

OVERVIEW

Two incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia (one CAT 3 incident and one CAT 4 incident) were reported to ReCAAP ISC. The CAT 3¹ incident occurred on board an oil/chemical/gas tanker while anchored at Kandla Anchorage, India. Several items were reported stolen during the incident. The CAT 4² incident occurred to a barge while being towed off Pulau Sambu, Indonesia. In the incident, no item was stolen; and two perpetrators on board a small boat were apprehended by the Indonesian authorities. The crew members in both incidents were safe. Details of incidents are shown in table (*).



Factors	Location	
	Kandla Anchorage, India (1 incident)	Off Pulau Sambu, Indonesia (1 incident)
Type of ship	Oil/chemical/gas tanker	Tug boat and barge
Time of incident	Hours of darkness	Hours of darkness
Number of perpetrators	5-6 men	4 wooden boats/ 2 perpetrators in 1 wooden boat were apprehended
Weapons	Knives and Rods	None
Treatment of crew	No injuries	No injuries
Significance level	CAT 3	CAT 4
Items stolen	Several items were reported stolen	Nothing was stolen

AREAS OF CONCERN

The ReCAAP ISC advises ships to continue to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting areas of concern, including the Singapore Strait and the Sulu-Celebes Seas; 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

Downgrading of threat level

- The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), after careful consideration of inputs from stakeholders and counterparts with vital involvement in securing the Sulu-Celebes Seas maritime security measure, recommends the downgrading of the threat on the 'Abduction of Crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'POTENTIALLY HIGH' to 'MODERATE'. The MODERATE threat level implies that '**Incidents are possible to occur but are relatively less severe in nature**'.

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory

- As the threat of abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas has diminished since January 2020 due to successful military operations and robust law enforcement initiatives, the ReCAAP ISC updates its Advisory to all ships to **consider re-route from the area as an option based on its prerogative**.
- 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.



1 Philippine Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao
Tel: +63 998 585 7972
+63 917 842 8446
VHF: Channel 16 with call-sign "NEPTUNE"
Email: hcgdsww@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

Picture 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ship master and crew are to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State and flag State, 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/2022/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202022%20\(caa%208%20Nov%2022\).pdf](https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/Number%20of%20Incidents/2022/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202022%20(caa%208%20Nov%2022).pdf) for details of the incidents.

¹ CAT (Category) 3 incident is 'less significant' in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are armed with knives/machetes or other items such as sticks or rods. Although the crew can be subjected to duress or threat during the incident, they are not harmed physically. In most CAT 3 cases, nothing is stolen. In cases where losses are reported, stores and engine spares are commonly stolen items.

² CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as "least significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators were not armed, and the crew not harmed.