

OPRF MARINT Monthly Report

April 2008



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~ From the IMB Report and the ReCAAP Report ~

This monthly report is edited/ summarized by publisher and staff writers based on published news resources.

Each resource is referenced with bracket below each title and is displayed as link URL on the last page of this report.

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Major Events in April 2008

Security: In April, many piracy incidents occurred in Somalia waters. On April 4, pirates seized control of a luxury yacht *Le Ponant* of a French ship-owner in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia's coast. The pirates freed 30 crew members on April 11. On April 20, pirates seized a Spanish tuna fishing boat off the coast of Somalia and demanded a ransom for the release of 26 crew members. On April 21, a small unidentified boat about 440 kilometers east of the Yemeni city of Aden fired to hit the VLCC *Takayama* (150,000 GT) of NYK Line. On April 28, a South Korean "bulk carrier" came under pirate attack off Aden.

Considering the situation, the United States and France introduced a United Nations (UN) resolution that would allow countries to chase pirates off Somalia's coast into the country's territorial waters and arrest the sea thieves. Also on April 1, the Dutch Parliament approved the deployment of a Dutch naval frigate to the waters off the coast of Somalia. The vessel, which will remain in the region for three months, will protect ships carrying United Nations food supplies under the World Food Program (WFP).

On April 16, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) issued to the public a Quarterly Report on piracy armed robberies against ships which occurred in the world in the first quarter (between January 1 and March 31) of 2008 through the Piracy Reporting Center based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. On the other hand, at the end of April 2008, the Information Sharing Center (ISC) in the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) which was established, based upon the ReCAAP, issued to the public a report on the incidents of piracy and armed robberies against the ships which were noted in the Asian areas in the first quarter (between January 1 and March 31) of 2008. The major features of piracy incidents against the ships noted in the world and Asia in the first quarter of 2008 viewed in these two reports are introduced in 2 intelligence assessment in this monthly report.

Military: US Defense journal, *National Defense*, April 2008 has contributed an article under the title of "Diesel-Electric Submarines, the U.S. Navy's Latest Annoyance," in which the author has pointed out that the recent quiet, hard-to-detect diesel submarines are vexing the US Navy.

On April 7, the US aircraft carrier USS *George Washington (GW)* (CVN 73) departed Norfolk, Virginia, to begin its journey to Yokosuka, Japan. *GW* will reach its destination in Japan in August.

On April 9, Taiwan Defense Minister Michael Tsai told a parliamentary interpellation session that two U.S. aircraft carriers - USS *Kitty Hawk* and USS *Nimitz* will stay in the Western Pacific near Taiwan until the new government is inaugurated in Taipei on May 20. Two U.S. aircraft carriers have been deploying there since shortly before the March 22 presidential election in Taiwan. During this period, the USS *Nimitz* and USS *Kitty Hawk* entered Hong Kong on 3 April and 28 April respectively.

The third edition of the annual bilateral series of Indo-UK exercises, 'KONKAN 2008,' is

scheduled in the Arabian Sea on the western seaboard, Goa, from April 21 to May 2. In this exercise, U.S. and French naval vessels will join the British and Indian naval ships.

On April 24, Hans Kristensen, a researcher of the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), published a satellite image (purchased by FAS from Digital Globe) of a new base of a nuclear ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) near Yulin on Hainan Island on the South China Sea. The Chinese navy has deployed a Jin-class (Type 094) SSBN to this base.

Diplomacy and International relations: On April 2, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Mineral Fuels Songpop Polachan said Thailand would begin negotiations with Cambodia over maritime boundary lines in an area of the Gulf of Thailand by April 21. The first set of meetings will be held to determine resource rights and boundary lines in an area of the Gulf of Thailand that covers over 26,000 square kilometers.

A main controversial point over the Philippines' territorial demarcation bill – House Bill (HB) 3216 is whether to include the Kalayaan Group of Islands (KIG) and the Scarborough Shoal in the South China in the country's territory. Malacañang is asking to treat these islands as a "regime of islands" instead of enclosing them within the country's baselines. On April 8, Speaker Prospero Nograles said he was willing to adopt Malacañang's position so long as there is an assurance that the country would not lose its claim on the KIG and the Scarborough Shoal.

On April 21, Australia's Resources and Energy Minister Martin Ferguson said that the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) had newly confirmed and ruled Australia's jurisdiction over an extra area 2.5 square kilometers, and that the area is potentially a bonanza of natural resources. This issue was taken up as a hot topic in this monthly report.

Shipping, Resources, Environment and Miscellaneous: On April 3, China's first indigenous liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier built at Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding (Group) Company in Shanghai was delivered to its owner. As an LNG vessel requires the highest level of shipbuilding technology, until now, only a few shipyards in Japan, the Republic of Korea and some European nations have been capable of building the special-purpose tankers.

The fourth Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands was held in Hanoi on April 7-11. In a decade the South China Sea (SCS) has lost 16 percent of its coral reefs and coastal mangroves and 30 percent of its sea grass because of dense population and rapid industrialization in the region. The key issues on a basin scale are habitat degradation and loss, indiscriminate fishing and land-based pollution.

India's defense giant Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has contracted a deal to construct a major new port in the state of Tamil Nadu. The new port facility will be located at Kaatupalli in the Thiruvallur district approximately 50 kilometers south of State capital of Chennai (Madras). The port would have both civilian and military capabilities and would be home to warships and submarines.

Investing at least 3.75 billion US dollars (USD) to build seaports by 2010, Vietnam has

planned to build 10 seaports, including an international one in northern Hai Phong city, and another in central Khanh Hoa province.

On April 24, Rail monopoly Russian Railways and North Korea's Railways Ministry signed an agreement to build a railroad and container depot at the Rason seaport, near the border with Russia and China. Under the deal, Russian Railways and the port of Rason will set up a joint venture for 49 years. The joint venture plans to modernize a 52-km rail line between Tumangang and Rason, and build a container depot at Rason.

1. Information Digest

1.1 Security

April 1 “Dutch frigate sent to Somalia coast” (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, April 1, and The Standard, April 10, 2008)

On April 1, the Dutch Parliament approved the deployment of a Dutch naval frigate to the waters off the coast of Somalia. The vessel, which will remain in the region for three months, will protect ships carrying United Nations food supplies under the World Food Program (WFP). Commenced first by the French Navy for a planned period of three months in November 2007, this escort mission was later handed over to the Danish Navy.

April 4 “French luxury yacht hijacked” (AP, April 4, 2008)

On April 4, pirates seized control of a luxury yacht *Le Ponant* of a French ship-owner in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia's coast, the French government said. The 850-ton, three-masted *Le Ponant* was returning from the Seychelles, in the Indian Ocean, toward the Mediterranean Sea. Except 30 crew members, no passengers were on board. “This is a blatant act of piracy. The yacht was sailing in the international waters in the Gulf of Aden. The Defense and Foreign ministries are mobilized to act as quickly as possible,” Prime Minister Francois Fillon said. France has a base in Djibouti and a naval flotilla circulating in the Indian Ocean.

【Related Story 1】

“Hijack-suspects are Somali ‘marines’” (The Independent, April 10, 2008)

According to the British newspaper *The Independent* dated April 10, *Le Ponant* is in the hands of the Somali “marines”- a group of fishermen-turned-pirates armed with satellite telephones and hand-held missiles. The “marines”- a paraphrase for a modern pirate group, the Pirates of Penzance- use for camouflage fishing vessels as “mother ships” for launching small boats. The Somali “marines” have a reputation for courteous treatment of their hostages, so long as they are confident that a ransom will be paid. Andrew Mwangura, president of a seamen's aid association in Kenyan, said: “The size of the ransom depends on the value of the ship, its proprietor and the nationality of the crew. In this case, they will ask for a fortune, millions of dollars.” Mr Mwangura said there were four, rival groups of pirates operating from the Somali coast but *Le Ponant* was almost certainly in the hands of the Somali “marines.” “They are the best organized,” he said. “They have an almost military structure and training, plenty of weapons and boats, and excellent communications.” A French journalist was held for eight days by the “marines” in December. He said they were “former fishermen” who have no particular political allegiance. Only money counts as far as they are concerned.

【Related Story 2】**“France freed crew members taken hostages” (AP, April 11, 2008)**

On April 11, French official told pirates freed 30 hostages held for the past week following a peaceful operation that involved the French military. The French government would not say whether any pirates were captured nor whether the vessel had been retaken. Neither statement elaborated on when or how the hostages were freed, where they were or whether a ransom was paid. The French Foreign Ministry informed the Philippine Embassy in Paris that the hostages included six Filipino crew members. According to military officials, the army sent elite commando troops to the region, and a French frigate, *Le Commandant Bouan* was diverted from its NATO duties and tracked the yacht, while a French plane dispatched from a base in Djibouti flew over the boat.

[A related article 3]**“Rescue operation of crew becomes partly clear” (International Herald Tribune, April 15, 2008)**

International Herald Tribune dated April 15 reports on part of operations for liberation of the crew members of The Ponant, outlining it as follows. (1) Half a dozen naval vessels, at least five helicopters and a surveillance plane took part in the operation to free them and secure the yacht, an operation coordinated by President Nicolas Sarkozy himself, his office said. (2) As of April 15, some parts of the operation were still unknown. It was unclear whether the owner of the yacht had paid a ransom to win the release of the crew. A sum of two million US dollars was widely reported in the French press. (3) It was unclear whether any pirates had been killed in the operation. Somali officials have claimed that at least three hostage-takers died while French officials have said that no one died. (4) Captain of the yacht, Patrick Marchesseau, said, when the pirates armed with Kalashnikov rifles began climbing aboard, some of the crew tried to fend them off with a fire hose. But they quickly gave up as the kidnapers began firing their rifles. The yacht had dropped anchor on the northern coast of Somalia on April 7, and the crew members were watched at all times by three armed guards. But they never hurt their captives. An English translator came aboard and began negotiations over the yacht's radio with the owners in Marseille. It took until the morning of April 11 before an agreement was reached and a French frigate appeared on the horizon, accommodating all crew members but Marchesseau. He had to wait until the last three pirates had left the yacht and made for the coast. (5) According to an official at the French Defense Ministry, Sarkozy gave the order to pursue the pirates that had abandoned the yacht. Six of them escaping on foot were captured after an attack helicopter destroyed the engine of their four-wheel-drive running inland, Part of a presumed ransom was recovered in the car and the kidnapers were taken aboard a naval vessel headed for France. It was unclear whether French judge have jurisdiction over the captured kidnapers.

April 10 “Indian Navy, ICG to intensify surveillance in SL’s border area” (newkerala.com, April 10, 2008)

The Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has decided to intensify air and sea surveillance along the coastline to thwart smuggling activities to Sri Lanka (SL) and prevent infiltration of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militants into Indian territorial waters in the wake of escalation of battle between the Lankan forces and the LTTE. A senior official of the ICG told that a decision to this effect was taken at a high-level 'Special Coastal Meeting' following increase in smuggling activities to SL from the coastal villages of Tamil Nadu. Reviewing the security of the 1076 mile long coastline in Tamil Nadu, the meeting decided to intensify air and sea surveillance by the ICG and Indian Navy in 21 unmanned islands between SL and India and also over the 591 coastal villages and hamlets.

April 16 “Russian, U.S. border guards sign security cooperation deal in N. Pacific” (RIA Novosti, April 16, 2008)

On April 16, Russian and U.S. border guards have agreed on joint measures to counter poaching and smuggling in the northern sector of the Pacific Ocean, the Russian Far East customs authority said. The agreement, signed during a meeting between the two services' leaders in San Francisco, will focus on intercepting illegal trade in arms, drugs and poached fish. The sides have also agreed to exchange information and carry out joint operations to crack down on international organized crime groups.

April 20 “Pirates seize Spanish fishing boat of Somalia” (CNN, April 21, 2008)

On April 21, pirates seized a Spanish tuna fishing boat off the coast of Somalia and demanded a ransom for the release of 26 crew members. Spanish government has sent a nearby frigate to the scene of the hijacking, and has contacted Britain, France and other allies with military presence in the area.

April 21 “NYK Line tanker attacked in the Gulf of Aden” (NYK Line, News Releases, April 21-23, 2008)

According to NYK Line News Releases dated April 21-23, around daybreak on April 21, local time, a small unidentified boat about 440 Kilometers east of the Yemeni city of Aden approached the VLCC Takayama (150,000 GT) owned and operated by NYK Line and fired some form of munitions. No injuries were reported, and navigation remains unaffected. The tanker arrived at Port of Aden on April 22. Takayama was on a ballast voyage to Yamboo in Saudi Arabia from Ulsan, South Korea from which the tanker departed on April 4.

April 24 “Pirates bob Thai tanker in the Malacca Strait” (The Bangkok Post, April 28, 2008)

On the evening of April 24, a Thai fuel tanker was attacked by six armed pirates in a speed boat in the Straits of Malacca off Singapore and was robbed of valuables worth almost 600,000

baht (two million yen or less). Leaving Rayong, Thailand on April 22 with two million liters of A-1 jet fuel, the tanker *Patrawarin 2* was bound for Phuket (in the Andaman Sea). The ship was scheduled to reach the island on April 27. The pirates attacked the tanker on the evening of April 24, while it was finding a way to the Singapore channel. Robbing the crew members of the valuables, four pirates fled with the other two pirates waiting in their speedboat. The speedboat was about 20 feet long and was driven by two 300hp Yamaha engines. Thai Third Fleet commander said he thought the pirates had intended to steal fuel, as they had mistakenly believed the tanker was carrying diesel. Realizing the cargo was jet fuel, they decided to rob the crew, he said. According to him, three littoral nations (Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia) and Thailand have plans to begin joint patrols in the Straits of Malacca from October 1.

April 28 “US, France circulate draft UN resolution to battle pirates” (AP, April 28, 2008)

On April 28, the United States and France introduced a United Nations (UN) resolution that would allow countries to chase pirates off Somalia’s coast into the country’s territorial waters and arrest the sea thieves. The draft Security Council resolution would authorize states, with approval from Somalia’s transitional government, to use “all necessary means” to identify, prevent, and repress actions of piracy and armed robbery. On this occasion, it would allow pursuing countries to engage in “boarding, searching, and seizing vessels engaged in or suspected of engaging in acts of piracy or armed robbery.”

In addition, the draft resolution (DR) on piracy urges states whose naval vessels and military aircraft operate in international waters and airspace off the coast of Somalia to be vigilant to acts of piracy and armed robbery, and to cooperate with each other, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other organizations to locate and arrest pirates. It urges relevant states to cooperate in determining jurisdiction in order to ensure the detention, investigation, and prosecution of persons responsible for acts of piracy and armed robbery consistent with applicable international law.

The DR on piracy can be renewed for a six-month period. The DR is co-sponsored by Britain and by Panama. It notes that Somalia’s transitional government sent a letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in November 2007, saying it needs and would welcome international assistance to address the piracy problem. A follow-up letter in February requested the Security Council’s “urgent assistance in security the territorial and international waters off the coast of Somalia for the safe conduct of shipping and navigation.” France’s UN Ambassador Jean-Maurice Ripert said the government of Somalia told them that it agreed with the resolution.

April 28 “South Korean attacked off Aden” (Channel News Asia, April 30, 2008)

On April 28, a South Korean “bulk carrier” came under pirate attack off Aden, Noel Choong, chief of Piracy Reporting Center based in Kuala Lumpur, said. According to him, 10 pirates in two speed boats believed to be from Somalia attacked the ship for about 40 minutes with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. The captain took evasive measures to prevent the pirates

from boarding the ship. The ship was still sailing to its destination in Europe despite the damage suffered in the attack. There has been an unprecedented surge in pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden with 13 attacks so far this year, Choong said.

April 30 “Singapore tug hit by pirates in SCS” (ReCAAP HP, April 30, 2008)

The Singapore-registered tug boat, the *PU 2008* towing barge *PU 3306*, was underway to Singapore from Vietnam on April 30. When the tug boat was sailing off Pulau Tioman (off east coast of Malaysia) in the South China Sea (SCS), six masked men armed with long knives boarded the tug boat from a speed boat. The robbers entered the accommodation area of the crew, took away the laptops, mobile phones and wallets of the crew before escaping. No crew was injured. The total damage was estimated worth 3,600 US dollars.

1.2 Military

April “Threat of Diesel-Electric Submarines: the U.S. Navy’s Latest Annoyance” (National Defense, April, 2008)

US Defense journal, *National Defense*, April 2008 has contributed an article under the title of “Diesel-Electric Submarines, the U.S. Navy’s Latest Annoyance,” in which the author has pointed out that the recent quiet, hard-to-detect diesel submarines are vexing the US Navy. The gist of the article is as follows.

- (1) In recent years, nations in the Pacific have begun to acquire stealthy diesel-electric submarines. Some of those nations could one day threaten U.S. access to strategic coastal areas of the world or interrupt the flow of commerce around the globe. Although the Navy has the world’s most advanced technology, these comparatively low-tech diesel-electric boats could give an enemy an asymmetric advantage. Diesel boats are propelled by batteries when submerged and move through the water by diesel engines when on the surface. Once they have powered up their batteries, the submarines can sail to the bottom of coastal waters and remain undetected for days. Advancements in technologies, such as air-independent propulsion (AIP) and fuel cells, have allowed diesel submarines to extend their operational ranges underwater.
- (2) The best selling point of the diesel submarines is their relatively inexpensive price tags. The Russians have sold diesel submarines for as little as 200 million US dollars (USD) and the French have exported their *Scorpene* submarines for 300 million USD. More than 39 nations possess diesel submarines. One of the latest tallies indicates a total of 377 ships in the world, and there could be an increase in the next few years. With China continuing to increase the size of its navy, a number of neighboring nations also have begun to develop their undersea capabilities. Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia all have closed deals on diesel submarines, and now Thailand is following suit. Driving the market in part is Russia, which during the past 18 months has been aggressively selling ships, including its *Kilo*-class diesels. Russia has exported

30 *Kilos* around the globe and 26 are still in active service. It will deliver two more submarines to Algeria by 2010, five to Venezuela by 2020, and six to Indonesia by 2018. China received its 12th and final Kilo in 2007. The number of *Kilos* that are being sold is particularly concerning because many of the submarines are equipped with Klub anti-ship cruise missiles*.

- (3) That China's submarines are taking bold actions near U.S. warships is a telltale sign of newer advanced technologies. The proliferation of diesel submarines in the Pacific is one of the major factors behind the Navy's decision to move six submarines from the Atlantic Fleet to the Pacific Fleet, says Rear Admiral (RADM) Joseph Walsh, Commander of the Pacific Submarine Force. Because more than 140 diesel subs are within reach of critical "choke points" in the area, anti-submarine warfare is Pacific Fleet's top war-fighting priority, he adds.
- (4) The US Navy saw its anti-submarine warfare skills diminish after the end of the Cold War. In those days, enemy Soviet nuclear submarines were noisy, and could be detected with passive sonar. But modern-day diesel submarines are not as easily heard, particularly in regions of the seas where biological life and merchant shipping can camouflage their acoustic signatures. Hunting for quiet diesel submarines in the shallow waters of the littorals is akin to trying to identify the sound of a single car engine in the din of a major city, said RADM John Waickwicz, who was the head of the Naval Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare Command.
- (5) The only technology that the Navy considers suitable for detecting and tracking diesel submarines is active sonar. It disperses signals out into the water where they bounce off of objects. Those echoes are captured by hydrophones and interpreted by sonar technicians. The Navy spent 40 years building a training range on the coast of Southern California. Because the water and ocean bottom conditions are representative of many areas around the world, the range is an ideal location for training strike groups in anti-submarine warfare, says Vice Admiral (VADM) Samuel Locklear, Commander of the US Third Fleet. But the Navy's training there has been curtailed by ongoing litigation over the harmful effects of active sonar on marine mammals. Under a federal judge's ruling, ships were forbidden from using active sonar within 12 nautical miles of shore. VADM Locklear says the Navy tries to balance its responsibility to protect the environment with its job. Because the U.S. Navy no longer operates diesel-electric submarines, it invites allied countries that own these boats to participate in exercises. The Swedish Navy's HMS Gotland collaborated most recently with various Navy commands off San Diego. RADM Waickwicz said it was very advantageous to have a diesel submarine crew for two years, to see how they thought, and how they approached the issues, which really opened their eyes to diesel submarines. He added that the experience led to recent changes in the Navy's anti-submarine warfare doctrine and tactics.

Notes* : The Russian-made anti-ship cruise missiles in a Klub series armed in Chinese naval vessels are called 3M-54E/SS-N-27 Sizzler subsonic/supersonic cruise missiles. "Sizzler is a very sophisticated piece of hardware and we are currently not as capable of defending against that missile as I would like," said Admiral Timothy Keating, the Commander of U.S. Pacific Command. (World Tribune.com, March 19, 2008)

Details on SS-N-27 Sizzler subsonic/supersonic cruise missile are available on Internet

at:

<http://warfare.ru/?lang=&linkid=2181&catid=312&image=799> (WARFARE.RU HP)

April 2 “Commander of U.S. Marine Corps visits China’s South Sea Fleet” (People’s Daily, April 3, 2008)

On April 2, General (Gen.) James T. Conway, Commander of the U.S. Marine Corps, started his 2-day visit to the headquarters of the China’s South Sea Fleet (SSF) in Zhanjiang. While touring the headquarters of the SSF, Gen. Conway will travel to SSF’s amphibious landing training grounds to watch the training exercises of China’s Marine Corps and the anti-terrorism training exercises of China’s Navy on April 3.

April 3 “Indonesian and Thai navies reach cooperation agreement” (Antara News, April 4, 2008)

Indonesian Navy Chief of Staff Fleet Admiral Sumardjono and his Thai counterpart signed Terms of Reference between the two navies, spokesman for the Indonesian Navy headquarters said on April 3. Under the terms of reference, the cooperation covered training exercises, personnel training, and exchange of information on security at sea. With regard to the joint patrols in the Malacca waterway, he said that Thailand still wished for joint patrols in the Malacca Strait with the Indonesian Navy and the navies of the other neighboring countries.

April 3 “U.S. carrier strike group visits Hong Kong” (AP, April 3, 2008)

On April 3, the USS *Nimitz* strike group arrived in Hong Kong on a port call. The group of ships includes the aircraft carrier USS *Nimitz* and the naval ships the USS *Princeton*, the USS *Chafee*, the USS *Higgins* and the USS *John Paul Jones*. No information is available on how long the ships will stay because of security reasons. This is the first port call to Hong Kong by the U.S. naval ships since the USS *Blue Ridge* visited the port in last January.

April 5 “Indian, Germany to hold joint naval exercise in Arabian Sea” (The Times of India, April 1, 2008)

For the first time, Indian and German warships will hold joint maneuvers in the Arabian Sea from April 5. On their way to deployment to the Persian Gulf, three German warships - two missile frigates and a naval support vessel – will cross swords with four Indian warships to carry out sea control and anti-submarine warfare maneuvers.

April 7 “U.S. aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* departs for Japan” (Navy News Stand, April 7, 2008)

On April 7, the U.S. aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* (*GW*) (CVN 73) with its crew of approximately 3,200 Sailors departed Norfolk, Virginia, to begin its journey to Yokosuka, Japan. *GW* is to replace USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63). Taking the guided-missile frigate USS *Kauffman* (FFG 59) and the guided-missile destroyer USS *Farragut* (DDG 99) in company, *GW* will enter the U.S.

Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) area, where she will remain for two months. Later on, *GW* will continue steaming to reach its destination in Japan in August. USS *Kauffman* (FFG 59) and USS *Farragut* (DDG 99) will deploy to USSOUTHCOM area for six months. *GW*'s replacement of *Kitty Hawk* is part of the Navy's long-range effort to routinely replace older ships assigned to the Navy's forward deployed naval forces with newer or more capable platforms, and is part of ongoing measures in preparation for the unpredictable security environment in the Western Pacific. USS *Kitty Hawk* is scheduled to be decommissioned later in 2008.

April 8 "RP, Malaysia begin joint naval exercise" (Philippine Star, April 9, 2008)

The joint Philippines-Malaysia naval exercises opened on April 8. The ten-day exercises dubbed MALPHI-LAUT 11/08 aim to enhance the inter-operability of the two navies in efforts to fight crimes that take place across national borders, Philippine Navy Fleet Commander Rear Adm. Petronilo Magno said. The joint exercises will involve at least 300 Filipino and Malaysian troops, six warships and two reconnaissance planes. The exercises are scheduled to take place in the waters of Sabah and would end in Labuan, Malaysia on April 17. Both naval forces have continued cooperation in dealing with crimes such as drug trafficking, hijacking, illegal migration, piracy, smuggling, illegal fishing, theft of marine resources and marine pollution. "Malaysia has been the Philippine Navy's strong partner in the development of national security, since we share common borders where transnational crimes are becoming the modern trend among terrorist groups and pirates," Magno said.

April 9 "Two U.S. aircraft carriers to stay near Taiwan until new government inaugurated: Taiwan Defense Minister" (AP, April 9, 2008)

On April 9, Taiwan Defense Minister Michael Tsai told a parliamentary interpellation session that two U.S. aircraft carriers - USS *Kitty Hawk* and USS *Nimitz* will stay in the Western Pacific near Taiwan until the new government is inaugurated in Taipei on May 20. Two U.S. aircraft carriers have been deploying there since shortly before the March 22 presidential election in Taiwan. "The period between March 22 and May 20 is an uncertain time for the Taiwan Strait. The deployments have their strategic significance," Tsai said. Asked by lawmakers on the objective of the deployment, Tsai said, "It is to deter China and to ensure a smooth transition of government in Taiwan." Military affairs expert in Hong Kong Andrei Chang said, "The deployments are a message to both Taiwan and China not to provoke each other."

According to Taiwan's Defense Ministry, the USS *Kitty Hawk* left its port in Japan just days before Taiwan's election, while the USS *Nimitz* has been in the Western Pacific since January. For the USS *Kitty Hawk*, this is likely the super carrier's last mission. While the USS *Kitty Hawk* is patrolling with just one destroyer, the USS *Nimitz* is patrolling with its entire strike group, which includes surface combatants and submarines, a U.S. Pacific Command spokesman said in March.

April 10 “China, U.S. defense chiefs talk in first hot-line call” (The China Post, April 11, 2008)

On April 10, Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie and U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates held their talks in first hot-line call. Congratulating Liang on his March 17 appointment as minister of defense, Gates emphasized how substantive dialogue can avoid any miscalculations. Liang, formerly headed the Nanjing Military District, called on the United States to end arms sales to Taiwan, and Gates told him that they would stick to the “one-China” policy.

April 11 “U.S. PaCom talks with Indonesian President” (American Forces Press Service, April 11, 2008)

After meeting with Indonesian President Bambang Yudoyono on April 11, Navy Admiral Timothy J. Keating, Commander of U.S. Pacific Command, praised Indonesia's role in promoting maritime security in the strategic Straits of Malacca during a joint news conference with Yudoyono. Moreover, Keating noted the close cooperation among Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines that is improving their collective maritime domain awareness and law enforcement capabilities. Both Keating and Yudoyono pledged to promote information and intelligence sharing and law enforcement engagement to prevent terrorist activities. In addition, Yudoyono expressed particular interest in cooperating in humanitarian assistance and disaster response preparedness.

April 14 “Russian Navy to develop antiterrorism cooperation with foreign navies” (RIA Novosti, April 14, 2008)

Russia's Navy plans to expand its counter-terrorist and humanitarian cooperation with foreign navies, the Russian Navy commander Admiral (ADM) Vladimir Vysotsky said on April 14. “The Russian Navy began to cooperate more closely in developing joint tasks with foreign navies in 2007. This practice will be expanded, as many tasks at sea are of a general humanitarian or antiterrorist nature,” ADM Vysotsky said. He said that in 2007 Russian naval vessels carried out over 30 long-distance missions, during which they made over 40 visits to ports of 21 states. During 2007 Russian naval ships took part in nine joint exercises with foreign navies. Russia's Navy regularly participates in counter terrorist operations Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean and Black Sea Harmony in the Black Sea.

April 16 “Indian Navy, Coast Guard face force depletions” (The Times of India, April 16, 2008)

According to Indian newspaper *The Times of India* dated 16 April, India's Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defense (PSCD) has said in its latest report that the Indian Navy and Coast Guard are facing force depletions and government should expeditiously augment induction of warships, submarines and surveillance aircraft to maintain optimum operational readiness. Although the sanctioned strength of the Navy is 140 warships and submarines, at present Navy only had 129 warships and submarines, the report has said. On the other hand, the Coast Guard

faces significant force depletion with its existing strength of just 43 ships, 18 boats, and 45 aircraft although it has required 154 ships, 93 boats and 105 aircraft. The PSDC called for enhancement of budgetary allocation for the Coast Guard.

April 17 “ROKN’s latest sub suffers problems” (maritimeasia.blogspot.com, April 17, 2008)

The Republic of Korea Navy (ROKN) commissioned into service its first U-214 submarine (1,800 tons), ROKS *Son Won-II* in December 2007. However, a South Korean media report claimed ROKS *Son Won-II* was suffering problems with its propeller shaft. The ROKN has publicly stated the U-214's were performing superbly, and that ongoing work on ROKS *Son Won-II* has been intended to maximize upon the U-214's capabilities, not to make up for glitches. Nevertheless, German maker, de: Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werfe (HDW), is known to have offered South Korea a guarantee of 5 million US dollars that any faults with the ROKN's U-214 will be fixed to expected standards. A second ROKN U-214, ROKS *Jeong Ji*, is currently undergoing sea trial, and is expected to enter into service later this year. By 2018, the ROKN is expected to possess nine U-214 submarines.

April 19 “U.S., Gulf allies commence joint exercise” (World Tribune, April 21, 2008)

On April 19, the U.S. Navy began the exercise with nations of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which was meant to test GCO capabilities to block the entry of ships that carry weapons of mass destruction. Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar participated in the exercise while representatives of Egypt, Jordan, Oman and Saudi Arabia observed. The GCO sources said the exercise was not meant against any country, including neighboring Iran. The maneuvers were meant to improve U.S. Navy interoperability with Gulf Arab allies as well as improve their capabilities in stop-and-search operations.

April 20 “Australian Navy to dispatch patrol boats to SW Pacific” (Pacific Magazine, April 18, 2008)

On April 20, Royal Australian Navy (RAN) will send the state-of-the-art patrol vessels--HMA *Launceston* and HMA *Pirie* for a five-week deployment to the Southwest Pacific. The two patrol vessels are bound for Vanuatu, Samoa, the Cook Islands and Tonga. This deployment will allow them to engage Australia’s regional neighbors and strengthen international ties. Commissioned into the RAN in September 2007 and July 2006, respectively, the 57-meter *Armidale* Class Patrol Boats are extremely capable vessels with their primary missions for border protection operations, having a formidable patrol, surveillance and response capability for the RAN.

April 21 “Royal Navy, Indian Navy to conduct joint exercise” (India, British High Commission, Press Release, April 18, 2008)

According to India, British High Commission, Press Release, the third edition of the annual bilateral series of Indo-UK exercises, ‘KONKAN 2008,’ is scheduled in the Arabian Sea on the

western seaboard, Goa, from 21 April to May 2. The Royal Navy will field the aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious*, the hunter-killer submarine HMS *Trafalgar*, guided missile frigate HMS *Westminster*, the Fleet Replenishment Tanker RFA *Wave Knight*, and the Afloat Stores Ship RFA *Fort Austin*. On the other hand, the Indian Navy will be represented by guided-missile destroyers INS *Mysore* and INS *Rajput*, the guided missile frigate INS *Gomati*, the submarine INS *Shishumar*, and Replenishment Tanker INS *Aditya*. In addition, French stealth frigate FS *Surcouf* and U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer USS *Cole* will also join the exercise. During the exercise, the major thrust will be on Anti-Submarine Warfare operations, with the Indian Navy's Sea Harrier aircraft operating from Goa.

April 24 “New Chinese SSBN base: US researcher published satellite image” (Federation of American Scientists, April 24, 2008)

On April 24, Hans Kristensen, a researcher of the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), published a satellite image (purchased by FAS from Digital Globe) of a new base of a nuclear ballistic missile submarine (SSBN). The Chinese navy has deployed a *Jin*-class (Type 094) SSBN to a new base near Yulin on Hainan Island on the South China Sea. China is believed to have launched two *Jin*-class SSBNs with a third possibly under construction. The U. S. Intelligence community estimates that China might possibly build five SSBNs if it wants to have a near-continuous deterrent at sea.

Hans Kristensen says: The SSBN base on Hainan Island will probably be seen as a reaffirmation of China's ambitions to develop a sea-based deterrent. Although the Chinese navy has virtually no tactical experience in operating SSBNs at sea, the *Jin*-class and the demagnetization facility on Hainan Island show they're trying.

Yulin (Sanya) Naval Base

Source: Federation of American Scientists, April 24, 2008

<http://www.fas.org/blog/ssp/2008/04/new-chinese-ssbn-deploys-to-hainan-island-naval-base.php>

Note: This image shows a whole view of the naval base at Yulin (Sanya) Naval Base on Hainan Island. According to Hans Kristensen, a white pier seen inside the frame on the mid-lower part appears to be a newly constructed demagnetization facility for submarines. There is a large underground facility in the base. One of the entrances to the underground facility is visible in the mid-frame. (Left is the north.)

Remarks: As to the satellite images of a Chinese submarine published by Researcher Hans Kristensen, please refer to 1. 2. Military in OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, July 2007, and 1. 2. Military in OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, October 2007.

April 28 “U. S. aircraft carrier dock in Hong Kong” (The US Daily, April 28, 2008)

On April 28, the aircraft carrier USS *Kitty Hawk* docked in Hong Kong for the first time since Beijing banned a visit in November 2007. Rear Admiral Richard Wren, who oversees the USS *Kitty Hawk* strike group, said, “We’re back on track. I expect Beijing to allow around 40 U.S. military ships to dock in Hong Kong this year.”

1.3 Diplomacy and International Relations

April 2 “Thailand, Cambodia start negotiation on borders in Gulf waters” (Bangkok Post, April 2, 2008)

On April 2, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Mineral Fuels Songpop Polachan said Thailand would begin negotiations with Cambodia over maritime boundary lines in an area of the Gulf of Thailand by April 21. The first set of meetings will be held to determine resource rights and boundary lines in an area of the Gulf of Thailand that covers over 26,000 square kilometers. Mr. Songpop said the Thai government will propose to Cambodia a model based on

similar regional initiatives, such as the successful Malaysia-Thailand Joint Development Area* and the Timor Gap Australia-Indonesia Co-operation Treaty.** Exploration began 30 years ago in the disputed Thai-Cambodian waters. Despite the lack of concrete reports on reserves, both countries have sought to tap the overlapping area for potential undersea oil and natural gas potential. The two countries have not engaged in any serious talks about the offshore area for the past decade.

Note* : The Malaysia-Thailand Joint Development Area is an overlapping economic zone located offshore between Malaysia and Thailand in the Gulf of Thailand. The Joint Development Area was established, based on an agreement between Thailand and Malaysia in 1989. The area is divided into three blocks, and is administered by the Malaysian-Thailand Joint Authority (MTJA), of which Malaysia and Thailand each owns 50 percent. (From the National Oil Company of Malaysia, PETRONAS HP)

Note** : The Timor Gap Australia-Indonesia Co-operation Treaty (hereafter treaty) was signed between Australia and Malaysia in 1989, and the treaty came into effect in 1991. The treaty established a Zone of Cooperation in the area of the continental shelf between Australia and East Timor, comprising three distinct areas or zones of jurisdiction. The treaty would not prejudice the claims of either country to sovereign rights over the continental shelf, nor would it preclude continuing efforts to reach final agreement on permanent seabed boundary delimitation. On July 6, 2001 Australia and East Timor signed an interim agreement to share the management and revenue from oil and gas production in the Timor Gap. On the first day of East Timor's independence on May 20, 2002, Australian and East Timorese government leaders signed the Timor Gap Treaty. (From Parliament of Australia HP)

April 2 “Former ranking official group supports RP baseline bill” (ABS-CBN News, April 3, 2008)

A main controversial point over the Philippines' territorial demarcation bill – House Bill (HB) 3216 is whether to include the Kalayaan Group of Islands (KIG: Tagalog for the Spratlys) and the Scarborough Shoal in the South China in the country's territory. The HB 3216 encloses these islands within the country's territorial baselines. On the other hand, according to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Malacañang is asking to treat these islands as a “regime of islands” instead of enclosing them within the country's baselines.

Philippine *ABS-CBN News* (on the net) dated April 3 reported the group of Former Senior Government Officials (FSGO) expressed their support to the Philippines' territorial baseline bill– House Bill 3216 which had been under deliberation at the Congress on April 2. The House Bill 3216 includes the Kalayaan Group of Islands (west of Palawan) and Scarborough Shoal (west of Zambales). The FSGO is composed of around 90 former senior officials who are advocating reforms and good governance. According to the report, Cebu Representative Antonio Cuenco, chair of the House committee on foreign affairs, said, “The House's first order of business when session resumes on April 21 will be to approve the baseline bill. It's long overdue.” Also, Leticia

Ramos Shahani, a former senator who headed the Senate committee on foreign affairs, said, “The original position of the [House] committee [on foreign affairs] was correct to include the Kalayaan Group of Islands and the Scarborough Shoal. Congress should not discuss too long.” The UN is demanding submission of filings from countries claiming extended continental shelves by May 2009. Cuenco said that various sectors, in particular, the pressure groups came from the Office of the Executive Secretary, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Chinese government. Shahani stressed that the passage of a baseline bill into a law was a unilateral act, and they would not be negotiating with China at that point. (As to the issues over the territorial baseline, please refer to 2. 2. Analysis in OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, March 2008.)

【Related Story 1】

“Philippines to reconsider base line bill: House Speaker” (Philippine Daily Inquirer, April 9, 2008)

Regarding this matter, the Philippine newspaper *Philippine Daily Inquirer* dated April 9 reported, as below, that, on April 8 Speaker Prospero Nograles was willing to adopt Malacañang’s position so long as there is an assurance that the country would not lose its claim on the KIG and the Scarborough Shoal. According to the report, Nograles pointed out the main points as follows: (1) Even though the House consider the bill seriously, we ask it could guarantee that this would not endanger the country's legal claim on the disputed areas in the South China Sea. (2) Although we must be serious about this matter, I myself would support the Palace’s stand on the bill. I want to find out though if other claimants -- China, Vietnam, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Taiwan-- have submitted such documents to the United Nations. This baseline bill, once it becomes a law, will be a permanent document that will be submitted to the UN. (3) I have advised Cebu Representative Antonio Cuenco, chairman of the House foreign affairs committee, to carefully study the bill and look at the merits of the executive’s position.

【Related Story 2】

“Olympics deters China’s use of force in Spratlys : RP Congressman” (Philippine Daily Inquirer, April 10, 2008)

On April 10, Palawan Representative Antonio Alvarez, the congressman with jurisdiction over the municipality of Kalayaan, said the Beijing Olympic Games will prevent China from resorting to bullying tactics against the Philippines over the issue of the latter's archipelagic baselines. “The Beijing Olympics has put China in its best behavior. China will not take any improper action that will make it look like a bully in the eyes of the world,” Alvarez said. He said the fear raised by some Philippine officials of having to go to war with China if the archipelagic baselines law will enclose the Kalayaan Islands Group (KIG) inside the territorial lines has no basis. The executive department has asked Congress to only treat the KIG as an offshore territory or a “regime of islands” outside the territory lines. “Congress should do what is right. Put the KIG inside the baseline. If other countries don't like it, then they can register their opposition in the right way and in the proper forum. It is the way civilized nations do,” Alvarez stressed. “We

should not surrender the claims to territorial sovereignty right from the start in an act of self-forfeiture because of fear of China. If China will take a hostile action, such action will threaten the success of the games," he said.

 **Hot topic** 

UN CLCS recommends Australia to extend the outer limits of continental shelf

The article 76 of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) stipulates that the continental shelf of a coastal State comprises the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea to a distance of 200 nautical miles (NM) from the baseline. In addition, the article 76 stipulates, whenever the continental margin extends beyond 200 NM, the coastal State shall extend the limits of its continental shelf to either of the farther lines between to a maximum of 350 NM beyond 200 NM and to 100 NM from the 2,500 meter isobath. If a coastal State establishes a continental shelf beyond 200 NM, it has to submit information on the limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 NM from the baselines to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). In addition, the article 4 of Annex II in UNCLOS stipulates that the coastal State that intends to establish the outer limits of its continental shelf beyond 200 NM shall submit particulars of such limits to the Commission along with supporting scientific and technical data. The CLCS shall make recommendations to coastal States on matters related to the establishment of the outer limits of their continental shelf. The limits of the shelf established by a coastal State on the basis of these recommendations shall be final and binding.

For a State that became the member of the UNCLOS before 13 May 1999, the ten-year period from the date of its membership is designated as the deadline for a submission, and the party shall submit an application document by 12 May 2009 (under the decision of the Meeting of States Parties). To the State, which entered the UNCLOS after 13 May 1999, is applied a stipulation of the Annex II Article 4: “It shall submit particulars of such limits to the Commission ...as soon as possible but in any case within 10 years of the entry into force of this Convention for that State.”

In November 2004, Australia presented a submission for an extension of the outer limits of the continental shelf to the CLCS.¹ The CLCS has recommended Australia to extend the outer limits of its continental shelf.

Below is a summary for the outline of an extension of the outer limits of the continental shelf, which has been reported on home pages of the Australian Resources and Energy Ministry, other government organizations, and national media.

¹ Except Australia, the nations that made a submission to the CLCS so far are Russia (2001), Brazil (2004), Iceland (2005), New Zealand (2006), France, Iceland, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (jointly for the Celtic Sea and the Bay of Biscay) (2006), Norway (2006), France (for French Guiana and New Caledonia) (2007), Mexico (2007), Barbados (2008), the United Kingdom of Great Britain (for Ascension Island in the Atlantic).

As for details on a submission, please refer to CLCS HP:
http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/clcs_home.htm

1. The extended areas of outer limits of Australia's continental shelf²

According to Government officials from Geoscience Australia, Australia's Continental Shelf Submission was lodged with the CLCS on November 15, 2004 and was initially considered by the Commission at its 15th Session in April 2005. Since then, an Australian delegation has made numerous presentations to the CLCS. On April 9, 2008, the CLCS adopted recommendations that confirmed the location of the outer limit of Australia's continental shelf in nine distinct marine regions. (Please refer to map below.) This decision gives Australia jurisdiction over an additional 2.5 million square kilometers of continental shelf.

Although the Australian continent covers about 7.7 million square kilometers, it additionally includes the Australian Antarctic Territory, Christmas Island (the Indian Ocean: IO), the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (IO), Heard and McDonald Islands (IO), Norfolk Island (the Pacific Ocean, the Coral Sea Islands and Ashmore and Cartier Islands (the Timor Sea) in the territories. In all there are some 12,000 islands. The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) gives Australia jurisdiction over a marine area of some 10 million square kilometers, which is larger than the territorial land. The current decision means Australia now has jurisdiction over an extra 2.5 million square kilometers of continental shelf, which is almost five times the size of France, seven times the size of Germany and almost 10 times the size of New Zealand.

At the interview on April 21, Resources and Energy Minister Martin Ferguson said he welcomes the recommendation from the CLCS. The Minister praised the contribution of Government officials from Geoscience Australia, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Attorney-General's Department in preparing Australia's detailed submission to the Commission.

The recommendation gives Australia the rights to what exists on and under the seabed, including oil and gas resources, and biological resources among others such as micro-organisms, which could be used in medicines. At the meeting, Ferguson stressed the following points:

- (1) This brings about a major boost to Australia's offshore resource potential and also to our ability to preserve the marine environment on the seabed.
- (2) It demonstrates that Australia's effective engagement in law of the sea matters delivers results. In many respects, Australia has also led the way for other countries looking to confirm their continental shelf boundaries through the Commission.
- (3) The Government will move quickly to proclaim the outer limits of the Australian continental shelf into law on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission.

2. Australia's domestic expectations to developing resource potential

What are the Australia's domestic expectations to developing resource potential in the

² This paragraph is based on information from the following sources: Article on Australian Resources and Energy Minister Martin Ferguson at an interview is available on the following home page:
<http://minister.ret.gov.au/TheHonMartinFergusonMP/Pages/UNCONFIRMSAUSTRALIA%E2%80%99SRIGHTS%20OVEREXTRA.aspx>

Australian Government Geoscience Australia HP:
https://www.ga.gov.au/oceans/mc_LawSea.jsp

extended areas which has been newly added?

At the previous interview, Martin Ferguson said the areas had been only partially explored, but they had the potential to be a bonanza of new resources. However, regarding the Antarctic, Ferguson ruled out any exploration of areas, bearing in mind that the Antarctic treaty prohibits any exploration. The new territory includes two areas suspected of holding oil deposits — to the south of Lord Howe Island and in the middle of the Great Australian Bight — and one potential gas region off the Exmouth Plateau in Western Australia. Following is a summary of the reports from the media in Australia regarding the Canberra's domestic expectations over the development of the potential resources. (ABC News, April 21; National Mine News, April 21; the Age, April 22; and the Australian, April 22, 2008)

While pointing out it is too early to say that the recommendation of the CLCS will bring new wealth to Australia, the chief executive of the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association, Belinda Robinson, said, "On the upside a number of them are adjacent to existing producing areas, the Carnarvon Basin for example and the Browse Basin in Western Australia, so we'd be hopeful that they may be prospective."

The extended sea area of Exmouth Plateaus is already spreading westward from the production points of major oil and gas of Australia, but it is a deep sea, and future development would be technically difficult and the expenses will run up. Great Australian Bight is the most prospective area where oil resources would be discovered. On the other hand, in the Lord Howe Rise region in the western side, no explorations have been conducted, and it is regarded to be an unknown area.

Geoscience Australia geologist Mark Alcock regards the Great Australian Bight and Lord Howe Rise, south west of Lord Howe Island, and the Wallaby and Exmouth Plateaus all had mining potential. He said surveys were being undertaken in the in Load Howe Rise region and the result would be released within two years from now.

Klaus Regenauer-Lieb, a professor in the University of Western Australia, said whether Australia's new territorial areas offered hope for oil exploration depended on the depth of the seabed. "If we are in the deeper seas, the likelihood of oil is very, very slim," Professor Regenauer-Lieb said.

Source: Australian Government Geoscience Australia HP:
https://www.ga.gov.au/oceans/mc_LawSea.jsp

1.4 Shipping, Resources, Environment, and Miscellaneous

April 2 “India, Myanmar sign to develop infrastructure” (Khaleej Times, April 3, 2008)

According to a statement from India’s Foreign Ministry, India and Myanmar signed a deal to develop infrastructure linking the two countries on April 2. According to Indian officials, India will invest 120 million US dollars to upgrade waterways and highways along Myanmar’s Kaladan River and to develop the port of Sittway in the country’s northwest. The statement said the project would greatly enhance connectivity between Myanmar and India, in particular with India’s northeast states.

April 3 “China’s first self-made LNG tanker delivered” (Shanghai Daily, April 4, 2008)

China’s first indigenous liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier built at Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding (Group) Company in Shanghai was delivered to its owner on April 3. “It’s a major milestone in China’s shipbuilding industry. Now we are able to produce LNG tankers on a large scale,” said chief engineer of the LNG carrier’s builder. An LNG vessel requires the highest level of shipbuilding technology. Until now, only a few shipyards in Japan, the Republic of Korea and some European nations have been capable of building the special-purpose tankers. Construction of the first LNG carrier named “*Dapeng Sun*” started late in 2004. The vessel cost 160 million US dollars to build, and has a capacity of 147,000 cubic meters (about 70,000 tons) of LNG - equivalent to one-month use for Shanghai residents. According to the aforementioned chief engineer, there was some delay in delivery after builders found problems in pipe parts supplied by one domestic company.

The *Dapeng Sun* will carry LNG from Australia to Guangdong Province’s Dapeng, China’s first LNG receiving terminal. The *Dapeng Sun* can complete a return trip between Australia and Guangdong twice a month. The Dapeng terminal started to receive LNG from Australia in June 2006 under a long-term contract. It imported three million tons in 2007, equivalent to a third of the nationwide natural gas consumption.

The Hudong-Zhonghua is building another four LNG vessels with the same capacity. Two will be delivered for the Dapeng project in 2008 and 2009. The other two are being made for the LNG terminal in Fujian Province.

LNG tanker, “*Dapeng Sun*”

Source: Shanghai Daily, April 4, 2008

http://www.shanghaidaily.com/sp/article/2008/200804/20080404/article_354708.htm

April 8 “China’s National Oil Company builds refinery in Syria” (China Daily, April 8, 2008)

In early April, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) signed an agreement with Syrian oil ministry officials to build a refinery in the eastern oil hub of Dei Ezzor in Syria. China underwrites 85 percent – or three million US dollars - of the costs; output of the facility is expected to be 100,000 barrels per day. The CNPC has 69 joint projects in 26 countries across the world.

April 13 “SCS heading for serious environmental pollution” (AFP, April 13, 2008)

The fourth Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands* was held in Hanoi on April 7-11. AFP dated April 13 reports on the situation of environmental pollution in the South China Sea (SCS) warned by the marine scientists who attended the conference as follows. The SCS is ringed by China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, with about 350 million people living along its coastal areas. According to Vo Si Tuan, who served as Vietnam representative to the UN Environment Program (UNEP) South China Sea Project**, in a decade the SCS has lost 16 percent of its coral reefs and coastal mangroves and 30 percent of its sea grass because of dense population and rapid industrialization in the region. Also, the exploitation of its fisheries, both legal and illegal, by family boats and industrial trawlers now threatens to deplete fish stocks that millions of people rely on. The key issues on a basin scale are habitat degradation and loss, indiscriminate fishing and land-based pollution. According to Keith Symington, a marine specialist with the World Wide Fund for Nature***, the SCS is one of the world's most bio-diverse marine areas, where serious pollution caused by large populations heavily dependent, directly and indirectly, on fishing is increasing. Boats have to go further and fish longer to catch the same amount of fish and they are catching smaller fish. Also, there are a lot of illegal catches and some fishing boats flying flags of convenience. Vietnam, aiming to protect its coastal areas, plans to send fewer and larger fishing boats deeper into the SCS, said Nguyen Chu Hoi, director of the Vietnam Institute of Fisheries

Economics and Planning. The Vietnamese government plans to designate 15 marine protected areas in 2008, and to reduce its fleet of 90,000 mostly family-run boats by 30 percent over five years. Encouraging more off-shore fishing has already led to clashes on the high seas with Chinese vessels and the Indonesian coastguard firing at Vietnamese ships.

Managing the SCS is complicated by the fact that at its heart lie the Spratly islands, which are claimed by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. "One of the basic approaches now is putting aside the claims while we address the environment and the resource degradation," said Robert Jara of the Philippines' environment and natural resources department.

Note* : As to the fourth Global Conference on Ocean, Coasts and Islands, please refer to URL below;

<http://www.globaloceans.org/globalconferences/2008/>

Note** : Regarding the UN Environment Program (UNEP) South China Sea Project, please refer to URL below;

http://www.unepscs.org/Project_Background.html

Note*** : For the World Wide Fund for Nature, please refer to URL below; <http://www.wwf.org/>

April 16 "India to build new port in South-east region" (Defense News, April 16, 2008)

India's defense giant Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has contracted a deal to construct a major new port in the state of Tamil Nadu. An L&T official said the new port facility will be located at Kaatupalli in the Thiruvallur district approximately 50 kilometers south of State capital of Chennai (Madras). The port would have both civilian and military capabilities and would be home to warships and submarines. The port facility is being built jointly with the state of Tamil Nadu and is likely to cost around 750 million US dollars. Construction on the project will begin within the year, and is expected to be completed in about two years. L&T is currently constructing the hull of India's new nuclear-powered submarine, the Advanced Technology Vehicle. The shipyard will have the capability to build very large crude carriers, passenger vessels and ships for specialized applications such as transporting LNG and LPG.

April 16 "Vietnam plans to develop seaport capabilities" (Xinhua, April 16, 2008)

According to China's Xinhua, Vietnamese newspaper *Transport* dated April 16 has reported that Vietnam requires at least 3.75 billion US dollars (USD) to build seaports through 2010. Report says Vietnam has planned to build 10 seaports, including an international one in northern Hai Phong city, and another in central Khanh Hoa province. Over 1.28 billion USD will be invested in the northern region, and 875 million USD in the central province. The country wants to build deepwater seaports which can receive large vessels of 50,000-100,000 DWT so that its port system can handle 230-250 million tons of cargo in 2010 and 500-550 million tons in 2020. Now, Vietnam's port system is able to handle over 170 million tons of cargo, up from 154 million tons in 2006, according to the Vietnam Maritime Administration.

April 18 “Russia plans huge investment in North Circle” (Barents Observer, April 18, 2008)

On April 18, highlighting at the session in the Marine Board the issue of extending the outer limits of the continental shelf in the Arctic Circle, Russia’s First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov stressed that eventually the legal rights of Russia at the shelf will extend the territory of Russia. The mineral resources at the shelf are considered to be enormous. Head of oil company Rosneft, also a participant in the Marine Board, said that he believes up to 61 trillion Rubles (RUB) will be invested in the area by 2050. Minister of Natural Resources Yuri Trutnev at the board meeting said Russia by 2011 will spend about 1.5 billion RUB studying the Arctic shelf.

April 18 “Russia sends naval vessels to support trawlers” (Barents Observer, April 18, 2008)

Following a meeting of the Russian Marine Board, the Commander of the Russian Navy, Vladimir Vysotsky, said on April 18 he would send Russian naval vessels from the Northern Fleet to the waters off the Spitsbergen archipelago in order to lend “psychological support” to Russian fishing trawlers. The Russian move reflects Norway's decision to unilaterally establish a 200-mile zone around the archipelago in order to limit Russian fishing in the waters. Moscow does not recognize Oslo's 200-mile zone.

April 24 “Russia, NK sign agreement to build railroads and seaport” (RIA Novosti, April 24, 2008)

On April 24, Rail monopoly Russian Railways and North Korea's Railways Ministry signed an agreement to build a railroad and container depot at the Rason seaport, near the border with Russia and China. Under the deal, Russian Railways and the port of Rason will set up a joint venture for 49 years. Russia and North Korea will control 70 percent and 30 percent of the joint venture, respectively. The port is located in North Korea's Rajin-Sonbong Economic Special Zone in the northeast tip of the country. The joint venture plans to modernize a 52-km rail line between Tumangang and Rason, and build a container depot at Rason.

2. Intelligence Assessment

Piracy and armed robberies in the first quarter of 2008 ~ From the IMB Report and the ReCAAP Report ~

On April 16, 2008, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) issued to the public a Quarterly Report on piracy armed robberies against ships which occurred in the world in the first quarter (between January 1 and March 31) of 2008 through the Piracy Reporting Center based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

On the other hand, at the end of April 2008, the Information Sharing Center (ISC) in the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) which was established in September 2006, based upon the ReCAAP, issued to the public a Quarterly Report on the incidents of piracy and armed robberies against the ships which were noted in the Asian areas in the first quarter (between January 1 and March 31) of 2008.

Below is a summary of major features of piracy and robberies against the ships noted in the world and Asia in the first quarter of 2008 viewed in these two reports.

A major reason of difference in the number of the incidents noted between the ReCAAP report and the IMB report is that the former targets the sea-areas extending from the Arabian Sea to Northeast Asia along the southern rim of the Eurasian Continent while the latter targets the whole world. In addition, while the ReCAAP report makes use of various sources of information mainly from the maritime law enforcement organizations and the navies of member nations, the IMB report makes use of information available mainly from the non-government shipping.

The fourteen Contracting Parties are People's Republic of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Republic of Indonesia and Federation of Malaysia are non-members.

I . The IMB Report

According to the IMB, piracy and armed robbery have been described as "act of boarding any vessel with the intent to commit theft or any other crime and with the intent or capability to use force in the furtherance of that act." This definition includes actual and attempted acts regardless of the situation where the vessels are in ports, anchorages, or navigation, excluding an act of theft by persons who are not armed with knives. Below is the gist of the Report, summarizing the major characteristics of the piracy incidents in the first quarter of 2008.

1. Characteristics viewed from numbers and locations of attacks (including the attempted cases)

A total of 49 attacks (incidents/cases) were reported in the first quarter of 2008 (hereafter referred to as this quarter). Of them, 37 were the actual attacks, and 12 were the attempted cases. The number of the incidents is increasing, compared with the 41 incidents during the same period of 2007 (263 incidents for a year). The year 2007 recorded an increase in the number of incidents for the first time, compared with the previous year for the past five-year period. This has reflected directly a drastic increase of incidents in Nigeria and Somalia. (Regarding this trend, please refer to 2. Analysis in OPRF MARINT Monthly Report, January 2008.) As shown below, the piracy incidents in sea areas of Nigeria and the “Horn of Africa” continue to be prevalent, and it is of note how this trend will influence on the numbers of incidents for a whole year.

Looking from the locations of the attacks (incidents/cases) during this quarter, of 49 attacks in 20 locations, 28 attacks occurred in five locations. In order of frequencies, 10 attacks (of them, three are attempted cases) off Nigeria, five attacks (of them, three are attempted cases) in Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, four attacks (of them, one is an attempted case) off Indonesia, and four attacks (all are attempted cases) off Tanzania were noted.

Table 1: Number of attacks (including the attempted attacks) in the major areas in the first quarter of each year from 2003 onward

Locations	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Indonesia	28	21	16	19	9	4
Malacca Straits	3	8	4	0	2	0
Malaysia	2	0	2	3	1	1
Philippines	4	0	0	1	0	2
Singapore Straits	0	6	2	1	0	0
Vietnam	4	3	3	1	1	1
Bangladesh	9	8	6	9	2	2
India	9	0	5	0	3	5
Sri Lanka	2	0	0	0	2	1
Nigeria	9	10	0	4	6	10
Gulf of Aden/Red Sea	6	3	3	7	3	5
Somalia	2	0	3	5	2	1

Note : Depicted from Table in Report in the 2008, p. 6.

A remarkable characteristic during this quarter in 2008 is that Nigeria ranks as the number one hotspot accounting for just over 20 percent (%) of the figures with ten attacks reported. In 2007 the attacks increased to 42 cases from 12 in 2006. (In the quarter of 2007 the attacks increased to six cases from four in the quarter of 2006.) The Report says, “Violence in the water off Nigeria is spiraling out of control after the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) escalated their attacks against vessels in the oil sector in the Delta and Rivers State of

Nigeria.” The IMB is aware that in 2007 the attacks in the oil sector go unreported for fear of reprisals against the vessels operating regularly in these waters. The Report says this situation has alarmed the shipping company for operations. It has been reported that Maersk and Bourbon shipping companies suspended their operations to major ports such as Onne, Port Harcourt and Bony in Niger Delta. The deteriorating security situation has resulted in a 20 % cut in oil production, which is having disastrous effect on the Nigerian economy.

India and the Gulf of Aden shared the second place with reported incidents each. As to this, the Report says that the attacks in India were low level cases aimed at theft from vessels. However, the attacks in the Gulf of Aden are all aimed at hijacking the vessel and taking it to small ports on the Eastern coast of Somalia. Waters around Somalia continue to be notorious for hijacking of vessels and the abduction of crew for ransom. The locations of these attacks have moved from the Eastern Coast of Somalia to the north and northeastern coast and the Gulf of Aden. In this quarter, there was only one attempted attack off the eastern coastline some 390 nautical miles (nm) from the coastline. The Report points out the heavier concentration of traffic in the Gulf of Aden means the pirates do not have to range as far away from the coast, although they now operate in an area with Coalition Naval vessels at hand.

In Asia, Indonesia had only four incidents in this quarter, for which the Indonesian Navy and the Police should be commended for the anti-piracy measures taken, says the Report. There have been no reported incidents for the Malacca Straits in this quarter. This can be attributed to the enhanced cooperation between the littoral states. Pointing out there is no room for complacency, the Report says it is vital that maritime law enforcement resources remain deployed in this area.

2. Characteristics viewed from the status

According to the report, of 37 actual attacks (incidents) in the first quarter of 2008, one hijacked case, and 36 boarded cases were noted. Of 12 attempted incidents, two fired upon cases, and 10 attempted boarding cases were noted. In the same quarter of 2007, of 31 actual attacks, two hijacked cases and 29 boarded cases were noted. Of ten attempted incidents, three fired-upon cases and seven attempted boarding cases were noted. Although the number of the incidents is increasing, there is no change in the trend that boarded attacks continue to be primary cases in the piracy incidents.

Regarding the status of the ships attacked, of 37 actual attacks in the first quarter of 2008, seven berthed cases, 18 anchored cases, 11 steaming cases, and one unstated case were noted. On the other hand, of 12 attempted attacks, one berthed case, two anchored case, and nine steaming cases were noted. In the same quarters of 2007, of 31 actual attacks, three berthed cases, 17 anchored cases, 10 steaming cases, and one unstated case were noted. There was no significant change in the growing number of attacks made while the vessels were anchored or steaming.

Looking from the types of vessels attacked in the first quarter of 2008, the highest number of nine incidents (nine cases in the same quarter of 2007) for chemical and product tankers was noted. The second were eight cases for bulk-carriers (four cases in the same quarters of 2007), and

the third were seven cases for containers (nine cases in the same quarters of 2007), seven cases for general cargoes (five cases in the same quarters of 2007) and seven cases for crude oil tankers (five cases in the same quarters of 2007). Final were four cases for tug boats (two cases in the same quarters of 2007), and two cases for yachts (one case in the same quarters of 2007).

3. Characteristics of violence and arms used

Looking at the violence - damage inflicted on the crew, a total number in the first quarter of 2008 was reduced by half, compared with the number in the same period of 2007, as shown in the table 2.

Table 2: Types of violence to crew in first quarter of each year from 2003 onward

Types of Violence	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Taken hostage	78	82	31	63	39	7
Kidnap/Ransom			10	13	17	6
Crew threatened	6	11	2	7	1	4
Crew assaulted	6	6	1	1	0	4
Crew injured	27	34	4	2	4	8
Crew killed	4	22	0	1	0	3
Missing	24	15	0	0	0	1
Total for three months	145	170	48	87	60	33

Note: Depicted from Table 8 in Report in the 2008, p. 12.

The incidents of hostage taken in the first quarter of the 2008 were drastically reduced to seven cases from 39 cases in the same period of 2007. Also, the incidents of kidnapping and ransom were reduced to six cases from 17. On the other hand, the incidents of crew attacked were notable with three cases of crew killed which occurred in the Philippines. In Nigeria, four cases of crew were injured and six cases for kidnapping and ransom were noted. Six incidents of hostage taken were noted in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.

On the other hand, as for the arms used during attacks by pirates, no significant changes have been made for seven years. as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Types of arms used during attacks in the first quarter of each year from 2003 onward

Types of Arms	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Guns	22	25	14	13	10	13
Knives	39	23	20	17	13	15
Other weapons	12	6	5	4	4	1
Not stated	30	25	17	27	14	20
Total for three months	103	79	56	61	41	49

Note: Depicted from Table 6 in Report in the 2008, p. 12.

II . ReCAAP Report

1. Definitions of Piracy and Armed Robbery

Regarding the definitions of Piracy and Armed Robbery, Piracy adopted by the ReCAAP/ISC is in accordance with the “Definition of Acts of Piracy” in Article 101 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Armed Robbery is in accordance with the definition in the International Maritime Organization (IMO)’s Code of Practice for the Investigation of the Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships finalized at the IMO Assembly in November 2001.

2. Characteristics viewed from numbers and locations of attacks (including the attempted cases)

Although the primary source of information for the ReCAAP’s report (hereafter report) is ISC’s Information Network System (IFN), the ISC also makes use of open sources of information from IMO, IMB, and others, if necessary.

According to the report, a total of 20 piracy and armed robberies against ships (incidents/attacks/cases) (of them, six incidents in January, six attacks in February and eight cases in March) were reported in the first quarter of the year. Of them, 15 were actual incidents and five were attempted incidents. According to the report, the number of incidents reported in the first quarter of 2008 is nearly equal compared to the number of 19 cases (15 actual incidents and four attempted incidents) which occurred during the same quarters of 2007. However, the number of incidents in the first quarters of 2008 shows a remarkable decline compared to the number of 36 cases (32 actual incidents and four attempted incidents) in the same quarter of 2006. This decline is regarded to be reflecting a remarkable decrease of incidents in Indonesia and Malaysia. In particular, no incidents were reported during this period. However, the report pays special attention to growing incidents in India during this period.

Table 4 shows the total number of incidents reported in the first quarters of the past three years.

Table 4: Number of incidents reported (January – March 2008, 2007 and 2006)

	January-March, 2008		January-March, 2006		January-March, 2005	
	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted	Actual	Attempted
South Asia						
Bangladesh	3		2		8	1
India	6		1			
Arabian Sea				2		
Bay of Bengal			1			
Indian Ocean			1			
Southeast Asia						
Indonesia	3	1	7	1	15	3
Malaysia	1		1		6	
Thailand					1	
Vietnam	1		1		1	
Philippines	1	1				
South China Sea		1	1		1	
Straits of Malacca and Singapore		2		1		
Total	15	5	15	4	32	4

Note: Made from ReCAAP Quarterly Report (January 1, 2008 – March 31, 2008), p.10, Table 6.

3. Characteristics viewed from the status

Table 5 shows status of the ships attacked in 20 incidents during the actual and attempted cases in the first quarter of 2008.

On the other hand, by type, the ships most susceptible to attacks during the first quarter of 2008 were four general cargoes, chemical tankers, and bulk carriers respectively. The second were two container ships, oil tankers, and tug boats respectively. They were followed by one VLCC and passenger ship respectively. According to the report, tankers appeared to be most commonly targeted compared to other ships. Three out of the six incidents involving tankers occurred at the anchorages of Kandla and Tuticorin, India. The other two incidents occurred at the port of Sandakan, Malaysia and Chittagong, Bangladesh. The two incidents involving bulk carriers occurred while the ships were steaming in the South China Sea and Celebes Sea, and two cases occurred while ships were at anchor/berth at Pulau Laut Anchorage and Chittagong Anchorage.

Table 5: Status of ships during the actual and attempted incidents (January-March 2008)

	Anchored	Berthed	Steaming
South Asia			
Bangladesh	1	2	
India	4	1	1
Southeast Asia			
Indonesia	1	1	2
Malaysia		1	
Vietnam	1		
Philippines			2
South China Sea			1
Straits of Malacca and Singapore			2
Total	7	5	8

Note: Made from ReCAAP Quarterly Report, p.8, Table 4.

4. Significance Level of Incidents viewed from ReCAAP report

The most distinctive characteristic of the ReCAAP report is making a division into categories by evaluating the significance of the incidents from the two viewpoints of a violent factor and economic factor.

In evaluation of the violent factors, the report uses as criteria: (1) types of weapons used (violence is the most forceful when more highly efficient weapons than knives are used); (2) treatment of the crew (violence is the most intensive if the crew are killed or kidnapped); and (3) numbers of the pirates /robbers who engaged in an attack (in this case, the more the numbers are, the more the violence develops and the possibility of organized crime increases.)

In assessment of the economic factors the report uses a criterion of evaluating financial values of damaged vessels. In this case, the seriousness is the greatest when the ship was hijacked with the cargoes.

Based on the above criteria, the report divides the category as follows.

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

According to the report, the 15 actual incidents in the first quarter of 2008 are categorized as shown in the table 6.

Table 6: Number of actual incidents by categories in January–March 2008

	January	February	March	January-March
CAT 1			1	1
CAT 2		1		1
CAT 3	5	3	5	13
Total	5	4	6	15

Note: Made from ReCAAP Quarterly Report, p.6, Table 2.

According to the report, as to 15 actual incidents (attacks/cases) in the first quarter of 2008, of three incidents which occurred while the ships were steaming, one incident was CAT 1, and the rest of two were CAT 2. Of seven incidents which occurred while the ships were at anchor or berth, one incident was CAT 2, and six were CAT 3. All five attacks which occurred while the ships were at anchor or berth were CAT 3.

Looking at the types of weapons used, of 15 actual incidents, two cases involved the use of guns and knives, four cases involved use of knives, and nine cases were unreported or unidentified. Regarding the treatment of crew, of 15 actual incidents, one incident where crew was killed, two incidents where they were assaulted or taken hostage, one incident where they were threatened and eleven cases where no one was injured or there was no report, were noted. As for the number of pirates and armed robberies (hereafter robbers), of 15 actual incidents, they were committed by groups of several robbers -- nine incidents involved between one and three robbers, three incidents involved between four and six, two incidents involved between seven and nine, and one incident involved more than nine robbers.

Concerning the economic factors, of 15 actual incidents, one incident involving robbery of cash/property, six incidents involving the loss of stores and engine spares, three cases of robbing other materials, and five cases not reported or unidentified, were noted. No incidents where cargo was discarded or the ship was hijacked were noted during the first quarter of 2008.

According to the report, of 15 actual incidents during the first quarter in 2008, only one incident was classified as CAT 1, which was as follows.

Incident of CAT 1: On March 12, a Philippine passenger boat *Baby Renze* was attacked while sailing toward Polillo off the Pacific Coast of Luzon Island of the Philippines, the Focal Point of the Philippines reported. The *Baby Renze* was with 10 passengers on board, comprising five crew members, three passengers and two unidentified males. In this incident, while sailing, two unidentified men took out the guns and announced a holdup to other people. They shot the boat's captain and four other people, and tied the bodies of the boat's captain and two of the four people to the boat anchor and threw them into the sea. One of the wounded persons jumped over board and was later rescued by the Search and Rescue (SAR) team comprising of Personnel from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Philippine Navy. Three other passengers, including two adults and a child were not hurt as they had reportedly pleaded for mercy. The robbers fled with an estimated amount of 50,000 Philippine pesos in cash (equivalent to about 1,220 US dollars) and other valuables. They escaped in a motor boat driven

by one of their accomplices.

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