

OVERVIEW

Two actual incidents of armed robbery against ships (one CAT 2¹ and one CAT 4²) in Asia were reported to ReCAAP ISC. The incidents occurred on 6 Nov 23 and 13 Nov 23 to a general cargo ship while anchored at Phu My Anchorage, Vietnam and a chemical tanker while anchored at Kandla OTB Anchorage, India, respectively. The details of incidents are shown in table (*).



Factors	Location	
	Vietnam	India
	Phu My Anchorage (1 incident)	Kandla OTB Anchorage (1 incident)
Type of ship	General cargo ship	Chemical tanker
Date/Time	6 Nov at 0150 hrs	13 Nov at 2235 hrs
Number of perpetrators	2-3 men	8-10 men
Weapons	Not stated	Long knives, axe and steel rods
Treatment of crew	No injuries	No injuries
Items stolen	Six paint drums	Common line elbow connections, vapour line elbow
Significance level	CAT 4	CAT 2

AREA OF CONCERN

The ReCAAP ISC advises ships to continue to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting areas of concern, including the Straits of Malacca and Singapore; and littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in these areas.

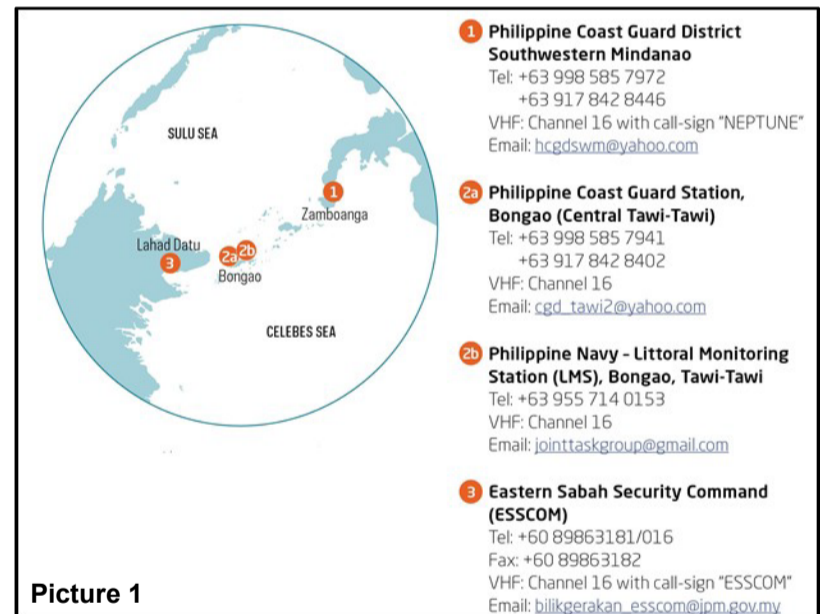
SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

Re-Assessment and Downgrading of threat level

The efforts by the Philippine Government in Zamboanga, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi through the conduct of continuous military operations led to the dismantling of the support base and neutralising the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Sulu archipelago. Against this backdrop, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), coordinated with other stakeholders and counterparts that have vital involvement in the maritime security of the Sulu-Celebes Seas, reviewed the threat situation and recommended further downgrading the threat level of 'Abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'MODERATE' to '**MODERATE LOW**', which implies that '**Incidents are unlikely to occur due to perpetrators' perceived lack of capability to orchestrate an attack. Nevertheless, minimal damages are expected to the vessel and crew in case of an attack**'.

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory

- With downgrading of the threat on the 'Abduction of Crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes seas by the PCG, ReCAAP ISC have updated its Advisory for ships to **"exercise vigilance & adopt necessary preventive measures while transiting the area"**.
- For ships transiting the area, the **ship masters and crew are strongly encouraged to exercise extra vigilance 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 are as shown in Picture 1.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Ship master and crew are to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State RCC and flag State, referring to the Poster on *Contact Details for Reporting of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*, exercise vigilance and adopt appropriate preventive measures taking reference from the *Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*.

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* Table at <https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/Number%20of%20Incidents/2023/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202023.pdf> for details of the incidents.

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 are not armed, and the crew not injured.