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ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report

26 May-1 June 2020

Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

OVERVIEW

During 26 May-1 Jun 20, the ReCAAP ISC did not receive report of incident of piracy or armed robbery against ships in Asia.

SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

As the risk of the abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah is high as demonstrated by the Warning 01-2020 issued by the ReCAAP ISC on 23 May (refer to Warning as attached) and the recurrence of the abduction incident on 17 Jan 20, the ReCAAP ISC reiterates its advisory issued via ReCAAP ISC Incident Alert dated 21 Nov 16 to all ships to reroute from the area, where possible. Otherwise, ship masters and crew are strongly urged to exercise extra vigilance while transiting the area, and report immediately to the Operation Centres of Philippines and Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) of Malaysia. The contact details of the Operation Centres of the Philippines and ESSCOM of Malaysia (updated by ReCAAP ISC on 3 Jan 19) are as follows:



The map shows the Sulu Sea to the north and the Celebes Sea to the south. Key locations marked include Lahad Datu, Zamboanga, and Bongao. Contact points are indicated by numbered circles: 1 near Zamboanga, 2a and 2b near Bongao, and 3 near Lahad Datu.

1	Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao Tel: +63 998 585 7972 +63 917 842 8446 VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "NEPTUNE" Email: hcgdswm@yahoo.com
2a	Philippine Coast Guard Station, Bongao (Central Tawi-Tawi) Tel: +63 998 585 7941 +63 917 842 8402 VHF: Channel 16 Email: cgd_tawi2@yahoo.com
2b	Philippine Navy - Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS), Bongao, Tawi-Tawi Tel: +63 955 714 0153 VHF: Channel 16 Email: jointtaskgroup@gmail.com
3	Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) Tel: +60 89863181/016 Fax: +60 89863182 VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "ESSCOM" Email: bilikgerakan_esscom@jpm.gov.my

Contact details

In the event that the ship master is not able to establish contact with the Operation Centres of the Philippines as listed in the ReCAAP ISC Advisory, he can contact the **Philippine Coast Guard Command Centre** at the following contact details:

Tel: +632-8-527-8481 (ext: 6136/37)
+632-998-585-5327 (mobile)
+632-917-842-8249 (mobile)
+632-8-527-3877 (fax)

Email: pcgcomcen@coastguard.gov.ph

The ReCAAP ISC advises the shipping industry and ships to enhance their situation awareness by referring to the *Guidance on Abduction of Crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and Waters off Eastern Sabah* produced by ReCAAP ISC in July 2019. The Guidance is available at www.recaap.org.

RECOMMENDATION

The ReCAAP ISC urges ship master and crew to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State and flag State, exercise vigilance and adopt relevant preventive measures taking reference from the *Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia*.

WARNING 01-2020

22 MAY 2020

1. On 22 May, the ReCAAP ISC has received information from the Philippine Coast Guard (ReCAAP Focal Point) that a group of approximately five ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) members armed with assorted firearms is planning to conduct kidnapping activities in undisclosed areas in Sabah, Malaysia. They are targeting wealthy businessmen or crew of fishing boats and other slow moving ships plying within the waters off Sabah, Malaysia. The group came from Sulu and was monitored to have landed at Omapoy Island, Sipangkot, Sitangkai, Tawi Tawi.
2. Ship masters and crew are strongly urged to exercise extra vigilance when transiting the waters off Eastern Sabah and in the Sulu-Celebes Seas.
3. Source: Philippine Coast Guard
4. This information is to provide maritime situational awareness for mariners operating in the area.



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