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ReCAAP ISC Weekly Report 24-30 August 2021

Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

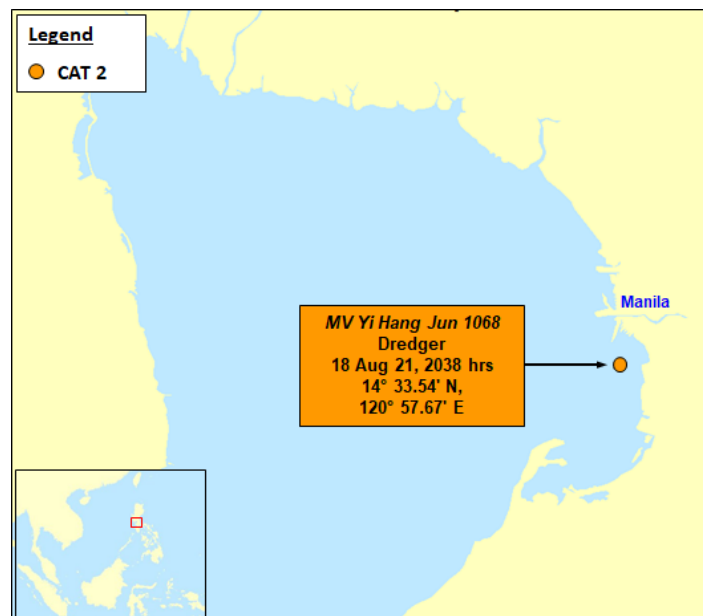
OVERVIEW

During 24-30 Aug 21, one incident of armed robbery against ships in Asia was reported to the ReCAAP ISC. The CAT 2¹ incident occurred to a ship while anchored at South Harbour Anchorage Area of Manila, the Philippines. In the incident, one perpetrator pointed a gun at the head of the chief engineer, and locked him up in the comfort room of the ship. Another three perpetrators were about to rob the ship but escaped empty-handed upon noticing the presence of a crew inside the mess hall of the ship. The perpetrators escaped in a white motorbanca.

Concerned with the continued occurrence of incidents at South Harbour Anchorage Area of Manila, the Philippines since January 2021 and the increased level of violence demonstrated by the perpetrators in the incidents in July and August, the ReCAAP ISC issued an Incident Alert (IA 06/2021) on 23 Aug.

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

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.



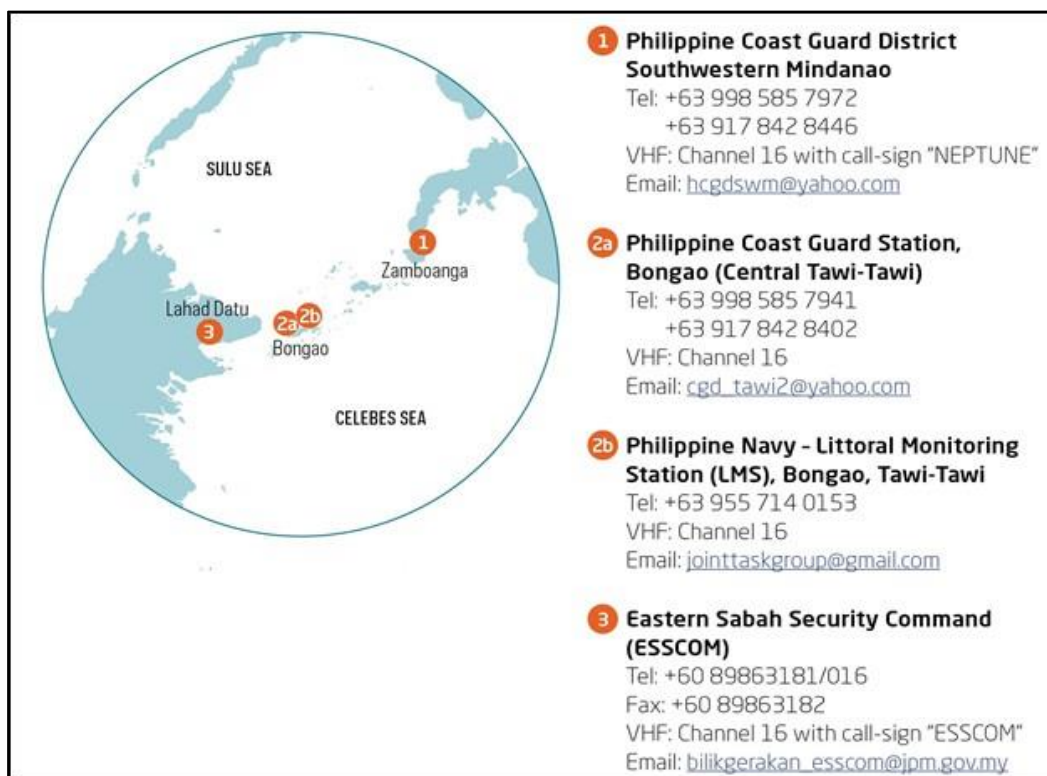
Location of incident

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

There is no incident of abduction of crew reported since the last incident in January 2020 up to today, and no crew is currently being held in captivity by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

On 23 Apr 21, the Philippine Armed Forces conducted a military operation against members of the ASG during which one of the ASG leaders responsible for the abduction of crew in the area of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi had managed to escape. The threat of the abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and waters off Eastern Sabah remains high particularly in the areas of Sulu and nearby waters off Tawi-Tawi.

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 are as shown next page:



- 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
- 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
- 2b Philippine Navy - Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS), Bongao, Tawi-Tawi**
 Tel: +63 955 714 0153
 VHF: Channel 16
 Email: 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

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

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.

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
24-30 Aug 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
INCIDENT IN ASIA									
ACTUAL INCIDENT									
1.	<i>MV Yi Hang Jun</i> Dredger China	18/08/21 2038 hrs	14.0; 33.54' N, 120.0; 57.67' E Or at vicinity waters off South Anchorage Area, Manila, the Philippines	While at anchor, the chief engineer is on his way to the comfort room when he encountered one unidentified perpetrator who pointed a gun at his head and locked him in the comfort room. Three other perpetrators were about to rob the ship but escaped empty-handed when they noticed that there was a crew inside the mess hall. The perpetrators escaped in a white motorbanca. The ship master reported the incident to the VTMS Manila, mustered all crew and inspect the ship properties on board. The personnel of Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Sub- station Paranaque proceeded to the location of the incident, and conducted 'board and search' of all motorbanca transiting the nearby area. Nothing was found, and the team returned to the ship and conducted an initial investigation.	All crew are safe and accounted for. No items were reported stolen.	The master of the ship mustered the crew, and inspected the properties on board the ship. The incident was reported to VTMS, Manila.	The incident was reported to VTMS, Manila.	ReCAAP ISC via ReCAAP Focal Point (Philippines)	The personnel of the Philippine Coast Guard Sub-station Paranaque proceeded to the location of the ship, and conducted 'board and search' of all motorbanca transiting the nearby area. The Philippine Coast Guard is continuously coordinating with other law enforcement agencies for the identification and apprehension of the perpetrators.

