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ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report 20-26 April 2021

Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

OVERVIEW

During 20-26 Apr 21, three incidents of armed robbery against ships (one CAT 2¹ incident and two CAT 4² incidents) were reported to the ReCAAP ISC. Of the three incidents, two incidents occurred to ships while underway in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the Singapore Strait (SS), and one incident occurred to a ship while berthed alongside the MOT Terminal at Sandakan, Sabah, East Malaysia.

The two incidents in the SS occurred off Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, Indonesia within an interval of four hours on 17 Apr. In one of the incidents, the perpetrator hit the third engineer using a wrench. The crew sustained a mild contusion on his forehead. Some engine spares were also stolen. Nothing was reported stolen in the other incident. With these two incidents, a total of 12 incidents had occurred in the SS since January 2021. The ReCAAP ISC is concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents in the SS, particularly off Tanjung Pergam, and issued an Incident Alert (IA 03/2021) on 23 Apr 21. Of the 12 incidents in SS, nine incidents occurred off Tanjung Pergam.

The locations of the three incidents are shown in map next page, and detailed description of the incidents tabulated in the attachment.

¹ CAT (Category) 2 incident is moderately significant. Under this category, the perpetrators are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in some incidents armed with guns. The crew is threatened or held hostage temporarily and, in some cases, the crew suffered injury and physical violence.

² CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as "least significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators were not armed, and the crew not harmed.



Location of incidents

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

There is no incident of abduction of crew reported in 2021 so far, and no crew is currently being held in captivity by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). However, the risk of the abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah remains high as demonstrated by information of planned kidnapping in Sabah and Semporna, Malaysia (as reported in ReCAAP ISC's Warning issued on 2 Jul 20), and the operation on 3 Nov 20 by the Philippine authorities in preventing a kidnap-for-ransom incident. 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 all incidents immediately to the Operation Centres of the 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 shown next page.



The map shows the Sulu Sea to the north and the Celebes Sea to the south. Three numbered locations are marked: 1 (Zamboanga), 2a and 2b (Bongao), and 3 (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*.

**Description of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships
20-26 April 2021**

	Ship Name Type of Ship Flag Gross Tonnage IMO Number	Date Local Time of Incident (LT)	Position of the Incident	Details of the Incident	Consequences for crew, ship, cargo	Action taken by the master and crew	Was the incident reported to coastal authority? Which one?	Reporting State or International Organization	Coastal State Action Taken
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
INCIDENTS IN ASIA									
ACTUAL INCIDENTS									
1.	Ioanna L Bulk carrier Isle of Man 43066 9803340	17/04/21 0500 hrs	1.0; 16.4' N 104.0; 14.3' E Approximately 8 nm northwest of Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, Indonesia in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS). (SOMS)	While underway, four unauthorised persons were sighted in the engine room. One of them hit the third engineer with an adjustable wrench. The crew sustained mild contusion on his forehead. The alarm was raised and crew mustered. A search on board the ship was conducted. At about 0600 hrs, the search on board was completed with no further sighting of the perpetrators. The master reported that some engine spares were stolen, and all crew was accounted for. The ship continued with her voyage for Xinsha, China. A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The Republic of Singapore Navy's (RSN) Maritime Security Task Force (MSTF) and Singapore Police Coast Guard were informed, and the Malaysian and Indonesian authorities were notified. [Category 2]	The third engineer sustained a mild contusion on his forehead. Some engine spares were stolen.	The general alarm was raised and a search onboard the ship was conducted.	Yes The master reported the incident to the Singapore Vessel Traffic Information System (VTIS)	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore) and ReCAAP Focal Point (Japan)	A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The Republic of Singapore Navy's Maritime Security Task Force (MSTF) and Singapore Police Coast Guard (PCG) were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Malaysian and Indonesian authorities.

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2.	Name withheld Petroleum/ chemical tanker	17/04/21 0140 hrs	1.0; 16.03' N 104.0; 12.08' E Approximately 8.6 nm northwest of Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, Indonesia in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS). (SOMS)	While underway, the duty engineer was making his rounds in the engine room when he spotted a perpetrator trying to open the steering gear entrance door from poop deck. He reported the incident to the bridge and the general alarm was raised. A search on board the ship was conducted by the crew and nothing was reported missing. The perpetrator was believed to have escaped when his presence was discovered. The crew was not injured and there was no reported damage to the ship [Category 4]	The crew was not injured. Nothing was stolen.	The general alarm was raised. A search was conducted by the crew and nothing was reported missing.	Not known	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Singapore)	No information available.
3.	Henry Maersk Chemical/oil product tanker Denmark 25723 9399351	12/04/21 0348 hrs	5.0; 48.0' N 118.0; 4.0' E MOT Terminal, Sandakan, Sabah, East Malaysia.	While at berth, the crew on the manifold heard the sound of the padlock being broken. On investigation of the forecastle, it was noted that the padlock to the forward bosun store had been broken. The rod securing the plates blocking access through the anchor chain pipes was found removed but the plates were still closed. Upon further investigation of the forecastle, it was discovered that the ship's anchor bell was missing, presumably stolen by the perpetrator. A complete ship inspection was conducted and all other doors and locks were found intact. The crew was safe. [Category 4]	The crew was not injured. The ship's anchor bell was stolen.	A complete search onboard the ship was conducted.	Yes The master reported the incident to the Agent who informed the Port Facility Security Officer (PFSO) and the local police. The Flag State was also notified.	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Denmark) and regional authorities	No information available.

