



Report for February 2007

ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

456, Alexandra Road, #11-02

Singapore 119962

Tel : (65) 6376 3091

Fax : (65) 6376 3066

Web : <http://www.recaap.org>



Executive Summary

In the month of February 2007, a total of four incidents (three actual and one attempted) was reported. Of these four incidents, three took place in the South Asian region. Notably, the attempted incident which occurred in the Arabian Sea fell under the ReCAAP ISC's definition of attempted piracy. The details of all four incidents are described in the Annex. Part 3 of this report features three incidents that are described in more detail for the purpose of analysis and sharing of good practices.

Part 1 - Definitions & Methodology Used

1.1 Definitions Adopted by ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre

The definitions of piracy and armed robbery adopted by the Information Sharing Centre (ISC) are in accordance with the ReCAAP Agreement, wherein:

Piracy in accordance with Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is defined as:

(1) any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:

(a) on the high seas, against another ship or persons or property on board such ship;

(b) against a ship, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;

(2) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;

(3) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

Armed Robbery in accordance with the International Maritime Organisation's Code of Practice for the Investigation of the Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships, is defined as:

(1) any illegal act of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends and directed against a ship, or against persons or property on board such ship, in a place within a Contracting Party's jurisdiction over such offences;

(2) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship with knowledge of facts making it a ship for armed robbery against ships;

(3) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraphs (1) or (2).

1.2 Methodology for Classifying Incidents

1.2.1 To provide some perspective on incidents of piracy and armed robbery, the ISC evaluates the significance of each incident in terms of two factors – the level of violence and the economic loss incurred. The indicators for these two factors are as follows:

a. **Violence Factor.** This factor refers to the intensity of violence in an incident, and the three indicators used to determine this are:

(1) Types of weapons used. Incidents of pirates/robbers who board a ship with no visible weapons are generally deemed as less violent compared to those equipped with pistols, knives, machetes, or other dangerous weapons. In cases where more sophisticated weapons are used, such incidents would be considered more violent.

(2) Treatment of the crew. Incidents where pirates/robbers kill or kidnap crew are deemed to be more violent compared to petty thieves who flee upon being noticed. Other cases could include threatening crew members, assault, or serious injury.

(3) Number of pirates/robbers engaged in an attack. As a rule, an incident where a larger number of pirates/robbers were involved would be considered more significant as having a large capacity (as well as probability) for use of force. A larger number of pirates/robbers may also indicate the involvement of gangs or organised syndicates rather than petty and opportunistic pirates who *generally* operate in small groups.

b. **Economic Factor.** This factor takes into consideration the value of the property taken from the ship. Cases of theft of cash or personal effects are generally less significant incidents compared to cases where the entire ship is hijacked either for the cargo onboard or theft of the vessel.

1.2.2 Using these indicators, the ISC categorises all incidents into one of the three categories to determine their overall significance.

Category	Significance of Incident
CAT 1	Very significant
CAT 2	Moderately significant
CAT 3	Less significant

1.2.3 This classification of incidents allows the ReCAAP ISC to provide some perspective of the piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia.

1.3 Note on Sources of Information

The ISC makes use of various sources of information in producing its reports. The primary source is the ReCAAP ISC's Information Network System (IFN). Where necessary, the ISC leverages on other secondary sources of information, including those from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the International Chamber of Commerce-International Maritime Bureau (ICC-IMB), and other publicly available sources to facilitate analysis on patterns and trends, and to make recommendations. The ISC makes every effort to acknowledge these sources.

Part 2 - Report for February 2007

2.1 Number and Significance of Total Incidents

2.1.1 A total of four incidents were reported during the month of February 2007. Of these four incidents, three were armed robbery cases and one was an attempted piracy case. Compared to the eleven incidents in February 2006 (all actual cases), there was a sizeable decrease. It is worth noting that the number of actual incidents in February 2007 has also decreased significantly compared to February 2006, from eleven to three. Please see *Table 1* below.

	February 2007	February 2006
Actual	3	11
Attempted	1	0

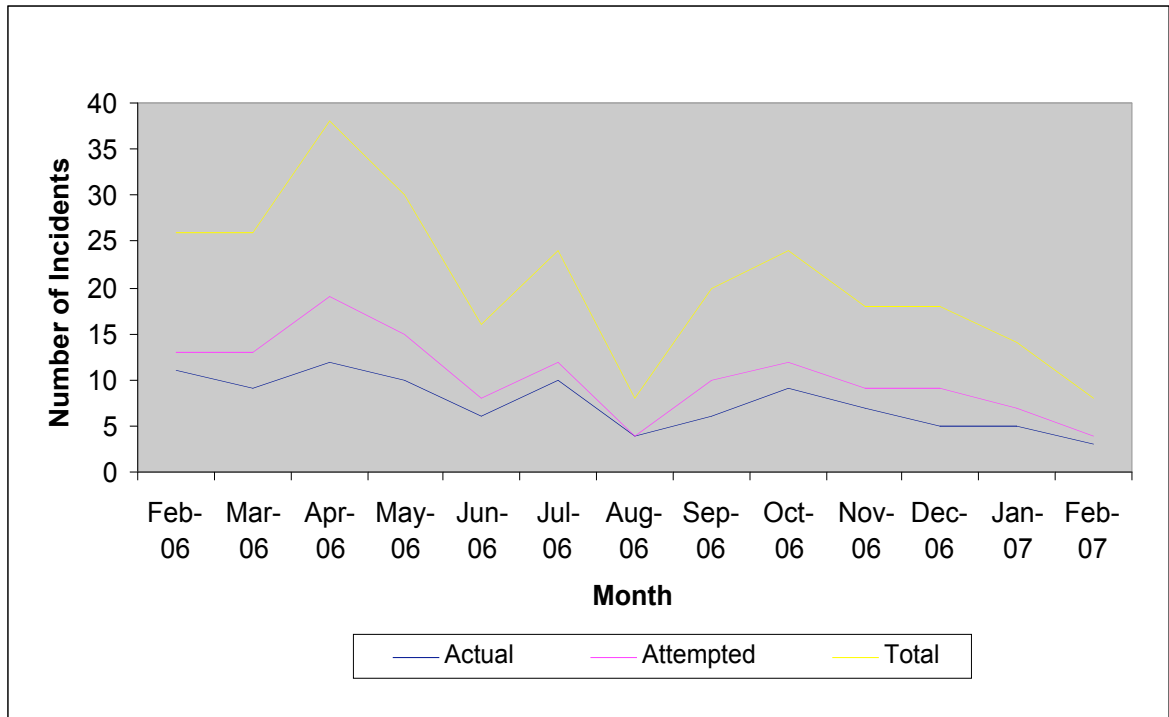
Table 1 – Actual and attempted incidents during February 2007 and February 2006

2.1.2 All three actual incidents in February 2007 were Category 3 incidents. Further details of the incidents are given in the Annex. This is in contrast to February 2006, when six of the eleven were Category 3 incidents, and the remaining five were Category 2 incidents. Please see *Table 2* below.

Significance Level	February 2007	February 2006
Category 3 (Less Significant)	3	6
Category 2 (Moderately Significant)	0	5
Total	3	11

Table 2 – Significance level of incidents during February 2007 and February 2006

2.1.3 During the period February 2006 to February 2007, total activity was highest in the month of April 2006. However, total activity has declined since October 2006. Figure 1 shows the number of actual and attempted incidents during this period. The ISC will continue to monitor and analyse the incident patterns.



Source: ICC-IMB Reports

Figure 1 – Number of incidents from February 2006 to February 2007

2.2 Analysis of Incidents in February 2007

2.2.1 **Location of Actual and Attempted Incidents.** *Table 3* shows the location of incidents in February 2007 and February 2006. There was a decline in the number of incidents in the Southeast Asian region, from nine cases in February 2006 to just one in February 2007. This February 2007 incident is one of three incidents reported at the Balongan Terminal in Indonesia to date this year, whereas no incidents were reported at that terminal in the year 2006. Another area of newly emerging activity appears to be in the Arabian Sea, where two attempted piracy incidents have been reported this year compared to none in 2006¹. In both the Arabian Sea incidents, the pirates were reported to have adopted similar mode of operation. The ISC’s analysis of the significance of the incidents in the Arabian Sea can be found in Part 3 of this report.

¹ The earlier incident in January 2007 was reported as an attempted armed robbery case in the January 2007 report. With more clarity on the incident, it is reclassified as an attempted piracy incident, and included as a case study in Part 3 of this report.

	February 2007		February 2006	
	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted
Bangladesh	1		2	
India	1	1		
Indonesia	1		6	
Malaysia			3	
Philippines				
Thailand				
Total	3	1	11	

Source: ICC-IMB Reports

Table 3 – Location of incidents during February 2007 and February 2006

2.2.2 **Weapons Used.** Table 4 shows the weapons used in incidents during February 2007 and February 2006. No substantive conclusion can be drawn from comparing the weapons used in incidents during February 2007 and February 2006.

Incidents in January	Guns	Knives	Guns & Knives	Other weapons	Not stated/ Nil
February 2007		1		1	2
February 2006	2	3			6

Table 4 – Weapons used in incidents during February 2007 and February 2006

2.2.3 **Types of Ships Targeted.** Table 5 reveals that no particular type of vessel was more susceptible to attack in February 2007. In contrast, nearly half of all the incidents in February 2006 involved bulk carriers and container vessels.

Type of Ship	February 2007	February 2006
Container	0	2
Bulk Carrier	1	3
Chemical Carrier		1
Oil Tanker	1	
General Cargo	1	1
Tug Boat	1	
Fishing Boat/Trawler		1
Vehicle Carrier		1
Yacht		2
Total	4	11

Table 5 – Types of ships involved in incidents during February 2007 and February 2006

2.2.4 **Status of Ships.** Of the four incidents in February 2007, two involved ships that were under way, and the other two while the ships were anchored. This is in contrast to February 2006 where ten out of eleven incidents occurred while ships were in anchorages.

	Actual Incidents			Attempted Incidents		
	Berthed	Anchored	Steaming	Berthed	Anchored	Steaming
February 2007		2	1			1
February 2006		8	1		2	

Table 6 – Status of ships during incidents in February 2007 and February 2006

2.2.5 **Time of Incidents.** In February 2007, 75% (three out of four) incidents occurred between late evening and early morning. This is expected since ships remain most vulnerable during the hours of darkness, and is comparable to February 2006 when 82% (nine out of eleven) incidents occurred during the same window.

	1800 hrs to 2359 hrs	2400 hrs to 0559 hrs	0600hrs to 1159 hrs	1200 hrs to 1759 hrs	Not stated
February 2007	1	2	1		
February 2006	5	4		1	1

Table 7 – Local time of incidents during February 2007 and February 2006

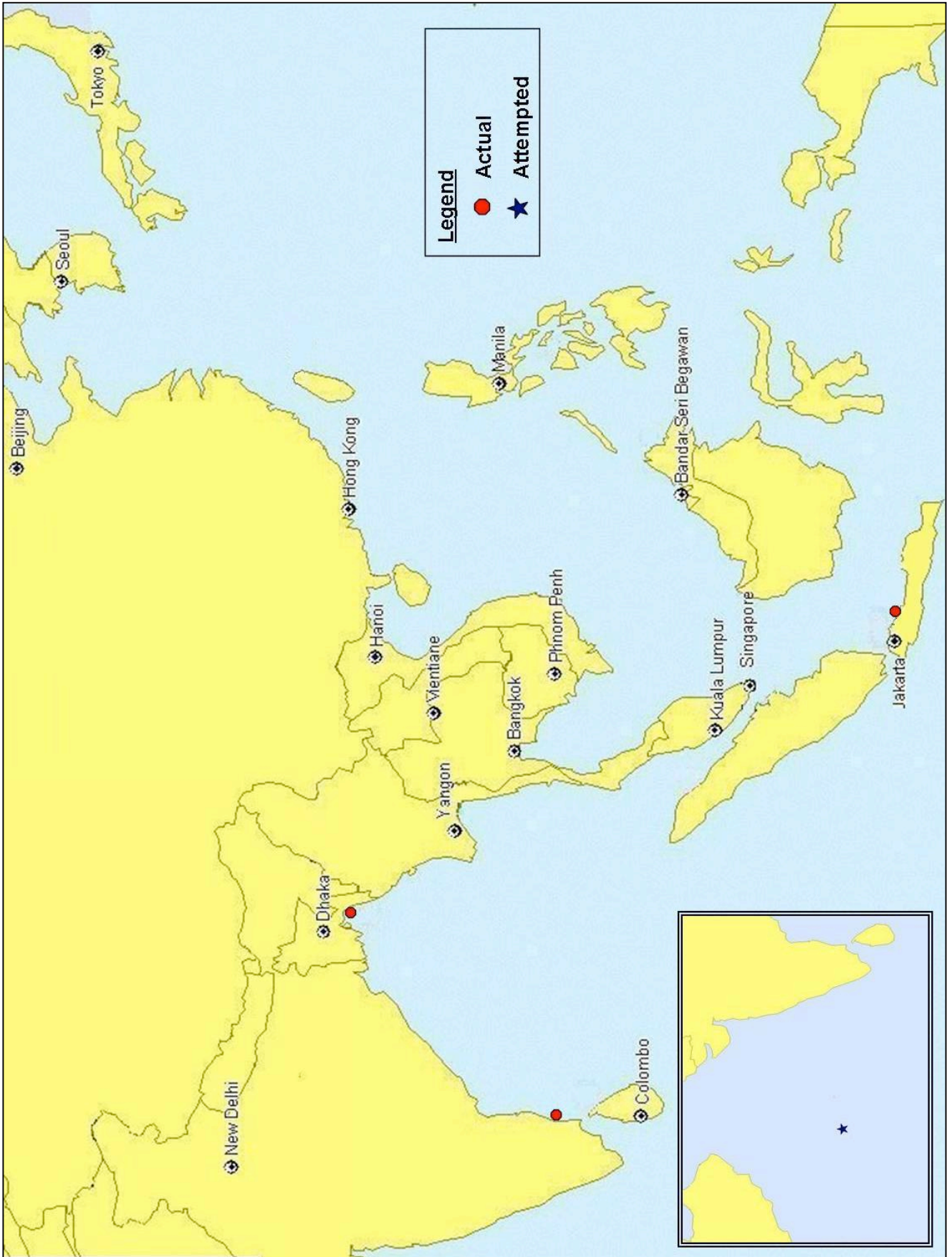


Figure 1 : Location of All Incidents in February 2007

Part 3 - Details of Selected Incidents

3.1 Incident on board the *MV DCI Tug VII* and *FC Thangam*

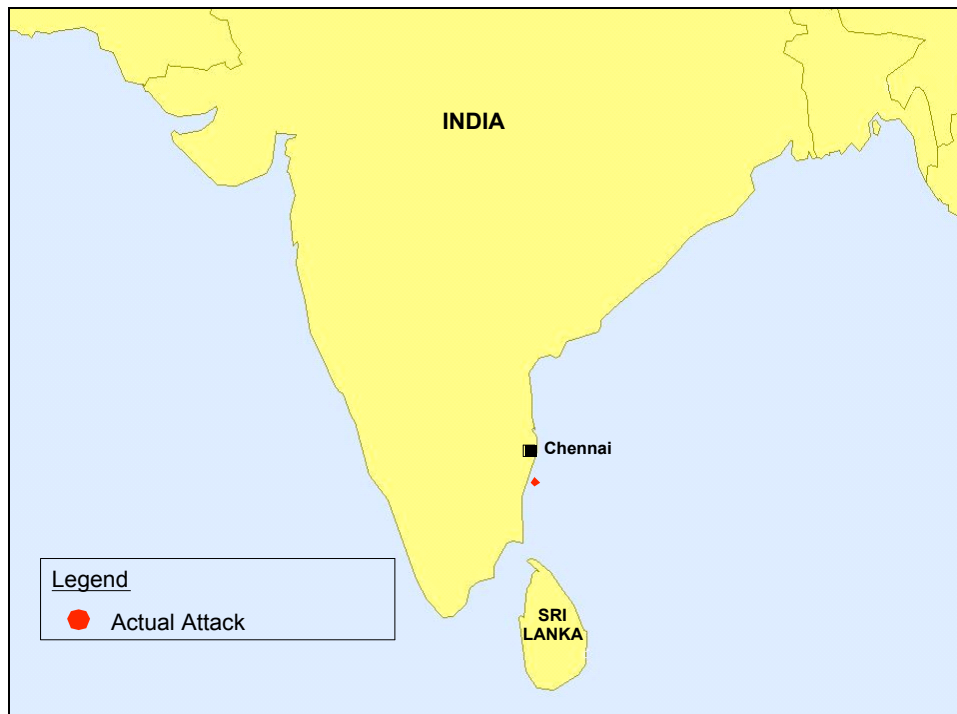
Name of Tug : *MV DCI Tug VII*
Flag of Tug : India
IMO Number : 9238715
GT : 686

Name of Floating Crane : *FC Thangam*
Flag of Tug : India
IMO Number : 9287675
GT : 1,948

3.1.1 On 15 February 2007 at 1000 hrs, a Project Manager from the Dredging Corporation of India (DCI) reported to the ISC Focal Point (India) that a suspicious fishing boat approached one of its tugs, the *MV DCI Tug VII* at 12° 05.0'N 080°10.7'E, off Chennai. Please see map next page for the general location.

3.1.2 The ISC Focal Point (India) contacted the tug and established that it was towing a floating crane, the *FC Thangam*, to Chennai when at around 0815hrs, some crew members spotted three robbers onboard two fishing boats followed the tug and attempted to board the floating crane. The crew raised the alarm and the master undertook evasive manoeuvres. However, one of the robbers managed to board the *FC Thangam*, and remained on board till 0920 hrs.

3.1.3 The tug reported the incident to MRCC Pondicherry. At the time of the incident, there was a floating oil production unit named the *FPU Tahara* located off the coast of Cuddalore (about 28 nm from Chennai). The tug reportedly informed the *FPU Tahara* of the incident, which in turn relayed the information to an Indian Coast Guard aircraft patrolling the vicinity. The aircraft flew to the location at 0935hrs to locate the fishing boat. However, the fishing boat had departed from the area by that time. At 1400hrs, the Project Manager of DCI informed the ISC Focal Point (India) that there was no damage to the crane, and stated that no further assistance was required.



Location of Incident

Observation

3.1.4 Tugs are known to be more susceptible to attack especially when under way as they have low freeboards and move at relatively slow speeds when towing barges, or other vessels such as floating cranes, as in this incident.

3.1.5 The dispatch of the Indian Coast Guard aircraft to the incident area shows the responsiveness of law enforcement agency in reaction to a reported incident. Also commendable was the *FPU Tahara*'s request for assistance on behalf of the *MV DCI Tug VII*. The ReCAAP ISC encourages ship owners and masters to report armed robbery or piracy incidents to the nearest coastal state.

3.2 Incidents of Attempted Piracy in the Arabian Sea

3.2.1 Within a span of a week, from 28 January 2007 to 2 February 2007, two incidents with similar mode of operation occurred in close proximity in the Arabian Sea. Both incidents are described below².

ATTEMPTED INCIDENT INVOLVING THE *MV GANTA* ON 28 JANUARY 2007

Name of Ship	: <i>MV Ganta</i>
Type of Ship	: Vehicle Carrier
Flag of Ship	: Panama
IMO Number	: 7814981
GT	: 25,431



3.2.2 On 28 January 2007 at 0610 hrs, the *MV Ganta*, a Panama-registered vehicle carrier, was under way at 11 ° 20.0'N 065° 09.9'E, in the Indian Ocean³. Please refer to the map on page 15. The vessel was on its way to Eilath, Israel, after taking on bunkers in Singapore on 21 January 2007, and reported receiving a VHF call from a small craft requesting some fresh water. After making the request, the small craft altered course and began heading towards the starboard side of the *MV Ganta*. Also drifting in the vicinity were two other small craft – one at the port bow of the vessel, and the other at the starboard bow.

3.2.3 The duty officer who received the call asked the small craft to call back later, and immediately informed the master. From the bridge, the master spotted the craft on his vessel's starboard side fast approaching her at increased speed. When the craft was approximately 2nm from the vessel, the two other craft drifting in the vicinity followed suit in approaching the *MV Ganta*. The master raised the alarm and sounded the whistle repeatedly.

3.2.4 The crew mustered on the starboard side of deck in anticipation of an attempted boarding by pirates from the suspicious craft. However, the craft began to veer away and slowly reduced its speed. The other two crafts, at the bow also moved away from the *MV Ganta*. According to the master, the suspicious craft had a white and green hull, with a superstructure on deck, and had two satellite domes.

ATTEMPTED INCIDENT INVOLVING THE *MV ACHILLES* ON 2 FEBRUARY 2007

² Source: International Chamber of Commerce, International Maritime Bureau

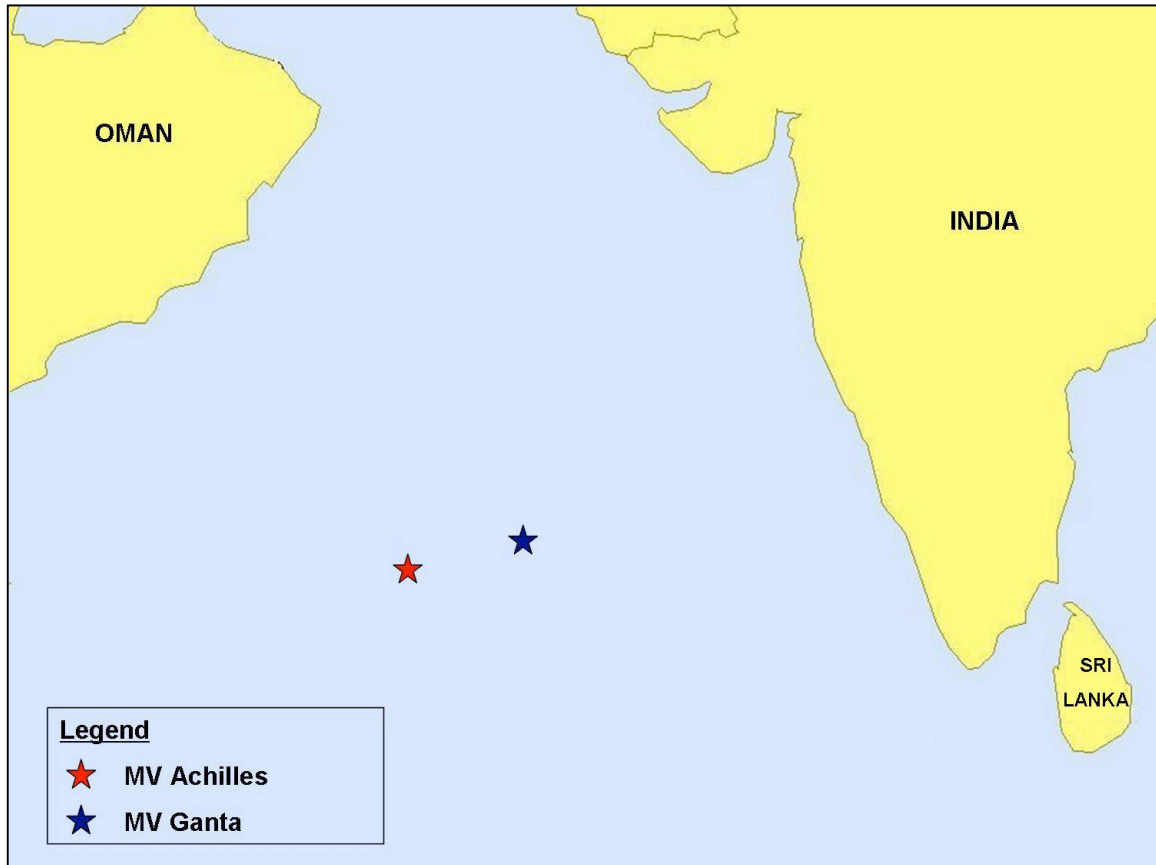
³ This incident was reported in the annex of the January 2007 report. With more information that has emerged after the publication of the January 2007 report, it is included as a case study in this February issue.

Name of Ship : *MV Achilles*
Type of Ship : General Cargo
Flag of Ship : Singapore
IMO Number : 8322105
GT : 3,949



3.2.5 On 2 February 2007, while under way at 10 ° 40.0'N 062°07.0'E, the general cargo ship *MV Achilles* received a VHF call from a vessel, claiming to be a "fishing vessel" at 1100hrs. This took place about 184 nm from the reported location of the *MV Ganta* incident five days earlier. Please refer to map next page. The vessel requested fresh water from the *MV Achilles*. The description of this vessel appears to match that of the one that had approached the *MV Ganta*. It was a wooden vessel, approximately 15m to 20m long, painted in white and green, and appeared to have had no fishing equipment on its deck. Suspecting a case of attempted piracy, the *MV Achilles'* master raised the alarm and mustered the crew. He also altered the course of the ship to evade the approaching vessel.

3.2.6 However, the vessel continued to pursue the *MV Achilles*, leading the master to alter his course again and further increase speed. The vessel persisted in following the ship until 1210 hrs when it gave up the chase. Soon after, another four small speed boats were spotted at the horizon approaching the suspicious vessel. Their crew members were heard talking and laughing over the VHF, and calling out to other ships later that evening.



Approximate location of incidents involving the *MV Achilles* and the *MV Ganta*

Observation

3.2.7 Although there is no conclusive evidence as yet, it appears that the same group of pirates was probably involved in the two incidents that occurred in the Arabian Sea on 28 January 2007 and 2 February 2007. Ships are therefore advised to be more alert and take security precaution when operating in the area.

Part 4 - Observations for February 2007

4.1 Compared to February 2006, the number of incidents of armed robbery against ships in the Asia region in February 2007 dropped from eleven to four. Overall, the following observations can be made for incidents in the month of February 2007:

- a. All the actual incidents in February 2007 were of Category 3 status.
- b. Incidents did not seem to be targeted at any particular type of ships.
- c. As in the preceding two months, the majority of the incidents took place during the hours of darkness.
- d. The attempted piracy incident in the Arabian Sea shares similar mode of operation with the attempted incident in the same area in January 2007, leading us to conclude that the same group of pirates was probably involved in both incidents.

ANNEX

DETAILS OF INCIDENTS IN FEBRUARY 2007

Actual Incidents

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incident	Consequences for Crew, Cargo, Ship Equipment, etc	Reporting Agency	Significance Level (classified by the ReCAAP ISC)
1.	Bulk Carrier	14/02/2007 0415 hrs	Chittagong Anchorage, Bangladesh 22° 16.2'S 091°43.7'E	Anchored	Robbers boarded the bulk carrier and attempted to steal her stores and ropes. However, the ropes were secured on winches with wires. The robbers escaped empty-handed.	Two padlocks damaged	ICC-IMB PRC	CAT 3
2.	<i>DCI Tug VII</i> Tug India 9238715 686 <i>FC Thangam</i> Floating Crane 9287675 1,948	15/02/2007 0815 hrs	12° 05.0'N 080°10.7'E	Steaming	Three robbers in a fishing boat attempted to board the tug which was towing a floating crane. Although the tug tried to take evasive manoeuvres, one of the robbers managed to board the unmanned floating crane. The robber remained on board till 0920 hrs. The incident was reported to MRCC Pondicherry. The ship master also informed the	None	ISC Focal Point (India) ICC-IMB PRC	CAT 3

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incident	Consequences for Crew, Cargo, Ship Equipment, etc	Reporting Agency	Significance Level (classified by the ReCAAP ISC)
					<i>FPU Tahara</i> , a floating oil production unit in the vicinity, who in turn relayed the information to an Indian Coast Guard aircraft which was patrolling the area. The aircraft flew to the reported location but the fishing vessel had already departed.			
3.	Oil Tanker	18/02/2007 0100 hrs	Balongan Terminal, Indonesia 06° 16.2'S 108°27.7'E	Anchored	Four robbers armed with knives boarded the tanker while it was discharging its cargo at the anchorage. The robbers entered the engine room where they were spotted by the duty oiler who informed the duty officer. The alarm was raised and the crew alerted. The robbers escaped empty-handed. A search was carried out and nothing was found missing.	None	ICC-IMB PRC	CAT 3

Attempted Incident

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incidents	Reporting Agency
1.	<i>MV Achilles</i> General Cargo Singapore 8322105 3,949	02/02/2007 1100 hrs	Arabian Sea 10° 40.0'N 062°07.0'E	Steaming	The general cargo ship received a VHF call from a fishing vessel. The white and green wooden vessel approximately 15 to 20m long, requested fresh water from the <i>MV Achilles</i> . However, it did not appear to have any fishing equipment on its deck. Suspecting a case of attempted piracy, the ship's master raised the alarm and mustered the crew. He also altered the course of the ship to evade the approaching "fishing vessel". However, the vessel continued to chase the cargo ship for some time before giving up. Soon after giving up the chase, another four small speed crafts approached the suspicious vessel from the horizon. Their crew were heard talking and laughing over the VHF, and calling out to other ships later that evening.	ICC-IMB PRC

Other Incident (not Act of Piracy or Armed Robbery)

S/N	Ship Name, Type of Ship, Flag, IMO No., GT	Date Time	Location of Incident	Status of Ship	Details of Incidents	Reporting Agency
1.	<i>MV City of Liverpool</i> General Cargo Ship Cambodia 6708795 1,595	21/01/2007 1530 hrs	Kankasanthurai (KKS) harbour, northern Jaffna peninsula, Sri Lanka	Steaming	<p>After unloading its cargo, the ship was leaving Kankasanthurai (KKS) harbour when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam Sea Tiger (LTTE) rammed an explosive-laden boat into the cargo ship. The resulting explosion damaged the hull of the ship, and it was towed back to the KKS harbour.</p> <p>When contacted by the ReCAAP ISC, ISC Focal Point (Sri Lanka) clarified that the incident did not fall under the ReCAAP's definition of piracy or armed robbery.</p>	ISC Focal Point (Sri Lanka)