

DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2006 – 241



Number 241 COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS ***Saturday 25-11-2006**
News reports received from readers and Internet News articles taken from various news sites.

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Going, going... almost gone. The wreck of the container ship **Safmarine Agulhas on East London's western breakwater is rapidly being reduced in size.
Photo : Willem Kruk of Elgin Brown & Hamer Group of companies**

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EVENTS, INCIDENTS & OPERATIONS



The IHC new building **SARBAS** seen in the Scheurhaven in Rotterdam-Europoort
Photo : Jan Oosterboer ©

Submarine was a Cigarette

Last week, the crew of the U. S. Coast Guard Cutter **Steadfast** boarded and seized what a USCG release described as a "semi-submersible craft." That got translated into "submarine" in most media reports.

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"Tipped off by three plastic pipes mysteriously skimming the ocean's surface, authorities seized a homemade submarine packed with three tons of cocaine off Costa Rica's Pacific coast," reported USA Today.

The newspaper quoted Costa Rica's Security Minister as saying that four men traveled inside the 50-

foot wood and fiberglass craft, breathing through the pipes. The craft sailed along at about 7 mph, just six feet beneath the surface."

Not quite so, it seems. The vessel did carry cocaine (3.5 tons) and its crew of four -- two Colombians, one Guatemalan, and one Sri Lankan -- were taken into custody and will face prosecution in the U. S. The vessel was towed into port by the Costa Rican Coast Guard and will be also be brought to the U. S. as evidence.

But any submersibility seems to have been unintentional. Reuters reports that Costa Rican Coast Guard commander Rodrigo Peralta now says the 45-foot (14-meter) craft was a cigarette boat that had an ocean-colored fiberglass covering intended as camouflage.

The boat rode low in the water because of the weight of the cocaine but did not actually submerge, said Peralta.

"It was covered with lead lamination to conceal it from radar," said Peralta. The tubes protruding from the boat turned out to be exhaust pipes rather than snorkels.



A panoramic view of Horta at the island of Faial (Azores) – Photo : Miguel Noia ©

Another Accident Waiting To Happen

The Philippines' Coast Guard had opposed the use of barges in the transport of oil-contaminated debris from Guimaras but the Maritime Industry Authority and the regional inter-agency task force on the oil spill had allowed it anyway. Capt. Luis Tuason, Coast Guard commander in Western Visayas, said they wrote to Presidential Assistant for Western Visayas Rafael Coscolluela, head of the Task Force Solar I Oil Spill, and Marina about the risks in transporting the debris by barges.

"We've been telling them that barges are not designed to carry hazardous material in bulk but they still allowed it," Tuason said in a telephone interview.

A barge carrying about 59,000 sacks or around 600 metric tons of oily debris from Guimaras Island sank 5 km northeast of Plaridel town in Misamis Occidental Monday night.

Barge Ras owned by Harbor Star was on its way to Lugait town in Misamis Oriental when it encountered rough seas and sank at 11:10 p.m.

The barge left the Cabalagnan port in Nueva Valencia town in Guimaras on Sunday and was being towed by tugboat Vega when water entered the barge's cargo hold causing it to sink, said Tuason in an earlier interview. None of the six crew members of the tugboat were hurt.

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Carlos Tan, Petron health, safety and environment manager, said strong winds blew off the tarpaulin covering the bulwark of the barge allowing water to come in.

Tuason said barges are not safe and protected from transport hazardous material because water could come in, especially when the covering of the cargo is blown off by strong winds as what had happened with barge Ras.

Hazardous materials should be transported, not in bulk, and in sealed containers by regular cargo ships or other closed vessels like tankers, said Tuason.

But Marina issued a "Special Permit to Transport Hazardous Cargo" to the barges contracted by Petron, the P&I Club, International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd., and the International Oil Spill Compensation Fund.

Marina inspectors had recommended that additional safety measures should be instituted in the loading of the debris to a barge including the covering of the barge's bulwark with tarpaulin to prevent the contamination of the waters in case of rain.

Environmental groups and scientists have raised alarm over the incident coming three months after the tanker Solar I, carrying 2 million liters of bunker fuel, sank 13 miles southeast of Guimaras Island.

The oil spill devastated the island's rich marine life and dislocated thousands of residents.

"The (latest) incident demonstrates that government is just waiting to respond rather than prevent spill disasters, to be reactive rather than proactive," said scientist Jurgenne Primavera, Pew Fellow and senior researcher at the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (Seafdec).

Primavera said there is a need to put up a committee that will help prevent and respond to oil spill disasters on a "science-based approach" to be spearheaded by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The Save Our Lives, SOS! said the latest incident only shows that "government agencies and Petron Corp. continue to bungle their jobs and responsibilities even as Guimaras residents continue to suffer the effects of the oil spill."

The group composed of scientists, non-government organization, religious groups and local officials called for an investigation of the incident to determine any liabilities on government agencies and other parties involved in the transport of the debris.

Petron's Tan said no oil sheen has been detected as company personnel have been monitoring the shoreline to assess potential damage. Tan said the debris, mostly sand and rocks, is "unlikely" to pose any danger to communities and marine life.

Petron has opted to transport the debris from Guimaras to Misamis Oriental after officials of Guimaras refused to allow it to be dumped on a site on the island for fear that it could continue to contaminate it.

Britten geven negatief rapport voor ongeval Zeebrugge vissersboot

Het ongeval met de Zeebrugge vissersboot **Noordster** kon minder erg geweest zijn. Dat zegt een Brits rapport. De **Noordster** verging eind vorig jaar voor de Britse zuidkust. Drie bemanningsleden kwamen om, één matroos van 19 uit Zeebrugge overleefde het ongeval. Het schip zonk toen het met haar netten vastraakte. Volgens het rapport was de bemanning oververmoeid, en ze droeg ook niet de nodige veiligheidskledij. Het schip was bovendien ook niet veilig genoeg uitgerust.

Norwegians Say No To Nigeria

Norwegian seamen now have the right to refuse to serve on ships in Nigerian waters. This is the result of an agreement between their unions and the Shipowners' Association.

The agreement between the two parties was signed after a meeting on Monday (20 Nov).

The background for the agreement is the difficult security situation in Nigerian waters at the moment. Recently, four crew members were abducted from a Norwegian supply ship by armed men.

Negotiations for their release have been ongoing during the past week, and there is hope that they will be released shortly. Around 15 vessels under Norwegian management are at present operating in Nigerian waters.

Crewman Saved After Cruiseship Fall



A crewman has been saved after falling into the sea off Kenya from the MSC cruiseship **Melody** (built 1982), reports Tradewinds.

The 35,000-gt vessel was on a 21-day cruise from Italy to Durban, carrying about 1,500 passengers, when the Samoan maintenance man plunged into the water on Sunday morning.

Photo : Piet Sinke ©

A five-hour search ensued off Mombasa. The man was treated for shock but was otherwise unharmed, the Mercury newspaper reported. The man had remained afloat despite not

wearing a life jacket, the local cruise agent said.

Zeevaartschool Delfzijl krijgt vorm schip

De nieuwe Abel Tasman Zeevaartschool in Delfzijl krijgt de vorm van een schip. De bouw van het nieuwe onderkomen kost 5 miljoen euro. Het ontwerp van de school werd tijdens de viering van het 150-jarig bestaan in de Evenementenhal in Delfzijl gepresenteerd.

De nieuwe school is gesitueerd op de grens van Delfzijl en Farmsum, aan de dijk bij de oude zeesluis. Het huidige gebouw staat aan Het Zwet. De eerste zeevaartschool werd gebouwd in 1856. Bij het 75-jarig bestaan in 1931 kwam er een nieuw onderkomen aan het Abel Tasmanplein. In 1981 werd het huidige gebouw aan Het Zwet betrokken. Met de nieuwbouw, ontworpen door architect Dries Jongsma in de vorm van een schip, wordt in 2007 begonnen. De school heeft studies als zeevaart, Rijnvaart, binnenvaart en operationele technieken. Volgens plan moet de nieuwe zeevaartschool in september 2008 in gebruik worden genomen.

ALL 37 SAILORS SAVED IN CARGO SHIP ACCIDENT IN BOHAI SEA

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All the crew of 37 sailors was saved from a Democratic People's Republic of Korea-registered cargo ship in the Bohai Sea on Wednesday morning after the ship's engine was out of power and went into danger in strong wind.

According to local rescue officials, the accident occurred at 10:20 a.m. when it was pulling in near the seashore of Longkou City, in east China's Shandong Province.

The ship lost power about 1,000 meters to the seashore and fell in a dangerous situation amid strong wind and big wave, the officials said.

After seven hours rescue efforts, the powerless ship was pulled over to safe area and all 37 endangered sailors aboard were saved. Also on Wednesday, the rescuers with the Beihai bureau of the Ministry of Communications handled another four boat accidents caused by strong wind in Bohai Sea, saving a total of 41 sailors.



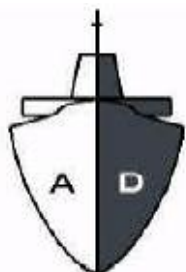
The **TAKLIFT 7** started offloading the barges in Caracas bay (Curacao)

Photo : Kees Bustraan ©

NAVY NEWS

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The Dutch Mine counter measure vessels **M 864 WILLEMSTAD** & **M 862 ZIERIKZEE** arrived in Newcastle's Quayside for a port visit.

Photo : Dave Wilkinson ©

‘Pakistan Navy proved it is best in region’

Admiral Muhammad Afzal Tahir, Chief of Naval Staff, said that Pakistan Navy (PN) has experience to construct submarines, MCMVs, missile boats, coastal tankers, floating docks and other utility craft. The exposure at International Defence Exhibition IDEAS-2006 will help PN get orders to construct naval platforms.

He said this in an interview with the newsmen on Thursday. Admiral Afzal said that with four F-22P Frigates co-production contract with China, (one to be constructed at Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works KSEW), PN's future acquisition of seagoing platforms will be fully indigenized. "Induction of 8 US P3Cs will make aviation a potent wing and enable PN to participate in war against terrorism more effectively. Submarines are effective offensive punch of PN which is among the few who build these. I am confident PN will prove equal to task in hour of need," he said.

He pointed out that a decade of experience on submarines construction techniques and practical technology transfer from DCN France were most rewarding, enlightening experience for PN engineers, technicians. The successful induction and operation of two Agosta 90-B submarines and final completion of third with MESMA Air Independent Propulsion System is further testament to expertise acquired by PN.

"We are now at such vantage point whereby there is professional resolve and ability to undertake construction of modern conventional submarines not limited to **Agosta 90-B** only. We have basic capability in submarines construction — manufacture hull, piping, cutting, bending, welding and integrated electronics equipment — which very few states possess," he pointed out.

Afzal Tahir informed the media that Pakistan is the second Muslim state after Turkey to have this capability. It is committed to indigenous construction of modern submarines and its type will be dictated by national policies. The admiral said that PN is acquiring new Chinese surface ships and US P3Cs to develop air arm and also looking forward to acquire submarines to replace Daphnes, (laid off), modernizing and upgrading existing platforms to ensure they radiate combat power and survive in envisaged threat environment.

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"We want to increase major surface platforms in service by acquiring used ships to offset some pressure on available Type-21s to fulfill training, operational requirements. F-22P will fulfill long term requirement of surface ships, replace aging Type-21s. We are considering acquiring corvettes to provide greater operational flexibility and reduce operating costs," he added.

The chief of naval staff pointed out that Pakistan is a front line state in Global War on Terrorism to ensure stability in maritime sector by preventing terrorists, nefarious elements from achieving their objectives. He informed the newsmen that PN's project with China includes construction of 4x F-22P frigates by CSTC. 6x Z9-EC Helicopters supply by CATIC, C-802 SSM & FM-90(N) SAM missiles supply by CPMIEC & ammunition by NORINCO.

Admiral Tahir said that joint maritime exercises enhance interoperability, professional skills, strengthen navy-to-navy ties and enhance the national status and image in the international community. "We have old professional ties with Saudi Arabia, Oman, UAE Navies and other Gulf states. We were first to have joint exercises with China Navy outside Chinese water limits in 2003. We actively collaborate with the US and other coalition forces in regional waters," he added.

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Western Shipyard for sale

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Western India shipyard in Goa on India's west coast is for sale. The company has been put on the block by a consortium of banks as a going concern after a series of losses. Larsen & Toubro, Aban Lloyd and Wärtsilä Group are reported to be interested. According to market estimates, the company, which has a floating dry dock for shipbuilding and a wet repair berth, is valued at Rs2Bn-Rs2.5Bn (\$44M-55M) because of its location and land area. The Western India share price, currently trading at Rs7.73, has gained significantly over the past month and prospective buyers are believed to be offering up to Rs25. In the year to 31 March 2006, the company lost 181 working days due to adverse weather conditions and repair work to the drydock. A further 60 days were lost in the three months to 30 June for the same reasons. With repair work to the dock and conversion of the incomplete graving yard into a slipway, Western India's prospects have been greatly strengthened.

VT Halter wins \$165 million missile craft award

VT Halter Marine Inc. has won a contract modification worth US\$165 million from the U.S. Navy for the Egyptian Navy's Fast Missile Craft (FMC) project.

This modification enables VT Halter Marine, as the prime contractor, to procure long lead time materials which include items, equipment and/or components that need to be developed in advance of the required delivery dates due to their complex nature.

VT Halter Marine secured the Phase I functional design contract for \$28.8 million on December 1, 2005. This contract modification was issued as a letter contract with a not-to-exceed price of \$165 million, which brings the total amount awarded on this program to approximately \$194 million. The program value could grow to more than \$450 million after Phase II is added to the contract.

The Fast Missile Craft is designed to perform coastal patrol, surveillance, interdiction, surface strike, and naval battle group support for the 21st century. High speed and maneuverability are two of the ship's primary assets to fulfill these roles. The vessels will be approximately 62 m in length and will incorporate ship signature control technology. The vessels will also incorporate numerous combat system assets and electronic sensors that give them capabilities in anti-aircraft, anti-surface, and electronic warfare.

STX Shipbuilding World's No. 6 Shipyard

South Korea's STX Shipbuilding Co. climbed up a notch to become the world's sixth-largest shipyard by order backlog as of the end of October, a London-based market researcher said Thursday, reports Yonhap news.

STX Shipbuilding had an order backlog of 29 million compensated gross tons (CGTs), up from 28.31 million CGTs the previous month, Clarkson Plc. said.

Karachi Shipyard is not being privatized"

Managing Director Karachi Shipyard, Vice Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed ruling out privatization of Karachi Shipyard has said Pakistan Navy had chalk out joint plans 10-year and 15-year of period with an American security agency for development of the Shipyard under which naval ships, missiles and gun-boats would be produced at the shipyard.

Talking to journalists here on Thursday during his visit to Expo Center, where the four-day international defence exhibition is underway, the MD Shipyard said that talks were on with gulf countries for production of such boats and ships for them, as, he said, the Shipyard had become a part of defense industry.

He informed that work on co-production of naval ship, Frigate, by Pakistan and China has been initiated and it would be completed soon.

He said that Pakistan would produce submarine equipped latest with technology with the cooperation of Germany and France very soon, adding that these submarines would have been modern technology than the Augusta submarines.

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MD Shipyard said that the Karachi Shipyard was going to sign an accord with Germany under which turbines for `One Form Project` would be produced at the Shipyard. He said that talks were underway with China on a plan for production of four ships adding that under the plan three of the ship would be produced in China while a ship would be made in Pakistan. The engineers of Karachi Shipyard are being trained for mastering in modern technology so that the defence capabilities of the country would be made impregnable through self-reliance, he added.

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The **SMR MANZANILLO** is operating in the port of Manzanillo (Mexico)

Photo : Willem Kappert – o/b Zaandam ©

Karachi-Dubai ferry service in troubled waters

Karachi-Dubai ferry service enters into troubled waters as it has failed to attract the required number of potential travellers for a five-day pleasure. The local chatterer has diverted the **Gulf Dream Cruise** to Dubai-Kuwait route for a period of one month, and the service has been suspended from Karachi port till December 17.

However, an official of the company disclosed that the ferry would be operated on Dubai-Goa (India) route. Sources told Business Recorder on Wednesday that the local chatterer have booked 110 passengers for its second voyage that has already been delayed by 14 days and unfortunately the ferry left the Karachi port for Dubai without any passenger.

The first voyage of the **Gulf Dream Cruise** should have been started on November 3, but the ferry left the harbour carrying 245 passengers on November 7, which was the date of second voyage.

Experts believe that financial aspects of ferry service has compelled the operator to rethink whether to continue operation or wait for a good time, as booking of less than 350 passengers brings the operator on break-even on costing issue.

Gulf Dream Cruise weighs 23,000 tonnes with a length of 196 metres. It has 540 rooms and can accommodate up to 1,250 passengers with 400 crewmembers. Karachi was placed on the world sea cruise map when the ferry service commenced on November 7, inaugurated by the President General Pervez Musharraf.

The present situation would likely to discourage new operator of cruise liners, as the ministry of ports and shipping has awarded five licences to private companies for starting luxury cruise and ferry services to Dubai, Mumbai and other Middle East destinations

P&O Cruises re-flags more ships

P&O Cruises, the Carnival Corp subsidiary, is to transfer its 69,153-gt **Oriana** from the British to the Bermuda flag because weddings on board a British-registered cruise ship are not legally recognised. As the cruise liner will still fly the Red Ensign but under Bermuda registry, no UK seafarers will lose their jobs or any loss of conditions and pay. P&O has already re-flagged the **Arcadia**, **Oceana** and **Artemis**, all operating cruises out of Southampton, understandably for the same reason. The 115,000-gt newbuilding **Ventura**, despite the focus on its British pedigree, will also fly the Bermuda flag. This means a loss of 390,000gt from the British register. Andrew Linington of seafarer union Nautilus UK told Fairplay: "we have talked to the UK government but with no success." Nautilus representatives were meeting P&O today over this issue. A P&O spokesman confirmed to Fairplay that the wedding issue was the only reason for transferring the ships. All five P&O ships will offer a Weddings at Sea package. A Department for Transport spokesman said the issue had been considered but the complexities of four different wedding processes made it too difficult.

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Mitsui Goes Back To Basics

Mitsui OSK Lines Ltd, Japan's second-largest shipping line, said it will retrain 6,000 seamen, revise operating manuals and reinforce old vessels to improve safety after four accidents this year.

'We'll have to return to the starting line with the concept that there's no future growth without ensuring safety,' managing executive officer Kenichi Yonetani said in an interview.

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Mitsui OSK is stepping up efforts to improve safety following four sea accidents since April, including a wreck last month that killed six crew members after an iron-ore carrier broke up in rough weather northeast of Tokyo.

The Tokyo-based company's increased spending on safety will not have a 'big impact' on earnings Mr Yonetani said, without specifying how much the company will spend. The shipping line is standardising operations manuals, redesigning ships and having training crews go on board vessels to educate seamen, Mr Yonetani said.

In addition to the wreck of the "**Giant Step**" last month, fire broke out in an engine room on the "MOL Initiative" that carried containers off the coast of the northern island of Hokkaido on April 3. "The Cougar Ace", with 4,700 Mazda cars on board, was crippled in rough seas on July 24. The "**Bright Artemis**" spilt 33,000 barrels of crude oil into the sea on Aug 15 after a collision in the Indian Ocean.

Mitsui OSK reported an 18 per cent decline in second-quarter profit on Nov 9 to 25.1 billion yen (\$331 million), as it cut container rates and paid more for fuel.

The sea carrier this month forecast 3 billion yen in current profit from carrying containers after a loss of 1 billion yen in the first half for the business.

'The worst time in the container business is behind us and will see a recovery from now on,' Mr Yonetani said.

Mitsui OSK has been expanding long-term contracts to carry dry-bulk cargo, automobiles and liquefied natural gas in order to benefit from growing demand and reduce reliance on volatile container rates.

The shipping line expects a 'profit gain' from non-container shipments next fiscal year, as global trade increases, Mr Yonetani said.

Mitsui OSK gets half of its sales from transporting cars, dry-bulk cargo, oil and liquefied natural gas.

The shipping company plans to operate a total of 900 ships by March 2010, by adding 250 ships to its fleet over three years.

East London reveals ambitious port plans

Ambitious plans for the port of East London have been revealed. The proposals – the Port Expansion Business Case – have been put together by a consortium of stakeholders in the city and port and co-ordinated by the Eastern Cape Development Corporation acting on behalf of the East London Industrial Development Corporation, Safmarine, DaimlerChrysler SA and KPMG. The plans were presented to the Buffalo City Municipality (East London) on Monday.

According to the proposers, the expansion of the harbour has the potential of raising further development worth R15 Billion and leading to the creation of 60,000 new jobs. However, should the planned expansion not go ahead East London is likely to lose R7 Billion in existing investments while about 16,500 jobs will be placed at risk.

Among the proposals are a deepening of the harbour channels and an expansion of the existing container terminals plus equipping them with container handling equipment such as ship to shore gantry cranes. The port's turning basin, which was dug in the 1950s would also be widened.

Recognising that East London is not high on the agenda of Transnet planning, the proposal calls for an upgrade of the existing railway between East London and Cookhouse, where it could connect with the proposed upgrade of the Port Elizabeth/Coega – Gauteng railway network.



GPS Marine Services BV successfully refloated **cranebarge "92"** at Waalhaven Rotterdam.

The cranebarge sunk on November 12th 2006, The salvage operation was carried out by sheerleg **GPS Atlas** which just returned from Milford Haven. The **Cranebarge "92"** will be scrapped at a scrapyard in the Rotterdam Port Area.

Photo : Hans de Jong ©

Ferry Traffic Vanino-Kholmsk Closed

A cyclone currently affecting Russia's Sakhalin Island and the Kuriles has disrupted electric power supply to the cities Kholmsk, Nevelsk, Tomari and settlements in the Ulegorsk, Kholmsk and Smirnykhov districts. According to the press service of the Sakhalinenergo power utility company, due to overlapping of wires and adhesion of wet snow to them the automatic overload protection system went off over 40 times switching off 13 electric power transmission lines on Thursday morning, which caused electricity supply disruption to settlements. A total of 21 brigades of electricians and 23 machinery units have been engaged in repair efforts.

According to meteorologists, the cyclone is gradually moving away from Sakhalin to the Sea of Okhotsk, but there is still strong wind on the islands reaching 27 metres per second. A storm in the Tatar Strait in the north of the Sea of Japan has been for the second day keeping the Vanino-Kholmsk ferry service closed. Four large specialised diesel-electric ships working on the line are sheltering from the storm under the Khabarovsk territory coast. The air service Sakhalin-Iturup Island of the Kuriles chain is also not working due to bad weather. Planes have not been flying on the line from Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk for the second day.

New ships on the South African coast

A number of new ships have or will shortly be appearing on the South African coast.

One that is currently in Durban is **MSC Olga**, the 5,100-TEU MSC container ship deployed with sister vessel **MSC Benedetta** on the weekly Northwest Europe – South Africa service. Incidentally, **MSC Olga** (54,215-gt) was the 50th



new build to come out of three South Korean yards for the Swiss/Italian shipping line when she was launched earlier this year.

Left : **MSC OLGA**
Photo : Glenn Kasner ©

MSC has two other sister ships in the fleet – **MSC Debra** and **MSC Mare** but it is not known whether either of these will be seen on the South Africa service in the

immediate future. Each ship is 294m LOA and 32.2m wide and has a DWT of 68,121.

Another newbuild set to become a regular sight in Southern African waters is **Maruba Pampero**, a 2,350-TEU container ship with Argentina's Maruba line that is due in Durban on her maiden voyage on 1 December. The latest ship to enter the South America – South Africa – Far East service, **Maruba Pampero** replaces the **Clan Amazonas** which has been deployed to the South American West Coast.

Maruba runs a joint Far East – South Africa – South America service with CMA CGM and China Shipping.

Another group of ships that are being deployed to South Africa can hardly be described as new but remain highly interesting nonetheless. They are five of the Danish/American D9J class of 1980-builds, namely **Sealand Endurance**, **Sealand Liberator** (which has been on the US – South Africa run since 2003), **Sealand Independence**, **Sealand Mariner** and **Sealand Express**.

Each of the 32,600-gt (33,000-DWT) ships has a container capacity of 2472-TEU and were distinguished by being the first diesel-powered newbuild container ships to enter the US fleets. With a service speed of 21 knots each ship was subsequently jumbo-ised – hence the J derivation added to the original D9 class.

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Sealand Express is the best known of all five ships to South African readers. She spent some years on the US - SA service until one fateful stormy night in August 2003 when she went aground in Table Bay. After a protracted but successful refloating conducted by Cape Town's **Smit Salvage**, the ship was taken to Durban where she became a lucrative repair job in the Durban dry dock, with a large amount of South African steel fitted permanently to her hull bottom. Having been replaced by **Sealand Liberator** in the interim, **Sealand Express** was then withdrawn from African waters.



The **POLARBJORN** – Photo : Rieber Shipping ©

The **POLARBJORN** is built during 2001 at the Havyard in Leirvik (Norway) under yard number 76, the vessel measures a 4985 GRT, is having a length of 89 mtr and is home ported Bergen in Norway.

More cruiseship purchases on cards

The Restis group seems set on opening up another new business front in the cruise industry. Restis has recently bought out all its co-investors in the group's first cruiseship, the 21,884-gt **Cruise One** (built 1990).

When the ship was purchased a year ago, it was controlled by a number of interests including Nikos Tragakis of Piraeus Global Maritime, who held a 10% stake, and the Restis group, which held a 30% stake. A number of other Piraeus-based owners are understood to have been involved.

The purchase is an experimental move for the Restis group, which says it has so far had a positive experience and will look for further tonnage to purchase. The cruiseship has been chartered out to a German cruise line for six years and is scheduled to sail some time in January after refurbishment work is complete.

Pan Ocean Ups Tanker Orders

STX Pan Ocean's tanker ambitions took another leap forward today after the firm placed orders for three new mid-range (MR) vessels worth \$130m from sister company STX Shipbuilding.

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The deal represents the exercise of an option held by STX Pan Ocean since October 2005 plus two new fresh orders.

Delivery of the vessels will take place in 2008 and form part of the company's Vision 2010 plan to diversify its activities. The vessels are costing an even \$40m each. Though historically known as a drybulk owner STX Pan Ocean is pushing ahead with the expansion of its tanker fleet and in September clinched its first ever VLCC deal, signing a five-year charter on the 259,000-dwt single-hull **Front Tobago** (built 1993).

STX Pan Ocean already has two MR tankers under construction at STX Shipbuilding for delivery in March 2007.

Master Ferries to Buy Ferry

Master Ferries in Kristiansand has reached an agreement with the Australian shipyard Incat about the purchase and refit of a new high-speed ferry. The ferry has belonged to the American army and will go through an extensive rebuilding before delivery.

The ferry has a length of 98 meter and can take as much as 800 passengers and up to 20 trailers or 245 cars. The ferry was built in Australia 2002. The new ship is 12 metres longer than **Master Cat**. Master Ferries plans to put the ferry in traffic in April next year. Master Ferries refuses to make the price official, reports SSG.

BALLAST IN GREAT LAKES SHIPPING IS SCRUTINIZED

Viral hemorrhagic septicemia, known as VHS, was discovered in the Great Lakes basin last year, and it has been blamed for the deaths of thousands of fish in the eastern Great Lakes. Now the Michigan Natural Resources Commission wants the federal government to order an emergency ban on freighters filling their ballast water tanks in the virus-infected waters of Lakes Erie, Ontario and St. Clair, as well as the St. Lawrence River. The hope is that this will protect the virus-free Lakes Michigan, Huron and Superior. As Glen Nekvasil, spokesman for the Lake Carriers' Association, which represents US shippers operating inside the Great Lakes, points out: "A ban on ballast uptakes would bring shipping to a halt." The request came in a November 9 resolution from the governor-appointed, bipartisan commission that oversees the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. It was forwarded to the federal Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, or APHIS, early last week. APHIS has already proven it is keen to move quickly on this issue when it banned the export of several fish species from all the Great Lakes states on October 24. The group will meet with other federal agencies to evaluate the dangers posed by the virus

MOVEMENTS

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A crab fishing vessel seen operating at Punta Arenas (Chile)

Photo : Tomislav Raymondi ©

Het nieuwe cruiseschip Norwegian Pearl arriveert woensdag 29 november in Rotterdam. Het schip vertrekt diezelfde middag om 17.30 uur voor een korte trip op de Noordzee. Donderdagmorgen vroeg komt ze weer binnen, donderdag einde middag gaat ze weer weg.



The **IVS NIGHTINGALE** seen departing from Callao port

Photo : Piet Sinke ©

The **IVS NIGHTINGALE** is built during 2005 at the Naikai Zosen shipyard in Setoda under yard number 692, the bulker is having a length of 172.9 mtr, measures a DWT of 32316 ton and is flying the Panamanian flag

AIRCRAFT / AIRPORT NEWS

Transavia gaat ook in Frankrijk vliegen

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Transavia gaat ook in Frankrijk vliegen. De luchtvaartmaatschappij zal onder haar huidige naam voornamelijk vanuit Parijs vakantiebestemmingen aandoen rond de Middellandse Zee, zoals Tunesië en Marokko. Vanaf volgende zomer moeten de eerste vluchten plaatsvinden.

Transavia zal, net als in Nederland, chartervluchten uitvoeren voor reisorganisaties. Ook zal de luchtvaartmaatschappij via internet goedkope tickets verkopen. Daarmee gaat het bedrijf de concurrentie aan met prijsvechters als easyJet, die al een sterke positie hebben verworven in Frankrijk.

Transavia behoort tot de luchtvaartgroep Air France-KLM behoort en krijgt 40 procent van de aandelen van de op te richten Franse vervoerder in handen. De overige 60 procent gaat naar moederconcern Air France. Dit bedrijf krijgt een meerderheidsbelang omdat Transavia alleen dan vanuit Frankrijk bepaalde vakantiebestemmingen kan aandoen. Dat heeft te maken met landingsrechten. De nieuwe prijsvechter krijgt ook een Franse bestuursvoorzitter.

Air France-KLM verwacht in Frankrijk een sterke positie te kunnen opbouwen met Transavia. "Er is nog geen Franse chartermaatschappij", zei KLM-topman Leo van Wijk donderdag in een toelichting. Net als Nederlanders vliegen Fransen volgens hem graag met een nationale luchtvaartmaatschappij. Er is volgens hem veel vraag geweest van touroperators naar een chartermaatschappij van Franse bodem.

Het Franse Transavia gaat vliegen met tien vliegtuigen. Dat vergt een investering van 20 miljoen euro. Binnen twee jaar is dat bedrag terugverdiend, verwacht Air France-topman Jean-Cyril Spinetta.

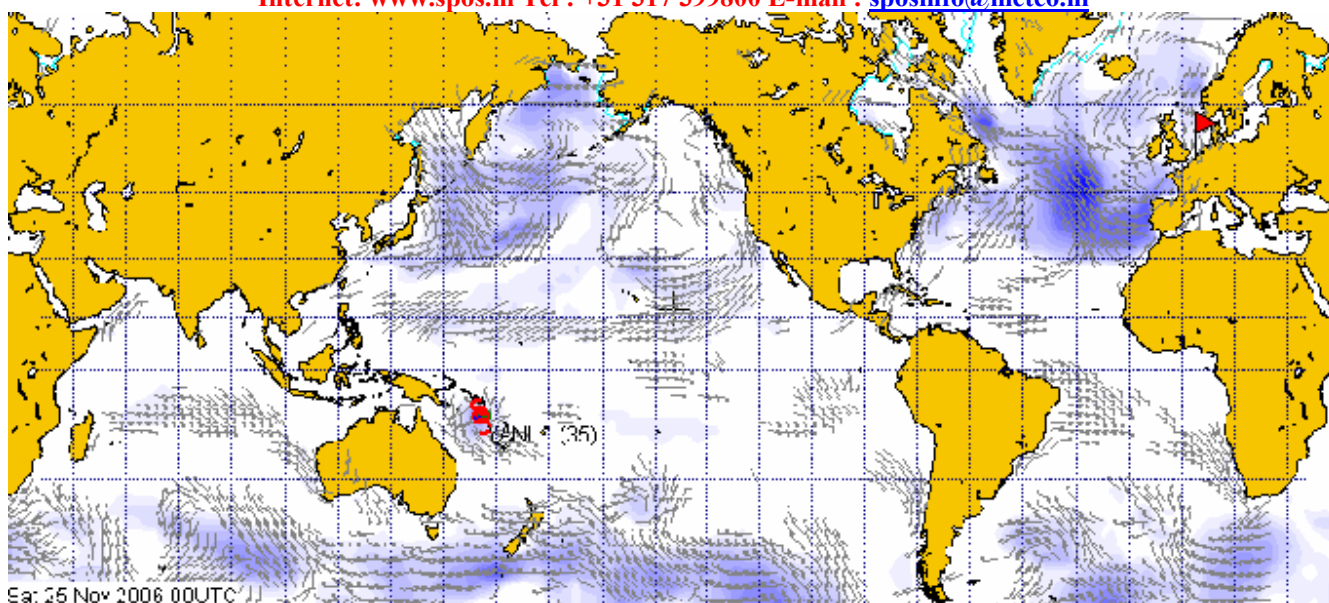
"Transavia kan winstgevend worden als er tegen lage kosten wordt gewerkt." Vooral de ticketverkoop via internet moet daar aan bijdragen.

MARINE WEATHER

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Today's wind (+6Bft) and wave (+3m) chart. Created with SPOS, the onboard weather information & voyage optimisation system, used on over 500 vessels today.

NEAR HURRICANE FORCE WINDS FORECAST FOR UK

THE UK is set to be battered by exceptionally high winds over the next few days with gale force 8 to storm 10 forecast for many areas from early Friday. The UK's Maritime and Coastguard Agency warns that winds could later reach "violent storm 11" later. As of Thursday night there were gale warnings in force for all sea areas around the UK. The worst weather is expected on Saturday.

.... PHOTO OF THE DAY



The **BOURBON PERIDOT** – Photo : Jan Plug ©

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