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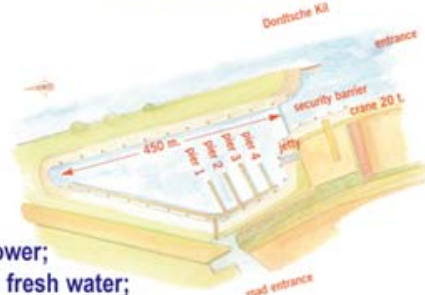
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Above seen the 1979 built chemical/oil products tanker **TROODOS** berthed at Qasr Ahmed, Misurata Port, Libya on Saturday 1st May, 2011. **Photo : Cpt. Lawrence Dalli - www.maltashipphotos.com (c)**

Tanker spot fixtures on another month of growth says report

The latest monthly OPEC oil report signalled yet another rise for spot fixtures, since April saw an increase of 10% to stand at 15.81 mb/d. The gain came mainly from the Middle East. Outside the Middle East, fixtures decreased by 2% in April. Compared to the previous month, global fixtures increased by 4% to stand at 21.55 mb/d. OPEC sailings declined 3% from the previous month to average 22.7 mb/d in April. Arrivals in Europe declined while arrivals in North America and the Far East increased. The increase in the Far East was supported by Japanese fuel demand. Compared to the previous month, arrivals in North America and the Far East increased by 1% and 4% to stand at 8.73 mb/d and 4.37 mb/d. Arrivals in Europe declined by 6% to stand 11.28 mb/d over the same period.

"In April, crude oil tanker market sentiment weakened and average spot freight rates closed down 17% compared to the previous month. For the VLCC sector, average spot freight rates for reported routes decline 19% in April compared to the previous month, while Suezmax dropped 24% and Aframax fell 10%. The overall weakness in spot freight rates in April can be attributed to tonnage oversupply and weak demand due to lower activities, both East and

West of the Suez. The weak demand for tonnage was driven by refinery maintenance, lower demand in the Far East as well as the holiday. In contrast, average spot freight rates on the clean market closed up by 7% in April compared to the previous month, with East of Suez rates registering a healthy gain of 16% and West of Suez increasing 5%. Higher petroleum product trade, especially in Asia, supported clean rates in April.

For VLCCs, Middle East to East spot freight rates declined 19%, Middle East to West decreased 11% and West Africa to East dropped 23% in April compared to the previous month. Spot freight rates for VLCCs loading from the Middle East declined on the back of lower Chinese lifts, refining maintenance in India and lower tonnage demand from Japan as refining capacity has remained shut in since the earthquake. Additionally, lower floating storage capacity further increased availability and pressured spot freight rates in April. For Western destinations, VLCC spot freight rates were further influenced by the lower tonnage demand to North West Europe as market participants were off for the Easter holiday. Suezmax spot freight rates followed a similar pattern to those of VLCCs. West Africa to the US spot freight rates lost ground, declining 25%, and Northwest Europe (NWE) to the US decreased 24% in April compared to the month before. The decline of Suezmax spot freight rates for deliveries from West Africa to the US was due to lower transatlantic activities backed by the slow return of refineries from turnaround, shutdowns of refineries in the US, as well as lower crude oil lifting from the North Sea as production declined.

Aframax spot freight rates closed down on average by 10% in April compared to the previous month with spot freight rates on all selected routes losing ground except the Indonesia to East route. The gain of Indonesia to East Aframax spot freight rates was partially due to higher fuel oil demand from Japan as many electricity plants and refineries require fuel oil for direct burning to compensate for closed nuclear capacity. In the Mediterranean, Aframax spot freight rates experienced deep declines with Mediterranean to Mediterranean rates losing 25% and Mediterranean to Northwest Europe declining 19% in April compared to the previous month. The decline of spot freight rates in both routes can be attributed to lower activities of trades due to political tension in North Africa. Caribbean to the US Aframax spot freight rates registered a 7% decline in April compared to the previous month, on the back of shutdowns of refineries in the US.

Sentiments in the clean tanker market were bullish and spot freight rates on all reported routes increased in April compared to a month earlier. East of Suez clean spot freight rates registered healthy growth of 16% and West of Suez edged higher by 5% in April compared to last month. East of Suez, the Middle East to East clean spot freight rates gained 13% and Singapore to East registered growth of 19% in April over the previous month. The gains on spot freight rates on both routes in April were due partially to higher demand for petroleum products in Japan to relieve the shortage created by the outage in refinery capacity following the earthquake. West of Suez clean spot freight rates gained 5% on average in April compared to the previous month. In West of Suez, Caribbean to the US clean spot freight rates increased 4%, while from NWE to the US, rates edged 6% higher. Improved gasoline imports in the US, with the approaching driving season, along with open arbitrage, supported rates. In the Mediterranean, clean spot freight rates for inter-Mediterranean voyages increased by 5%, while from the Mediterranean to NWE rates gained 4% in April over the previous month. The increase was supported by higher gasoline trade in preparation for the US driving season" concluded the report. **Source : Nikos Roussanoglou, Hellenic Shipping News Worldwide**



The IHC built **Gang Hai Jun 566** finished successfully the water pumping test and returned to the builders to prepare for towing and delivery at Tianjin port later this month - **Photo : Cees de Vries ©**

EU NAVFOR welcomes the Greek Frigate FFG NIKIFOROS FOKAS

Commanded by Commander Panagiotopoulos, the ship and its crew are fully prepared and trained to take an active part within Operation ATALANTA and in all counter-piracy operations. **FFG NIKIFOROS FOKAS** is equipped with extensive self defense measures and has 1 helicopter at its disposal. As a flexible warship, **FFG NIKIFOROS FOKAS** is perfectly adapted to counter-piracy missions and will improve the capability of EU NAVFOR to protect vulnerable vessels, especially those of the World Food Programme and AMISOM. She will also contribute to deterring and preventing acts of piracy, as well as monitoring fishing activities off the coast of Somalia.

F-466 NIKIFOROS FOKAS holds 179 crew members, including 32 officers. She has been commissioned for service in the Greek Navy since 2004. Her displacement is 3,600 tons and she has a length of 130.5 meters. She is participating in EU NAVFOR for the second time. Her first deployment on Operation ATALANTA was in 2009. EUNAVFOR Somalia – Operation ATALANTA's main tasks are to escort merchant vessels carrying humanitarian aid of the World Food Program (WFP) and vessels of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). EU NAVFOR also protects vulnerable vessels in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean, deters and disrupts piracy. EU NAVFOR finally monitors fishing activity off the coast of Somalia. **Source: EU Navfor**

NATO intercepts military cargo ship bound for Eritrea

NATO Naval forces have reportedly captured a heavy weapon carrying cargo ship destined to Eritrea in the international waters of the Indian Ocean. NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a military alliance between the US and various European countries. It is currently engaged in the bombing of Libya.

A UN monitoring group report this week revealed that the cargo originally shipped from North Korea was carrying 15 tonnes of rockets, surface to air missiles and explosives worth \$US15 million. In December 2009, the UN Security Council imposed sanctions against Eritrea, which include an arms embargo, travel restrictions and a freeze on the assets of its political and military leaders for an alleged involvement in training and supplying weapons to Al-Qaida and links Somali Islamic rebels.

After the UN Security Council passed the resolution against the red sea nation, the Southern Red Sea and the Indian Ocean have increasingly been monitored by multi-national naval forces mainly from the US, France and Germany, to maintain security and international law in the waters.

The Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group have been accusing the Government of Eritrea being a regional destabilising factor by its continued political, financial and allegedly military assistance to armed opposition groups in Somalia.

There are allegations that Eritrea has been importing arms from Eastern Europe and Asia. Ethiopia has recently threatened to attack Eritrea to stop an alleged continued terrorist acts and the armies of both sides have remained on high alert then after. Eritrea became independent from Ethiopia, making its larger neighbour landlocked, in 1993 following 30 years of struggle however the two neighbours fought a 1998-2000 war over their disputed border that killed over 70,000 people. **Source : PortNews**



The advertisement for Vlierodam B.V. features a collage of maritime equipment and a ship. On the left, there are yellow wire ropes and pulleys. In the center, a blue and white logo shows an anchor and a crane, with the text 'DNV 2.7-1' below it. On the right, a large blue and white ship is visible. Below the collage, the text reads: 'Wire Ropes • Towing, Lifting and Hoisting Equipment • Consulting', 'Nijverheidsweg 21 - 3161 GJ Rhoon - Tel. +31-(0)10-5018000', and 'VLIERODAM B.V. - THE NETHERLANDS – www.vlierodam.nl'. A small logo with the letters 'VRD' is in the bottom right corner.



The **MARIDIVE 108** seen anchored off the Egyptian coast – **Photo : Piet Sinke (c)**

Tug destined to be hub of new artificial reef

The **Monica Lee** landed at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico on May 11 and is located approximately 15.2 nautical miles on a bearing of 151° from Destin Pass at a depth of approximately 117 ft, at coordinates: 30° 09.342'N and 86° 22.224'W. She is the hub of a four pronged proposed reef system named Conch Reef. Conch Reef is the County's latest reef project funded by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission with a 10% match of County funds. The County artificial reef systems are designed to enhance recreational opportunities to Okaloosa County residents and the tourism industry in a managed, environmentally conscious manner.

According to the US Coast Guard the Monica Lee, a 49.2 feet long steel hulled tugboat, was built in Houma, La., in 1955. The **Monica Lee** was previously owned by McCulley Marine Services out of Stuart, Fla. The Monica Lee assisted in the deployment of many artificial reef projects off Southeast Florida throughout her working life. She continues to serve the citizens of Florida as she herself has been deployed as the centerpoint of an artificial reef complex planned for construction this summer.

Artificial reefs provide a protected habitat for a wide variety of marine organisms that matures into a self-sustained, highly productive marine ecosystem and nourishes sea life at all levels of the food chain. The Monica Lee structure itself was enhanced with the addition of prepared Chicken Transport Devices that provide small hiding places for the more vulnerable yet essential marine creatures.

"Thank you to all who supported Okaloosa County and the Gulf Artificial Reef program," said Scott Henson, Okaloosa County Artificial Reef Coordinator. Okaloosa County would like to express our appreciation to all who assisted in the remarkable effort required to bring this project to fruition. In particular, Okaloosa County would like to recognize the following individuals and organizations:

Captain James and Val Flores — The owners of Turn Key Marine who generously donated the Monica Lee to the Okaloosa County Artificial Reef Program and who assisted in the vessel preparation, transportation and scuttling activities. Candy Hansard — Reef Deployment Director of the Emerald Coast Reef Association (ECRA) who tirelessly planned and organized the remarkable efforts of over 30 ECRA vessel preparation volunteers and was a critical contributor in all efforts to obtain regulatory approval.

Jim Tucker — owner of The Boat Marina and Boatyard who provided mooring for the **Monica Lee** during vessel preparation activities as well as equipment and materials. Charlie Saleeby - Destin resident and volunteer of the ECRA, for the use of his boat dock in Joe's Bayou for final vessel preparation and regulatory inspections;

Monica Lee Deployment Team — This team, consisting of County staff, local businesses, non-profit organizations and private citizens, provided all of the time and effort necessary to assure that Monica Lee was deployed in a safe, environmentally conscious, and regulatory compliant manner. **Source : Destin Log and Walton Log**



The 1993 built **TAGANROGSKIY ZALIV** seen moored in IJmuiden - **Photo : H. Blomvliet (c)**



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The 2010 built **LA STELLA DEI MARI** seen enroute Amsterdam – Photo : H.Blomvliet (c)

Rhine river water level may drop this week

Water levels on the Rhine River, which have dropped to the lowest in 18 months, may fall further this week, potentially hampering shipments of products from gasoline to grain, according to a German government agency. "There's not a lot of water coming from upstream," said Ulrich Nowotsch, an official from the Wasserschutzpolizei, which patrols German waterways. "Water levels are expected to drop in the next three or four days in Duisburg, Koblenz, Mainz," he said from Duisburg, Germany.

Falling water levels have cut the amounts that can be carried on barges by as much as 70 percent, pushing freight rates to the highest level in 18 months. The cost of shipping gasoil to Duisburg in Germany from Rotterdam or Amsterdam rose to 8 euros (\$11.50) a ton yesterday, the highest price since November 2009, according to data compiled by Bloomberg News. The Rhine links industrial sites including BP Plc (BP/)'s Gelsenkirchen refinery and BASF SE (BASF)'s Ludwigshafen chemicals site to Europe's busiest port in Rotterdam. A canal system running into Poland, the Czech Republic and Austria joins the Rhine at Duisburg, west of the Gelsenkirchen plant. "We're down to about 25 or

30 percent of capacity,” said Joachim Hessler, operations manager at Maintank Schiffahrtsgesellschaft mbH, which handles diesel and jet fuel deliveries. “Barges can still travel.” The barge clearance level at Mainz dropped to 175 centimeters this week, the lowest level since November 2009, according to German government data available on Bloomberg. The clearance level is the depth at which a barge can travel without the risk of running aground. The cost of shipping gasoline to Karlsruhe in south Germany from Rotterdam advanced 9 percent to 30.75 euros, Bloomberg data show. The Miro refinery, part owned by Royal Dutch Shell Plc (RDSA), is in Karlsruhe.



Above seen the naming ceremony from the UDW **PACIFIC MISTRAL**, with the crew posing in front of it.

Photo : Kevin Lutter 3rd Engineer Mistral (c)

Virginia authorities say 1 person missing, 9 others rescued from capsized sailboat in river

Authorities in southeastern Virginia conducted an air and water search Friday for a missing person after rescuing nine others from a 22-foot sailboat that capsized where the Pagan and James rivers meet. None of the ten people, who are in their 20s, were wearing lifejackets on the boat when it overturned Thursday night, Virginia Marine Resources Commission spokesman John Bull said. Bull said the group had been attending a party in Newport News when they decided to go for a midnight cruise. It wasn't immediately clear why the boat capsized. Five of the passengers managed to swim to shore after spending about five hours in the water and drifting about three miles, Bull said. They managed to stay afloat by clinging onto passing debris such as buoys that protect boats from banging into docks. "It must've been harrowing experience — clutching a floating gas can," he said. Bull said emergency responders pulled the other four out of the water shortly after the first group knocked on the door of a nearby homeowner, who called

authorities. About the same time, a tug boat captain ran into the capsized sailboat on the James River near where the Navy mothballs old ships known as the Ghost Fleet.

Bull said each of the victims were taken to an area hospital and that one person wasn't in good condition, although specifics weren't immediately available. The identities of those on the boat have not been released. Authorities are impounding the sailboat as part of the investigation, Bull said. The sailboat had floatation devices on board, but the passengers couldn't get to them once the boat overturned, he said.

Coast Guard Lt. Mike Patterson said it wasn't immediately clear who the boat was registered to. He said the water temperature was 57 degrees Friday morning and that overnight conditions showed there was a light breeze with waves probably at a foot or less. Bull said emergency responders were able to respond quickly because of a previously scheduled training exercise in the area. **Source : WashingtonPost**



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The **GSP PRINCE** seen operating in the Black Sea – **Photo : Capt Dariusz Klekowiecki ©**

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Stranded cargo ship threatens Bakud reef



A foreign cargo ship is stranded on a protected coral reef off this province and may be stuck for three weeks, raising fears of environmental damage, authorities said Thursday. The Panamanian-registered **MV Double Prosperity** was carrying about 65,000 tons of coal from Australia to India when it hit Bakud Reef on Sunday, regional Coast Guard Commander Roy

Echeverria told Agence France-Presse.

About three-quarters of the 225-meter-long ship is stuck on the reef and it is lying in barely two meters of water, making the task of refloating it very difficult, he said. "Weather permitting ... the ship may be extricated within more or less three weeks," he said, adding it would also take time to bring in specialist equipment.

Echeverria said there were concerns the ship's fuel may start leaking, and inflatable oil spill booms had been brought into the area as a precaution, although there were no signs this had yet occurred. A marine biologist will also arrive soon to determine the extent of damage to the reef, said Sarangani Gov. Miguel Dominguez.

The reef, located in rich fishing grounds less than 10 kilometers off Sarangani's coast, is a protected area under a provincial environmental law. This protected status is aimed at preserving the reef for tourist divers and to keep commercial fishing vessels away. Even if no major environmental damage occurs, provincial authorities will seek compensation from the ship-owners over the incident, Dominguez said. "Our objective here is to pull the boat safely out from the reef ... and that the rights of the province are protected and compensated," he said. **Source :** **Philippine Daily Inquirer**

NAVY NEWS

AFP's first submarine coming up

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is embarking on an ambitious plan to acquire a submarine in line with its modernization program to improve the capability of the Navy in safeguarding the country's territory from foreign intrusions. The Philippine Navy Fleet spokesman, Lt. Rommel Rodriguez, on Thursday disclosed that studies and researches have been undertaken on acquiring a submarine and are ready to be presented to higher command. "There is already a team that is conducting these studies and these studies will determine what capabilities do we need, where we can get this submarine, what are the alternatives we have to be able to fund it, how long will it take. These are the considerations," he said. According to Rodriguez, the study team, headed by Lt. Commander Merlito Martinez, has completed their work and this would be presented and deliberated for additional inputs, before it is submitted to higher headquarters.

He said that a submarine cost billions of dollars, which is almost impossible for the Armed Forces to acquire, considering the funding that it receives from the national budget and its list of other priorities. But Rodriguez said that the Philippine Navy is confident that it would be able to get one. "It looks impossible. This amount may seem impossible for now. But definitely we are taking a step because right now the President [Benigno Aquino 3rd] is improving our naval capability. That is why we are undertaking this study," he pointed out. The Philippine Navy, Rodriguez said, has also invited experts from other countries, such as Japan, South Korea and the United Kingdom to present their military technologies and capabilities. Among the equipment offered by these countries were a satellite vessel tracking system, fire control tracking system and satellite tracking system.

The satellite tracking system, Rodriguez explained, has the capability to track the current location of a vessel and its status on real time basis. If plans pushed through, he said, this would be the first time that the Philippines would have a submarine on its naval fleet, which at present is mostly made up of World War II vintage vessels that were handed down by the American government. Rodriguez said that the United States Coast Guard would turn over this month to the Philippine Navy a large Hamilton-class patrol craft that would be deployed to the disputed Spratly group of islands in the South China Sea amid tensions over territorial claims with China, among other claimant-countries. "The Hamilton is designed to endure high weather. So this will be our largest asset, this will be able to sustain longer patrolling at sea, it has better, wider-range radars to be able to cover a larger scope and has some fire control system onboard," Rodriguez said. **Source : The Manila Times, Philippines**

ThyssenKrupp announces German in-service support for Norwegian submarines

Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft GmbH (HDW), a company of ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems, and MarineForce International LLP (MFI) have signed a frame agreement with the Norwegian Defence Logistics Organisation on supplies and services for their German built ULA-class submarines.

The frame agreement ensures access to specialised engineering services to be provided by the consortium. It will gain in importance during the execution of the ULA-class update programme which guarantees the submarines' operation until at least 2020. Engineering assistance will be especially significant when it comes to obsolescence of spare parts.

This contract is an additional proof of the consortium's commitment to ensure through-life-support for submarines of German origin. Having faced an increasing demand for industrial in-service-support of their high-end submarines, HDW and MFI have established a dedicated department which takes care of all customer requirements regarding long-term in-service- support of operational submarines.

Main characteristics of ULA class submarines: The six German designed and built ULA-class submarines were commissioned between 1989 and 1992 and have since then been operated by the Norwegian Submarine Force.

Source: ThyssenKrupp



The 44 mtr German ex. SAR cutter **John T. Essberger** seen enroute Rotterdam yesterday morning, the cutter is now part of the Speyer Technik museum - <http://speyer.technik-museum.de/seenotkreuzer-john-t-essberger>
Photo : Piet Sinke (c)

In Germany, the **Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Rettung Schiffbrüchiger (DGzRS)** has provided naval rescue service since 1865. It is a civilian, non-profit organisation and has a variety of boats and ships, the biggest being the 46 meter (150 ft) SK Hermann Marwede. The DGzRS operates from 54 stations in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. It has 20 rescue cruisers (usually piggybacking a smaller rescue boat) and 41 rescue boats.

Virginia-class sub California will be homeported at Groton base

U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., says the Navy will homeport the recently-launched Virginia-class submarine **California (SSN-781)** at the Naval Submarine Base in Groton.

"This great news is welcome and well-earned for Connecticut and the men and women who serve the Naval Submarine Base in New London," Blumenthal said in a statement issued by his office. "This sub assignment attests to the base's military value and validates our state's commitment to supporting it. I look forward to visiting the USS **California** when she arrives."

On Thursday the base broke ground on a simulator training facility for submarine officers and crew, funded in part by the state of Connecticut. Launched on Nov. 14, 2010, the **USS California** is the eighth Virginia-class submarine to be built. Blumenthal said the transfer of the submarine to the base for its initial homeport assignment will become effective on Oct. 29, 2011. The **USS California** brings with it 15 officer and 117 enlisted billets, his statement said.

Source : TheDay

Kamthorn says he'll ask next govt to buy old German subs

The navy chief is insisting he will ask the new cabinet to reconsider his proposal to buy six second-hand submarines from Germany. Adm Kamthorn Phumhiran admitted he had been disappointed that the purchase of the submarines had not been tabled for the Democrat-led cabinet's approval earlier. He was not disheartened, however. Adm Kamthorn said he would ask the German firm which the navy planned to buy the second-hand submarines from to wait for a while. The navy would seek cabinet approval for the 7.5-billion-baht purchase again. "I'll ask the government to understand the needs of the navy and their children who would be deployed in a war to protect the country's sovereignty ... Otherwise, we will have to wait for the next government," said Adm Kamthorn. "Give them [naval officers] the chance to win a war. Don't let our ships be sunk by other ships that we cannot see," added Adm

Kamthorn. He said the navy had planned to buy submarines for 60 years, but successive governments had never given it enough money. The navy's current attempt to buy submarines was its third.

Adm Kamthorn said giving the navy and its officers equipment that could help them win wars or defend themselves was not harming the country. The navy just wanted to strengthen Thailand's defensive capacity and it had no plans to harm anybody. Earlier, the navy asked the government for 48 billion baht to buy submarines but the cabinet ruled that this budget was too high and told the navy to lower the amount. "Eventually, we brought the figure down to 7.5 billion baht. The whole fleet will get everything. And we will do it for the public. We don't get a single baht from the project," said Adm Kamthorn. The navy has already informed the government and the public about the facts of its submarine project. The government should trust the information as it was the only agency in the country with sufficient expertise in this area. Source : bangkokpost

Loss of Carrier Strike Capability Top Concern of Royal Navy Chief

The head of the Royal Navy says retaining Britain's carrier strike capability would have been top of his "wish list" if the recent strategic defense and security review were to be rewritten. First Sea Lord Adm. Sir Mark Stanhope told the parliamentary defense committee that if Britain still had a carrier available, it would be deployed off the coast of Libya helping to enforce U.N. Resolution 1973. Giving evidence alongside the heads of the Army and Air Force on the impact of last year's defense review, Stanhope said that retaining [HMS Ark Royal](#) and its fleet of Harrier strike aircraft would have been his top priority if the government's strategic defense review and associated four-year defense spending plan could be revisited.



The [ARK ROYAL](#) seen paying off December 3rd 2010 - [Gary Davies - Maritime Photographic \(c\)](#)

Britain's Navy was hard hit by the latest round of defense cuts with frigates, destroyers, an aircraft carrier and support ships all being pensioned off. The other two services also suffered heavy cuts, particularly the Royal Air Force. Later in his evidence, Stanhope pointed to the impact the cuts were already having, saying the Royal Navy would find it "significantly challenging" to maintain the deployment of a frigate and a mine countermeasures vessel off the coast of Libya for much more than six months without crippling other standing commitments. The British government axed the Royal Navy's remaining aircraft carrier and the Harrier aircraft that fly from its deck as part of a strategic defense and security review that saw surveillance aircraft, warships, tanks and other equipment eliminated to help meet swinging cuts to the defense budget over the four years ending 2014.

Withdrawing [Ark Royal](#) and the Harriers earlier this year was by far the most controversial element of the defense spending cuts. Stanhope later indicated he would not oppose resurrecting the Harrier force if possible and if money was made available to support the aircraft. Stanhope and Air Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, the chief of the Air Staff, were asked by a defense committee member whether returning the Harrier force to service had gone beyond the point of no return. Dalton said it had. But Stanhope responded that while Dalton's statement was correct, he would "like to

think that should a decision [be made to reassess the Harrier force, we could], look again. It all comes down to money."

Stanhope said the Royal Navy is faced with the task of regenerating the carrier force in the latter half of the decade as a new aircraft carrier and the F-35C fighter become available. Rebuilding an aircraft carrier force around 2019 could only be done with the assistance of allied carrier operators France and the U.S., he said. Such a program is now being developed, Stanhope said. Three Fleet Air Arm pilots are already flying F/A-18s with the U.S. military to help maintain British capabilities. A fourth is due to move to the U.S. soon, he said. Britain is building two 65,000-ton carriers, with the first entering service around 2017 and the second scheduled to be ready around 2019.

The defense cuts saw the government commit to only operating the second of the warships as an aircraft carrier. Stanhope said Britain would have to operate two carriers unless it wanted to follow the example of France, which could only get its single carrier, the nuclear powered **Charles de Gaulle**, operational for five years in every eight. The remainder of the time is devoted to maintenance and workup, he said. The Harriers were operated jointly by the Royal Navy and Air Force, and the plan is to do the same with the F-35s. In his evidence, Dalton denied the RAF had any ambitions to take over the role of the Fleet Air Arm on the Navy carriers, and said a 60-40 split in favor of the Air Force had already been agreed to between the two services. Dalton said the carrier would start operating with a single squadron of F-35s and eventually work up to three squadrons. **Source : Defensenews**

SHIPYARD NEWS

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Levingston and PaxOcean sign LOI to build world's largest liftboat

PaxOcean Engineering Zhoushan Co., Ltd. of Singapore, Singapore and The Levingston Corporation, Boerne, Texas, said today that they have signed a Letter of Intent to build a Levingston designed 415WC (World Class) with an option for one additional similar vessel for an undisclosed contract value. The announcement was made at the new Elevating Boats LLC's (EBI) facility at Ponchatoula, Louisiana.

PaxOcean will build the vessels in its Zhoushan shipyard on Zhoushan Island, located about 17 nautical miles from Yangshan Port in Shanghai. The yard is composed of 173 acres with 36 acres in shop areas and has two of the world's largest drydocks (No.1 dock: 400 m x 106 m x 13.7 m, No.2 dock: 380 m x 80 m x 13.7 m). The fabrication areas, dry dock facilities, overhead cranes with other yard features, provide the shipyard with the key features to build the Levingston 415WC. The Levingston 415WC Jack-up MOU (Mobile Offshore Unit) will be the world's largest liftboat with 415 feet of legs, an open deck area of 18,300 square feet (1,700 square meters), a net deck load capacity of 1,654 tons (1,500 metric tonnes) with accommodations for 100 personnel including navigation crew. This vessel follows in the footsteps of the Levingston 320E, the world's current largest liftboat.

Levingston has delivered three of a six-vessel contract based on the 320E design with the remaining deliveries scheduled to be completed June 2012. The 415WC vessel will have the fastest, high capacity Levingston-EBI 12-tooth pinion jacking system along with the Levingston-RAM Leg Encircling Crane with 300 metric tonne capacity. This vessel will be designed to work in harsh environments and with this design the accommodations may be increased to meet additional customer's needs. The Levingston 415WC Jack-up MOU will be provided with, if required, the option of a modular workover/drilling facility (mounted on a cantilever structure) to support offshore workover operations. The cantilever shall be equipped with state-of-art workover/drilling equipment package, and hydraulically skidded out of the bow of the vessel. When the vessel is not required to be in workover operation mode, the cantilever structure shall

be removed to onshore storage. Alternatively, modular workover/drilling equipment can be set on the platform using the 415WC's crane if the customer does not use cantilever beams.

According to Ken Serigne, CEO of EBI, "we are pleased to jointly announce the start of the new generation of liftboats. Through our long-term relationship with Levingston, we have developed the new industry standard in world-class liftboat design. In combination with Levingston and using EBI's proven jacking system, this will bring a new level of versatility for the offshore industry. Using our jacking system, the Levingston 415WC will simply be the fastest, high capacity liftboat in the world. It is greatly gratifying to see this accomplishment."

Ronald Sanders, CEO and Chairman of Levingston, stated, "it is a great day to announce the start of a new era for the American inspired liftboat industry and more specifically the Louisiana inspired liftboat industry. It gives me a great sense of pride to see this evolutionary and revolutionary liftboat industry well accepted in the world offshore industry. Along with our alliance partners, we will continue to be the world leader in liftboat technologies. We are extremely pleased to be working with PaxOcean to build the Levingston 415WC." In addition to EBI and Ram Crane, the Levingston Corporation has been able to meet the challenging needs of the global market through a cooperation with GL Noble Denton, Jackup Structures Alliance and Alabama Roll Products. The Levingston 415WC will be ABS classed.



The **TRANS DANIA** seen moored in Kolding (Denmark) – Photo : Daniel van der Zwaan ©

Bergen Group Offshore posts Q1 results

Bergen Group's total operating revenues in the Q1 2011 amounted to NOK 954 million. The Offshore Division delivered a very strong quarter and is for the first time the biggest division in the group measured by turnover. 'This quarter saw a substantial increase in turnover, which, together with the improvement in our order books and better market prospects, gives grounds for optimism in the long term,' says CEO Pål Engebretsen. Bergen Group now has orders worth NOK 5.9 billion on its books, up by as much as NOK 2.5 billion on the same period last year. The group's accumulated operating revenues of NOK 954 million in the first quarter 2011 are on a par with the same quarter in 2010. An operating profit before depreciation and write-downs (EBITDA) of NOK 40 million means an operating margin (EBITDA margin) of 4.2% for the quarter, compared with 8.3% for the same quarter last year. 'The underlying conditions are fundamentally different, however. The situation today is that we now have substantially more orders on our books and that the markets we operate in are growing,' Mr Engebretsen points out. The Offshore Division experienced a substantial increase in activity and an improvement in profits in the first quarter, with a turnover of NOK 400 million and a profit margin of 8.6%. For the first time ever in the history of the group, the Offshore Division is the biggest division measured by turnover.

'The extension of field lifetimes and ensuing upgrades and modifications of existing facilities are expected to account for a large proportion of the investments on the Norwegian continental shelf in the years ahead. Through Bergen Group Rosenberg, the Offshore Division has extensive experience of large modification projects and is therefore well-positioned in this market segment,' the CEO points out. He refers to the Offshore Division's well-established and strategically favourable locations in Stavanger (Rosenberg), Bergen (Hanøytangen) and the Far North (Kirkenes, Hammerfest and Murmansk), which have the potential to handle very strong growth without major investments being required.

'In the longer term, Bergen Group believes that the Far North has an interesting potential, on both the Norwegian and Russian side. Bergen Group Offshore wishes to utilise its established position in Kirkenes and Murmansk to develop a

platform for long-term growth in the region,' the CEO says. The offshore sector is characterised by increasing flexibility and complexity as a result of new activity in harsh environments, more stringent environmental requirements, greater water depths, more advanced subsea operations and maintenance and modification projects on mature installations. These factors will also influence future demand for more advanced offshore vessels. This is a segment in which Bergen Group Shipbuilding has strengthened its international reputation by building 15 state-of-the-art vessels in the last three years - with excellent results and satisfied customers. 'There have been great fluctuations in the international markets in the last two years. During this period, Bergen Group has made the most of the advantages it has as a group consisting of four different divisions that operate in industries with varying lead times from contract signature to project start-up. The activity level in the Shipbuilding Division was high last year. This year it is the Offshore Division that accounts for the biggest growth. We are preparing for extensive activity in all the divisions in the years ahead,' says Mr Engebretsen. 'Bergen Group has a clear strategy for further development of the group's expertise and capacity in relation to complex maritime and offshore projects. We have succeeded in winning contracts on that basis, and we have secured the increased capacity we need to grow in an exciting and forward-looking market,' says the CEO, with reference to, among other things, the recent partnership agreement with an Indian IT and engineering company that ensures that the group will have access to a further 400 engineers when required. The interim report for the first quarter 2011 is enclosed. **Source : PortNews**



The containership **Ocean Bright** seen sailing from Lyttelton 09.05.11. **Photo : Alan Calvert ©**

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UASC Adds Port Call at Jebel Ali

United Arab Shipping Company expanded its Asia-Europe Service 1 with a direct call at Jebel Ali, a major transshipment hub in the Middle East. The additional port call came into effect with the sailing of vessel **UASC Doha** from Jebel Ali on May 7. The revised AEC1 rotation is Jebel Ali, Khorfakkan, Port Qasim, Nhava Sheva (Jawaharlal Nehru), Pipavav, Jeddah, Port Said, Antwerp, Thamesport, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and back to Jebel Ali.

The upgraded service offers transit times of 17 days from the last port in Europe and 25 days from Jebel Ali to the first port in North Europe, the Middle East carrier said. Separately, UASC said it plans to apply a new round of rate increases on the trade from Asia to all destinations in the Red Sea region, as part of a rate restoration program.

The rate restoration, to be implemented in two stages, will boost rates on the route by \$200 per 20-foot-equivalent unit beginning June 1 until June 30, followed by another increase of the same amount beginning July 1, lasting until July 31. **Source : The Journal of Commerce Online**



The tug **JAN LEENHEER** seen with the **MATADOR 3** off Harwich – **Photo : Andrew Moors (c)**

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The 1974 built, Italian Tug, of AUGUSTEA, " BRUCOLI " seen in Grand Harbour, Malta, on the 12-05-2011
Photo : Gejtu Spiteri ©

MISC's yard sale boosts figures

Annual profit at Malaysian shipping giant MISC has been boosted by a sale of shares in a shipyard, but the fourth quarter turned red. The company, whose mixed fleet includes tankers, containerships and LNG carriers, said net earnings in the year to 31 March were RM2.2bn (\$730m), up from RM822m in the previous year. Revenue fell by 10.5% to RM12.32bn, compared to RM13.77bn in the preceding year, as liner and heavy engineering income dwindled. Other operating income rose, however, and it banked an RM1.4bn gain from diluting its stake in Malaysia Marine & Heavy Engineering. **Source: Seatrade-Asia**


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DP World LSE listing may prompt Dubai stake sale

DP World planned dual listing on the London Stock Exchange may prompt a stake sale by majority shareholder Dubai World, a report by investment bank J.P. Morgan said. State-owned conglomerate Dubai World owns 80 percent of the port operator, which is considered one of its more profitable assets. "This (London listing) remains a key milestone in clearing the path to an improved liquidity through a broader investor participation and/or potential selling by majority shareholder Dubai World," the report, dated May 11, said. DP World said on Thursday that it would list on the LSE by

end of May or Early June. The company said a one-for-20 share consolidation will take effect from May 19 adding that its free float would remain unchanged at 19.55 percent. **Source : PortNews**



Above seen the **SeaJack** lifting blades at the Ormonde windfarm Barrows UK.

Photo : Tony Brands ©

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Dublin-based d'Amico Group announces \$310m fleet expansion

The Dublin-based international shipping company, The d'Amico Group has confirmed its intentions to expand its fleet with the delivery of two new handy-size dry-bulk vessels worth around US \$60 million from one of the world's major shipbuilders, Hyundai Mipo, based in Ulsan, Korea.

These two latest vessel acquisitions have been named the [Cielo di Dublino](#) and the [Cielo di San Francisco](#), the latter vessel being 'christened' by Mrs. Sandra Murphy, wife of Mr. Glenn Murphy, Director, Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) at a ceremony in Korea on 10th May.

The two additions to the fleet mark another important chapter in the Group's development since it established its Irish office in 2002, as these vessels are managed from its Dublin office under the Irish Tonnage Tax regime. The investment in these two new vessels reflects the d'Amico Group's commitment to growth, to providing a first-class service to their clients and to investment in its Irish operations.

Speaking at the naming ceremony in Korea, Mr. Cesare d'Amico, Group CEO stated: "It is also fantastic to have with me such a distinguished delegation from Ireland because we have always believed very much in the potential of this country and this event marks a milestone, in my opinion, in the history of our two entities. Without their support, today probably would have not occurred". The d'Amico Group began and grew as a family owned business; it has been operating successfully in the international shipping business for over 50 years. The Group has four more vessels under construction in Korea, scheduled for delivery in 2012, and two under construction in Japan which are scheduled for delivery in 2013. These latter ships represent a further investment in excess of US \$310 million. IMDO Director Glenn Murphy commented: "d'Amico Group are one of a leading number of firms that are driving investment in this sector in Ireland which is contributing to new employment and growth opportunities". **Source:** Irish Trucker

Weer diepgangrecord op Westerschelde



Records zijn er om te worden gebroken. Nadat vorige maand nieuwe diepgangrecords op de Westerschelde zijn gevestigd, zette de [MSC Savona](#) afgelopen zaterdag de nieuwe norm. Deze containerreus is binnen gekomen met een diepgang van 15,50 meter. De [Savona](#), goed voor 14.000 standaardcontainers, vaart naar de MSC-terminal in

Antwerpen. De reis geldt als een proefvaart, waarvoor de Permanente Commissie voor de Scheldevaart speciale toestemming heeft verleend. De [MSC Savona](#) passeert Vlissingen om 10.30 en Terneuzen om 11.30 uur **Source :**

PCZ - **Photo : Sjaak Klaassen ©**

Ferries to go private

Sydney Ferries would be run by private operators but remain in government hands, under plans announced by Premier Barry O'Farrell today. The government would run advertisements in newspapers next week seeking registrations of interest from companies to run the ferries, he said.

The government would maintain ownership of the ferries under the plan. But the government would allow non-government operators to lease, maintain and operate the fleet. Ferries currently service northern district commuters in Woolwich, Cockatoo Island, Huntleys Point, Gladesville, Bayview Park, Kissing Point and Meadowbank.

Registrations of interest for franchising existing services must be lodged with the Department of Transport by May 31.

The plan has the backing of Infrastructure Partnerships Australia chief executive Brendan Lyon, who said taxpayer funding had soared by 10 per cent between 2005 and 2008. ``But patronage only grew by two per cent," Mr Lyon said. Mr O'Farrell said Sydney Harbour, ``the most beautiful harbour in the world" deserved a ferry service that matches its world class status. He was joined at the announcement at Parliament House in Sydney by Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian. Ms Berejiklian said the government's Fixing the Ferries program would reinstate hundreds of ferry services cut in October 2010 by the Labor Government. ``In October last year the Labor Government slashed the number of weekly northside ferry services by 30 per cent from 731 to 498, a cut of 233 weekly services," Ms Berejiklian

Source : Northern District Times

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Star Bulk Acquires Two Capesize Vessels With Long Term Timecharters Attached

Star Bulk Carriers Corp., a global shipping company focusing on the transportation of dry bulk cargoes, Friday announced that it has entered into definitive agreements to acquire two Capesize bulk carriers for an aggregate purchase price of approximately \$51.5 million.

The first Capesize vessel has a carrying capacity of approximately 168,000 dwt and was built in South Korea in 1996. This vessel has a time charter agreement with a major mining company until November 2015 at the earliest, at a gross daily rate of \$25,000. The vessel is expected to generate \$38-44 million in gross revenue and is currently expected to be delivered to Star Bulk within July 2011. The second Capesize vessel has a carrying capacity of approximately 170,000 dwt and was built in Japan in 1994. This vessel has a time charter agreement with a major mining company until August 2014 at the earliest, at a gross daily rate of \$24,500. The vessel is expected to generate \$26-31 million in gross revenue and is currently expected to be delivered to Star Bulk within July 2011.

The vessels are being acquired from companies, in which family members of our Chairman, Mr Petros Pappas, hold minority stakes. The new vessel acquisitions will be financed through a combination of company cash and bank debt. Spyros Capralos, President and CEO of Star Bulk, commented: "We are pleased to acquire these two vessels that will increase significantly our fleet's carrying and earnings capacity. We believe that the time charter agreements that the two vessels have attached to them will substantially enhance our revenue visibility and improve our financial results going forward, since they are expected to contribute a minimum of \$64 million to a maximum of \$75 million in gross revenue. We will continue to be on the lookout for opportunities to structure accretive transactions that increase shareholder value." Star Bulk is a global shipping company providing worldwide seaborne transportation solutions in the dry bulk sector. Star Bulk's vessels transport major bulks, which include iron ore, coal and grain and minor bulks such as bauxite, fertilizers and steel products. Star Bulk was incorporated in the Marshall Islands on December 13, 2006 and maintains executive offices in Athens, Greece. Its common stock trades on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "SBLK." Currently, Star Bulk has an operating fleet of eleven dry bulk carriers, definitive agreements to build two Capesize vessels and definitive agreements to acquire two Capesize vessels. The total fleet consists of fifteen vessels, seven Capesize, and eight Supramax dry bulk vessels with a combined cargo carrying capacity of 1,626,721 deadweight tons. The average age of our current operating fleet is approximately 11 years. **Source: Star Bulk Carriers Ltd.**



The **GSP BIGFOOT** seen operating in Black Sea – Photo : Capt Dariusz Klekowiecki ©

Genco Shipping & Trading Limited Takes Delivery of Handysize Newbuilding

Genco Shipping & Trading Limited Friday announced that it has taken delivery of the **Genco Avra**, a 35,000 dwt Handysize newbuilding. The Genco Avra is the third of five vessels to be delivered to the Company under Genco's agreement previously announced on June 9, 2010 to acquire five Handysize vessels from companies within the Metrostar group of companies.

The Genco Avra is expected to be delivered to its charterer, Cargill International S.A., on or about May 14, 2011 to commence a spot market-related time charter for 34.5 to 37.5 months. The rate for the time charter will be linked to the Baltic Handysize Index (BHSI), incorporating a floor of \$8,500 and a ceiling of \$13,500 daily, with a 50% profit sharing arrangement to apply to any amount above the ceiling. The rate will be based on 115% of the average of the daily rates of the BHSI, as reflected in daily reports. Hire will be paid every 15 days in advance, net of a 5.00% third party brokerage commission.

The Company used available cash of \$9.9 million as well as \$20.0 million under its \$100 million term loan facility to pay the remaining balance of \$29.9 million for the Genco Avra. Genco Shipping & Trading Limited transports iron ore, coal, grain, steel products and other drybulk cargoes along worldwide shipping routes. Excluding Baltic Trading Limited's fleet, and assuming deliveries of the vessels we recently agreed to acquire, we will own a fleet of 53 drybulk vessels, consisting of nine Capesize, eight Panamax, 17 Supramax, six Handymax and 13 Handysize vessels, with an aggregate carrying capacity of approximately 3,812,000 dwt. In addition, our subsidiary Baltic Trading Limited currently owns a fleet of nine drybulk vessels, consisting of two Capesize, four Supramax, and three Handysize vessels. References to Genco's vessels and fleet in this press release exclude vessels owned by Baltic Trading Limited, a subsidiary of Genco **Source: Genco Shipping & Trading Limited**



In Curacao the **CLELIA II** was renamed in **ORION II**

Photo : Kees Bustraan – <http://community.webshots.com/user/cornelis224> (c)

Port of Tanjung Pelepas to handle 7.5 million TEUs in 2011

MMC Corp Bhd's Port of Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) has emerged as the fastest-growing container port in the first quarter of 2011 and is on track to handle 7.5 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) for the year, Bernama reports.

In the first quarter of 2011, PTP's container traffic grew by 1.79 million TEUs, or 18 per cent, compared with a year ago. MMC group managing director, Datuk Hasni Harun, said the remarkable growth was mainly due to higher volume from its main customers -- Maersk Line and Evergreen Group.

"PTP is poised to extend its uninterrupted annual volume growth, with a forecast volume of 7.5 million TEUs in 2011, up 15 per cent from the previous year," he said in an interview with Bernama on Wednesday. In fact, the compound annual growth for PTP's throughput volume for the 10 years since 2001 is at 14 per cent, positioning it as a competitive port.

"PTP's double-digit growth is comparable with some of the leading ports in Malaysia as well as in the region," said Hasni, adding that it was currently ranked 17th in terms of the world's busiest container port in 2010.

Going forward, he said, PTP would benefit from an increasing customer focus on cost, which would lead to main liners opting for ports which offered better value proposition. The productivity and efficiency of PTP's port operation is also internationally-recognised where its average quay crane productivity handling 35 gross crane moves per hour is of a world-class standard.

PTP also has the capacity to handle a sizeable 8.5 million TEUs. Strategically located at the confluence of the world's major shipping lanes, PTP has 12 berths stretched over 4.3 km quay length and has the facility to accommodate the latest generation vessels that are generally large in size.

Johor Port, which MMC has 100 per cent, also serves as an important origination point for cargo, particularly from the adjoining Pasir Gudang vicinity, he said. Johor Port manages the largest vegetable oil tank installation in the world and is one of the few ports in Asia which received accreditation from the London Metal Exchange (LME) as an approved LME location for its warehousing activities and facilities.

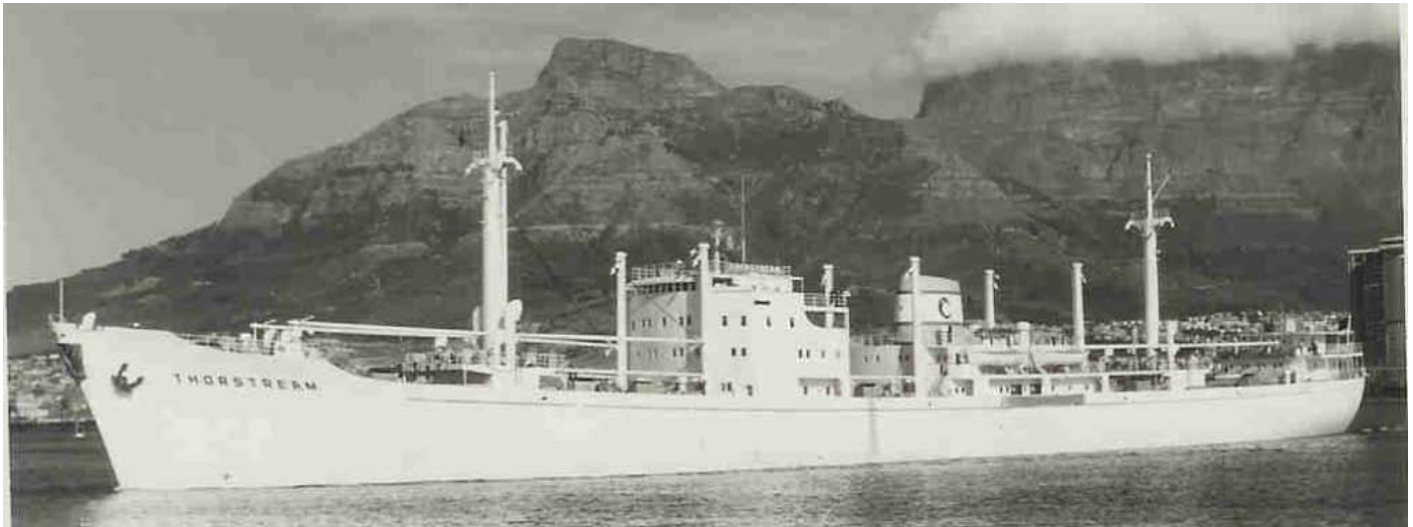
"This mature port continues to provide a steady annual income stream to MMC, where positive growth was recorded year-on-year," he said. In 2010, Johor Port handled 15.7 million free weight tonne (FWT) of conventional cargo consisting of dry bulk, break bulk and liquid bulk cargo, an increase of nine per cent compared with the previous year. The port's container terminal recorded a four per cent growth in container throughput to 876,000 TEUs driven by higher imports and exports volume. **Source : PortNews**

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s.s. **SANDENBURGH** as watercolour of **F.H. Haalmeijer sr.** (1916-1996).

OLDIE – FROM THE SHOEBOX



The 1960 Norwegian built 5758 gross ton classic cargo liner **THORSTREAM** served on Thor Dahl's Christensen Canadian African Lines service from Canada to Southern Africa. A prominent figurehead depicting Thor, the god of thunder, was a feature on most of the company's ships. **Photo: Robert Pabst ©**

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The **West Cressida** towed by PRM's **Pacific 38** and the **Pacific 68** for a field move in the Gulf of Thailand
Photo : Richard Qualm (c)

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