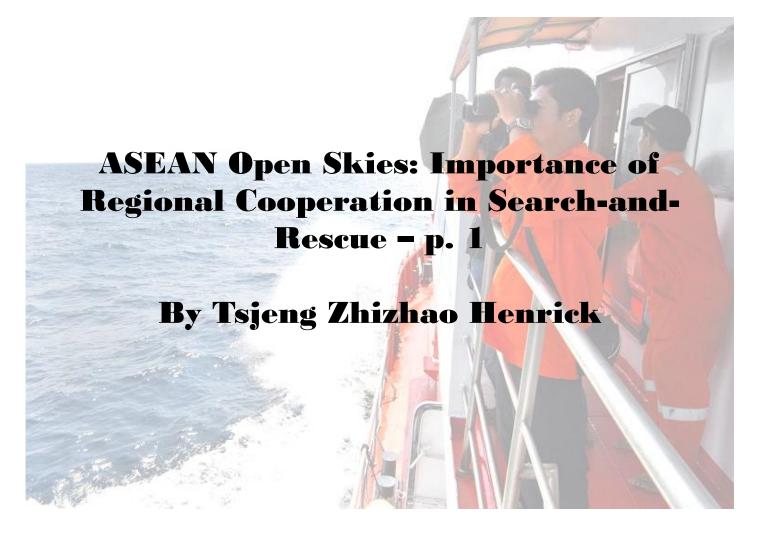


A Monthly Maritime Bulletin and Perspectives of the Maritime Security Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Featured MSP Perspective:



MSP Perspectives:

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MSP Perspectives

ASEAN Open Skies: Importance of Regional Cooperation in Search-and-Rescue

Tsjeng Zhizhao Henrick Associate Research Fellow, Maritime Security Programme

ASEAN is looking to liberalise its airline and aviation market with an "ASEAN Open Skies" agreement. Slated to be in place by 2015, it aims for a single aviation market in ASEAN. This is in line with the implementation of the ASEAN Community 2015, which seeks to deepen intra-ASEAN integration and herald a new chapter in the regional group's evolution. It would no doubt go a long way towards greater economic integration among ASEAN member states, notwithstanding the setbacks posed by the tragedy of the Malaysia Airlines flight MH370.

MH370 might have cast a pall over the aviation market in ASEAN initially. Yet, public confidence in the airline industry in the region remains steady despite the initial shock and worry of its possible negative impact. Arising from this episode, there is a need to further enhance regional search-and-rescue cooperation to prepare for major incidents in future.

Expanding aviation facilities and fleets is only part of the story. Air traffic is likely to rise significantly if and when the Open Skies Agreement is implemented, implying the need for search-and-rescue (SAR) cooperation to increase commensurately to cope with this expected increase. The MH370 incident has made abundantly clear the necessity and urgency of such collaboration. Already, the incident has drawn many countries in the region to contribute to the effort, the scale of which has been deemed unprecedented.

MH370 has also thrown the spotlight on the necessity of a coordinating centre. The Information Fusion Centre at the Changi Command and Control Centre participated in the search operation. Meanwhile, Singapore's defence minister recently offered to host a Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre. These are positive developments as such assets are essential safeguards with the increased air traffic expected with liberalisation of the aviation industry.

What is worth highlighting is the fact that the countries involved were willing to come together to search for the missing plane, even in the South China Sea despite existing territorial disputes. Moreover, the Indonesian Navy recently held multilateral joint naval exercises which included a SAR simulation.

The MH370 search-and-rescue operation may not have been executed perfectly. Nonetheless, numerous leaders, including the Australian prime minister and Singaporean foreign affairs minister, as well as the US Navy, have praised the SAR efforts. One can see not only a greater willingness to cooperate among ASEAN's community of nations but also the will of ASEAN countries to focus on SAR, with positive implications for the Open Skies agreement.

MH370 has shown that regional cooperation in SAR will be needed more than ever before, especially if and when the ASEAN Open Skies agreement is implemented. The silver lining from the tragedy may be that the SAR cooperation brought about by the missing plane demonstrates one thing about ASEAN: Despite the challenges faced by the group, it has not only the will, but also the potential to develop the capabilities to meet the challenges of an increase in air traffic.

Tsjeng Zhizhao Henrick is an Associate Research Fellow with the Maritime Security Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University. This item is based on a commentary co-written by the author and Benjamin Ho, Associate Research Fellow of the Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme, published on 7 May by the RSIS.

Naval Development & Policy

PHILIPPINES—US | 28 APRIL | CHANNEL NEWSASIA

Philippines, US ink defence pact

MANILA: The Philippines and the United States signed an agreement Monday to allow a bigger US military presence on Filipino territory, hours ahead of a visit to Manila by US President Barack Obama. Philippine Defence Minister Voltaire Gazmin and US ambassador Philip Goldberg signed the 10-year pact, which is seen as another element of Obama's effort to focus US military and economic attention more heavily on Asia.

<u>Full Report</u>

NORTH—SOUTH KOREA | 1 APRIL | CHANNEL NEWS ASIA

S Korea finds crashed drone on border island

SEOUL: South Korea said Tuesday it had recovered an unidentified drone that crashed on one of its border islands the same day that North and South Korea exchanged artillery fire across their disputed maritime boundary. The wreckage was discovered on Baengnyeong Island, which lies just south of the maritime border, fuelling suspicions that it might be North Korean.

Full Report

MYANMAR | 1 APRIL | IHS JANE'S

Myanmar commissions first frigate with reduced RCS

The Myanmar Navy (MN) has commissioned its first guided-missile frigate with low observable radar characteristics. UMS (Union of Myanmar Ship) Kyansitthar (or Kyan-Sit-Thar), with pennant number F12, was commissioned on 31 March at Thanlyin naval station near Yangon, just two days after the launch of the third frigate UMS Sin Phyu Shin (F14).

Full Report Available Upon Request

AUSTRALIA—SRI LANKA | 3 APRIL | NAVAL-TECHNOLOGY.COM

Sri Lankan Navy receives first Bay-class vessel gift from Australia

The Sri Lankan Navy has received the first Australian Customs and Border Protection Vessel (ACV), Corio Bay, at a flag transfer ceremony in Cairns, Australia. Provided by the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS), the Bay-class patrol vessel has been renamed the Republic of Sri Lanka Navy Ship Oshadi.

JAPAN-NORTH KOREA | 5 APRIL | VOICE OF AMERICA

Japan: Strike any N. Korea missile launches

TOKYO — Japan has ordered a destroyer in the Sea of Japan to strike any ballistic missiles that may be launched by North Korea in the coming weeks after Pyongyang fired a Rodong medium-range missile over the sea, a government source said on Saturday. Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera issued the order on Thursday, but did not make it public in order to avoid putting a chill on renewed talks between Tokyo and Pyongyang, the first in more than a year, local media reported earlier.

Full Report

JAPAN—UNITED STATES | 6 APRIL | FOX NEWS

US to send 2 more ships to Japan by 2017 to counter North Korea nuclear threat

TOKYO – The U.S. will deploy two additional ballistic missile defense destroyers to Japan by 2017 as part of an effort to bolster protection from North Korean missile threats, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said Sunday. Speaking to at a news conference following a meeting with Japan Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera, Hagel said they discussed the threat posed by Pyongyang.

Full Report

UNITED STATES—VIETNAM | 8 APRIL | BLOOMBERG

U.S.-Vietnam naval exercises begin amid sea tensions

Two U.S. Navy ships began six days of non-combat exercises with the Vietnamese military as the U.S. seeks to bolster its presence in Asia at a time of growing tension between China and its neighbours. The engagements, the fifth year of joint exercises between the two navies, will focus on military medicine, search and rescue and shipboard damage control, with participation by the missile destroyer USS John S. McCain.

Full Report

CHINA—JAPAN | 9 APRIL | REUTERS

Japan's scrambles against Chinese planes hit record high

(Reuters) - Japanese fighter jet scrambles against Chinese planes hit a record high in the year that ended in March, the Defense Ministry said on Wednesday, as Sino-Japanese ties were strained by disputes over territory and interpretations of history. Japan scrambled combat planes against Chinese aircraft 415 times during the year, up 36 percent from a year earlier. It was the highest number since the ministry started disclosing country-specific figures in 2001.

Full Report

UNITED STATES | 11 APRIL | BLOOMBERG

Littoral ship's fitness for Asia questioned by some in U.S. Navy

U.S. Navy officers in the Pacific fleet say the service's Littoral Combat Ship may lack the speed, range and electronic-warfare capabilities needed to operate in Asian waters, according to a congressional audit. "Several 7th Fleet officials told us they thought the LCS in general might be better suited to operations" in the smaller Persian Gulf, the U.S. Government Accountability Office said in a 56-page report, labeled "For Official Use Only," obtained by Bloomberg News.

TAIWAN—UNITED STATES | 15 APRIL | WALL STREET JOURNAL

Taiwan cuts back order for secondhand U.S. warships

TAIPEI—Taiwan reduced an order for secondhand warships from the U.S. because of budgetary constraints, despite China's growing military clout in the region. Defense Minister Yen Ming told lawmakers that Taiwan had requested more than four Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided missile frigates from the U.S., and Washington had proposed to sell four. But Taiwan decided to buy only two.

Full Report Available Upon Request

AUSTRALIA—INDONESIA | 17 APRIL | THE AGE

Australian Navy captain stood aside, another punished over Indonesia breaches

A Royal Australian Navy captain will lose command of his ship and another will receive administrative punishment over the recent incursions into Indonesian waters during border protection operations. The Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Ray Griggs, announced in a statement on Thursday that he was carrying out the sanctions against the ship commanders to uphold the standards of the navy.

Full Report

CHINA—JAPAN | 15 APRIL | ASAHI SHIMBUN

China cancels fleet review, denies snub for Japan

BEIJING--China's navy on April 15 denied, in a roundabout way, that it snubbed Japan by not inviting it to join in a naval fleet review as part of an international symposium, saying the two events had never been linked in the first place. The navy said the fleet review has been canceled because of the "special situation and atmosphere" surrounding the continuing search for a Malaysian airliner that went missing last month, with 239 aboard, on its way to Beijing.

Full Report

CHINA-JAPAN | 20 APRIL | CHANNEL NEWSASIA

Japan steps up surveillance posture against China: reports

TOKYO: Japan bolstered its military surveillance capabilities in the southern island region of Okinawa over the weekend, reports said, as territorial tensions with China simmer. The nation's armed forces, called the Self-Defence Forces, launched a squadron of four E-2C early warning planes at its air base in Naha on the main Okinawan island Sunday, the Jiji and Kyodo news agencies reported.

Full Report

ASIA-PACIFIC | 22 APRIL | BLOOMBERG

Pacific navies approve conduct code for unplanned sea encounters

Navy chiefs attending the Western Pacific Naval Symposium in China approved an agreement on rules for unplanned encounters at sea, according to the official PLA Daily newspaper. The Code for Unplanned Encounters covers what steps should be taken to reduce interference and uncertainty during unexpected contact between naval vessels or aircraft, the report posted on the Ministry of Defense's website said.

Construction begins on Indonesia's first SIGMA 10514 PKR naval frigate

Netherlands-based Damen Schelde Naval Shipbuilding (DSNS) has laid the keel for the Indonesian Navy's first SIGMA 10514 Perusak Kawal Rudal (PKR) frigate at the PT PAL (Persero) shipyard in Surabaya, Indonesia. Upon completion in December 2016, the first of the two ordered frigates under a \$220m contract will provide the navy with its largest domestically built warship.

Maritime Safety & Security

GLOBAL | 24 APRIL | ICC-CCS

Lowest first quarter figures since 2007 but no room for complacency, reports IMB

The International Chamber of Commerce's International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has revealed that piracy on the world's seas is at its lowest first-quarter level since 2007, but warns that the threat is still present. The latest IMB Piracy Report, published today, shows 49 piracy incidents in the first quarter of 2014 – the lowest first quarter figure since 2007, when 41 incidents were recorded.

Full Report

AUSTRALIA—INDONESIA | 11 APRIL | AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Illegal fishing crackdown may create people smugglers, say lawyers

It is Australia's policy to burn the wooden boats of fishermen found fishing illegally, both as a deterrent and because of boat safety and biosecurity concerns. However, a court ruling last month has raised questions about the practice and prompted critics to argue that Australia's hardline stance is heavy handed.

Full Report

INDIA—PAKISTAN | 12 APRIL | TIMES OF INDIA

Pakistan abducts 17 fishermen

RAJKOT: Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) abducted 17 Indian fishermen and seized their three boats from International Maritime Boundary Line off Kutch coast on Thursday night. Gujarat Fishermen Association president Manish Lodhari said PMSA personnel crossed over into Indian waters in their boat and abducted the 17 fishermen from Porbandar in the night. They also took away the fishermen's three boats.

Full Report

JAPAN-DJIBOUTI | 14 APRIL | KYODO NEWS (GLOBAL POST)

Defense chief Onodera to visit Djibouti, eyes greater security role

Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera plans to visit Djibouti after the Golden Week holidays in early May, government sources said Monday, as Japan hopes to build a hub for Self-Defense Forces peacekeeping operations in Africa and the Middle East. Onodera is expected to exchange views with Djiboutian government officials on the plan, the sources said.

WEST AFRICA | 17 APRIL | HOMELAND SECURITY TODAY

Surge in West African piracy

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) is asking ships to be extra vigilant when transiting West Africa as piracy in the region becomes a growing concern. Thanks to effective counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden region, activity in East Africa has decreased significantly, but attention now focuses on West Africa where there has been an increase in attacks. Since the beginning of the year, one vessel, MT Kerala, has been hijacked and six were boarded in the region.

Full Report

SOUTH KOREA | 18 APRIL | BLOOMBERG

South Korea ferry disaster shows Concordia lessons tough to implement

The sinking of the Sewol ferry off South Korea raises new concerns about ship safety more than two years after the capsizing of the Costa Concordia ocean liner spurred a global campaign to improve passenger security. The sight of terrified passengers being plucked from the side of the listing ferry stirred memories from January 2012 of the Concordia lying on its side near Giglio Island, off the western coast of Italy.

Full Report

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES | 20 APRIL | THE NATIONAL

End Somali poverty to end piracy: UN ambassador

ABU DHABI // Increased security measures, development of a justice system and economic growth have greatly curbed the threat that Somali piracy once posed. But the country still needs help to provide alternatives for Somalis to deter them from activities such as piracy and terrorism, said Nick Kay, the UN ambassador to Somalia. Mr Kay was in Abu Dhabi last week to meet UAE officials.

Full Report

UNITED STATES—PHILIPPINES | 21 APRIL | PHILIPPINE STAR

Phl, US troops to hold humanitarian activities in Luzon

MANILA, Philippines - Filipino and American troops will conduct humanitarian projects as part of the activities leading to this year's Balikatan military drills. Lt. Annaleah Cazcarro, public affairs officer for the exercise, said among the pre-Balikatan activities to be conducted is the repair of a classroom in Malobago, Albay. The groundbreaking of the project will be held Tuesday, almost two weeks before the formal opening of the bilateral exercises on May 5.

Full Report

MALAYSIA | 22 APRIL | REUTERS

Pirates raid Japanese oil tanker off Malaysia, kidnap three crew

(Reuters) - Armed pirates raided a Japanese oil tanker off the coast of Malaysia and abducted three crew members, Malaysian maritime police said on Wednesday, underscoring increasing threats to shipping in one of the world's busiest waterways. The incident in the Malacca Strait, a route for about a quarter of the world's seaborne oil trade, has fuelled fears piracy could be on the rise in the area and drive up ship insurance premiums.

UNITED STATES—WEST AFRICA | 23 APRIL | VOICE OF AMERICA

US, African countries team up to tackle piracy in Gulf of Guinea

YAOUNDE, CAMEROON — Three blocs of African countries and the United States have agreed to coordinate efforts to fight piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. Forty vessels have been attacked by armed gangs in the Gulf of Guinea this year, according to senior officials of the U.S. military's Africa Command. The epicenter of West African piracy is Nigeria, with 12 attacks and multiple kidnappings this year.

Full Report

THAILAND | 24 APRIL | BANGKOK POST

Thai Marine Department says ferries meet safety standards

The Marine Department has assured the public that a tragedy on the scale of the South Korean car ferry sinking is unlikely to occur in Thailand due to the shorter distances of ferry routes and constant checks on the seaworthiness of the ferries. The department said on Tuesday tourists and users of car ferry services should not be anxious about using the boats following the incident in South Korea.

Full Report

UNITED KINGDOM—AUSTRALIA | 25 APRIL | THE TELEGRAPH

British and Australian navies seize largest ever heroin haul at sea

A joint operation by the British and Australian navies seized the largest ever haul of heroin at sea, weighing 1,032 kilogrammes, the Ministry of Defence announced last night. The drugs, with an estimated British street value of more than £140 million, were found on a dhow, or sailboat, some 30 miles off the coast of east Africa near Kenya and Tanzania.

Full Report

GLOBAL | 29 APRIL | PORT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL

Hackers the new pirates, says KPMG

KPMG, one of the largest professional services companies in the world, has issued a stark warning to the maritime industry that the open seas are the next playground for hackers. Wil Rockall, director of KPMG's cyber security, says that the cyber security of maritime control systems controlled by engineers and not chief information security officers (CISOs) and chief information officers (CIOs) are making these systems vulnerable to pirates, the new hackers.

Full Report

MALAYSIA | 30 APRIL | CHANNEL NEWSASIA

Sabah's security command set for revamp after kidnappings: Sources

KUALA LUMPUR — The Malaysian government is planning to restructure the one-year-old Eastern Sabah Security Command (Esscom) in the wake of the recent kidnappings on islands off the east coast of Sabah, said sources. The Malaysian Insider has learned that Putrajaya is concerned with the weaknesses in the security unit which had led to easy intrusions into the country's coastal areas, especially in the east coast of Sabah.

MALAYSIA—AUSTRALIA—UNITED STATES | 30 APRIL | REUTERS

Cost pressures mount as Malaysia Airlines search drags on

(Reuters) - With the search for missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 entering a new, much longer phase, the countries involved must decide how much they are prepared to spend on the operation and what they stand to lose if they hold back. The search is already set to be the most costly in aviation history and spending will rise significantly as underwater drones focus on a larger area of the seabed that Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said on Monday could take six to eight months to search.

Shipping, Ports, & the Maritime Economy

SINGAPORE | 7 APRIL | CHANNEL NEWSASIA

Challenges in Singapore's maritime industry

SINGAPORE: The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) wants to do more to profile Singapore as a listing destination for maritime companies. It is working with the Singapore Exchange and the industry. But MPA also acknowledged that this is a process that will take time.

Full Report

JAPAN | 1 APRIL | SEATRADE GLOBAL

NYK to invest \$5.13bn in LNG, offshore over next 5 years

Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK) plans to invest JPY530bn (\$5.13bn) in LNG carriers and the offshore business over the next five years, while making its container and dry bulk segments more asset light. Setting out its mid-term management plan NYK, much like compatriot Mitsui OSK Lines (MOL), said it would be focusing on LNG and offshore.

Full Report

ASIA | 3 APRIL | LLOYD'S LIST

Asian and Gulf banks on the rise in ship finance

A year to the day after shipping banker Nigel Anton transplanted himself from London to Hong Kong, the global head of shipping finance at Standard Chartered is in no doubt that he has moved to where the action is. Even as traditional European shipping lenders form an orderly queue to offload troublesome loans, Asian and Gulf banks will continue to grow their share of the global pie in the niche specialism, he is convinced.

Full Report Available On Request

SINGAPORE | 8 APRIL | CHANNEL NEWSASIA

Singapore to mandate use of mass flow meters for bunkering

SINGAPORE: With over 42 million tonnes of the fuel sold last year, Singapore is the world's top bunkering port. Bunkering is the process of supplying fuel to ships. And to improve transparency and the accuracy of bunker readings, Singapore will mandate the use of a new mass flow metering system. The new system allows fuel to be measured in terms of mass. Currently, in bunker fuel trading, fuel is sold by mass but delivered by volume. Volume is affected by changes in pressure and temperature, unlike mass.

India moves forward with 5m tonne LNG import terminal at Mundra

India's imports of liquefied natural gas are set to grow significantly, generating extra business for the global LNG fleet following firm plans to build a new re-gasification terminal at Mundra on the country's west coast. Japan's Toyo Engineering has told investors that it has been awarded the project for a new 5m tonnes per year plant, to be completed by the end of 2016.

Full Report Available On Request

CHINA | 20 APRIL | THE HINDU

China's 'Maritime Silk Road' to focus on infrastructure

China has for the first time released details of its recently announced "maritime Silk Road" plan, announcing that the Indian Ocean-focused initiative will prioritise building ports and improving infrastructure in littoral countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. China is also planning to establish free trade zones in Indian Ocean countries as part of the plan — a move that will reinforce China's deepening economic presence in the Indian Ocean Region and in India's neighbourhood.

Full Report

PHILIPPINES | 21 APRIL | SEATRADE GLOBAL

Filipino seafarer group hits out over European Maritime Safety Authority audit failure

The United Filipino Seafarers (UFS) group has hit out at the country over its latest audit failure by the European Maritime Safety Authority (EMSA). The Philippines underwent two audits by EMSA of its compliance with STCW Convention last year and failed to meet the required standards on maritime training.

Full Report

SINGAPORE | 21 APRIL | LLOYD'S LIST

Work together or die together, MCC Transport CEO warns intra-Asia box lines

INTRA-Asia box carriers should enhance co-operation or some will face bankruptcy, with oversupply continuing to push down rates, according to a senior industry executive. Despite enjoying decent growth of 5%-6% per annum, the regional trade has seen a deteriorating rates environment over the past year due to worsening overcapacity. "Rates just keep going down. It has really been quite bad in the key intra-Asia corridors," MCC Transport chief executive chief executive Tim Wickmann told Lloyd's List in an interview earlier this month.

Full Report Available On Request

HONG KONG | 24 APRIL | LLOYD'S LIST

Drastic reform of Hong Kong's maritime sector proposed by study

A more than two years' long study commissioned by the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region proposes to set up a new statutory body outside the government, along with other initiatives, in a bid to revive the city's waning popularity as an international maritime centre.

Full Report Available On Request

"Dredging and Australian Ports" report published

Ports Australia, the peak body representing the interests of port and marine authorities in Australia, has introduced its "Dredging and Australian Ports – Subtropical and Tropical Ports" report. The report provides an overview of the approval processes associated with dredging and at-sea placement of dredged material, the nature of environmental monitoring programs associated with recent port related dredging projects and, through a comparison of monitored environmental impacts with those approved by government, determines that recent port related dredging projects in northern Australia have performed well.

Full Report

CHINA—JAPAN | 24 APRIL | FINANCIAL TIMES

Mitsui OSK settles to free ship impounded in China

Japanese shipping line Mitsui OSK has paid Y2.9bn to the Shanghai Maritime Court to free an ore carrier impounded in a dispute that dates back to the second world war. The Shanghai Court ordered the Baosteel Emotion to be seized last weekend after Mitsui OSK failed to reach a settlement with plaintiffs.

Full Report Available Upon Request

BANGLEDESH | 25 APRIL | BDNEWS24.COM

Bangladesh stresses 'blue economy'

Bangladesh advocated at a global forum the inclusion of oceans and seas in the post-2015 development agenda to leverage the growth of "blue economy" for poverty alleviation. Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali made the suggestion at a 'high-level session' on the opening day of the "Global Oceans Action Summit for Food Security and Blue Growth" at The Hague, the Dutch seat of government, on Thursday.

Full Report

CHINA | 28 APRIL | SEATRADE GLOBAL

China shipbuilding sector in recovery mode

China's shipbuilding sector has embarked on a path to recovery, aided by the overall global economic rebound and policies from Beijing to help the shipyards, after more than five years of downturn, according to China Association of the National Shipbuilding Industry (Cansi). The shipbuilding sector has been bogged down by excessive shipyard capacity amid the ongoing vessel tonnage glut, leading to low new building prices and reduced orders, not to mention the widespread bankruptcy of many bottom-rung yards.

Full Report

PAPUA NEW GUINEA | 28 APRIL | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

PNG LNG production starts ahead of schedule

Exxon Mobil Corporation has announced the \$19 billion PNG LNG project has started producing LNG in Papua New Guinea ahead of schedule. Production from the first LNG train will increase over the coming weeks and the first cargo is expected to be shipped to Asia markets before midyear.

Sunken ferry cuts Golden Week spending as Korea grieves

Lee Mi Ja and her 50-member hiking club are among thousands of Koreans canceling holidays, as grief for the dead and missing from a sunken ferry overshadow what's normally peak season for hotels and retailers. Lee's group had planned a day-trip to Cheongsando to see the island's spring-blooming yellow canola flowers and rice paddies laid out among granite rocks. All canceled the 50,000 won (\$48) package including bus and ferry tickets to the island, about 85 kilometers (53 miles) to the east of where the 'Sewol' sank on April 16, leaving 302 people dead or missing.