



**S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL
OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**
A Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University

Broader Horizons

A Monthly Maritime Bulletin and Perspectives of the Maritime Security Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Featured *MSP Perspective*:

Lessons from the Search for MH370 – p. 1

By **Sam Bateman & Anthony Bergin**

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Lessons from the Search for MH370

Sam Bateman & Anthony Bergin

Numerous countries have come together with ships, aircraft, satellite information and technical know-how to assist in the search for Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. This co-operation looks good, but it has been hindered by political problems and security sensitivities with the release of classified surveillance data.

Political problems have been evident with the apparent determination of China to do its own thing independent of its obligation to co-operate with Australia and other countries. China's claim it had picked up possible signals from the aircraft's black box was released to Chinese state media before the information was properly analysed and the search adjusted as necessary. From the first days of the search, Southeast Asian countries did not co-ordinate as well as they might. It was not clear at first which country was in charge, then Thailand admitted it had surveillance information it didn't share initially.

A root cause of this problem lies in the fact that not all regional countries have accepted their responsibilities for SAR at sea. The responsibilities and procedures for this are prescribed in the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR Convention), but in Southeast Asia, only Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam are parties to the convention.

Obligations to establish national rescue co-ordination centres and to cooperate with neighbouring countries, including allowing rescue units of other countries to enter territorial waters on a SAR mission without prior permission, are possible reasons why more countries are not parties to the convention. Thus sensitivities to sovereignty may have over-ruled responsibilities for SAR at sea, despite the fundamental importance of co-operation between neighbouring countries.

The US has very capable satellite surveillance and intelligence systems that would provide a vital source of intelligence to assist the search. The US only shares this information with a limited number of countries, and it is not evident how that information is being used in the search for MH370.

A positive outcome from the search for MH370 may well be greater preparedness to address these political problems and security sensitivities, and the way in which they can restrict an effective SAR mission. At the international level, the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the International Maritime Organisation should address these issues.

At the regional level, a key lesson is the need for greater regional cooperation. Delays in mobilising regional cooperation were previously a factor in the search for Adam Air flight KI574 that crashed in the Makassar Strait on 1 January 2007. After several false reports, it was over a week before the crash location was identified and the 'black box' flight recorders were not recovered until August 2007.

Enhanced measures are required in the region for SAR co-operation that would encourage information sharing, designate lead SAR centres and ensure arrangements are in place for co-ordination for ships and aircraft to respond quickly. This is an obligation of countries under the SAR convention, but while ASEAN has a number of agreements relating to SAR in place, the basic foundation for cooperation is missing in that important regional countries are not parties to that convention. All regional countries should be parties to the SAR Convention

A regional SAR centre might be considered. One model might be Singapore's Information Fusion Centre, which draws together information to produce and disseminate a synthesised overview of the sea situation in the region. Something similar to a regional SAR centre appears to have found some support in

Southeast Asia. Singapore's Defence Minister recently offered to host a regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief co-ordination centre at Changi Naval Base.

Sam Bateman is Adviser to the RSIS Maritime Security Programme and Anthony Bergin is Deputy Director of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). This item is based on an opinion piece published in the Australian Financial Review on 9 April.

Naval Development & Policy

CHINA—PHILIPPINES | 22 MARCH | DEFENSE NEWS

Philippines to challenge Chinese blockade

TAIPEI — With the eyes of the world focused either on the Russian incursion into Ukraine or the search for the missing Malaysia Airlines passenger plane, another drama that normally would be making international headlines is unfolding in the South China Sea. On March 9, two Chinese Coast Guard cutters blocked two Philippine transport vessels carrying supplies to marines assigned to a corroding World War II-era vessel marooned on the Ayungin Shoal, known as the Renai Shoal to China.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 1 MARCH | TIMES OF INDIA

Indian Navy validates massive exercise under country's first military satellite's gaze

NEW DELHI: India's first-ever dedicated military satellite, Rukmini or GSAT-7, "seamlessly networked" around 60 warships and 75 aircraft during the massive month-long naval combat exercise in the Bay of Bengal that ended on Friday. The location of the exercise "Tropex", or the theatre-level readiness and operational exercise, was significant since India is steadily bolstering military force-levels on the eastern coast and Andaman and Nicobar archipelago to counter China's strategic moves in the critical Indian Ocean region (IOR).

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 3 MARCH | HINDUSTAN TIMES

Cable fire caused INS Sindhuratna mishap: probe

A cable fire seems to have been the cause of a the fire that led to the deaths of two naval officers in the accident on INS Sindhuratna last week according to the preliminary findings of the board of inquiry. According to reliable naval sources, the fire occurred in plastic-covered cables connecting the batteries to the electrical systems of the submarine. Once the fire alarm went off, Lt Commander Kapish Muwal and Lt Manoranjan Kumar rushed to the spot but collapsed after inhaling the dense black smoke, according to the preliminary findings.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 5 MARCH | AL JAZEERA

China announces military spending increase

China has announced its biggest rise in military spending in three years, a strong signal from President Xi Jinping that Beijing is not about to back away from its growing assertiveness in Asia, especially in disputed

waters. The government said on Wednesday it would increase the defence budget by 12.2 percent this year to \$131.57bn, partly to develop more high-tech weapons and to beef up coastal and air defences.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 6 MARCH | REUTERS

China apprehending boats weekly in disputed South China Sea

(Reuters) - Chinese patrols enforcing disputed new fishing rules in the South China Sea are apprehending foreign boats on a weekly basis, Communist Party officials said on Thursday. In comments that provide the first window on how China is enforcing new rules criticized by Washington, the party secretary for Hainan Island said Chinese patrols attempted to peacefully negotiate with vessels that initially ignored warnings to leave Chinese waters.

[Full Report](#)

AUSTRALIA | 7 MARCH | SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

Australian Navy's Air Warfare Destroyer project blows out by \$300m

The cost of building Australia's most powerful warships has blown out by \$300 million - a figure likely to rise sharply - amid management problems and poor productivity, an auditor's report has found. The much-anticipated assessment of the \$8.7 billion Air Warfare Destroyer project found that Australia's shipyards were not fully prepared to take on the complex work, while the Spanish ship designer provided poor blueprints marred by "drawing errors or omissions" and late changes.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 7 MARCH | ZEE NEWS

Commander dies in INS Kolkata mishap

Mumbai: Just weeks before Indian Navy's most modern destroyer, INS Kolkata, was to be commissioned, the warship was hit by an accident at the Mazgaon Dock in Mumbai on Friday claiming the life of a Commander and hospitalisation of two dockyard employees. In the 11th incident in seven months stalking naval assets, INS Kolkata (officially called Yard 701) was undergoing fitments and trials when the mishap occurred in its engine room.

[Full Report](#)

AUSTRALIA | 13 MARCH | NEWS.COM.AU

PM gives go-ahead to buy Triton drones

AUSTRALIA will buy Triton long-range unmanned surveillance drones, but the Abbott government isn't saying how many or how much they'll cost. And the deal will be conditional on the US Navy proving this advanced and expensive technology works properly. Prime Minister Tony Abbott travelled to South Australia two days out from the state election to announce that the government would buy Tritons, to be based at RAAF Edinburgh outside Adelaide.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 23 MARCH | IHS JANE'S 360

PLAN commissions first Type 052D DDG, puts second on sea trials

China's People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) commissioned the first of its Luyang III (Type 052D)-class guided missile destroyers (DDG) at the Jiangnan Shipyard in Shanghai on 21 March. The vessel was handed over in a ceremony presided over by PLAN commander Admiral Wu Shengli, who described the vessel as an asset that will "greatly enhance the navy's fighting capabilities".

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 26 MARCH | TIMES OF INDIA

India tests new underwater nuclear missile

India has test-fired a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) with a "longer range" than that of the existing one of 750-km in the quest towards building a credible nuclear weapons triad. The new SLBM with a range over 2,000 km, tentatively dubbed K-4, was tested from a submersible pontoon in the Bay of Bengal on Monday. The test came up for discussion in the annual DRDO directors' conference, attended by defence minister A K Antony and national security advisor Shivshankar Menon here on Tuesday, said sources.

[Full Report](#)

RUSSIA—UKRAINE | 26 MARCH | IHS JANE'S 360

Ukrainian Navy cut down by Russian move into Crimea

Ukraine's maritime forces have been dealt a heavy blow by the Russian intervention in Crimea with 12 of its 17 major warships, nearly 40 support vessels, and much of its naval aviation assets now falling under Moscow's control. In the eight days following the controversial referendum on 16 March that opened the door for Crimea to be absorbed in the Russian Federation, almost every Ukrainian naval base and ship on the peninsula has been seized by Russian forces or local pro-Moscow self-defence units.

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA | 29 MARCH | ANTARA NEWS

Chief security minister to open Komodo Multilateral Naval Exercise 2014

Batam, Riau Islands (ANTARA News) - Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Djoko Suyanto is scheduled to inaugurate Komodo Multilateral Naval Exercise (KMNE) 2014 in the Batam Harbour Bay on Saturday morning. The naval exercise which involves 17 countries will take place in Batam Bay, Natuna Islands and Anambas Islands, KMNE 2014 Director Commodore Amarulla Octavian said here on Friday.

[Full Report](#)

PHILIPPINES—CHINA | 31 MARCH | BBC

Philippines files case to UN in South China Sea dispute

The Philippines has submitted evidence to a UN tribunal hearing its case against China's territorial claims in the South China Sea. Both sides have overlapping claims in the sea, leading to severe tensions. China has refused to take part in the arbitration and warned that the case will damage bilateral ties. The latest move comes a day after a Philippine ship evaded Chinese vessels to bring supplies to troops stationed on a disputed shoal.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA—PHILIPPINES | 31 MARCH | XINHUA

China lodges solemn representation to Philippines over South China Sea dispute

BEIJING, March 31 (Xinhua) -- Chinese vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin on Monday lodged solemn representations to Philippine Ambassador to China Erlinda Basilio over the formal plea the Philippines filed to an international tribunal on South China Sea dispute on Sunday. China expressed strong dissatisfaction at and firm opposition to the Philippine side over the international arbitration it pushed forward unilaterally disregarding China's stern stance, said Liu.

[Full Report](#)

NORTH—SOUTH KOREA | 31 MARCH | DEFENSE NEWS

North, South Korea trade live fire over sea border

SEOUL. SOUTH KOREA — The two Koreas traded hundreds of rounds of live artillery fire across their disputed maritime border Monday, forcing South Korean islanders to take shelter a day after the North drove up tensions by threatening a new nuclear test. The exchange, triggered by a three-hour North Korean live-fire exercise that dropped shells into South Korean waters, was limited to untargeted shelling into the sea, military officials said.

[Full Report](#)

Maritime Safety & Security



AUSTRALIA—MALAYSIA | 31 MARCH | THE GUARDIAN

Tony Abbott praises international co-operation in search for missing MH370

Tony Abbott has praised international efforts in the search for the missing Malaysia Airlines plane after a joint agency co-ordination centre was appointed to oversee the operation. Since the plane's flight paths were identified and satellite images have picked up what could be debris, searches have focused on the southern Indian Ocean west and south-west of Perth.

[Full Report](#)

AUSTRALIA—PAKISTAN | 5 MARCH | SEVEN NEWS

Australian Navy vessel HMAS Darwin rescues 13 fishermen found adrift off Pakistan coast

The Australian Navy ship HMAS Darwin has rescued 13 fishermen found adrift off the coast of Pakistan. The Navy says the men - who claimed to be Iranian - said they had been drifting for five days after their boat was hit by another vessel. Navy personnel gave the men food, water and minor medical care before they were transferred to the Pakistan Maritime Authority and returned to shore.

[Full Report](#)

OMAN | 5 MARCH | TIMES OF OMAN

International forces thwart piracy bid off Omani coast

Muscat: Oman Coast Guard, Australian frigate HMAS Darwin from the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), and Pakistan Navy's maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) moved swiftly to "thwart a suspected pirate attack" on a cargo vessel, MV Tateyama, 60 nautical miles off the coast of Oman on February 28, the CMF claimed. According to the CMF, the Thailand flagged merchant cargo ship, MV Tateyama, reportedly came "under attack" from the sailors on two skiffs.

[Full Report](#)

NORTH KOREA | 6 MARCH | YONHAP NEWS AGENCY

U.N. mulls more sanctions on N. Korea for arms deal ship

NEW YORK, March 5 (Yonhap) -- The United Nations Security Council is expected to impose additional sanctions on North Korea for the attempted shipment of arms from Cuba to the peninsula last July, a diplomatic source here said Wednesday. The council's sanctions committee has concluded that two entities were involved in the shipment by the North Korean vessel, Chong Chon Gang, caught by Panamanian authorities, the source said.

[Full Report](#)

WEST AFRICA | 7 MARCH | ICC-CCS

IMB warns of West Africa piracy threat

The ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) is asking ships to be extra vigilant when transiting West Africa as piracy in the region becomes a growing concern. IMB's Live Piracy Map shows that since the beginning of the year, one vessel, MT Kerala, has been hijacked and six were boarded in West Africa. There was also one attempted attack. The hijacking of the Liberian-flag product tanker in January by Nigerian pirates has sparked fears these gangs are venturing further south.

[Full Report](#)

SINGAPORE | 12 MARCH | IHS MARITIME 360

Ship masters 'should check conditions in Singapore Straits'

Given the amount of land reclamation and general works in the Singapore Strait, ship masters should seek up-to-date information about sea conditions prior to entering, said UK-based protection and indemnity organisation Standard Club. The Standard Club was commenting on the recent collisions in the Singapore Strait, which have raised concern among the city-state's shipping community. The collisions also prompted the Singapore Flag State to produce an updated Guide to the Singapore Straits, in cooperation with the Singapore Shipping Association.

[Full Report](#)

SINGAPORE | 17 MARCH | CHANNEL NEWSASIA

SAF deploys task group to support international counter-piracy efforts in Gulf of Aden

SINGAPORE: The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) has deployed a task group in support of international counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden for the fifth time. Led by Colonel Cheong Kwok Chien, the 151-strong SAF task group comprises the Republic of Singapore Navy Formidable-class stealth frigate -- RSS Tenacious -- with a Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) Sikorsky S-70B Seahawk naval helicopter on board.

[Full Report](#)

JAPAN—CHINA | 19 MARCH | SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

One Chinese crew dead, eight missing after ships collide near Tokyo

A mainland Chinese crew member was killed and eight others were missing after their Taiwanese-owned freighter collided with another ship at the mouth of Tokyo Bay and sank yesterday. The 130-metre Beagle III, which was carrying steel coil, collided with the South Korean-registered Pegasus Prime in the Uraga waterway at around 3.10am.

[Full Report](#)

LIBYA—NORTH KOREA—UNITED STATES | 23 MARCH | REUTERS

Seized oil tanker Morning Glory arrives in Libyan capital

(Reuters) - A commercial oil tanker seized by U.S. forces after it loaded crude at a Libya port held by anti-government rebels has docked back in the capital Tripoli, a Reuters witness said on Sunday. U.S. special forces boarded the tanker a week ago off Cyprus, days after it left Es Sider port, which is controlled by rebels who demand more autonomy and oil wealth in defiance of the central government.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA—UNITED KINGDOM | 26 MARCH | BBC

British anti-piracy guards held in India granted bail

Five out of six British men who have been held in India since October on suspicion of illegal possession of guns and ammunition have been granted bail. The men were among the 35-strong crew of a US-owned anti-piracy support vessel detained in the Indian port of Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, on 12 October. A judge has now granted conditional bail to 33 of the men, including Billy Irving, 33, from Connel in Argyll.

[Full Report](#)

SINGAPORE—MALAYSIA | 28 MARCH | STRAITS TIMES

Some criticism of Malaysia's handling of missing MH370 plane 'unfair': Shanmugam

Some of the criticism being levelled at Malaysia for its handling of a missing jetliner has been unfair, said Singapore's Foreign Affairs Minister K. Shanmugam on Friday. Calling the mystery of Flight MH370 a "most unusual, bizarre situation", he said there have been many theories over what could have happened.

[Full Report](#)

PHILIPPINES—JAPAN | 31 MARCH | PHILIPPINES DAILY INQUIRER

Patrol boats from Japan to start arriving in 2015

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) expects delivery of two to three of 10 brand-new multi-role patrol boats from Japan by the third quarter of 2015, according to the PCG spokesman. Cmdr. Armand Balilo, PCG public affairs office chief, told the Inquirer on Sunday the seven other 40-meter (131-foot) vessels would be delivered the following year. "The two sides have agreed that all 10 patrol boats will be brand-new and multi-role," Balilo said.

[Full Report](#)

JAPAN | 31 MARCH | AL JAZEERA

UN court rules against Japan whaling

The UN's top court has ordered Japan to stop its annual whale hunt in the Antarctic, rejecting Tokyo's argument that it is for scientific purposes, in an emotive case activists said was make-or-break for the giant mammal's future. "Japan shall revoke any existant authorisation, permit or licence granted in relation to Jarpa II [research programme] and refrain from granting any further permits in pursuance to the programme," the International Court of Justice's Judge Peter Tomka said on Monday.

[Full Report](#)

PHILIPPINES—VIETNAM | 31 MARCH | VOICE OF AMERICA

Philippines seizes Vietnamese fishing boat

Philippine officials say they have seized a Vietnamese fishing boat in disputed waters of the South China Sea. Maritime police say the ship and its 11 crew were found with a haul of dead sharks on March 26. The crew members have been charged with violating the fisheries code. Vietnam says it is not clear if the ship was in Philippine territorial waters when it was taken.

[Full Report](#)

Japan to build two patrol boats for Djiboutian coastguard

Djibouti and Japan signed a 1.6-billion franc (\$8,800) grant agreement Sunday (March 30th) for the construction of two patrol boats to boost the capacity of Djibouti's coastguard, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation Mahamoud Ali Youssef told Sabahi. The agreement was signed by Youssef and Japan's Ambassador to Djibouti Atsushi Nishioka.

[Full Report](#)

Shipping, Ports, & the Maritime Economy

CHINA | 13 MARCH | REUTERS

Global shippers must tighten belts, China's COSCO Chairman says

(Reuters) - Global shipping firms must prepare for another tough year as a glut in global capacity will continue to weigh on profits and margins, the chairman of China's biggest shipping group, China Ocean Shipping Group Co. (COSCO) said. "The industry turnaround will still take a long time," Ma Zehua told Reuters in an interview this week. "There are a lot of challenges ahead." COSCO Group is one of China's top 100 central government-controlled conglomerates. The firm operates more than 700 merchant vessels with shipping lines covering 1,600 ports.

[Full Report](#)

EUROPE | 5 MARCH | LLOYD'S LIST

Ukraine conflict could change global LNG shipping trends

AN ESCALATION of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine over the coming months could dramatically change global trading patterns in liquefied natural gas shipping. Disruptions to gas exports piped from Russia to Europe, through Ukraine, would force Europe to rely more heavily on LNG shipped in on vessels. Specifically, the situation would force Europe to retain many of its imported LNG cargoes, rather than re-loading them for export to other markets, as has been the trend over the past year or so.

Full Report Available Upon Request

CHINA | 6 MARCH | LLOYD'S LIST

CSSC executive urges Beijing to set exhaust cap to cut ship emissions

A SENIOR executive at China State Shipbuilding Corp has handed in a proposal to the country's top political advisory body, asking Beijing to rein in SOx and NOx emissions from ships and set up an exhaust cap marked to the standards of emission-control areas. Hu Keyi, technical director of Jiangnan Shipyard (Group) Co and Shanghai Jiangnan Changxing Heavy Industry Co, two mainstay CSSC subsidiaries, this week submitted his proposal to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which is convening its annual session in Beijing.

Full Report Available Upon Request

PHILIPPINES | 6 MARCH | PHILIPPINE STAR

Congress ratifies bill on maritime industry reforms

MANILA, Philippines - The Senate and the House of Representatives ratified on Tuesday night a bill that seeks to institute reforms in the country's maritime industry to avert the possible ban or firing of some 100,000 Filipino seafarers by European shipping companies. The measure is entitled "An Act Establishing the

Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) as the single maritime administration responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, and International Agreements or Covenants Related Thereto” is now set for transmittal to President Aquino.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 11 MARCH | HINDU BUSINESS LINE

“Set up task force to study issues faced by major ports”

Kochi, March 11: Port and dockworkers have asked the Government to set up a task force to study the deteriorating situation at major ports. The five federations of port and dockworkers say this will help assess the challenges confronting major ports. The task force, comprising all stakeholders in the transport industry, should take positive decisions to ensure the survival of major ports and its workers. Representatives of the five federations at the 11 major ports met in Visakhapatnam recently to discuss the problems faced by major ports to secure traffic and revenue due to various policies of the government.

[Full Report](#)

JAPAN | 13 MARCH | PLATTS

Two Japanese refiners to cut bunker fuel supply from April on regulatory change

Japanese refiners Idemitsu Kosan and Kyokuto Petroleum Industries will cut bunker fuel supply from April as they reduce refining capacity to comply with a government regulation, industry sources said Thursday. Idemitsu Kosan currently sells a combined 60,000-70,000 mt/month of bunker fuel from its Tokuyama refinery in western Japan and Chiba refinery in Tokyo Bay, which will fall to below 60,000 mt/month after April, a company source said. Traders said Idemitsu's supply was likely to fall to around 50,000 mt/month. The refiner will cease operations at the 120,000 b/d Tokuyama refinery by end March due to the change in regulations.

[Full Report](#)

THAILAND | 13 MARCH | BANGKOK POST

Thai bunker supplier plans expansion, eyes ASEAN

The MAI-listed Sea Oil Plc, a supplier of marine bunker oil and lubricants, expects revenue growth of 20% to 3 billion baht this year on the back of business diversification and growing demand for fuels. Chairman Apisit Rujikeatkamjorn said the expected double-digit growth would come from branching into other businesses beyond fuel distribution.

[Full Report](#)

JAPAN—MYANMAR | 14 MARCH | LLOYD'S LOADING LIST

MOL President Koichi Muto visits Myanmar to further strengthen business cooperation

MOL President Koichi Muto hosted an appreciation cocktail party for government leaders, customers, partners and MOL employees on 5 March at Park Royal Hotel, Yangon. It was attended by 110 guests including Ichiro Maruyama, Minister-Counsellor/Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan, reaffirming MOL's expansion plan in the containership business in Myanmar and its commitment in furthering the country's economic development.

Full Report Available Upon Request

Hong Kong's container traffic faces further decline

The port of Hong Kong, which is already losing container market share to rival Chinese ports, faces further “significant” decline in volume following the launch of the P3 Network alliance, according to Alphaliner. Hong Kong saw traffic fall 3.3 percent in 2013, the largest decline among the world's Top 20 ports, the industry analyst said. This pushed Hong Kong, the world's biggest container hub between 2000 and 2004, to fourth place in the global league rankings behind Shanghai, Singapore and Shenzhen.

Full Report Available Upon Request

INDONESIA | 20 MARCH | JAKARTA POST

Blue economy for marine resource development

Indonesia, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), will soon start implementing the blue economy concept in East Lombok and Central Lombok regencies in the province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB). An integrated, upstream and downstream development program covering tuna fisheries, aquaculture, marine tourism, salt industry, pearl industry, ecosystem services with eco-friendly sustainable energy and other infrastructure, including a capacity-building program, is being pushed forward to begin this year, and is scheduled to be completed by 2018, ready to be showcased to the world.

[Full Report](#)

ASIA—EUROPE | 21 MARCH | LLOYD'S LIST

Fall in Asia-Europe rates slows down

DECLINES in spot market freight rates on Asia to Europe services slowed this week as carriers and customers brace themselves for coming planned rate increases. This week's Shanghai Containerised Freight Index revealed that spot rates on services from Shanghai to northern Europe declined by \$45 to \$843 per teu compared with a week earlier. Meanwhile, prices from Shanghai to the Mediterranean slipped \$45 week on week to \$893 per teu.

Full Report Available Upon Request

UNITED STATES | 21 MARCH | SEATRADE GLOBAL

US Federal Maritime Commission approves P3 alliance

The US Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) has cleared the P3 alliance of container lines Maersk Line, CMA CGM and Mediterranean Shipping Co (MSC). The alliance of the world's three largest container lines was approved by the FMC on Thursday with one commissioner Richard Lidinsky, dissenting. The commission said its decision is based on a determination that the agreement is not likely at this time, to cause a reduction in competition. It was also not likely to produce an unreasonable increase in transportation costs or an unreasonable reduction in transportation service.

[Full Report](#)

GLOBAL | 27 MARCH | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

Risk of financial distress plagues container shipping

Beset by continued sluggish demand, a growing mountain of debt and a radically changing marketplace, listed companies in the global container shipping industry as a whole face a greater risk of financial distress,

including possible bankruptcy, than at any time since 2010, and that risk has grown in each of those past three years. That's according to a new study from AlixPartners, the global business-advisory firm.

[Full Report](#)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | 28 MARCH | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

Oil Search vs Total: Battle for PNG gas field

Papua New Guinea energy company Oil Search Ltd launched a fight on Friday to contest French oil giant Total SA's purchase of a 40 percent stake in PNG's biggest undeveloped gas field. The dispute surrounds stakes in the Elk and Antelope fields, coveted because the gas could be used either for a possible expansion of a \$19 billion liquefied natural gas (LNG) project that ExxonMobil Corp is building with Oil Search, or for a rival project.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 31 MARCH | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

Shipbuilder Rongsheng in talks with banks

China Rongsheng Heavy Industries Group, the country's largest private shipbuilder, posted a second straight annual loss on Monday due to shrinking orders and said it was in talks with 10 Chinese banks about the repayment of loans. Analysts have said Rongsheng could be the biggest casualty of a local shipping industry suffering from overcapacity during a global shipping downturn, amid mounting concerns of defaults in China as a credit crunch takes a toll.

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