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## ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report 27 Apr-3 May 2021

### Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

#### OVERVIEW

During 27 Apr-3 May 21, one CAT 4<sup>1</sup> incident of armed robbery against ships in Asia was reported to the ReCAAP ISC. The incident occurred to a barge while anchored at South Harbour Anchorage, Manila, Philippines. Five perpetrators boarded the barge and stole the cargo on board. Upon being sighted by the duty crew, the perpetrators jumped overboard. One of the perpetrators was arrested by the Philippine Coast Guard and pending prosecution by the Regional Court of Manila, Philippines.

The location of the incident is shown in the map and detailed description of the incident tabulated in the attachment.



Location of incident

<sup>1</sup> CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as “least significant” in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators were not armed, and the crew not harmed.

## 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:



The map shows the Sulu Sea to the north and the Celebes Sea to the south. Key locations marked include Lahad Datu, Bongao, and Zamboanga. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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  
27 April-3 May 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
<b>INCIDENTS IN ASIA</b>									
<b>ACTUAL INCIDENT</b>									
1.	<b>Bak-Da 5 / Bak-Da 55</b> Tug boat / barge Mongolia	20/04/21 0255 hrs	14.0; 33.0' N 120.0; 56.0' E  South Harbour Anchorage, Manila, the Philippines.	<p>While at anchor, the duty security guard spotted five perpetrators onboard the barge transferring timber to a motor banca known as "Jaime Franco". The duty security guard shouted and the five perpetrators immediately jumped overboard.</p> <p>The master and crew conducted a search for the perpetrators and saw one of them asking to be rescued. The crew rescued him and reported the incident to its agent and subsequently to the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Port State Control. The PCG upon receipt of the report immediately proceeded to the location and arrested the rescued perpetrator who was charged under a case of violation of Article 308 of the Revised Penal Code (A.30, RPC) also known as "Theft" at the Regional Trial Court of Manila, Philippines.</p> <p>All crew are safe. 27 pieces of sawn timber were stolen. The incident was reported to the PCG Port State Control and the Coast Guard at Sub Station of South Harbour.</p> <p align="right">[Category 4]</p>	<p>The crew was safe.</p> <p>27 pieces of sawn timber were stolen.</p>	<p>The master and crew conducted a search for the perpetrators and saw one of them asking to be rescued. The crew rescued the perpetrator and reported the incident to its agent and subsequently to PCG Port State Control.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The incident was reported to the PCG Port State Control and the Coast Guard at Sub Station of South Harbour.</p>	<p>ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)</p>	<p>The PCG upon receipt of the report immediately proceeded to the location of the incident and arrested one of the perpetrators who was charged under a case of violation of Article 308 of the Revised Penal Code (A.30, RPC) also known as "Theft" at the Regional Trial Court of Manila, Philippines.</p>