TRANSPORTER** enroute from Korea to Hoek van Holland arriving in Cape Town for bunkers

Photo : Aad Noorland ©

(see also photo's below)

Foreign shipping companies hiring South-East Asians

Sooraj Thomas was always fascinated by the sea. Nine months ago, he graduated as a cadet in the merchant navy from a renowned private institute in Chennai. Like many of his seniors, he was confident of landing a job on campus. But Thomas is yet to find a job.

Foreign shipping companies are hiring work-hungry Filipinos and Ukrainians for cheaper salaries, ending a dream run for Indians in a profession once known for its fancy salaries and the rush of adrenaline. "I put in all my effort to be a cadet in the four-year course, but companies are not recruiting us. There is a flood of cadets in the market," says Thomas.

The shipping industry may have emerged from the two-year downturn, but Indian seafarers are finding it increasingly difficult to get a job in the face of increasing competition from South East Asian cadets. Besides, the rapid strides made by Chinese ship-building companies in the global market have led to more South East Asians being employed. For hundreds of youngsters who aim to make quick money in the profession, this is a let-down. The global supply of seafarers from India has grown only by 22.8% in the past five years while South Asian countries such as Philippines and China saw a 41.6% growth.



Students at the [AMET University](#) in Chennai - Photo : [Piet Sinke](#) ©

"There is a demand-supply mismatch in the sector. Till a few years ago, Indian seafarers were considered the best in the business," says Babu CLT, a chief engineer with a domestic shipping company. Indian seafarers were renowned globally for their skill (including their comfort with English), knowledge, aptitude and professionalism. "Ship owners needed a crew that was analytical, expressive, innovative and submissive, which is why they took a fancy to Indians," says Subrat Mukherjee, GM, manning personnel at ship management company Orient Express. But today, crew from developing countries like Ukraine, the Philippines, Poland, Indonesia and China have captured the market by accepting salaries that are a quarter of what Indian engineers get paid, says Madan Kochhar, president, i-maritime Consultancy.

The Philippines, for instance, has always been a seafarers' nation. "They are currently the best in terms of crew and in sea faring," says Mukherjee. Global players are recruiting Filipinos because they are hungry for work and efficient, he adds. Competition from the Philippines can be traced back to the 2008 recession. During the period, many American and Dutch shipping companies, which were hiring Indian seafarers, were on the verge of bankruptcy, and South Asian countries such as Korea, China and Japan emerged as the front-runners, acquiring ships world-wide. In January 2010, China overtook the Republic of Korea as world's largest shipbuilding nation in new orders, according to the London-based shipping service provider Clarkson.

India's ship-building industry accounts for just 1% of the global market. "Filipinos may not be skilled as Indians, but the recession saw the entry of a large number of ship owners, mainly the Chinese and the Koreans. There is also an emotional connect that these countries have with the Philippines," says Mukherjee. While some Indian companies such as Essar and Varun Shipping did step in, trying to buy ships during the downturn, other South Asian economies had a clear edge in this area, leading to an increase in recruitment of Filipinos.

One of the reasons for the demand-supply mismatch among Indian cadets is that not enough attention is being given to quality training and job security.

The maritime education sector in India was opened up to the private sector in the mid-1990s to meet the demand shortage. There are 126 maritime institutes in India, with an average of 200 students each. The proliferation of institutes has raised questions on the quality of candidates churned out every year. Maritime colleges have more than tripled in the past decade, releasing a large number of graduates into the job market. "Institutes are churning out engineers in just one year. If the government doesn't introduce a policy for fixed minimal cadet jobs a year, institutes will add no value," says a director at Varun Shipping who does not wish to be named.

The government needs to increase the number of berths available for cadets, says Mukherjee, adding that a few years ago, ships were run by cadets to give them hands-on experience. "If we don't nurture them now, the demand will be hugely unfulfilled in the long run," he says. Technology has played its part in edging out manpower from ships. A container that would earlier require 10 cadets can now make do with just two. Very often, a cadet is sacrificed to retain senior personnel on the ship, such as a chief officer, who is paid extra to look into the job done by a cadet.

While a chief engineer or chief officer typically earn \$11,000 a month (Rs 5,00,000), a cadet earns just over \$200 a month (Rs 10,000), which goes towards the senior officer's pay hike once a cadet's job is axed. "By doing so, owners are able to reduce their associated costs and compensate for high fuel costs," says a second officer at a foreign shipping company. But till the day the industry strikes a balance, dreams of youngsters like Sooraj Thomas, who are passionate about sea faring, will remain unfulfilled. **Source : The Economic Times**



The **Kota Nelayan** seen approaching TICTS in Dar es Salaam. Vessel sails in direct East Coast of Africa service to Far East. – **Photo : Anton Klaasen ©**

Improved market conditions to help ship acquisitions

With shipping bearing little to no impact from the recent turmoil in Egypt and the Baltic Dry Index (BDI) finally picking up some steam on improved market conditions, shipbrokers are expecting more ship acquisition deals to come through.

Those deals were supposed to have been finalized earlier, but owners were on hold in order to assess the latest market conditions. According to a report from Golden Destiny, secondhand vessel prices began to show signs of softness, as a result of the freight rates' tumble, which saw the industry's benchmark fall to 1,043 points, or by 41% since November of 2010, while spot rates for capesize bulkers retreated by an impressive 283% since the end of the previous year. Still, despite the fact that the BDI is finally showing signs of life, ending yesterday's session up by

1.82% to 1,064 points, as a result of the strong rebound of the Panamax segment (up by 4.95%), maybe it's time for most owners to consider selling their older vessels for scrap. At the moment, demolition prices are still standing at remarkably high prices of around \$500/ldt, with Golden Destiny wondering whether the rally of scrap prices will continue and approach the levels of 2008, when scrap buyers were paying more than \$600/ldt for dry and \$700/ldt for wet cargo.

According to the Piraeus-based shipbroker, "in the secondhand market, 28 vessels were reported to have changed hands this past week equalling a total amount of money invested in the region of \$446 million, with 4 transactions reported for an undisclosed price. In terms of reported number of transactions, the S&P activity shows robust movement posting 40% positive w-o-w change with bulk carriers attracting most of the buying interest despite the continuous fall of BDI and Chinese festivities. The total invested capital in the bulk carrier sector is around US\$ 119 million with modern and vintage tonnage of all sizes being on the spotlight, representing a 40% share of the total invested capital in the secondhand market. In the demolition market, 12 vessels reported to have been headed to the scrap yards of total deadweight around 579 million of tons with China trying to compete the Indian subcontinent paying attractive prices XS\$490/ldt, while Bangladesh is still out of the game and Pakistan has been left behind in terms of volume of transactions. The demolition activity is standing at similar levels of previous week's activity with bulk carrier grasping the lion share. At a similar week in 2010, the demolition activity was around 40% lower with Bangladesh being the leader paying \$360/ldt for dry and \$400/ldt for wet cargo. The Greek presence has been strong this week in the container segment as 6 of the 7 vessels reported on order have been purchased by Greek owners, equalling a total invested capital around US\$ 162,000,000. It seems that Greek owners may have lost their confidence in the bulk carrier sector by waiting a significant correction in asset values, but their position is still bullish for containers" said Golden Destiny. As far as newbuilding orders are concerned, it was a more controlled week for new orders with offshore sector attracting once more a lot of invested capital and new orders in the container post panamax segment of 8,800 TEU from two European owners, Swiss liner operator Mediterranean Shipping and Hellenic owner Costamare. The vessels are going to be built to a new very wide beam design and are the largest container ships ever to have been ordered at Sungdong. The optimistic fundamentals in the container sector along with indications suggesting that sector's orderbook has shrank significantly from 2009-2010 period, seem that support strategic movements by major players for newbuilt units in the postpanamax segment. In the bulk carrier sector, only two units reported on order in the supramax segment, the lowest activity recorded since the beginning of the year. The stalled of newbuilding activity in the bulk carrier sector raises concerns for February as the continuous fall of the BDI since November 2010 may have finally influenced the investment plans of foreign and Hellenic owners. There rumours circulating in the market that Densan Denizcilik of Turkey has added five supramaxes of 58,000 dwt in its orderbook, but only two of them are fresh orders for construction in Yangzhou Dayang /China for USD \$31 million each. The week ended with 18 orders reported on order equalling a total deadweight of around 1million of tons, posting a 70% drop from previous week's activity while in the bulk carrier sector the newbuilding activity has fallen by 93%. The Hellenic presence has been noticed only in the crude carrier sector with two suezmax units reported equalling a total invested capital around \$100 mil each. At a similar week in 2010, the newbuilding activity was standing at significant lower levels with only two units reported on order. **Source : Nikos Roussanoglou, Hellenic Shipping News Worldwide**



The 294 mtr **Boston** outbound from Melbourne 9-2-2011 off Sorrento in Port Phillip Bay

Photo : Andrew Mackinnon - www.aquamanships.com ©

Hijacked oil tanker headed towards Somalia

Pirates using guns and rocket propelled grenades hijacked an Italian oil tanker in the Indian Ocean on Tuesday, Italian Navy and European Union officials said, adding the medium-sized ship was heading toward Somalia.

"It is heading west, in the direction of Somalia," Commander Paddy O'Kennedy, spokesman for the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) told Reuters. The attack on the [Savina Caylyn](#) took place some 500 miles off the coast of India and some 800 miles off Somalia, an Italian Navy spokesman said earlier, adding that no-one among the crew of 17 Indians and five Italians was reported hurt. An Italian navy frigate was heading to the scene but was some 600 miles away. "This is what we expected at this stage," O'Kennedy said of the ship heading toward Somalia. The Aframax-type tanker can carry a maximum of just over 700,000 barrels of oil with a maximum cargo value estimated at \$63 million. The largest crude tankers carry maximum cargoes of between 2 to 3 million barrels of oil. In the past Somali pirates have hijacked ships and held their cargo and crew for ransom. O'Kennedy added that the anti-piracy task force was monitoring the movement of the ship but was no longer in direct contact with the vessel. "The last communication was when the pirates were on board and then we lost all contact," he said. EUNAVFOR said the vessel was boarded early on Tuesday morning after a sustained attack by one skiff with five pirates firing small arms and four rocket propelled grenades. The ship is carrying a load of crude for the Arcadia commodities trading company. It was sailing from the Bashayer Oil Terminal in Sudan and was destined for Pasir Gudang port in Malaysia, according to Reuters Freight Views. **Source: Reuters**

Filipino seaman slain by Somali pirate

Somali pirates have shot and killed a Filipino seaman held captive on a cargo ship near the Indian Ocean country of Seychelles, the Department of Labor reported on Tuesday.

Labor Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz, in a statement, said the pirates shot and killed Farolito Vallega, 48, on January 26 on board the MV Beluga Navigation, a German-owned ship registered in Antigua and Barbuda. The information was belatedly relayed to the Department of Labor and Employment by the Beluga Nomination's local manning agency, Marlow Navigation Philippines, Inc. Baldoz, quoting a preliminary report from Marlow, said Vallega was shot dead by the pirates apparently in a "fit of anger" after an element of the Combined Maritime Forces, the international anti-piracy contingent patrolling the waters of the Gulf of Aden, tried to free the Beluga Nomination and rescue its crew. The Beluga Nomination was hijacked by Somali pirates off the coast of Seychelles on January 22. The vessel has a 12-member crew, seven of them Filipinos, the rest Polish, Russian and Ukrainian. Vallega served as a bosun or boatswain, which is a non-licensed member of the deck department of a merchant ship. Of the seven Filipino seafarers, Ferdinand Aquino, 46, a cook, escaped by jumping overboard and was eventually rescued. Another seaman, Elviro Salazar, 26, a wiper, was reported missing. The four other Filipinos remain captives of the pirates. Baldoz said that according to Marlow, the captive seamen's employers continue to negotiate for the release of all hostages and to undertake search and retrieval operation for the missing Salazar and the body of Vallega. Baldoz, in a statement, condemned the killing. "We express outrage over this senseless disregard for human life and we condemn in the strongest possible terms the atrocity of the Somali pirates. We are also saddened by this tragic incident, and deeply condole with the family and relatives of the deceased Filipino seaman," she said. Baldoz added the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration was extending all possible assistance and monetary benefits to Vallega's family. She said she has also directed the OWWA to provide the necessary package of assistance to Aquino and his family, to the family of Salazar. The manning agency was also working on the provision of the death benefits of Vallega and the continued allotment of the wages for the rest of the Filipino seamen. Baldoz has discussed with its tripartite partners a plan of action containing measures on how to better safeguard and protect Filipino seafarers on board international vessels traversing the pirates-infested waters of the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. In a meeting last Saturday, officials of the DoLE, OWWA, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Maritime Training Council, the Joint Manning Group and the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines called for firmer, decisive international action against sea piracy. The meeting reviewed and assessed current anti-piracy procedures and measures to come up with updated action plan on how to provide better protection to Filipino seafarers. Among the recommendations were for the Department of Foreign Affairs to "strongly urge" the United Nations to review the existing mandate of the multinational forces in the Indian Ocean and empower such forces to take a more proactive role to combat piracy, and to encourage governments, whose flag the pirated ships are flying, to prosecute pirates if and when apprehended by the naval forces. **Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer**

FIRST VIEWS OF THE NEW STENA TRANSPORTER



resulted is a good series of photos, the **STENA TRANSPORTER** is at present under command of **Capt. Peter van der Wardt** (as seen above) , right is seen the navigation console in the wheelhouse, and below the passenger lounge and the car deck.

Photo's : Ian Shiffman ©

As mentioned above the newbuilding **STENA TRANSPORTER** made a bunker stop in Cape Town whilst enroute from the builders in Korea to Hoek van Holland, due to good communication with the vessel last week , the photographers of the newscippings in Cape Town were well informed about the ETA of the new ferry, which

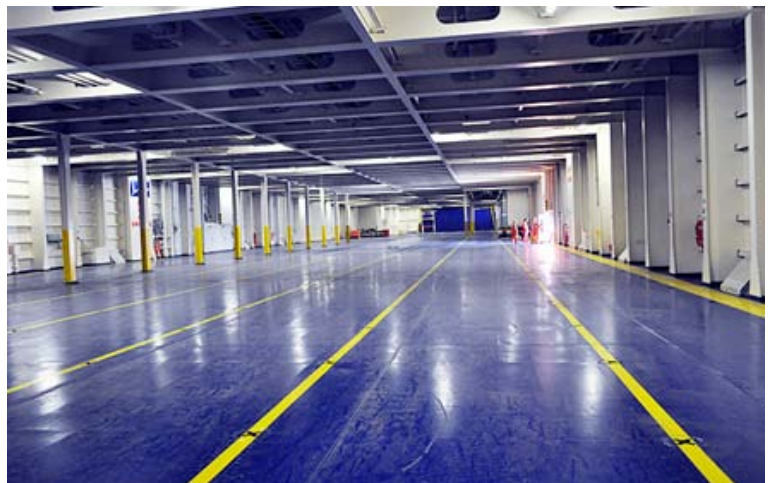




Photo : Glenn Kasner ©



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German shipping firm deploys private anti-piracy guards

A German shipping company is deploying private security guards aboard some of its ships off the Somali coast and rerouting other vessels after a deadly hijacking, its chief executive said.

"Private security personnel will be contracted in order to improve the protection of our seafaring colleagues," Niels Stolberg, president and CEO of Beluga Shipping, told AFP. In the meantime "some vessels have been rerouted around the Cape of Good Hope" in a bid to avoid the most dangerous waters around the Horn of Africa, Stolberg added in a statement. The measures follow the January 22 hijacking of the Antigua and Barbuda-flagged "**Beluga Nomination**" in the Indian Ocean, just north of the Equator and some 800 nautical miles north of the Seychelles. It was the third Beluga ship to be hijacked by Somali pirates. The 12 Polish, Filipino, Russian and Ukrainian sailors sent out distress messages and managed to evade capture for two-and-a-half days by hiding behind heavy steel plates in a purpose-built "panic room".

The pirates eventually found the room and forced their way in, capturing the crew, according to the shipping company, which criticised the fact that anti-piracy naval vessels arrived too late. Two anti-piracy patrol vessels from Denmark

and the Seychelles later shadowed the captured ship. The Seychelles ship then opened fire, setting the **Beluga Nomination's** engine room ablaze, killing one pirate. In retaliation, the pirates killed one member of the crew, according to the company. Two other members of the crew then managed to escape aboard a lifeboat while two more are missing, feared dead, the Bremen-based company said. The seven remaining crew members, including the Polish skipper, have since arrived off the Somali coast and the company is seeking to obtain their release. **Source: AFP**

If Suez shuts, it's back to fast steaming round the Cape

WHILE rating the likelihood "improbable", a shutdown of the Suez Canal by a radical Egyptian regime would require 100 more containerships to maintain existing Asia-Europe weekly services via the Cape of Good Hope, according to Alphaliner. "The immediate impact of a Suez Canal closure would be a dramatic shortage of container tonnage as at least two additional ships per string would be required to mount a weekly service on Far East to the North Atlantic via the Cape," said Alphaliner, laying low current fears of overcapacity.



The **MAREN MAERSK** seen passing the Suez canal – **Photo : Piero Corona ©**

A Suez closure would bring higher retail prices, an end to slow steaming as speeds increase to cover the extra distance, said the Paris-based shipping consultants. A Singapore-to-Rotterdam via the Cape route covers 11,800 nautical miles and takes seven extra days at 20 knots with a much higher bunker bill, versus economically slow steaming 8,300 nautical miles via Suez between the same port pair.

"This would have a severe impact on the global trade, especially for cargo moving between Asia and Europe. The cost of deploying the additional ships as well as the higher fuel expenses would be passed on to shippers," said Alphaliner.

The weekly newsletter also said there would be 56 services affected, most of them weekly and 46 of them running between the Far East and Europe, or between seven to eight box ships transiting Suez every week.

When the canal was closed for eight years after 1967 Six-Day War, the biggest containerships were 2,800 TEU and the first to start Europe-East Asia box services via the Cape on the backhaul, calling for cargo at Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan. Headhaul, they went to Europe via Panama without American port calls.

"Such a pattern is unthinkable today," said Alphaliner. "Now that Asian exports are focussed on China and south east Asia, this option is no longer competitive, and would furthermore add to the burden of the busy Panama Canal, not to mention the many ships currently deployed on the Suez route that are far too big for the Panama locks." **Source : Schednet**



The **NILEDUTCH SHANGHAI** seen in Cape Town – Photo : Ian Shiffman ©

Februari-lezing 2011 van de “Nederlandse Kaap Hoorn-vaarders”

De lezing dit jaar vindt plaats op **12 februari** a.s. in het evenementen-complex van de Koninklijke Marine, Kattenburgerstraat 7 in Amsterdam (naast het Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum). Voor programma en aanmelden, zie website (evenementen) van de Nederlandse Kaap Hoorn-vaarders: www.kaaphoornvaarders.nl

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Asia tanker rates seen firming on China demand

Rising bunker prices also support rates as shipowners look to cover extra costs

Rates for crude tankers on key Asian freight routes are expected to increase this week on strong Chinese demand and rising bunker prices, shipbrokers said yesterday. For products, rates are likely to remain under pressure due to stagnant demand and ample tonnage. The world's benchmark very large crude carrier (VLCC) export route from the

Middle East Gulf to Japan rose to W53.59 or US\$15,198 a day on Monday, from W45.90 or US\$7,296 a day last week, on strong demand from China and India.

'The market is very busy as many eastern charterers pile into the market after the holidays,' said broker firm ICAP. 'Owner ideas are now firmer as they become a little more picky on which cargoes to decide to offer.'

China booked three VLCCs from the Middle East and one from West Africa on Monday, while India chartered two from the Middle East, shipbrokers said. Baltic Exchange rates for 260,000-tonne crude tankers from West Africa to China surged to a 2011 high of W52.47 on Monday from W49.77 last week.

'Little change is expected in the West Africa market in the near term as a steady stream of ballasts continue to offer sufficient supply,' said broker firm Charles R. Weber. A total of 78 VLCCs have been booked to Asia from the Middle East for February, one more than in January during the same period, according to Meiwa International.

Total eastbound fixtures in January totalled 95 VLCCs, the highest since July 2010.

Traders were continuing to closely monitor the unrest in Egypt, which has slowed port operations for some container ships. Tankers, however, have been travelling through the Suez Canal, the main passageway for Europe's crude oil and imported goods, as usual with no reports of delays or cancellations.

Rates for 80,000-tonne Aframax tankers from South-east Asia to East Coast Australia rebounded to a near one-month high of W88.75 from W84.17 last week. Rising bunker prices have also supported freight rates as shipowners look to cover the additional operating costs.

The Asian fuel oil market has surged to year-high levels over the past month due to tightening supplies. For products, medium-range tankers travelling from Singapore to Japan, rates tumbled to a one-month low of W138.14 from W140.57 last week.

'The anticipated pre- Chinese New Year rush did not occur, and it is unlikely this week's activity will be much different than at present,' said broker firm BRS. Baltic Exchange rates for South Korea to North America's West Coast eased to a two-month low of US\$28.02 a tonne from US\$28.29 last week. Rates for clean tankers travelling from South Korea to Singapore fell to US\$9.02 a tonne from US\$9.11 last week. **Source : Reuters**



Pirates free ship with 39 Kenyans

A vessel hijacked last year by Somali pirates has been released, sending a sigh of relief among anxious relatives.

Thirty nine Kenyans are among the ship's crew. The vessel was the second to be released in as many weeks "under mysterious circumstances," said East African Seafarers' Assistance Programme coordinator Andrew Mwangura. "The

vessel was released early Wednesday and there has not been any report of a ransom payment. We don't know the conditions under which it was released," he said told the Nation by telephone.

"I am excited by the news. We had started giving up, but we are now relieved," Ms Elizabeth Molly, whose husband is a crew member. The South Korean fishing vessel, **Fv Golden Wave**, was seized on October 9, last year. Its other crew members are two Koreans and two Chinese.

The release marks freedom for the ship's crew, which had been held hostage for four months — with at least four of them having gone through the ordeal for a second time. Ms Mary Kanja's husband Richard Kanja has been a seaman for over 10 years and she recalls the experience she went through when her husband was held two years ago.

"They are tortured. I only hope that they are safe as they travel back," she said, adding that the four months they have been held captive had been "too long to bear." "When I spoke to him a couple of days before they were hijacked, he told me they were okay and would be home soon. But I was shocked to learn later they were hijacked," added the mother of four.

At least three families have more than one relative aboard **Fv Golden Wave**. Besides Ms Kanja, whose two brothers-in-law are on the ship with her husband, Mr Moris Ivetsi and Ms Caroline Vusyeka have a brother and two brothers-in-law on the vessel. According to Mr Mwangura, the vessel was expected at the Mombasa port in about four days. **Fv Golden Wave** was among three vessels hijacked within the Kenyan waters last year. Police have denied this.

However, the government tightened security on the Kenya-Somalia border, with police headquarters sending a helicopter and one light aircraft for surveillance along the coastline. Pirates operating off the Somali coast and the Gulf of Aden have posed the biggest threat ever to world maritime trade by hijacking ships for ransom, prompting the international community to station their navies in the area to thwart frequent attacks.

Despite the navies' presence, the sea bandits have successfully attacked and hijacked vessels. Three weeks ago, the Inter-governmental Standing Committee on Shipping said it would invite Somali leaders to its meetings with a view of finding lasting solutions to the thorny issue. The committee's chairman, Mr Athuman Mfutakamba, said the problem of piracy had become a serious threat to maritime trade in the region and it was time the Somali transitional government was involved in seeking solutions.

"The number of shipping lines calling on the ports within the region has fallen drastically due to piracy and maritime insurance premiums are on the rise. Consumers are being burdened with extra costs arising from the rising freight costs and the problem must be dealt with urgently," he said. **Source : Daily Nation**

NAVAL NEGLIGENCE CAN NOT BE EXCUSED

What is very astonishing in this case of the hijacking of VLCC **IRENE SL** at position Latitude: 21°27N and Longitude: 063°18E on 09.02.2011, is the fact that already on 02.02.2011 at 08h30 UTC in position: 20:16N – 063:36E, i.e. in both cases 225nm ESE of Ras al Hadd, Oman, about eight pirates in two skiffs and armed with RPG and automatic weapons had chased and fired upon a tanker underway.

That is nearly the exact location where the Greek supertanker was taken just five days later.

In the first case on that spot the tanker raised alarm, increased speed and contacted a warship for assistance. The pirates in the two skiffs kept firing with automatic weapons. When the warship arrived at the location the skiffs stopped chasing the tanker and moved away. A helicopter from a warship arrived at the location and circled the tanker. The helicopter contacted the pirates by VHF radio and ordered them to surrender their weapons. The pirates replied that they would kill the Iraqi and Pakistani hostages held on board the mother ship, if the warships attacked the skiffs.

While it must be respected that for humanitarian reasons and to save the life of the hostages the navies didn't go further in that earlier case, it can not be understood that they didn't keep the pirate's launch on a leach and under close observation. How five days later at the almost same location a supertanker can be captured, can only be explained with naval neglect, carelessness and uncoordinated operations.

But naval conglomerates like EU NAVFOR and its Operation Atalanta had even no clue about the hi-jacking of a supertanker from under their noses and where caught flat-footed when the shipowner already had released the first statement. There is presently no communication since the initial radio call from the VLCC **IRENE SL** reporting the attack to another vessel in the area and no information regarding the condition of the crew has transpired, while the huge tanker is commandeered towards Somalia **Source : Ecop Marine / Ecoterra**

Tongan ferry Princess Ashika trial collapses

A manslaughter trial of a New Zealander and three others in Tonga over the deaths of 74 people in the sinking of the ferry **Princess Ashika** collapsed on its second day. The Supreme Court, sitting in Parliament, opened its trial by selecting a jury of seven.

Today was supposed to begin with Crown Prosecutor 'Aminiasi Kefu making an opening statement but instead the court was told that one of the jurors had a criminal conviction. Justice Robert Shuster discharged the rest of the jury and ordered the trial to start again next week.

Among those on trial is former Christchurch businessman John Jonesse who was the chief executive of the government-owned Shipping Corporation of Polynesia (SCP) which operated the ferry at the time of the sinking in 2009.

SCP, Jonesse, Ashika captain Makahokovalu Tuputupu, first mate Semisi Pomale, and the former acting director of Tonga's marine division, Viliami Tu'ipulotu, face a charge of manslaughter by negligence, in relation to the death of 21-year old Vae Fetu'au Taufa whose body was one of only two recovered in the tragedy.

The other was a British national. They were also charged with about 30 offences following the sinking and subsequent inquiry, which found the rusting ferry was unfit to sail. The trial yesterday began with the dropping of 10 technical charges against Tuputupu and SCP, the Matangi Tonga website reported. The six charges remaining against the captain and SCP include one of manslaughter by negligence and five counts for taking an unseaworthy ship to sea.

Source : Stuff.co.nz

NAVY NEWS

GB sells aircraft carrier to Turkey for scrap

Great Britain has sold the **HMS Invincible** to Izmir-based Leyal Ship Recycling for scrap, BBC reports. The is scheduled for delivery to the Turkish scrapyard in April. Earlier, the Turkish company has recycled four decommissioned Royal Navy ships. The aircraft carrier built in late 1970s participated in the Falklands war. Source: bbc.co.uk

Russian shipyard won't build Mistral warships until 2020, Navy source says

Russia in the coming decade will not be engaged in building on its own shipyards amphibious helicopter carrier Mistral, Interfax reports citing a top source in the General Staff of the Russian Navy.

"State program of weapons procurement for the period until 2020, provides for money for the purchase of two French ships of this type. The funding of construction at the Russian shipyards of the helicopter carriers is not planned," the source said. According to the top officer, the contract for the purchase of two Mistral-type helicopter carriers in France is expected to include an option for building two more warships in Russia. "However, construction of the Mistral ships at Russian shipyards is rather a distant prospect, which also requires signing an additional contract ", said the source.

The newspaper Kommersant has previously reported that the representatives of the United Shipbuilding Corporation are not participating in the negotiations on the preparation of the contract with the French DCNS for construction of warships ordered by the Russian Defense Ministry. Rosoboronexport was authorized to negotiate the contract negotiations. As the newspaper reported, the head of the USC's department for military and technical cooperation Vladimir Belukov was recently sacked. Kommersant notes he was the only USC's specialist with experience in foreign trade.

The agreement on the construction of Mistral-class helicopter carrier was signed on Jan, 25, 2011 by Igor Sechin, Russian Vice-Premier, and French Defense Minister Alain Juppe. In late December 2010 Russia and France officially announced that a consortium of the United Shipbuilding Corporation (USC, Russia), DCNS (France) will build two Mistral warships in Saint-Nazaire with option for two more licensed ships – at a Russian shipyard. The tender was announced in October by the Russian Ministry of Defense. French multipurpose amphibious assault ship of Mistral-class is designed for vehicle and personnel transport and for landing operations. She can also serve as a command ship. Mistral ship's length is 199, beam - 32 meters. The ship is capable of transporting and deploying 16 helicopters (8

landing and 8 assault helicopter gunships), 40 tanks and 70 vehicles. Mistral ship can accommodate 160 crew members and over 150 marines. Its armament includes air defense systems, artillery systems and heavy machine guns. The cost of one amphibious assault ship for the Russian Navy may be around 600 million euros. **Source :** PortNews

Turkish ship in Greek waters causes political waves

Navy corvette in Aegean sparks clash in Parliament over foreign policy

A Turkish navy ship approached the coast of the Aegean island of Paros late on Tuesday night after setting sail from a base in Izmir and sailing through Greek waters for no apparent reason, sources at the Greek Defense Ministry said on Wednesday.

The **Bodrum**, a B-class corvette was shadowed by a Hellenic Navy vessel after being spotted on Tuesday night. It is one of several Turkish ships to have entered Greek waters unannounced in recent months. Tuesday's incident sparked a tense exchange in Parliament on Wednesday with opposition politicians accusing the government of failing to pursue a tough enough policy vis-a-vis neighboring Turkey with which Greece has a long history of rivalry. "It is all very well for the government to lodge official complaints and make diplomatic gestures but the country's foreign policy has not just failed to bear fruit, it has aggravated matters or whetted Turkey's appetite in the Aegean," said Constantinos Markopoulos, a spokesman for the main opposition New Democracy.

The leader of the far-right Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS), Giorgos Karatzaferis, was more outspoken, claiming that Ankara was "playing a game of nerves and Greece must react." **Source :** ekathimerini

Russia to use Mistral ships in Pacific Fleet to protect South Kurile Islands

Russia will use Mistral ships in the Pacific Fleet, including for protecting the South Kurile Islands, an informed source at the Defence Ministry said.

"Considerable appropriations will be made for improving the infrastructure of military compounds and garrisons of the 18th Artillery Division in the Eastern Military District, which are deployed on the islands of the Kurile Ridge. The division stationed in the South Kurile Islands has not undergone any organisational changes during military reform in Russia," the source told Itar-Tass on Wednesday, February 9.

"We plan to replace the division's weapons and hardware that have expended their service life with one ones," the source said. Mistral-type landing ships in the Russian Navy will be equipped with domestically-manufactured helicopters, Helicopters of Russia Holding Company Deputy Director-General Andrei Shibitov said earlier.

"The deck-based fleet aboard these ships will consist solely of domestic helicopters," he said. "Ship versions of the Ka-27K, Ka-29K and Ka-52K helicopters will be used. Their number on each ship will be determined by the Defence Ministry. As for Helicopters of Russia, there will be no problems on the part of the industry," he said. Presidential chief of staff Sergei Naryshkin said, "Russia and France have devised a joint mechanism for interaction at the level of the governments of the two countries for the implementation of the helicopter carrier project."

The United Shipbuilding Company will represent Russia in the international consortium. Russian and French shipbuilding corporations have agreed to create a consortium for building military and civilian vessels. The relevant agreement was signed in St. Petersburg on Monday, November 1, 2010. The French ship-building industry needs new contracts and hopes for export more than ever before, an unnamed trade union leaders of the French shipbuilding association DCNS said at the Euronaval 2010 International Naval Defence & Maritime Exhibition and Conference exhibition. According to the official, DCNS needs export contracts badly due to a delay in the construction of a second aircraft carrier till 2012. "In this context, DCNS hopes to sell several landing and command Mistral ships to Russia," he said.

"The contract is being negotiated," but the decision on its implementation is a certainty, French President Nicolas Sarkozy said in July. However now France has to argue with the other bidders over this delicate political issue, France Presse said. Some NATO allies, especially Baltic countries, are looking at this contract with a jaundiced eye. France


hopes to build at least two such multipurpose ships at Saint-Nazaire, while Russians want to build the other ships of the same class on its own territory and obtain technology for that. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said "exclusive negotiations between Russia and France over the supply of the helicopter carrier Mistral are proceeding intensively enough and are very specific. The negotiations include the question technology transfers. We appreciate the constructive attitude of the French side to our interest."

Russia is buying the French helicopter carrier Mistral with French equipment, including combat navigation devices, but will arm it with its own weaponry, a defence industry official involved in the talks said earlier. "We are buying not just a ship. We are buying all the technical documentation for it. It is planned that the third such ship will be built by Russian shipbuilding companies. This is our key condition at the talks on the Mistral," the official said.

"The Mistral will use our helicopters. But it is necessary to slightly elevate the ship's deck for them. We also plan to use this helicopter carrier in northern latitudes. This will require the ship's boards to be reinforced. But this will not necessitate serious changes in the design or equipping of the ship," the official said. He denied assertions that Russia is buying only the hull of ship from France. "I want to emphasise that the Mistral is being bought complete with all the navigation and technological equipment installed on it, including the combat navigation elements," he said.

The universal amphibious assault ship of the Mistral class has a displacement of 20,000 tonnes, hull length of 200 meters, full speed of 19 knots, fuel endurance of up to 11,000 miles at a speed of 15 knots, a crew of 160 and air wing personnel of 220. The ship is capable of carrying a force of up to 450 Marines. The air force component consists of 20 HN-90 helicopters. The ship carries four light amphibious boats or two hovercraft. The freight deck accommodates 60 armoured vehicles. **Source : ITAR-TASS**

SHIPYARD NEWS



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Above seen the 1999 built MLT flag and owned refrigerated ship **SANTINA** at the Marsaxlokk Hardstanding Facilities, Malta on Monday 7th February, 2011. She's the former ESP flag and owned **PUNTA LA GAVIOTA** and was renamed **SANTINA** on 16th November 2006. **Photo : Capt. Lawrence Dalli - www.maltashipphotos.com ©**

Hitachi Zosen net profit drops to US\$101.22m

Japan-based shipbuilding company Hitachi Zosen's net profit dropped in the first three quarters of 2011. Net profit for the nine months to the end of September was JPY8.31bn (US\$101.22m) as compared with JPY9.23bn a year earlier. Revenues rose appreciably from JPY 181.33bn to JPY 189.99bn. But the company still expects full-year net profit of JPY9bn, sales are expected to achieve JPY300bn comparing to JPY273.53bn a year earlier. **Source : PortNews**

Bharati Shipyard's Q3 net profit down 30 pc

Bharati Shipyard reported a decline of 29.66 per cent in its net profit for the third quarter (Q3) ended December 31, to Rs 23.16 crore due to rise in interest payments. The company had reported a net profit of Rs 32.93 crore during the corresponding quarter of 2009-10. Net sales of the company rose 7.97 per cent to Rs 344.97 crore for the quarter, as against Rs 319.48 crore it had reported in Q3 of 2009-10, it said in a filing to the Bombay Stock Exchange. For the October-December, 2010 quarter, the company paid Rs 63.47 crore in interest on loans, vis-a-vis Rs 23.05 crore during Q3 in the last fiscal, Bharati said. The company's scrip closed today at Rs 156.50 apiece on the BSE, down 2.80 per cent from the previous close. **Source : PortNews**

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Vancouver expects an extra four million TEU by 2030

PORT METRO VANCOUVER requires additional annual capacity of four million TEU to meet forecasts that container traffic through Canada's Pacific gateway will nearly triple by 2030, according to port authorities.

Port officials said that in the absence of "substantive improvements" a capacity gap could emerge at the port as early as 2017. As part of a new long-term programme intended to boost container handling capacity to meet future growth and Canadian international trade demand, port authorities are initially considering making infrastructure improvements at Roberts Bank. This includes a proposed multi-berth marine container terminal that would raise annual box handling capacity by more than two million TEU. Roberts Bank is very well positioned to accommodate future trade growth because it's an established route that offers excellent access to important lower mainland markets, as well as major North American transportation corridors," said Vancouver port CEO Robin Silvester. **Source : Schednet**

SCI posts 41.4% surge in net profit for Q3

Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) posted a 41.4% year-on-year rise in net profit for the quarter ended 31 December 2010 on higher profit from operations. SCI chalked up 1.23bn rupees (\$27.2m) for its third quarter as against 870m rupees in the same quarter of 2009, it said in a statement. Revenue for the quarter rose marginally year-on-year to 8.89bn rupees from 8.45bn rupees in corresponding period last year. For the nine months ended 31 December 2010, net profit came up to 8.89bn rupees as against 8.45bn rupees in the same period last year. **Source : Seatrade asia**

NEW TOW WIRE FOR TTB SALVOR



At the [ASL shipyard](#) in Singapore the [TTB SALVOR](#) received a new 650 mtr long 52 mm tow-wire last Wednesday, also was an 52- mm spare tow wire installed at the lower drum as can be seen at the photo top and right.

[Photo's : Piet Sinke ©](#)

For specs and availability of the TTB SALVOR please contact :
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Dredging International and MEDCO to build artificial islands offshore Abu Dhabi

Dredging International and MEDCO have been awarded a contract for the dredging and civil engineering works required to build two artificial 'energy islands' for the Satrah al-Razboot (SARB) offshore oilfield. Dredging International is part of the DEME group in Belgium.



MEDCO's **AL JARRAF** seen fitting out at the **ASL shipyard** in Singapore – Photo : Piet Sinke ©

The islands will be used as drilling platforms. Their design and implementation is based on a full environmental impact assessment study. The new islands will be located 120km off the northwest coast of Abu Dhabi City. A contract to build them was signed on February 7th during the official mission of the Flemish Minister-President Kris Peeters to Abu Dhabi and Qatar.

Said DEME: "The award of this contract, which requires a wide range of dredging and complex marine construction skills, gives further proof of the versatility of the services offered by MEDCO in the Middle East and DEME on worldwide level." "Interesting prospects exist for instance in offshore European coastal areas, amongst others in the North Sea, for the construction of small-scale multipurpose artificial service islands for the maintenance of offshore wind farms and other marine structures related to the production of renewable energy."

The contract was awarded by Abu Dhabi Marine Operating Company (ADMA-OPCO), which is part of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). Work is scheduled to start in mid-February 2011.

The contract involves engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) and will start with approximately five months of engineering, preparation and logistics activities. The contract is due to be completed in 110 weeks, and requires reclamation of two 500m x 500m artificial islands and concrete armour units and armour rock.

The work scope includes design and model testing, dredging and reclamation, compaction of the reclaimed site, construction of the shore protection structures, construction of harbours from concrete block walls and installation of navigational aids. The work will require the deployment of trailing suction hopper dredgers, offloading and positioning pontoons, crane pontoons, transport barges and heavy earth moving equipment. A work force of over 500 people will be required for the execution of the project. Source : Dredging News Online

PRISCO sells 6 tankers to SCF

JSC Primorsk International Shipping Ltd. (PRISCO) sold to Sovcomflot (SCF) 6 tankers. The vessels are currently engaged in transporting crude oil from the oil deposits of the northern part of Sakhalin Island, the PRISCO press release said. The terms of the transaction are confidential.

Two of the vessels are time-chartered to Exxon Neftegas Limited ("ENL") for Sakhalin-1 oil export operations. Both vessels will continue operations under current agreement with ENL.

Three other vessels are on charter to Sakhalin Energy Investment Company Ltd ("Sakhalin Energy"). The sixth vessel is fully equipped, designed and constructed for Sakhalin shuttle service and was formerly chartered to ENL.

This transaction will be completed in February 2011 and has the approval of the relevant charterers.

PRISCO Corp. is a specialized tanker company engaged in overseas shipping of liquid and bulk cargos. The Corp. operates a fleet of 19 tankers and 2 bulk carriers (of total 1,892,221DWT). The fleet includes largely ice-class vessels, including large-capacity ships, equipped for operation in freezing seas. PRISCO provides commercial and technical management, agency services, training of personnel of maritime transport and oil and gas facilities.

In the first half of 2010, the company's fleet transported 8,774,000 tons of different cargoes, up 16% from 2009's figures. Net loss of PRISCO to RAS for 9 months of 2010 amounted to 50,925,000 rubles versus net income of 100.025 million rubles a year earlier. Revenues declined by 5.3% to 84.795 million rubles.

Sovcomflot Group (SCF) is the largest Russian shipping company, one of the world's leading energy carriers. The Group operates 147 vessels (total -11m DWT). The company's portfolio of newbuilds comprises 18 vessels (total – over 1,5m DWT). The average age of the tankers fleet is about 6.5 years.



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Nord Stream enters Baltic Sea

The world's largest submarine pipeline plow arrived Tuesday in the Baltic Sea to lay part of the Nord Stream gas pipeline, the project consortium announced.



The **Maersk Nexus** seen loading pipes in Hanko for the Gazprom project in Hanko - **Photo : Sören Johansson ©**

Submarine plow **PL3** arrived in the Baltic Sea to dig a trench for the Nord Stream pipeline in Swedish and Danish waters. Russian energy company Gazprom is leading the project consortium building the dual natural gas pipeline from the Gulf of Finland through the Baltic Sea to Germany. The project is meant to diversify Gazprom's export options as about 80 percent of Russian gas for Europe travels through Ukraine currently.

Environmental groups complained the dual pipeline would have negative consequences, though the consortium said its models show that subsurface plowing wouldn't create environmental problems. The consortium last week announced that it completed two of the three sections of the first line of the natural gas pipeline. Engineers will finish the third leg by April.

The cost of the pipeline is around \$10 billion. Once both lines are completed, which is expected in 2012, it will be the most advanced and environmentally friendly of major pipelines for the European community, the consortium said.

Source : upi

Newcastle Aust - 10 new berths: dredging to make way for more ships

ABOUT 3million cubic metres of mud, sand and possibly contaminated material would be dredged from the south arm of the Hunter River to make way for 10 new ship berths under new Newcastle Port Corporation plans. The river sludge would be removed at a cost of about \$48million and may be reused, dumped at sea or potentially carted away. Contaminated material would be treated before disposal. The new berths would be at the former steelworks site at Mayfield, disused sites at Kooragang and Dyke Point and along vacant foreshore at Walsh Point. The berths themselves would be worth about \$30million, the corporation said in an application to the NSW Planning Department. The application follows another from the corporation last year for a concept plan for the Mayfield site.

The dredging would pave the way for plans including general and bulk cargo wharves at Walsh Point, container wharves at Mayfield number 1 and 2, general cargo, containers, ammonium nitrate and bulk material berths at Mayfield number 5 and 6 and a bulk liquids berth at Mayfield number 7. The corporation said it was seeking approval for the project but that other parties would do the work, either in one go or in stages. They would need to seek separate approvals for the disposal of the dredge material. The corporation said the project was a "vital step in providing proponents with certainty that the adjoining lands may be developed for their intended uses". The dredging would provide access from the berths to the shipping channels and may entail channel widening near Walsh Point. Parts of the Mayfield sites are also subject to remediation work that BHP is carrying out in the river near the former steelworks site. A report done for the corporation said the BHP work would be done first before the proposed

dredging, which was expected to “yield a significantly smaller proportion of contaminated materials” than the BHP project. About 38per cent of the spoil would not be suitable for reuse, the report said. Residents in the area have already raised concerns about predicted truck movements from the proposed container terminal at Mayfield and have also criticised the plans of mining magnate Nathan Tinkler for a coal terminal at the site. Correct Planning and Consultation for Mayfield Group chairman John Hayes yesterday welcomed news that the government would exhibit further details about the Mayfield concept plan for comment. He said residents hoped their concerns about thousands of extra truck movements a week had been addressed. **Source : Garry Luxton –www.lakescan.com.au**

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Private players to be allowed in underground marine excavation

The Indian Government said it is preparing a policy to bring in private players in the sphere of underground excavation in the marine sector, thereby ending the monopoly of the state owned DCI. “Dredging corporation of India (DCI) will have to compete like other firms...they cannot be in protection mode all the time,” a Shipping Ministry official told PTI.

“Draft note on the Dredging Policy has been prepared...it would go to the Cabinet next month,” the official said. The DCI has now even executed assignments overseas and therefore it can handle competition, the official said. Shipping Minister G K Vasan, while unveiling the new Maritime Agenda 2010-2020, last month, had said the government's plan initiatives included formulating a new Dredging Policy, promoting coastal shipping and increasing the share of Indian ships in country's trade.

As per the existing Dredging Policy 2007, all major ports invite open competitive bids for dredging works with the DCI having the the first right of refusal if the rate is within 10 per cent of the lowest valid offer. This would apply to both maintenance and capital dredging works.

The government through the Department of Shipping reserves the right to assign, in public interest, any contract for dredging work in any of the major ports to DCI on nomination. Visakhapatnam based DCI is engaged in dredging activities and provides its services in the areas of Environmental Protection, Tourism, Flood Control, Irrigation, Power Generation, Port development, Mining, Reclamation, Laying of Off-shore Pipelines, among other things. **Source : Deccan Herald**

Former Hoylake lifeboat station to become museum

PLANS to turn the former Hoylake lifeboat station into a museum are a step closer to becoming reality after a Wirral businessman bought the building. The building, on Hoylake promenade, was bought by Peel Ports and has been vacant since the new lifeboat station opened across the road in November 2009.

The building's sale to Hoylake-based Hylgar Properties, owned by Tony Crane, was confirmed by Peel Ports today. Hylgar plans to lease it to a group who hope to open the museum, housing artefacts from the town's lifeboat history, by the spring. There will be a public meeting at Hoylake Sailing Club tomorrow, Thursday, at 7.30pm. Its purpose is to recruit members for a committee that would be responsible for the museum's running. John Parr is head of the group that plans to open the museum. He has been in talks with Peel Ports about the possibility of buying the currently

vacant site for more than a year. He told the Globe: "Peel have recognised the community's need for a lifeboat museum. "A white knight has come to us in the shape of Tony Crane, from Hylgar Properties, who has bought the building.

"We are going to lease this and open the museum, hopefully by the spring. We would also like to work closely with the council, too. The hard work starts now, of course." Mr Parr, who lives in Caldy, first proposed the idea of the museum in 1998, as a member of then Wirral West MP Stephen Hesford's Hoylake Regeneration Group.

His ancestors were members of the Hoylake lifeboat crew who lost their lives on December 22, 1810, after it had gone to the aid of a ship called "**Traveller**", which had been driven ashore in the Mersey. The idea for a museum was strongly supported at a public meeting and since then John has spent time restoring two lifeboats that would feature in the museum; the 1901 Hilbre Island lifeboat and 1970s lifeboat "Thomas Corbett." Both boats are listed on the National Register of Historic Vessels. Mr Parr continued: "The museum is a massive undertaking, which will obviously take time to develop. We will also need to work on a business plan and there will be plenty of roles for people.

"There will be lots of people who will have lifeboat-related artefacts in their attics and wardrobes, and we would welcome their inclusion in the museum." A spokesman for Peel Ports said: "We are pleased to announce that the former Hoylake Lifeboat Station on North Parade has been sold to Hylgar Properties to facilitate the development of a lifeboat museum.

"Following representations from Mr John Parr, Hylgar and the local community in general, the site's future use will be reserved to create a lifeboat museum for use by both locals and visitors alike. "Peel Ports wishes everyone involved in the lifeboat museum venture every success in the future." If you have any artefacts for inclusion in the museum, email John Parr at hilbre1948@aol.com Source : Wirral Globe



OLDIE – FROM THE SHOEBOX



Above seen the **Spirit of Tasmania** (ex **Princess of Norway**) departing Port Phillip heads in a 50 knots southerly blow 27-12-1998. - Photo : Andrew Mackinnon www.aquamanships.com ©

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



Above seen the **BOHAI CHALLENGE** (8,700 gross ton) which went aground on the breakwater of Kanazawa Port, Japan on Jan. 30th while she was approaching Kanazawa Port for loading cargo, battling the rough weather, laden with cargo of steel products and machinery/plant destined for US west coast.

Photo : Y.Fukushima ©

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