

MARITIME NEWS – 24 NOVEMBER 2016

Royal Navy destroyer towed back to port after engine breakdown



HMS Duncan with other NATO ships in Devonport last week. **Photo: Royal Navy**

The Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyer **HMS Duncan** had to be towed back to Devonport after experiencing a breakdown off Plymouth on 22 November. According to a report by the Plymouth Herald, a Ministry of Defence spokesman confirmed this saying the ship had experienced "technical issues". The ship was towed back to port on Tuesday, just two days after it left Devonport navy base together with a number of other ships deployed to NATO's Standing Maritime Group 1.

HMS Duncan, together with ships from the Spanish, German and Portuguese navies, was expected to sail to a European port after completing training in Plymouth. The Type 45 destroyers the Royal Navy currently operates experienced a number of breakdowns related to intercooler units on the ships' gas turbines. As a consequence of a late design change that was insufficiently tested the destroyers were deemed unfit for operation in warmer waters.

The Ministry of Defence confirmed in January 2016 the ships are to undergo extensive multi-million pound engine refits. This was not the case with **HMS Duncan's** breakdown on Monday, however. According to a tweet by NavyLookout, an independent online campaign to promote the Royal Navy, a burst salt water pipe and not a gas turbine failure led to the ship's engine shutdown.

Am hearing... **HMS DUNCAN** breakdown caused by burst salt water pipe – flood led to engine shut down. NOT Gas turbine failure this time pic.twitter.com/tdITpU8HCO — NavyLookout (@NavyLookout) November 23, 2016

Source : Naval Today

Ouch – the pain goes on! Not sure how a salt water pipe shuts down propulsion unless it flooded the engine room?

Head of Estonian Navy Resigns in Smuggling Scandal



The **Sakala**, centre, in an undated file image (social media)

The commander of the Estonian Navy, Captain Sten Sepper, has resigned from his post following the discovery of smuggled liquor and cigarettes aboard a minehunting ship. Customs officials said that earlier this month they found over 50 cases of cigarettes and over 250 gallons (1000 litres) of liquor aboard the naval vessel **Sakala**, all of it without revenue stamps. The ship is a member of Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1, and she was participating in a NATO mine countermeasures exercise at the time of the smuggling bust. Over thirty people were on board, and investigators do not yet know who was directly responsible.

Captain Sepper "decided to resign due to the damage to reputation accompanying the unacceptable event, irrespective of where the opened criminal case and official investigation will lead," said defense minister Hannes Hanso, speaking to Estonian Public Broadcasting. Captain Sepper will remain with the service in a different capacity. The commander of the **Sakala** has also tendered his resignation. "This is a shameful and absolutely inadmissible incident that damages the reputation of Estonian Navy," said the vice chair of the Estonian parliament's national defense committee, Mart Helme.

The leadership shakeup comes at a time of heightened tensions in the Baltic. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were annexed by the Soviet Union during the Second World War; while they are now members of NATO and the EU, they still have ethnic Russian populations – and they are concerned that as in Georgia and Ukraine, Russia may decide to use some form of unrest as an excuse to invade. A recent RAND study concluded that the Baltic states would be difficult to defend in the event that Russia should launch an attack.

Russia has insisted that it has no interest in war in the Baltic region. However, on Monday, Russian president Vladimir Putin announced the deployment of an advanced ballistic missile system to Kaliningrad, an isolated Russian enclave adjacent to Lithuania. "We are concerned by NATO decision making," Putin said. "We have, therefore, to take countermeasures, which means to target with our missile systems the facilities that in our opinion start posing a threat to us." The newly deployed Iskander missile system is nuclear capable, and would have the range to strike Lithuania and much of Poland. **Source : The Maritime Executive**

Falling on one's sword is honourable over there – not something even considered in some nations in Southern Africa! I do remember having to put a case of duty free-ers aside for CNS on returns from long trips but he did have to do a lot of entertaining at A-House!

Albanian Navy starts first ever deployment with NATO



ALS Oriku. Photo: MARCOM

The Albanian Navy joined its first-ever NATO maritime mission by deploying its patrol boat ALS Oriku to Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 on Monday. The vessel will support NATO activities in the Aegean Sea as part of the international efforts to stop illegal trafficking and migration. **ALS Oriku** is an Iliria-class patrol boat manned by 21 crew members who will rotate every two months throughout the yearlong deployment with the NATO group.

The Albanian patrol boat has joined ships from Greece, Netherlands, Turkey, and the United Kingdom in support of NATO's current activities in the Aegean Sea. These units are patrolling and providing real-time information on a daily basis to the Coast Guards of Greece and Turkey, the EU Border, and Coast Guard Agency Frontex. The Standing NATO Maritime Groups are a multinational, integrated maritime force made up of vessels from various allied countries. These vessels (including their helicopters) are permanently available to NATO to perform different tasks ranging from participating in exercises to actually intervening in operational missions.

The Republic of Albania joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 2009, and is one of the contributors to the Alliance operations to maintain peace and security in Afghanistan. Albania also contributes to the NATO-led Kosovo Force mission in Kosovo continuing to support the cooperation between NATO and Kosovo Security Forces. **Source : Naval Today**

The new boy on the block. How things have changed in a nation that was once more rigid than the Soviet Union. ALS Oriku is a locally built Damen Stan 4207 coastal patrol craft operated in a coast guard role

Russia commissions sixth Project 636.3 Varshavyanka-class submarine



Photo: Russian Navy

The Russian Navy has commissioned **Kolpino**, the country's sixth and final Project 636.3 Varshavyanka-class submarine. All six were built for the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The flag-hoisting ceremony which marked the submarine's official entry into the fleet took place in St. Petersburg at Admiralty Shipyards on November 24. Admiralty Shipyards was responsible for the construction of all submarines in the class. "The Admiralty Shipyards have done a great job to complete the Black Sea Fleet series of submarines. This is a good platform for starting the construction of another series of sub for the Pacific Fleet," Russian news agency Tass quoted the Admiralty Shipyards CEO, Aleksandr Buzakov as saying.

Work on another series of submarines for the Pacific Fleet is expected to start in 2017 with the completion date set for 2021, the news agency further said. Construction on the six Black Sea Fleet submarines began in 2010. **Novorossiysk**, the lead submarine of the project, joined the Black Sea Fleet in August 2014 with the **Rostov-on-Don** following suit in December. The next two submarines, **Stary Oskol** and **Krasnodar**, were delivered to RF Navy in July and November 2015 while the **Veliky Novgorod** was commissioned on October 26, 2016.

Kilo-class submarines from the 636.3 project are armed with 18 torpedoes and eight surface-to-air missiles. The vessels can accommodate a crew of 52 submariners and can stay at sea for 45 days. They displace 4,000 tonnes when submerged and 2,000 on the surface and reach speeds of "over 17 knots", the Russian Navy said. The submarines are also equipped with Kalibr-cruise missiles. Last year, the defense ministry said the Rostov-on-Don successfully fired the missiles from a submerged position in the Mediterranean Sea hitting two objectives in Syrian Raqqa province on December 8. **Source : Naval Today**

Quite a remarkable improvement in Russian shipbuilding capability which indicates that sufficient funding is taking place!

NATO Ends Counter-Piracy Mission

NATO has ended its Indian Ocean counter-piracy mission after a sharp fall in attacks, the alliance said on Wednesday, as it shifts resources to deterring Russia in the Black Sea and people smugglers in the Mediterranean. All ships and patrol aircraft have now left the area off the Horn of Africa, where they patrolled since 2009, as part of a broader international effort to crack down on Somali-based pirates who had caused havoc with world shipping.

NATO says its "Ocean Shield" operation, as well as European Union and other counter-piracy missions, have significantly reduced attacks, with no ships captured off Somalia since May 2012. Activity has decreased from multiple incidences each month to zero within the last two years. At its peak, there were 33 ships held in captivity. After more than a decade of NATO-led operations far beyond its borders, the U.S.-led military alliance is shifting to defend its territory to deter Russia in the east, following Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula.

"The global security environment has changed dramatically in the last few years and NATO navies have adapted with it," NATO spokesman Dylan White said in a statement. "NATO has increased maritime patrols in the Baltic and Black Seas. We are also working to help counter human smuggling in the Mediterranean." Earlier this month, NATO broadened its operations in the Mediterranean to help the European Union stop criminals trafficking refugees from North Africa.



Final Flight

A detachment of 20 Royal Danish Air Force officers and enlisted service members took flight in their aircraft from the Seychelles one last time on November 19. The flight marked the end of the 6th Royal Danish Air Force Challenger CL-604 deployment as a part of Operation Ocean Shield. The Danish detachment was the last of NATO forces assigned to the counter piracy mission in the Indian Ocean. The Danes primary task was to produce an intelligence picture composed of the pattern of life along the Somali coastline; within tiny camps and large cities.

The detachment covered 1,800 kilometers (1,100 miles) of coastline in which intelligence specialists reviewed and disseminated photographs and video files to produce an intelligence picture. Overall, the Danish Challenger aircraft detachments completed more than 200 flights totalling more than 1,100 hours of patrolling along the Somali coastline and in the Indian Ocean since 2011. **Source : The Maritime Executive**

Long expected but the EU operation apparently continues and we then have the Iranian and Chinese navies deploying ships to the area. The maritime surveillance capability will be sorely missed though, albeit not by potential pirates.

Hackers Steal Data on 130,000 Navy Sailors



File image : Prieser Project

Hackers gained access to sensitive information, including Social Security numbers, for 134,386 current and former U.S. sailors, the U.S. Navy said on Wednesday. It said a laptop used by a Hewlett Packard Enterprise Services employee working on a U.S. Navy contract was hacked. Hewlett Packard informed the Navy of the breach on Oct. 27 and the affected sailors will be notified in the coming weeks, the Navy said.

"The Navy takes this incident extremely seriously – this is a matter of trust for our sailors," Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Admiral Robert Burke said in a statement. Burke said the investigation of the breach was in its early stages. "At this stage of the investigation, there is no evidence to suggest misuse of the information that was compromised," the Navy said. **Source : Reuters**

Is technology not a wonderful thing? It offers so many new opportunities to criminals. Why would they take the info if not to misuse it?

Israeli police to probe alleged Netanyahu submarine scandal

Investigation ordered into allegations about involvement of prime minister's lawyer in defence procurement deal



Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu climbs out of the submarine **Rahav** in Haifa. **Photo : Baz Ratner/Reuters**

Israel's most senior law officer has ordered an investigation into an alleged scandal involving one of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's closest confidants over a controversial deal to buy German submarines. The affair – which has dominated Israeli headlines for days – involves allegations of a serious conflict of interest in the purchase of the submarines. At the heart of the issue is a claim that Netanyahu's personal lawyer, David Shimron, was representing the German arms manufacturer making the submarines at the same time Netanyahu was pushing for the submarine purchase.

Among the allegations are that Netanyahu purchased the new submarines for the Israeli navy over the objections of his own defence ministry. Although Netanyahu and Shimron – who is also a relative of the prime minister – have insisted they never spoke about Shimron's business relationship in the submarine deal, the inquiry was ordered after new information emerged both in the media and in a related investigation. ThyssenKrupp, the German company behind the submarine contract, said last week it believed there was no misconduct in the purchase.

However, on Wednesday, Israel's Channel 10 disclosed an email it claimed is proof that Shimron used his close relationship to Netanyahu to lobby for the submarine's manufacturer with at least one defence official – a claim strenuously denied by Shimron. According to reports in the Israeli media, the inquiry was also prompted by new information that emerged from the case of a second senior official who was arrested last week on charges of corruption.

Former deputy National Security Council head Avriel Bar-Yosef was arrested earlier this month on suspicion of taking bribes. The order of an inquiry represents a volte face by the country's attorney general, Avichai Mandelblit, who suggested last week that it was not necessary.

However, a justice ministry statement said that after police received new information on Wednesday, Mandelblit met senior officers, the state prosecutor and senior justice officials. "At the end of the discussion the attorney general decided to order an examination by the Israel police regarding various aspects related to the affair," it said. It gave no further details and did not indicate who might be the subjects.

Netanyahu maintains he was unaware his lawyer was advising the seller, and defended the acquisition at Sunday's weekly cabinet meeting. "The principle that guides me is clear: Israel will be able to defend itself by itself against any enemy, in any field," he said. "The security of Israel requires the acquisition of submarines and the renewal of the submarine fleet. These are strategic weapons systems that ensure the future and, I tell you, the very existence of the state of Israel for decades to come." **Source : Guardian News**

Philippine fishermen decry Duterte's disputed shoal ban

Philippine fishermen on Wednesday criticised President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to ban them from a rich South China Sea fishing ground, part of his efforts to ease tensions over disputed waters controlled by China.

Duterte's aides said he had made a "unilateral" declaration to make the lagoon at Scarborough Shoal a protected marine sanctuary, after raising the issue during a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of a regional summit in Peru last weekend. It was not clear whether Xi supported the plan.

The two neighbours both claim the shoal as part of their territory. But China took control of the ring of reefs just 230 kilometres (140 miles) from the main Philippine island of Luzon in 2012 after a standoff with the Philippine navy. "We fear that declaring it as a marine sanctuary would pave way for another fishing blockade," Fernando Hicap, chairman of fishermen support group Pamalakaya, said in a statement.



"This time it will be our own law and government that will prohibit (Filipino fishermen), not China," he added. After taking control of the shoal in 2012, China banned Filipino fishermen from operating there. The ban was eased last month after Duterte visited Beijing to mend ties, with the Filipinos allowed to fish outside the lagoon. A spokesperson for Duterte told AFP on Wednesday his office would soon release an executive order on the new "no-fishing zone" for both Filipinos and Chinese fishermen.

"This would be subject to friendly negotiations so we won't create friction with other claimants," said Ana Marie Banaag, presidential communications assistant secretary. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang on Tuesday had no comment on Duterte's declaration but said Beijing had made "proper arrangements for fishing activities". However Filipino fishermen told AFP the Duterte plan would hurt their livelihood.

"We are against that because it is inside the lagoon where there is more catch," said Charlito Maniago, village captain in Infanta, one of the main Scarborough Shoal fishing towns on Luzon. Maritime law expert Jay Batongbacal said Duterte's declaration favoured China since the Philippines could further lose access to the shoal. "China could just as easily accept the Philippine move and not act in return, because they derive the benefit anyway," Batongbacal said in a statement.

Following a case brought by Duterte's predecessor Benigno Aquino three years ago, a UN-backed international tribunal in July declared the shoal a common fishing ground for surrounding nations. It also ruled that China's claim to most of the South China Sea was without legal basis, in a resounding legal victory for the Philippines. But Duterte, 71, pivoted his country's diplomacy away from traditional ally the United States and towards China. Soon after his ice-breaking trip to Beijing, Chinese vessels stationed at Scarborough allowed Filipino fishermen to fish outside the lagoon. **Source : Space War**

First British submarine to fire a torpedo in World War 1 has been found after vanishing 100 years ago

Families of the long-lost crew of HMS E5 have revealed their thoughts now that they finally know what happened to their lost loved ones.

The first British submarine to fire a torpedo in **World War I** vanished in 1916, but now the families of crew who died aboard it know their loved-ones' fate. Divers found the intact hull of HMS E5 on Monday off the coast of the Netherlands after a suspension of the shipping lane it rests below was agreed. The sub was feared to have struck a mine while rescuing survivors from a stricken trawler near the bay Heligoland Bight on March 7, 1916. Its remains were a complete mystery until maritime archaeologists secured an agreement to examine a wreck near the German border.

Divers were able to report that the 178ft E5's hatches were open, suggesting the crew had tried to escape. There was no sign of damage to the hull of the sub that was built in Barrow-in-Furness and commissioned in 1913. Remy Luttik,

head of the diving team, said he was relieved to find the huge piece of history. Remy said: "A puzzle piece of the maritime history of the North Sea could be clarified." Relatives of those who died have been traced by the Daily Mail.



Royal Navy Submarine **HMS E5** Photo : Getty

The grandson of Petty Officer Arthur Robert Owen, from Battersea, South London, who shares his name, was among those traced. The 74-year-old retired insurance broker said: "No one ever knew what happened to it – the submarine just vanished. "My grandfather joined the Navy when he was just 12, and switched to serving on submarines because the pay was better than on the surface. It's extraordinary that it's been found 100 years later."

Others who lost their lives when the submarine perished were Stoker Petty Officer Francis Garratt Cowburn, Engine Room Artificer Cecil Rice, 28, a father of two from Peterborough and Leading Seaman John 'Tommy' Bassett, who was 33 and was working as a postman in Walsall when he was called up as a reservist six weeks after getting married. Bassett's cousin Anne Thorpe said: "He needn't have been on board – it's so tragic. It makes everything seem so close knowing where his submarine now lies." **Source : The Daily Mail**

'Loved ones' may be a bit emotional as no one alive today would have actually known them. She was not a very lucky boat and had a very short career before and after her commissioning. She had an engine room explosion on 8 June 1913, 20 days before commissioning. 13 were killed. A further three men were killed when there was an oil blow back into the starboard engine off St Ann's Head. Ten other men were seriously injured, although all civilian staff from Barrow were safe and unharmed.

READER COMMENT

*The comment that divers will be employed on MCMV (H) is shocking. We had that on **SAS Port Elizabeth** in 1979. The whole wardroom were divers, plus a team of 6 CD's, most of these were 18/19 – year old National Servicemen. They were superb. What happened in between?*

Having been retired for more than ten years I am not up to date with SAN policy and practices. But I do remember that, due to obsolete and the inability to get spares and maintain the sonar and associated MCM equipment, the SAN looked at more modern systems that could be deployed from smaller vessels of opportunity. The River class thus became patrol and training vessels. It thus appears that the Navy has now, with the help of IMT and other local sources plus a fair whack of ingenuity, regained a credible capability. I have no doubt that the new generation of divers will be just as good.

AGS