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The **mount ROBSON** enroute Amsterdam – Photo Simon Wolf (c)

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Shell's Arctic Drillship, The Kulluk, Grounds Off Alaska in Harsh Seas

Shell has confirmed its Arctic-class drillship, The **Kulluk**, grounded on the southeast shoreline of Sitkalidak Island, Alaska, at approximately 9 p.m. local time on December 31, 2012, while under tow in heavy seas from Alaska to the U.S. port of Seattle, Washington State. There has been no loss of life and no significant injuries as a result of...



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Cargo ship caught dumping waste

More than 162 cubic meters of contaminated water were discharged into the Yangtze River estuary by a Panamanian-registered cargo ship, which was nabbed by the Shanghai Maritime Safety Administration on Jan 1.

The 2,282-ton liner discharged the poisonous and harmful waste into the Yangtze River four times on Nov 8 and Nov 25, according to a release by the administration.

Such discharges broke international conventions and China's marine environmental management regulations on the prevention of pollution from ships. The case is now under further investigation.

There were five similar cases caught last year by Shanghai maritime authority's Jinshan branch office, which tracked down the New Year's Day's case.

An aircraft from the Shanghai Maritime Safety Administration filmed an oil slick 600 meters long and 40 meters wide on a routine patrol Nov 3 over the Yangtze River, which was discharged from a foreign oil tanker.

Mariners from the vessel have denied the pollution discharge. **source : china daily**



The **HHL MISSISSIPPI** in Rio Grande. Photo: **Marcelo Vieira** ©

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Chinese navy Protects Ships from Pirates

On March 25, one month after leaving Qingdao, Shandong province, Captain Wang Haijiang felt a bit more excited than usual. "Pirates had finally appeared," he recalled. "There were five batches of pirates harassing the fleet, but we, as part of the well-trained Chinese navy, were confident and would never be intimidated, even if war broke out," the chief of the missile destroyer Qingdao, from the North Sea Fleet, told China Daily. On Wednesday, the People's Liberation Army navy observed the fourth anniversary of sending escort fleets to the Gulf of Aden and Somali waters. Wang has every reason to be confident.

From February to September, the 11th escort fleet, with three ships and a crew of 800 from the North Sea Fleet, escorted 184 vessels, and inspected and drove away 126 suspicious ships in the area.

Over the past four years, the PLA navy has provided 13 groups with 34 warships, 28 helicopters and nearly 10,000 military men as escorts. More than 5,000 ships from China and the rest of the world were successfully protected.

The escort helped China to increase its anti-piracy capability and helped make the Gulf of Aden and Somali waters a safer place, experts said.

Improved capabilities

The Chinese navy has made an important contribution to the sharp decline in piracy over the past four years, said Zhang Junshe, deputy director of the Naval Military Studies Research Institute.

Somali pirate attacks fell to 70 in the first nine months of this year, compared with 199 incidents in 2011. It was the lowest number in three years as tougher navy action and private armed security teams deterred gangs, the International Maritime Bureau said in October.

There has not been a successful hijacking of a merchant vessel off Somalia in the second half of this year, Reuters quoted outgoing commander of the NATO mission, Ben Bekkering, as saying this month.

The navy accumulated enough experience to optimize its escort methods. It simplified and diversified procedures, and developed a regular escort schedule, experts said.

The navy is continuing to improve its combat capability by adapting to the pirates' new tactics, said Yang Junfei, commander of the 11th escort fleet and political commissar of the North Sea Fleet.

To address the increasing number of pirate attacks at dawn and dusk, for instance, the fleet, led by Yang, conducted its first day-and-night drill, involving warships and helicopters in the Indian Ocean in March.

Pirates have extended their activities from Somalia and the Gulf of Aden to the western coast of India and Sri Lanka, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Oman and the Mozambique Channel, he said.

They have changed their targets from slow, low merchant vessels to big, high ones carrying coal and oil, said Yang.

"The troops have never stopped training, in order to be ready for any threat," he said.

Efficient methods

Captain Liu from Nanjing Ocean Shipping Co Ltd is one of many who benefited from the Chinese navy's efficient anti-piracy methods.

Liu, with two decades of shipping experience, almost felt "hopeless" when he learned in Nanjing on April 6 that the company's vessel Xianghuamen had been attacked and 28 crew member had been kidnapped by pirates in waters off Iran.

The 11th escort fleet headed to Iran the moment they got the information and actively coordinated with the nearby international naval forces for assistance at the same time.

Ten hours later, all the kidnapped crew members were rescued by the Iranian navy.

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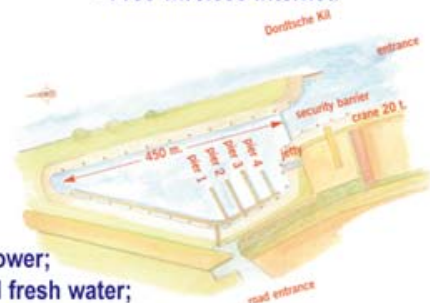
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Somalia: EU Naval Force Warship BNS Louise Marie Once Again Apprehends Suspect Pirates At Sea

Just 12 days after EU Naval Force **warship BNS Louise Marie** apprehended five suspect pirates at sea off the Somali Coast, the Belgium frigate has once again located a suspect skiff - this time with three men on board.

The warship, which is operating as part of the European Union's counter-piracy mission - **Operation Atalanta**, has maintained a constant sea watch during the past weeks in the waters off the Horn of Africa to help protect vessels from pirate attack.

During this latest incident, the skiff was located early morning on Thursday 27 December 400 miles off the Somali Coast by a Swedish EU NAVFOR maritime patrol aircraft. BNS Louise-Marie was tasked to conduct a surface search and was able to quickly locate the vessel. Upon arrival at the scene the warship's boarding team was deployed to apprehend the three suspect pirates.

After the men were taken on board **BNS Louise Marie**, analysis of the event was undertaken and evidence collected. Earlier today, having looked at the evidence available, the decision was taken to put the men ashore on to a Somali beach.

Speaking about this latest counter-piracy operation, Rear Admiral Gualtiero Mattesi, the Deputy Operation Commander of the EU Naval Force said "EU Naval Force's continued vigilance over this period has paid dividends. **BNS Louise Marie's** crew was able to quickly locate these men, and with reasonable grounds to suspect piracy, quite rightly took away their equipment that they may have used to prey on ships at sea. The EU always seeks, where possible, a legal finish, however, this time, whilst there were reasonable grounds to suspect piracy, it was felt that there was insufficient evidence to secure a prosecution. The European Union's intent is clear - to be tough on piracy, whilst helping Somalis to regain peaceful control of their own country". **BNS Louise Marie** continues with her counter-piracy patrols. **Source: European Union Naval Force Somalia**



The VOS SWEET in Ijmuiden. **Photo: Willem Harlaar (c)**

Pakistani fruit shippers appeal for subsidies as reefer rates rocket

PAKISTANI fruit exporters have appealed for state freight subsidies on exports of kinnow, an easy-peel orange-like fruit, after carriers increased reefer rates US\$1,500 per FEU from January, reports Karachi's News International.

"The Ministry of Commerce should grant a subsidy on exports of kinnow after shipping companies are to increase freight charges, keeping in view the abnormal growth in costs," said Harvest Tradings CEO Ahmad Jawad. Freight to Malaysia will increase to \$3,400 per FEU after the addition of the \$1,500 reefer FEU charge. Freight to Jeddah will rise

to \$3,600 FEU in addition to the \$1,500 existing charge, said Mr Jawad. Kinnow exports to Russia will pay an additional \$500 per FEU because of a mandatory charge for a recently required certificate needed by fruit exporters, a measure imposed by Russian authorities after a recent visit to Pakistan. Pakistan exports \$40 million to \$50 million a year of kinnow.

Mr Jawad said the government should pay 50 per cent freight charges to the shipping lines as he said happened in India, or it should issue directives to the shipping lines to lower rates. Exports of kinnow have already been badly hit by the recent 11-day national truckers strike. "The increase in freight charges will prove another suffering for kinnow exports," he said.

"The strike by goods transport carriers has resulted in lowering kinnow exports by around 10 per cent this year [July 2012 to June 2013]. Exporters may export around 180,000 tons of kinnow this year against a set target of 200,000 tons," he said. Mr Jawad said this year's production of kinnow was 20 per cent lower at 1.8 million tons from two million tons last year, adding that last year, Pakistan exported 225,000 tons citrus fruit against a target of 300,000 tons.

Despite restoration of normal trucking, it would take around 10 days for normality to return, he said, adding that kinnow processing factories and orchards in Sargodha district are over-supplied as owners try to find ways to preserve their produce.

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"The responsibility and flexibility that the Chinese navy showed during the rescue were really impressive," Liu said, adding that Chinese escort fleets have regular departure schedules, but they often leave one warship behind to wait for merchant ships that are late due to extreme weather.

If the warship did not wait for merchant ships, "the company would lose thousands of dollars and face the danger of piracy every day".

The company did not reduce its shipping business to the area after the incident, said Liu. "With the PLA navy's protection, we are not afraid of pirates."

China's business and energy interests in the busy shipping lanes of the Gulf of Aden demand the ongoing presence of its navy, said Zhai Dequan, deputy secretary-general of the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association.

But Somalia's 3,300-km coastline, the longest coastline in Africa and the Middle East, makes anti-piracy efforts difficult to solve overnight.

Political instability and poverty in war-torn Somalia continue to drive fishermen to become pirates and storm commercial vessels for ransom.

Last year, Somali piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the northwestern Indian Ocean netted \$160 million, said the One Earth Future foundation in the United States.

China has called upon the international community to be more responsive by providing more financing and technical assistance for anti-piracy efforts, China's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations Wang Min said on Nov 19.

Currently, around 20 international warships are patrolling Somali waters, Xinhua reported. However, since many countries do not send escort forces due to a combination of limited interests and huge costs, China shoulders responsibility for foreign vessels based on growing national strength and a friendly policy, said Zhai.

About half of the vessels escorted by the Chinese navy have been foreign ones, including four from the World Food Programme.

Most of these vessels were carrying items closely related to people's daily lives, including oil, food and chemical fertilizer, said the China Marine Search and Rescue Center.

China has coordinated its anti-piracy efforts with other parties and will continue to do so. It was authorized by the UN in November to extend its escort duties by one more year, said Yang Yujun, spokesman of the Ministry of National Defense.

"Such international cooperation and exchanges also help the rest of the world to know more about China and accept it," said Zhai.

The political commissar of the 11th escort fleet, Xia Kewei, recalled when the fleet visited Romania in August, the Romanians continually asked them about their escort experience.

Romania was going to send its first fleet to join a NATO escort mission at the time. "Although each country contributes to anti-piracy efforts for its own reasons and in its own ways, all of us share the same goal: driving pirates away and safeguarding transportation", he said. Source: CRI



The **FLINTER AMERICA** outbound from Amsterdam bound for Ravenna. Photo: Marcel Coster ©

Singapore Merchant Shipping Safety Convention rules take effect in January

SINGAPORE's Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) has released a circular informing the shipping industry, namely, shipowners, managers, operators, masters, crew members and surveyors of an amendment to the Merchant Shipping Safety Convention.

The MPA is advising that the Merchant Shipping (Safety Convention) (Amendment No 2) Regulations 2012 came into force on January 2013.

The port authority explained that the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organisation adopted amendments on May 20, 2011, to Chapter III of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 (SOLAS 74) by Resolution MSC.317(89).

It added that Shipping Circular No. 14 of 2011 provides further information on the Resolution.

More scrapping, sparked by eco-rules, eases overcapacity concerns SHIPPING accountant consultants **Moore Stephens**, in their latest quarterly shipping confidence survey, reports the industry spirits have recovered from their lowest level in 2011.

The upturn in mood appears to be related to an increase in scrapping, prompted by environmental rules that make ships obsolete, resulting in a reduction of the overcapacity problem that has been with the industry for years.

Scrapping was cited in a number of responses to the survey, often because it has been promoted by environmental regulation, such as the Ballast Water Management convention. The industry hopes that as more and more older ships go to scrap yards, and businesses start to recover, freight rates will increase.

But Moore Stephens shipping partner Richard Greiner was doubtful. "Scrapping activity has increased, although there is simply not enough demolition capacity in the world for this to be a solution."

Other respondents were also sceptical. "More demolition and greater discipline in respect of newbuildings is required before the upturn can begin," said one.

Said another: "Even though scrapping levels are high, the number of newbuildings on the market will continue to result in oversupply and keep freight rates depressed." Other respondents stressed macro-economic worries, in particular, the financial difficulties of the eurozone and the problem of the availability of third-party finance. But the likelihood of respondents making a major investment or significant developments over the next 12 months was up on the previous survey, on a scale of one to 10, from 5.3 to 5.4 - the highest level since May 2011.

Said Mr Greiner: "The inescapable conclusion is that those companies that emerge intact and profitable from one of the darkest periods in recent shipping memory will be among the leanest and greenest the industry has ever seen."

Biggest box maker seeks US\$600 million on US debt market to ease its debt

SHENZHEN'S China International Marine Containers (CIMC), the world's biggest container maker, hopes to raise \$600 million in 3-year notes on the US debt market to restructure its own debt load.

In a notice posted on the website of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, CIMC said its Hong Kong subsidiary has signed an agreement with Bank of China and Bank of America Merrill Lynch to facilitate the transaction. Separately, Hong Kong-based Singamas Container Holdings, the world's second biggest container maker, has been doing badly on the Hong Kong exchange, reports Bloomberg

Singamas expects 2012 net income to decline from the US\$138.6 million posted a year earlier as sales and gross profit margin have dropped because of the economic downturn in Europe and the US, the company said in a December 28 filing. Market weakness may continue until the second half of next year, it said in the filing.

"Singamas has been hit by a waning demand for containers," said Lawrence Li, a Shanghai-based analyst at UOB-Kay Hian Holdings Ltd.

In November, Reuters reported CIMC de-listed from what it called "China's ailing B-share market" to prepare for a re-listing in Hong Kong, which was accomplished on December 19.

With 40 per cent of market share in the international container business and 56 per cent of the dry marine container market, CIMC has been the world's biggest box maker since 1996, says Wikipedia, adding that it has 12 factories across China. Port of Genoa container growth up 11.5pc to 2 million TEU in 2012 ITALY's Port of Genoa's container facility had a 11.5 per cent surge in container throughput at two million TEU attributed to investments by the port authority and terminal operators.

The port was one of the few Italian harbours to show robust cargo growth particularly on its Far East-Europe trade routes which in 2011 accounted for 35 per cent of its overall container throughput, reported London-area World Cargo News.

Highest increases during the nine month period of 2012 were on South American trades at 111 per cent, followed by Oceania at 107 per cent, North Africa at 28 per cent and Middle East at 23 per cent. North America container traffic was the lowest but still up by 17 per cent.

The Genoa Port Authority's (APG) dredging projects has supported the handling of mega ships such as 13,000-TEU Maersk Eindhoven in line with acquisition of Shanghai-made ZPMC 18-wide ship-to-shore cranes. [SECH Calata Sanita](#) upgraded to five 18-row wide cranes and Genoa Port Terminal installed a new mobile harbour crane.

The Port of Genoa was also awarded EUR100 million (US\$131.8 million) to build the Calata Bettolo container terminal to be completed in 2014 with further yard space of 60,000 square metres in the Sampierdarena basin between Ronca and Canepa piers due by first quarter 2015. Calata Bettolo will boast a depth of 17 metres and a quay length of 625 metres and with an ability to handle 800,000 TEU annually.

Wan Hai-Yang Ming intra-Asia THI loop calls at Shenzhen's loop Shekou
THE joint intra-Asia service operated by [Wan Hai and Yang Ming](#), calling at Taiwan, Hong Kong and Indonesia, has added Shekou Container Terminal (SCT) to its ports of call. Three vessels in the 1,500- to 2,000-TEU range have been deployed on routes which calls at SCT every Monday. Port rotation is Kaohsiung, Hong Kong, Shekou, Surabaya, Jakarta and back to Kaohsiung.

This is the upgrade of the previous Taiwan-Indonesia service TIS. Hong Kong, Shekou and Surabaya are the newly added ports of call.

German regulator asks banks to scrutinize shipping loans

German regulator BaFin has written to auditors and banks asking them to scrutinise their exposure to shipping loans as they prepare annual earnings reports for 2012, four financial sources familiar with the matter said. The formal request was made in a letter sent late last year, shortly before Hamburg-based HSH Nordbank said it would raise loan loss provisions to match increased levels of default on ship loans. Germany's 12 largest banks had exposure of around 98 billion euros (\$129.2 billion) to the stricken shipping sector in mid-2012, statistics based on mid-2012 figures showed.

Dirk Mueller-Tronnier, country leader for banking at Ernst & Young Germany said, "BaFin asked companies and auditors to put particular emphasis on shipping loans as they prepare full-year reports." The three other sources asked not to be identified. Aside from HSH and NordLB, large banks with exposure to the shipping sector include Commerzbank and Deutsche Bank. **Source: Reuters**

NAVY NEWS



The DDG 98 USS SHERMANN visited Haifa photo ; peterSzamosi ©

THREE NEW HELICOPTERS FOR PHILIPPINE NAVY.

MANILA, Jan. 2 (PNA) - With the signing of the contract of agreement for the Philippines' three naval helicopters a done deal, the Dept. of National Defense expects the aircraft to be delivered and commissioned by 2014.

This is expected to gain impetus with the submission of the letter of credit to the manufacturer, **AugustaWestland S.P.A.**, within the first quarter of 2013.

Upon receipt of this document, the helicopter builder and supplier has 365 working days to deliver the aircraft to the Philippines.

DND observers said they see no problem with the submission of the needed documents, adding that the waiting period for this will be quite short. **Source : PTNews**

HMCS Athabaskan hull damaged in tow line break

Holes, dents, scrapes can be seen on Iroquois-class destroyer



The hull of the Royal Canadian Navy ship **HMCS Athabaskan** was damaged when it broke loose from its tow line last week and went adrift off Scatarie Island in Cape Breton, CBC News has learned. The **Iroquois-class** destroyer, which is currently docked in North Sydney, has at least seven holes in its hull along with several dents and scrapes. It also appears the ship's frame may be warped along the waterline.



The Royal Canadian Navy declined to comment to CBC News about the extent of the damage. **HMCS Athabaskan** was in St. Catharines, Ont., for a refit and was on its way to Halifax for the winter when it went adrift on Friday night.

The tow line to the 130-metre vessel was reconnected with the help of a Cormorant helicopter from the airbase in **Greenwood, N.S.**

There was no one on the ship at the time of the incident. **HMCS Athabaskan** went adrift off the same island where the bulk carrier **MV Miner** went aground in September 2010. The **MV Miner** was on its way to Europe when the tow line snapped. The rusting ship is still beached off Scatarie Island despite several attempts to refloat it. Breton, ourceCBC News

Indian Navy set to issue tender for new submarines

The Indian Navy is set to "very soon" issue a **RfP** (request for proposal or tender) for a new line of six submarines with AIP (air independent propulsion) capability.

The requirement has been pending for quite a few years but the proposal for the new line, designated Project 75-I, has now being given firm clearance by the government, according to Indian Navy chief, Admiral DK Joshi. Asked how soon is "very soon," the naval chief told India Strategic defence magazine that the defence acquisition committee (DAC) had already cleared a note on acceptance of necessity (AON), the navy had finalized the RfP and it was in its last stage of formalities for clearance in the defence ministry.

As per procedures, depending on the money involved, AON has to be cleared by a competent authority. If the requirement involves more than Rs 1,000 crores (\$200 million), then it is by the DAC, headed by the defence minister. The approval was accorded just before the Navy Day on December 4, 2012.

AIP increases the mission life of a submarine by around three times, depending upon the task and parameters required. The capability enables a submarine to generate air onboard without the need to surface for breathing to recharge its batteries.

At present, none of the Indian submarines have this capability, and some of them can only be under water. The Indian Navy is set to "very soon" issue a RFP (request for proposal or tender) for a new line of six submarines with AIP (air independent propulsion) capability.

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At present, none of the Indian submarines have this capability, and some of them can only be under water for only three to five days. The existing fleet of 14 diesel-electric submarines is rather weak despite the periodic upgrades, although some newer EW (electronic warfare) systems have been installed.

Submarines are about staying underwater as long as possible, and that is why nuclear power is used to keep them submerged for around three months, or to the limits of human endurance.

The new Project 75-I submarines should be huge in value, estimated at around \$10 billion-plus, depending upon the offsets and transfer of technology (ToT).

At present, six new Scorpenes under Project 75 are being built for more than 5% billion (Rs 23,562 crore) by the state-run Mazagon Dock Ltd. (MDL) under licence from the French DCNS company.

MDL is also hoping to get the new Project 75-I line but it has substantial work in hand for years — 14 ships in addition to the six Scorpenes. The experience gained in building the Scorpenes though should be extremely useful and must not get wasted.

AIP is also being considered for the last two of the existing line of Scorpenes by installing plugs — about eight meters in length and the same diameter as that of the submarine. Admiral Joshi said that the (Defence Research and Development Organisation) DRDO was working on building these plugs, but that if this entailed delay, "we will not wait".

The Scorpene project is already late by three years, with the first submarine scheduled to be out in June 2015 — instead of 2012 — and the last in September 2018.

DCNS has offered to build the plugs and some negotiations have taken place with it. Nonetheless, DRDO's Naval Materials Research Laboratory (NMRL) at Ambarnath in Maharashtra is working on the project to bring in some indigenous capability and content.

About the Project 75-I, defence ministry sources said that its Department of Defence Production was working on fine-tuning some features like Who-Will-Do-What among the Indian shipyards and the suppliers in terms of sub-systems and weapons. Details on offsets and ToT, which have a sizeable bearing on the costs, are also being given the last touches.

Notably, the defence offsets policy mandates a minimum investment of 30 per cent to be put back in a related defence industrial venture in India, but in the biggest defence contract that is now being negotiated for the French Rafale multi role combat aircraft (MRCA), this figure is 50 per cent.

As per indications, the RfP for the submarines should be out even in January 2013, or latest by March before the financial year 2012-13 ends.

The Indian Navy's current fleet of conventional diesel-electric submarines is quite old.



Photo: [Piet Sinke's collection](#).

There are four HDW [Shishumar class](#) submarines acquired from Germany and 10 [Kilo Sindhughosh class](#) from Russia, both from 1986 onwards. The service life of a submarine is estimated at around 20 years, but because of political indecision after the allegations over the purchase of Bofors guns from Sweden, the modernization process of the Navy — along with that of the Army and Indian Air Force — suffered.

In 1998, the then naval chief, Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat, projected a requirement of a 24-submarine fleet in the navy's long-term vision for 30 years. In 1999, the Cabinet committee on security (CCS) — the apex body headed by the prime minister — approved the plan for their indigenous construction in two lines.

The Scorpenes are being built in India to gain experience and indigenous support capability. India had gained some earlier with the induction of HDW boats but as there was no follow-on programme, that experience was lost and all those involved in the project have retired.

The only direct submarine acquisition of the Indian Navy after the HDW and Kilo submarines is that of the single nuclear power attack submarine (SSN) [INS Chakra](#) from Russia in 2012. There are also some technical issues with it, and during his recent to New Delhi, Russian President Vladimir Putin promised to have them sorted out ASAP.

An SSN is a nuclear propelled but not nuclear armed submarine. The conventionally-powered diesel electric submarines are known as the SSK class. for only three to five days. The existing fleet of 14 diesel-electric submarines is rather weak despite the periodic upgrades, although some newer EW (electronic warfare) systems have been installed.

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The new Project 75-I submarines should be huge in value, estimated at around \$10 billion-plus, depending upon the offsets and transfer of technology (ToT).

At present, six new Scorpenes under Project 75 are being built for more than 5% billion (Rs 23,562 crore) by the state-run **Mazagon Dock Ltd. (MDL)** under licence from the **French DCNS company**.

MDL is also hoping to get the new Project 75-I line but it has substantial work in hand for years — 14 ships in addition to the six Scorpenes. The experience gained in building the Scorpenes though should be extremely useful and must not get wasted.

AIP is also being considered for the last two of the existing line of **Scorpenes** by installing plugs — about eight meters in length and the same diameter as that of the submarine. Admiral Joshi said that the (Defence Research and Development Organisation) DRDO was working on building these plugs, but that if this entailed delay, "we will not wait".

The Scorpene project is already late by three years, with the first submarine scheduled to be out in June 2015 — instead of 2012 — and the last in September 2018.

DCNS has offered to build the plugs and some negotiations have taken place with it. Nonetheless, DRDO's Naval Materials Research Laboratory (NMRL) at Ambernath in Maharashtra is working on the project to bring in some indigenous capability and content.

About the Project 75-I, defence ministry sources said that its Department of Defence Production was working on fine-tuning some features like Who-Will-Do-What among the Indian shipyards and the suppliers in terms of sub-systems and weapons. Details on offsets and ToT, which have a sizeable bearing on the costs, are also being given the last touches.

Notably, the defence offsets policy mandates a minimum investment of 30 per cent to be put back in a related defence industrial venture in India, but in the biggest defence contract that is now being negotiated for the French Rafale multi role combat aircraft (MRCA), this figure is 50 per cent.

As per indications, the RfP for the submarines should be out even in January 2013, or latest by March before the financial year 2012-13 ends.

The Indian Navy's current fleet of conventional diesel-electric submarines is quite old.

There are four HDW **Shishumar class** submarines acquired from Germany and **10 Kilo Sindhughosh class** from Russia, both from 1986 onwards. The service life of a submarine is estimated at around 20 years, but because of political indecision after the allegations over the purchase of Bofors guns from Sweden, the modernization process of the Navy — along with that of the Army and Indian Air Force — suffered.

In 1998, the then naval chief, Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat, projected a requirement of a 24-submarine fleet in the navy's long-term vision for 30 years. In 1999, the Cabinet committee on security (CCS) — the apex body headed by the prime minister — approved the plan for their indigenous construction in two lines.

The Scorpenes are being built in India to gain experience and indigenous support capability. India had gained some earlier with the induction of HDW boats but as there was no follow-on programme, that experience was lost and all those involved in the project have retired.

The only direct submarine acquisition of the Indian Navy after the HDW and Kilo submarines is that of the single nuclear power attack submarine (SSN) **INS Chakra** from Russia in 2012. There are also some technical issues with it, and during his recent to New Delhi, Russian President Vladimir Putin promised to have them sorted out ASAP.

An SSN is a nuclear propelled but not nuclear armed submarine. The conventionally-powered diesel electric submarines are known as the SSK class.

Ship starts to take shape

This year is shaping up as a big one for the future **HMAS Canberra**, Australia's first helicopter landing dock and the third Royal Australian Navy vessel to bear the name of the national capital.



BAE Systems maritime director Bill Saltzer said the vessel now looked like the ship her designers had expected her to become following the recent installation of the Australian-made superstructure blocks on the massive hull.

A 29-year veteran of the shipbuilding trade, Mr Saltzer

said the moment when the 300-tonne bridge block had been swung out over the hull by a crane had been tense.

Although the 28,000-tonne Canberra is almost half as large again as Australia's previous biggest ship, **HMAS Melbourne**, she is less than one-third the size of some of the vessels Mr Saltzer has worked on.

Advertisement Among other roles, he commissioned and then managed a military shipbuilding yard in the United Arab Emirates.

"I have handled overhauls and refuelling on USS Nimitz and worked on other Nimitz-class aircraft carriers including the Roosevelt, Lincoln and Washington," he said.

"I have also worked on the USS Enterprise, which had eight nuclear reactors."

USS Nimitz and her sister ships are 333 metres long, compared with 230 metres for the Canberra, and carry 93,405 tonnes fully laden compared with 30,700 tonnes for the Australian helicopter landing dock.

Now that the key elements of the vessel are in place, much of this year will be devoted to fitting Canberra out in preparation for her commissioning into the Australian fleet in the first quarter of next year following testing and sea trials.

Mr Saltzer said the work was on schedule and on budget. He understood that the official naming ceremony would be held early this year.

There is, however, much more to the project than just building the ship. Navantia, the designers who also built the hull, are contracted to supply the watercraft that will be shipped aboard Canberra and its sister ship, **Adelaide**.

The Australian Defence Force is under pressure to train crews and soldiers to make effective use of the two vessels, which have a combined cost in excess of \$3.1 billion, from the day they are commissioned.

Adelaide is expected to be ready for service in 2015.

Mr Saltzer said the two vessels were world class and more appropriate to Australia's operational needs than US designs - which tend to be larger and more manpower-intensive - would have been.

He said the project had resulted in the development of a highly efficient naval shipbuilding industry and expressed concern that this capability might be lost if it was not used for new projects.

"Australia is an island nation," he said. "Shipbuilding is a strategic industry."

Mr Saltzer said he would miss Canberra and Adelaide when they finally sailed away.

"Every ship, especially one as large and as complex as this one, becomes a part of the family," he said. "When it sails away it is like watching a member of the family leave home. Source www.canberratimes.com.au

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Royal Caribbean picks STX France to build 3rd OASIS class ship

STX France SA signed a contract for building a cruise ship intended for Royal Caribbean International (RCI - subsidiary of RCCL) fleet. Third ship of the OASIS class, this ship featuring outstanding dimensions is due for delivery in mid-2016. An option for a second ship due in mid-2018 is also provided, STX Europe press release said.

With 361 metres long and 66 metres wide, this ship is one of the biggest ever built in Saint-Nazaire. **Oasis of the Seas and Allure of the Seas** are indeed the largest and most revolutionary cruise ships in the world. Architectural marvels at sea, they span 16 decks, encompass 225,282 gross registered tons, carrying 5,400 guests at double occupancy, and feature 2,700 staterooms.

"The Oasis of the Seas and Allure of the Seas have fundamentally transformed the cruise experience for our guests," said Richard D. Fain, chairman and chief executive officer of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. "These ships have consistently generated outstanding guest satisfaction ratings and continue to produce superior financial results. We are thrilled to be adding a sister to this extraordinary class of vessels at a compelling price. Being back building in France just adds to the pleasure."

This contract is worth 10 millions working hours distributed over more than three years. Studies will start in January 2013, while production is planned to start in September the same year.

"We are extremely proud to have been selected by Royal Caribbean International to build this third unit, which is a real challenge to our yard. This ship is a real exception in the cruise world as it is highly innovative and spectacular. Moreover, we are delighted to partner with Royal Caribbean again and continue our decades-long relationship. Royal Caribbean has always been an important part of our shipyard's success as we have built twelve of their vessels. Our technical teams should get back quickly to a cooperation mind. We are eager to start" declared Laurent Castaing, STX France Managing Director.

STX France SA is part of STX Europe AS, an international shipbuilding group which aims to be the leading builder of cruise vessels, ferries and other specialized vessels. STX Europe AS is also the majority shareholder in STX OSV Holdings Limited listed on the Singapore Exchange (SGX). The group has a strong position in terms of developing state-of-the-art concepts, technology, processes and products for customers around the world. STX Europe comprises 6 shipyards in Finland, France and Norway in addition to 9 shipyards belonging to STX OSV Holdings Limited. STX Europe has STX Europe Group has approximately 14,000 employees. See: www.stxeurope.com
STX Europe's principal shareholder, the international industrial group STX, has approximately 54 000 employees and aims to be a global top player in its core areas; shipping and trade, shipbuilding and machineries, plant and construction, and energy.

Hyundai, Samsung Boost Order Target on Offshore Demand

Hyundai Heavy Industries Co. (009540) and **Samsung Heavy Industries Co.**, the world's two biggest shipbuilders, forecast a jump in orders this year, helped by rising demand for offshore drilling and production units.

Hyundai Heavy is targeting annual orders for ships, offshore products and plant construction to surge 52 percent to \$29.7 billion, according to a regulatory filing. Smaller rival Samsung Heavy aims to win orders worth \$13 billion, 35 percent more than last year, its spokesman I Chan Hwang said.

The South Korean shipbuilders, who failed to meet their 2012 targets, are boosting the outlook as Petroleo Brasileiro SA, Exxon Mobil Corp. and other energy companies develop new fields amid dwindling oil reserves at existing wells. The increased exploration may spur spending of more than \$335 billion by 2016, according to Canterbury, U.K.-based researcher Douglas-Westwood.

"Demand for offshore facilities, including drill ships and floating production units, will continue to increase this year," Ko Jae Ho, chief executive officer of Daewoo Shipbuilding (042660) & Marine Engineering Co., said in a speech today. "Demand for vessels may recover in the second half."

Daewoo Shipbuilding, the world's third-largest, didn't disclose its order target for this year. The Seoul-based company won \$14.3 billion in contracts in 2012, exceeding its projection for \$11 billion, it said in a Dec. 26 statement.

Slumping Demand

Hyundai Heavy and Samsung Heavy failed to meet their order targets last year as overcapacity and economic uncertainties caused demand to slump. Hyundai Heavy will "aggressively market" their products to secure more work, Chief Executive Officer Lee Jai Seong said in a speech to employees today. Hyundai Heavy dropped as much as 0.6 percent to 247,000 won and traded at 248,000 won as of 12:59 p.m. in Seoul. Daewoo Shipbuilding advanced as much as 1.8 percent and Samsung Heavy fell as much as 1.3 percent. Ulsan, South Korea-based Hyundai Heavy raised a record 1.2 trillion won in bond sales last year as it sought cash amid the slump in new orders. Securing funds will be a top priority for the company this year as well, the CEO said without elaboration. The shipbuilder received applications for early retirement from workers last year for the first time, and also reduced the number of its executives. **Source: Bloomberg**

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The TSHD **PRINS DER NEDERLANDEN** moored in Abu Dhabi. Photo: **Hennie Petersen (c)**

Four-week unloading of pre-cast units off near Wan Chai ferry pier in Hong Kong.

DURING a four week period starting from January 2 the unloading of pre-cast units for seawall construction will be carried out 100 metres west of the **Wan Chai Ferry Pier** marked by yellow marker buoys fitted with flashing lights at the coordinates from A to D.

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Vessels near the vicinity are advised to slow and remain at safe distance from operations, warned the Hong Kong Marine Department. The work will take place 24/7 with diving operations taking place from time to time.

The area is bounded by straight lines joining the following coordinates (WGS 84 Datum) as follows: (A) 22 deg. 17.440'N / 114 deg. 10.801'E (B) 22 deg. 17.319'N / 114 deg. 10.839'E (C) 22 deg. 17.248'N / 114 deg. 10.580'E (D) 22 deg. 17.348'N / 114 deg. 10.537'E

A flotilla of vessels which include two crane barges, one semi submersible barge, three tugs, one work boat and some guard boats will be engaged in the task allowing a 50 metre working area around each barge with further yellow marker buoys employed. The work involves the unloading of precast units and towing to the site about 100 metres west of Wan Chai Ferry Pier for seawall construction, said the Marine Department.



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The **THSD LEIV EIRIKSSON** anchored at West Jurong Anchorage, Singapore. Photo: Capt. Jim Stone (c)

Matt Yacavone Joins Crowley as Vice President of Sales and Chartering, Petroleum Services

Crowley Maritime Corporation announced today that **Matt Yacavone** has joined the company as vice president of sales and chartering for Crowley's petroleum services team. He will be domiciled in the company's Jacksonville headquarters and report to Rob Grune, senior vice president and general manager, petroleum services. Jacksonville, Fla. (PRWEB) January 02, 2013 Crowley Maritime Corporation announced today that **Matt Yacavone** has joined the company as vice president of sales and chartering for Crowley's..[yahoo Daily News](#)

Modernised Lanzhou shunting yard opens after three years construction

AFTER three years of construction, the northern Lanzhou railway shunting yard now has become operational as an upgrade of the old rail yards built in 1950s, Xinhua reports.

Lanzhou Railway Bureau Director Wu Yuntian said on the opening ceremony that the classification yard connects with the Lanzhou-Chongqing Railway and occupies an area of 326.67 hectares, costing CNY9.6 billion (US\$1.54 billion) to build. It is the third in China that is completed in one single phase of construction.

Shipping opens European chartering office Friday,

Dry bulk vessel owner and operator **Thoresen Shipping** has opened a new commercial office in Denmark. This is its first commercial office in Europe and will serve its existing and potential clients with dry bulk cargo requirements in Atlantic and Mediterranean routes.

Leading Thoresen Shipping's European operations is **Henrik Jeremiassen**, who joins from a leading European dry bulk operator where he was senior chartering manager. With over 20 years' experience in the industry, he will be based in Copenhagen. Also appointed to the Thoresen Shipping Denmark leadership team is **Andreas Rossen**, who takes up the position of senior chartering manager.

Thoresen Shipping has increasingly positioned its fleet in higher yielding transatlantic routes, with a focus on premium service and core premium cargos targeting a diverse set of clients including a growing group of industrial majors. While the bulk of its chartering work has been led by its commercial hub in Singapore, the opening of the Copenhagen office is expected to give an opportunity to further expand its European client base. In 2012, about 50% of Thoresen Shipping's fleet was positioned in Atlantic routes.

"With the opening of our European office, we position ourselves optimally and in line with our most pressing commercial requirements. We now have chartering offices with outstanding professional capabilities in our two most important regions, Asia and Europe, supported by an experienced and highly skilled technical and back end unit in our traditional Bangkok base," said Ian Claxton, managing director, Thoresen Shipping.

Thoresen Shipping moved its commercial base from Bangkok to Singapore in January 2012, reflagging all but one of its vessels to the city state. As of November 2012, its fleet consisted of 16 vessels with an average age of just over 11.5 years.

After the refurbished shunting yard has started operation, the Lanzhou railway cargo hub will relocate to the northern bank of Huanghe River while the passenger hub will be at the southern bank of Huanghe, so as to adjust the railway transportation structure to better cater to market demand.

By 2020, the sorting capacity of the yard will reach 18,000 trains per day, greatly easing the heavy pressure on the northwestern railways caused by transportation capacity shortage. Lanzhou is one of the key hubs in western China, where the Lanzhou- Lianyungang, Lanzhou-Xinjiang, Baotou-Lanzhou and Lanzhou-Qinghai Railway join. According to China's railway development plan, the city will be joint for the Lanzhou-Chongqing railway, Lanzhou-Xinjiang second line, Baoji-Lanhou passenger line, Baotou-Lanzhou second line, Lanzhou-Hezuo and Lanzhou-Zhongchuan line.



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The **HAPPY DELTA** discharging locomotives, for BHP Billiton iron ore trains in Port Hedland, West Australia.

Photo: Ian Holland ©



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Korea Cites Bias in Move to Ban Japan Ship Firms

South Korea's government is moving to bar foreign shipping lines from contracts in the state-run energy sector as it supports domestic companies struggling to recover from the global downturn. State-controlled Korea Electric Power

Corp. (KEP) on Dec. 21 held an auction for its five units that effectively restricted participants to domestic shipping lines for the first time. The contracts, worth about \$2 billion, require bidders to partner with another South Korean company and build nine ships in local shipyards that will carry coal from such countries as Australia.

South Korea's biggest shipping lines may be set to benefit from the restrictions after [Hanjin Shipping Co.](#) (117930), [Hyundai Merchant Marine Co.](#) (011200) and STX Pan Ocean Co. (028670) posted losses in the first nine months of 2012. The move also threatens to further heighten economic tensions with Japan, whose carriers hauled about 25 percent of South Korea's coal shipments in 2011.

"State generators are making these restrictions for the first time upon demand from domestic shipping companies," said Yun Hee Do, a shipping and utility analyst at Korea Investment & Securities Co. in Seoul. "Domestic shipping companies are very desperate, and state firms have given in as talk of the country giving away its wealth is gaining momentum."

The Dec. 21 bid, which involves delivering coal to electricity producers over 18 years, also comes as South Korea's transportation ministry says it's looking into whether Japanese companies in general have excluded South Korean shipping lines from contracts to haul coal and other materials. The ministry is considering formally asking South Korean power companies to exclude Japanese shipping firms in reciprocity, said Jung Kyu Sam, a deputy director of the ministry's shipping division.

Unfavorable Treatment?

"There's suspicion that our shipping companies are treated unfavorably in Japan, and we are checking the facts through our embassy in Japan and the [Korea Shipping Association](#)," Jung said in a telephone interview. "We are mapping out related enforcements, and we will request that our power generators apply restrictions if the suspicion is true."

A shipping spat would follow flaring diplomatic tensions between Asia's second- and fourth-largest economies. The two sides failed to renew a currency swap deal after Lee Myung Bak in August became the first South Korean president to visit an island chain claimed by both nations. Japan's new Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, has vowed to secure sufficient funds for the armed forces and coast guard to defend Japan's territory.

South Korea's parliament in November approved a revised law for the shipping industry that says authorities can ban South Korea units of foreign firms from bids if their countries violate reciprocity in dealings with South Korean shipping lines. The new guidelines take effect in March.

Japanese Shipping

Japanese shipping lines such as Nippon Yusen K.K. (9101), Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd. (9107), and [Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd.](#) could bid for long-term contracts with Korea Electric in international auctions until 2009, when the utility required foreign participants to have an offshore business license registered in South Korea.

No locally registered unit of a shipping company outside of South Korea participated in the Dec. 21 bid, which collapsed because one of the two South Korean consortiums didn't meet requirements, said Kim Heo Jin, the senior manager of fuel procurement at Korea Southern Power Co. It is in charge of the auction process for Korea Electric's power generators.

The auction will be held again on Jan. 9. STX Pan Ocean and Hanjin Shipping are reviewing whether to participate, according to e-mailed responses to a Bloomberg News query.

'Thin Orders'

"We hope that the contract helps the country's shipping and shipbuilding industries, which are facing thin orders," Kim said.

Hyundai Merchant and Hanjin Shipping, which have Japanese units, declined to comment on auction practices in Japan.

Korea Electric's five power generators have picked Japanese shipping companies to build 18 vessels so far since 2007, according to data from the Korea Shippers Association. Japanese shipping lines shipped 16.54 million metric tons, or 25 percent of Korea's thermal coal imports, in 2011, and the fares paid to Japanese shippers have totaled \$2.26 billion since 2007, according to the association.

Tokyo Electric Power Co. (9501), Japan's biggest power operator, doesn't have rules in place that restrict the participation of South Korean shipping lines, spokesman Masateru Araki said by telephone.

'Doesn't Matter'

"When we seek companies for fuel transportation, we take into consideration conditions such as securing safety in transportation, the company's financial stability and possibility of long-term relationship with the contractor," Araki said. "If those conditions are satisfied, it doesn't matter for us whether the company is from Japan or not."

Tepco doesn't disclose which shipping lines are used for fuel transportation, Araki said. The company uses both public and private tenders, he said.

The Japanese Shipowners' Association will consider taking action if Korea Electric officially bans Japanese shipping lines from contracts, said Takashi Ishikawa, a general manager in the planning division of the organization, by phone in Tokyo.

South Korean shipping companies such as STX Pan Ocean and Hanjin Shipping, as well as shipbuilders including Hyundai Heavy Industries Co., stand to benefit from the new restrictions, said Um Kyung A, an analyst at Shinyoung Securities Co. in Seoul.

Securing Business

"In a tough environment, securing business that assures earnings for several years is good," said Um, who has a buy recommendation on Hanjin Shipping and a neutral recommendation on Hyundai Merchant.

Shares of Hanjin Shipping rose 5.3 percent in 2012 in Seoul trading and those of Hyundai Merchant dropped 4.5 percent during the year. Korea's benchmark Kospi index climbed 9.4 percent.

Japanese state companies have excluded Korean shipping companies from auctions, raising questions of fairness, Kwon Eun Hee, a lawmaker from South Korea's ruling New Frontier Party, told Korea Electric executives during an Oct. 17 parliamentary audit, according to a statement distributed to reporters.

Japanese units of Korean shipping companies have never received an order from a Japanese electricity company, the Korea Shipowners Association, which has more than 190 members, said in an e-mailed response to questions from Bloomberg.

Ports of Rotterdam, Antwerp record flat container traffic in 2012

ROTTERDAM and Antwerp ports saw their container volumes remain flat in 2012 compared to the previous year with a slight shift from imports to exports. Antwerp suffered a 0.6 per cent year-on-year decline in container traffic during 2012 with a total 8.6 million TEU while Rotterdam was marginally up at 11.9 million TEU.

Said Rotterdam port CEO [Hans Smits](#): "The positive throughput figures for this year do not alter the fact that the profit margins for many companies are under pressure, some businesses are in the red and some are dismissing staff."

London's Containerisation International warned container throughput is set to come under pressure early next year, a development blamed shipping alliances removing vessels from the Asia-Europe trade until the Chinese New Year from February 10.

Seanergy Maritime Holdings Corp. Successfully Completes Sale of Subsidiary

Seanergy Maritime Holdings Corp. announced that it has completed the previously announced sale of its 100% ownership interest in Bulk Energy Transport (Holdings) Limited ("BET"). The Buyer, I.M.I. Holdings Corp., is an affiliate of members of the Restis family, the Company's major shareholders.

Following the sale of BET, the Company owns a fleet of 12 dry bulk carriers (two Panamax, two Supramax, and eight Handysize vessels) with a total carrying capacity of approximately 468,500 dwt and an average fleet age of 13.9 years. Stamatis Tsantanis, the Company's Chief Executive Officer, stated: "The completion of the sale of BET marks an important milestone in the Company's restructuring process. Specifically, following the sale of BET the overall indebtedness of the Company and its subsidiaries has been reduced by approximately \$46.7 million, which is a first major step towards a sustainable capital structure for our Company. In addition, we expect the Company's overall operating expenses to be reduced as a result of the sale of the BET ships. Furthermore, we reduce the average age of

our fleet and concentrate our operating exposure in dry-bulk market segments that, in our view, enjoy somewhat better fundamentals with lower freight rate volatility."

Seanergy Maritime Holdings Corp. is a Marshall Islands corporation with its executive offices in Athens, Greece. The Company is engaged in the transportation of dry bulk cargoes through the ownership and operation of dry bulk carriers.

The Company's current fleet consists of 12 dry bulk carriers (two Panamax, two Supramax, and eight Handysize vessels) with a total carrying capacity of approximately 468,500dwt and an average fleet age of 13.9 years.

The Company's common stock trades on the NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol "SHIP."

Source: Seanergy Maritime Holdings Corp.




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The **HEILAN BROTHER** arriving in Abu Dhabi. Photo: [Hennie Petersen](#) ©



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Somali Hostage Release: S. Korea Applauds Singaporean shipping company.

The Korean government to honor Singaporean shipping company owner for his efforts to successfully rescue Korean sailors from Somali pirates.

Four South Korean crew members were kidnapped by Somali pirates on April 30, 2011 aboard the **MT Gemini**, a tanker operated by Singapore-based **Glory Ship Management**, and after 582 days of captivity, they were set free after the firm paid an unspecified amount of ransom. (the South Korean government maintains a policy of not directly engaging with pirates) reports the Korea Times.

On behalf of the South Korean government the shipping company led the long and arduous negotiations. During the talks, the owner, Soh Wei Liang, maintained close contact with Seoul officials and the crew members' families in the southern port city of Busan to brief them on the developments. It is anticipated that Mr Soh Wei Liang will be awarded a medal or be given some other official recognition by the S. Korean Government.

Source: Korea Times





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.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



the Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (RCM-SAR) boat based at station 12 Half Moon Bay B.C. Standing by at the Davis Bay polar bear swim on 1st January 2013.

Robin Merriott

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