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Trinidad Issues First Ultra-Deepwater Clearance

Trinidad and Tobago issued its first ultra-deepwater CEC, clearing ExxonMobil Trinidad and Tobago Deepwater Limited for a 3D seismic survey across 8,825 km² in Block TTUD-1.

P7

Big Three Hold Ground as Global Ship Orders Slide

Clarkson data cited by Korean media show South Korea back in the low-20% range (about 22%) of global orders in 2025 despite a 37% market decline, led by the Big Three's selective intake.

P12

"Undeclared Heavy Cargo" on Ursa Major Before 2024 Sinking

investigators suspect Ursa Major carried undeclared VM-4SG reactor hulls allegedly bound for North Korea before it sank off Cartagena in December 2024.

P18

Hanwha Boosts Philly Shipyard Readiness for "Golden Fleet"

Hanwha Group is ramping up hiring, training, and facility upgrades at Hanwha Philly Shipyard in Philadelphia as the US pushes a naval shipbuilding expansion under the "Golden Fleet" banner. The yard is preparing for possible future workshare on advanced naval programs, including efforts to recruit Virginia-class submarine specialists with modular and block-assembly experience.

Executives stress that any move into actual submarine production would require government-level coordination and approvals between Washington and Seoul. Hanwha has also said it plans to invest an additional $5 billion in the Philadelphia yard under the "MASGA" cooperation framework, following its earlier $100 million acquisition of the shipyard.

P10

Dominion Challenges BOEM Stop-Work Order as CVOW Costs Mount

CVOW construction halt, BOEM stop-work order, Dominion Energy TRO, US offshore wind pause, national security review offshore wind

28, December 2025

A federal judge in Norfolk will hear an emergency request on 29 December 2025 after Dominion Energy Virginia asked the court to immediately block a Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) stop-work order that has frozen offshore construction on the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) project.

In its filing, Dominion Energy Virginia says the suspension is already driving more than $5 million per day in vessel-related costs, with additional exposure from idle crews, equipment laydown, and schedule knock-on effects. The company argues that offshore installation sequencing leaves little slack, meaning short interruptions can cascade into materially higher overall costs.

The lawsuit arrives amid a broader federal pause on five East Coast offshore wind developments while the US Department of the Interior reviews national security questions, including whether turbine blades and towers could affect radar performance. BOEM has outlined a 90-day review period and indicated the timeline could be extended.

Rendering of Dominion Energy's newbuild WTIV Charybdis under construction at Keppel AmFELS, Texas. (Image: Dominion Energy)

CVOW, located roughly 27–44 miles off Virginia, is designed for up to 2,600 MW of capacity—an output Dominion has said could supply electricity to about 660,000 homes once fully commissioned. The developer has previously stated the project is around 50% complete and was targeting first power in early 2026.

The court filing also positions CVOW as a reliability asset as Virginia's electricity demand rises, pointing to major load growth tied to military facilities, shipbuilding activity, and data centers supporting artificial intelligence and cloud computing.

Cost recovery is another focal point. Dominion disclosed spending of about $8.9 billion, described as more than two-thirds of the project's expected total, with certain costs already being recovered from customers under a regulatory arrangement approved by Virginia regulators. The company warns that prolonged work stoppages could increase the final bill.

BOEM's stop-work order applies beyond Virginia, affecting Vineyard Wind 1 (Massachusetts), Revolution Wind (Rhode Island/Connecticut), and New York projects Sunrise Wind and Empire Wind 1—raising wider concerns across port logistics, heavy-marine transport scheduling, and contractor utilization along the coast.

Separately, Virginia stakeholders have pointed to the withdrawal of nearly $39.3 million in federal funding tied to a planned Norfolk offshore wind logistics port, a facility linked to long-term staging and operations support for regional offshore wind activity.

If the court does not grant immediate relief through a temporary restraining order, Dominion Energy Virginia has indicated it will pursue a preliminary injunction as the case proceeds.

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OceanPact Signs $90m AHTS Contract with Petrobras

26, December 2025

Brazilian offshore services company OceanPact has signed a new vessel charter with state-controlled oil company Petrobras for operations offshore Brazil, in a deal worth more than 500 million reais ($90 million). The new agreement adds to the fleet that OceanPact operates in Brazilian waters.

The company said on Tuesday it signed a four-year contract with Petrobras for the anchor-handling tug supply and offloading (AHTS-TO) vessel Rochedo de Sao Paulo. The vessel will be used to support tanker offloading activities.

Under the contract's work scope, Rochedo de Sao Paulo will handle and maintain offloading hoses, with operations scheduled to begin in 2026.

This contract is the third major charter agreement between OceanPact and Petrobras over the past few months, further increasing the number of vessels OceanPact has in service for the Brazilian oil company.

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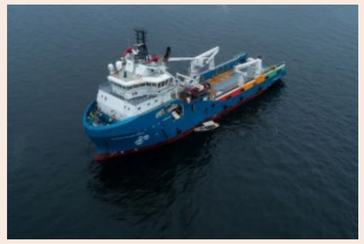

Baker Hughes Expands Kuwait Artificial Lift Scope Under New KOC Multi-Year Deal

Baker Hughes secured a multi-year deal with Kuwait Oil Company to deploy ESP-based artificial lift plus FusionPro and Leucipa optimization, aiming to improve reliability and cut nonproductive time in Kuwait.

28, December 2025

A new multi-year contract will see Baker Hughes deepen its footprint in Kuwait by deploying advanced artificial lift technology for Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), as operators in the region focus on extracting more value from established fields through reliability-led upgrades.

Before the latest award, Baker Hughes had already been building local capability in-country. The company operates a workshop in Kuwait that supports equipment testing and failure analysis for artificial lift systems, and has also outlined plans—through a memorandum of understanding—to establish an upstream-focused R&D center at Ahmadi Innovation Valley to strengthen local expertise.

Under the new assignment, Baker Hughes will supply its portfolio of electrical submersible pumps (ESPs) and deliver associated installation, surveillance, and maintenance services across KOC's oil and gas fields. The package also includes performance optimization through integration of Baker Hughes' FusionPro intelligent production drive and the Leucipa automated field production solution, which the company says is intended to improve operational reliability and reduce nonproductive time.

The agreement builds on earlier work in Kuwait this year. In the third quarter, KOC awarded Baker Hughes a separate scope for advanced wireline and perforation technology and services, including Proxima advanced logging services designed to strengthen reservoir evaluation, optimize production, and increase recovery.

Separately, Baker Hughes has continued to advance LNG-related equipment work for a project under development in Louisiana, highlighting the company's broader push across the upstream and gas value chains.

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Shearwater Sets Nigeria Multi-Client 3D Seismic

Source: Shearwater Geoservices

26, December 2025

Shearwater Geoservices is preparing to launch a new multi-client 3D seismic project offshore Nigeria, backed by significant industry funding. The survey will be executed in partnership with Harvex Geosolutions and the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC).

The project is scheduled to commence at year-end 2025 and will be carried out by SW Duchess over an expected two-month period. The 3D acquisition will deliver high-resolution subsurface data across the Western Niger Delta Basin to support exploration decisions and upcoming licence rounds.

CEO Irene Waage Basili said the project reflects the continued momentum in the company's multi-client business. She added that investment in high-quality seismic data is aimed at securing rapid returns while building longer-term value, enabling better-informed decisions tied to energy security in West Africa and beyond.

Shearwater Geoservices is a marine geoscience and technology business specialising in offshore data collection. The company operates seismic vessels and equipment and processes data using proprietary software. Headquartered in Bergen, Norway, it has facilities worldwide and employs approximately 1,100 people.

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Fugro's Blue Essence USV completes first remote survey offshore Germany

27, December 2025

Fugro has completed its first remotely delivered offshore survey in German waters using the uncrewed surface vessel (USV) Blue Essence, marking another milestone in the company's remote operations strategy.

The 12 m-long Blue Essence carried out a J-tube inspection campaign in collaboration with TenneT Germany. All vessel control and survey operations were managed entirely from Fugro's onshore remote operations center in Aberdeen, UK, without offshore personnel on board the vessel.

J-tube inspections form part of routine subsea infrastructure management, supporting the safe routing and protection of cables as they enter offshore structures. The use of a remotely operated USV enabled the inspection while reducing offshore exposure and vessel logistics requirements.

The German campaign builds on Fugro's earlier remote survey work performed during the summer offshore Western Australia. In that project, Blue Essence supported survey activities for a 433 km trunkline installation as part of construction works carried out by Saipem for Woodside Energy's Scarborough development in the Carnarvon Basin.

According to Fugro, the Australian survey program involved multiple campaign phases along a route that intersected existing subsea pipelines and third-party fiber-optic cables. Additional constraints included proximity to active shipping lanes, a loading jetty, and the shore crossing at the LNG plant, increasing operational complexity during the nearshore phase.

In that context, Blue Essence was deployed to support pipeline installation activities close to shore, where precise positioning and controlled operations were required. The company has positioned the USV as a tool to deliver survey and inspection work remotely while supporting offshore construction and installation campaigns.

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Photo source: Fugro

Deep Value Driller Extends Saipem Charter to July 2026, Keeps $300 Million Purchase Option Open

Deep Value Driller AS extended Saipem's amended bareboat charter to 31 July 2026 and prolonged the $300 million purchase option to 16 February 2026, with a 365-day extension option to 2027.

Image: Shipspotting.com / Copyright © Trygve Eriksen

29, December 2025

Deep Value Driller AS has agreed with Saipem to extend the amended bareboat charter for its 7th-generation ultra-deepwater drillship Deep Value Driller, securing continued employment for the unit through 31 July 2026.

The parties added a firm 31-day extension to the current charter term, pushing the end date to late July 2026. In parallel, Saipem's option to purchase the drillship has been prolonged and can now be exercised up to 16 February 2026.

Under the updated terms, the purchase price remains $300 million, plus any remaining hire due under the initial charter period, where applicable.

Beyond mid-2026, Saipem also holds an option to extend the amended bareboat charter by a further 365 days, covering 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027. If that charter-extension option is declared by 16 February 2026, the purchase option would also be extended to 31 December 2026.

Deep Value Driller AS is a Norway-based company that owns drillships. The company's sole asset, Deep Value Driller, is a high-specification unit delivered in 2014.

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Vietnam's PV Gas Sets VND100 Trillion Capex Plan for 2026–2030

PV Gas plans VND100+ trillion capex for 2026–2030, prioritising LNG infrastructure and M&A, while advancing Thi Vai expansion to 3 MTPA and multiple terminals nationwide.

29, December 2025

Petrovietnam says PV Gas is preparing an investment programme of more than VND100 trillion (about $3.8 billion) for 2026–2030, with LNG infrastructure and mergers and acquisitions identified as strategic priorities.

According to Petrovietnam's release, the plan follows a strategy of building infrastructure ahead of demand and using capital spending as a foundation for long-term growth.

As a near-term step, PV Gas plans to accelerate execution from 2026, with Petrovietnam stating that planned construction investment disbursements are expected to exceed VND9 trillion (about $342.3 million). The group described this as a stepping stone toward the wider 2026–2030 programme.

On the project side, Petrovietnam said major works under implementation include expanding the Thi Vai LNG terminal to 3 million tonnes per annum (3 MTPA), progressing the Son My LNG import terminal, and developing LNG terminals in northern and north-central Vietnam. The list also includes the PV Gas–Hai Phong LNG port, the Dinh Co ethane separation project, gas supply projects for the Long An 1 and 2 power plants, and upgrades to the Phu My–Ho Chi Minh City gas pipeline.

Other items referenced in the release include gas gathering and transportation lines from the Su Tu Trang and Tuna fields, studies to expand the PV Gas Vung Tau port, small-scale hydrogen production, cooling and heating supply solutions for customers, and LNG supply options for Vietnam's southwest region using floating storage and regasification units.

Petrovietnam also reported that PV Gas overachieved its 2025 disbursement plan: the company was assigned 12 projects with planned disbursements of more than VND3.3 trillion, while actual disbursement reached VND3.4 trillion (103% of plan).

On financial performance, Petrovietnam said PV Gas recorded consolidated revenue of VND134 trillion in 2025, with estimated pre-tax profit of nearly VND15 trillion and state budget contributions exceeding VND7.8 trillion.

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Dajin Starts BC-Wind Monopile Work

29, December 2025

Dajin Heavy Industry has completed the first cutting ceremony for monopiles for the BC-Wind offshore wind project, a step tied to its manufacturing scope for the development.

BC-Wind is an offshore wind farm with a capacity of up to 390 MW, located approximately 23,000 m offshore at sea, north of the municipalities of Krokowa and Choczewo in Poland's Pomeranian Province.

The company will manufacture and deliver 27 monopiles and 27 transition pieces for the BC-Wind project, with delivery scheduled in 2026.

It also described the contract as a milestone, noting it is its first initiative to complete full transition-piece manufacturing for an international project.

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Photo: Dajin Heavy Industries

Reliance Disputes Report of $30 Billion India Claim in BP Gas Case

Reuters reports Reliance Industries denied any $30 billion government claim with BP, after a Reuters exclusive cited sources on an offshore gas arbitration seeking over $30 billion.

30, December 2025

Reliance Industries has pushed back against a Reuters report that linked the company and partner BP to a potential Indian government compensation demand of more than $30 billion, stating that "there was no claim" of that size against the two companies.

Reuters had earlier reported—citing people familiar with the matter—that India is seeking over $30 billion in an arbitration connected to offshore natural gas volumes the government says were not produced from fields operated under a production-sharing framework.

In its response carried by Reuters, Reliance Industries described the report as "factually incorrect". They said the issues referenced are "sub judice," meaning they remain under judicial consideration and will be decided through India's legal system.

The Reuters exclusive said a three-member tribunal has been hearing the dispute since 2016 and is expected to issue a decision in mid-2026.

For maritime and offshore stakeholders, the case is being watched because it sits at the intersection of deepwater field performance, contractual obligations under production-sharing terms, and the risk of large retrospective claims tied to reservoir outcomes.

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TenneT Awards NjordIC UXO Role for Doordewind Export Cable Surveys

29, December 2025

TenneT has selected NjordIC to provide UXO consultancy services for the Doordewind 1 & 2 Grid Connection System, part of the offshore HVDC programme supporting the Netherlands' ambition to deliver 21 GW of offshore wind capacity.

Under the contract, NjordIC will deliver a full-scope package spanning survey preparation, offshore survey execution support, and geophysical data analysis. The export cable corridor runs about 112,000 m offshore and continues through a 14,000 m Wadden Sea section, requiring compliance with Dutch CS-OOO requirements and careful interface management across sensitive marine environments.

NjordIC will act as an independent UXO consultant and CS-OOO A-scope holder during survey execution and data evaluation. The scope includes supervision and quality control across beach, tidal, nearshore, and offshore environments, preparation and submission of CS-OOO-compliant documentation, independent processing and interpretation of raw magnetometry data, and delivery of the Master Target Lists for Doordewind 1 and 2 to support safe cable installation planning.

The company said its newly established Remote Data Centre will support high-volume processing to strengthen QA/QC and reduce false positives, targeting milestone delivery ahead of 31 December 2026 deadlines.

Doordewind is planned about 77,000 m off the Netherlands' north coast and has been described as the first offshore wind development planned to connect to Eemshaven. The zone covers roughly 580 sq km and is planned for a 4 GW total capacity, split into two 2 GW sites. The first site is expected to be auctioned in 2027, with commissioning targeted for 2032.

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JFE Engineering Lands Japan-Made Monopile Deal for Akita Offshore Wind

JFE Engineering won a contract from Kajima to manufacture and transport 21 monopiles and transition pieces for the Oga–Katagami–Akita offshore wind project, with deliveries planned from January 2026 to March 2027.

30, December 2025

JFE Engineering has secured a contract from Kajima to manufacture and transport monopile foundations for the offshore wind project planned off Oga, Katagami, and Akita in Akita Prefecture, a move that the company says will place domestically produced monopiles into a Japanese commercial project for the first time.

The monopiles and transition pieces will be fabricated at JFE Engineering's Kasaoka monopile facility in Okayama Prefecture. Company disclosures describe Kasaoka as Japan's only domestic monopile production base.

Under the Kajima contract, JFE Engineering said it will produce and ship 21 monopiles and associated transition pieces between January 2026 and March 2027, using heavy steel plate developed for large-scale foundation applications. The company also states the plant is designed to stably mass-produce around 50 ultra-large monopiles per year, supported by dedicated storage capacity and a transport vessel.

The foundations are intended for the 315-MW Oga–Katagami–Akita offshore wind development led by Oga–Katagami–Akita Offshore Green Energy, which is planned as a 21-turbine project and targets the start of operations in June 2028, according to the developer's project outline.

JFE Engineering said it is positioning its offshore wind offering to support projects from design through delivery, framing the Kasaoka output as part of efforts to strengthen Japan's domestic supply chain and support national decarbonisation goals.

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Saipem Lands $600m Saudi Offshore CRPO Package from Aramco

Saipem won two offshore CRPO awards from Aramco worth about $600 million, covering a 34 km pipeline EPCI scope and Marjan subsea interventions plus 300 m onshore tie-ins.

31, December 2025

Two offshore Contract Release Purchase Orders (CRPOs) awarded by Aramco will add around $600 million of work for Saipem in Saudi Arabia, according to the contractor's announcement.

One of the orders, CRPO 165, is set for 12 months and includes subsea intervention activities at the Marjan field. The scope also covers EPC for about 300 m of onshore pipeline and associated tie-ins.

The longer-duration package, CRPO 162, runs for 32 months and includes engineering, procurement, construction, and installation for approximately 34 km of pipeline, with 20-inch and 30-inch diameters. It also includes work on topside structures serving the Berri and Abu Safah oil fields.

For offshore execution, Saipem said it will use construction vessels already deployed in the region. Fabrication is planned at its Dammam yard, Saipem Taqa Al-Rushaid Fabricators Co. Ltd., with the company linking the local workshare to capability development objectives in the Kingdom.

The awards extend the long-standing relationship between Saipem and Aramco and underscore continued brownfield and tie-in activity across Saudi Arabia's offshore assets.

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ASRY Completes ADES Holding Rig Repair and Upgrade Works

ASRY completed rig repair and upgrade works for ADES Holding in 2025, preparing ADM-501/ ADM-504 for Nigeria and completing ADM-503/ADM-511 for Thailand and Brazil.

31, December 2025

ASRY has completed a series of rig repair and upgrade projects for ADES Holding, reflecting continued cooperation between the two companies.

In 2025, several ADES Holding jack-up rigs underwent major works at ASRY. ADM-501 and ADM-504 were prepared earlier this year for drilling operations in Nigeria.

Upgrade works on ADM-503 and ADM-511 have also been completed, supporting upcoming drilling campaigns in Thailand and Brazil.

The completed scope reinforces ASRY's role in rig repair and conversion activity for international offshore drilling operators, while positioning its facilities as a regional centre for these services.

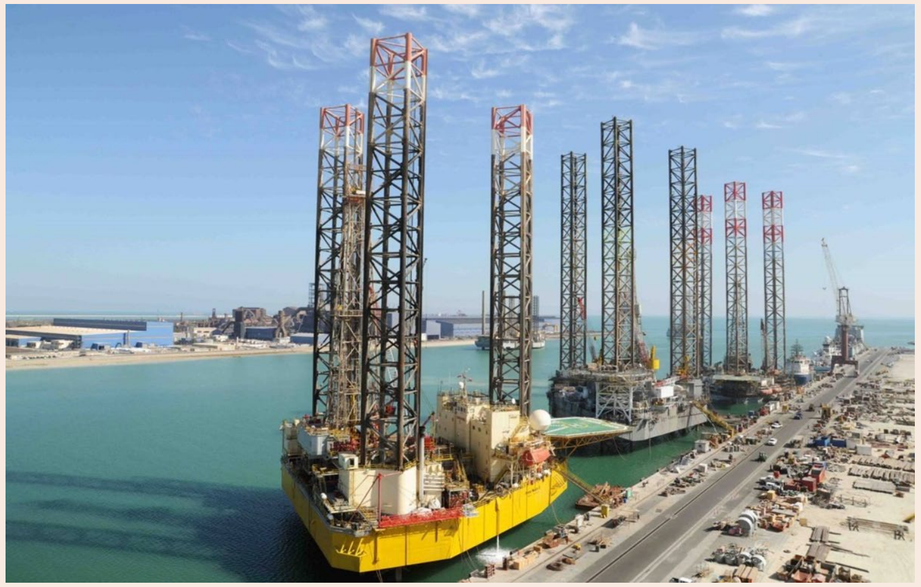

Photo source: ASRY

hmt-news.com

DOF Secures 4-Year Petrobras RSV Deal for Skandi Commander

30, December 2025

DOF Group ASA signs a new long-term contract in Brazil, securing a four-year agreement with Petrobras for the RSV Skandi Commander.

The award follows the same competitive tender process that previously resulted in six four-year RSV contract wins announced by DOF. Under this latest scope, Skandi Commander will deploy an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) as part of its duties, in addition to a Remote Operated Vehicle (ROV).

The contract is expected to commence in January 2027 and is valued at approximately $150 million.

Chief executive Mons Aase said the company's Brazil performance this year has added more than $2 billion to backlog through AHTS, RSV, and PIDF tenders. He also noted that DOF is marking 25 years of operations in Brazil, with a large share of the fleet now secured on firm contracts extending beyond 2030.

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Trinidad Issues First Ultra-Deepwater Clearance, Opening New Offshore Exploration Chapter

Trinidad and Tobago issued its first ultra-deepwater CEC, clearing ExxonMobil Trinidad and Tobago Deepwater Limited for a 3D seismic survey across 8,825 km² in Block TTUD-1.

Photo: BP

31, December 2025

Trinidad and Tobago has granted its first environmental approval linked to ultra-deepwater hydrocarbon exploration, a regulatory step the government views as strategically important as it seeks to revitalise offshore activity.

The Environmental Management Authority (EMA) has issued a Certificate of Environmental Clearance (CEC) to ExxonMobil Trinidad and Tobago Deepwater Limited for a 3D seismic survey programme covering approximately 8,825 km² in Block TTUD-1, located offshore the country's east coast. According to the Ministry of Planning, Economic Affairs and Development, this is the first CEC granted for exploration work in Trinidad and Tobago's ultra-deepwater marine area.

The approval was formally presented on 29 December 2025 during a press briefing at the Planning Ministry. Planning Minister Kennedy Swaratsingh said projects of this scale demand close regulatory oversight to ensure environmental protection while supporting national development objectives. He also highlighted plans for a dedicated priority desk within the Town and Country Planning Division to streamline approvals for projects valued above TT$50 million.

Government officials framed the move against the backdrop of maturing shallow and deepwater gas provinces, where declining production has increased pressure to identify new resource potential. Ultra-deepwater acreage remains largely unexplored, but authorities regard it as a longer-term opportunity that could contribute to future energy security and state revenues, subject to exploration results.

From a regulatory perspective, the EMA described the decision as a first for the country. EMA Deputy Chairman Neeala Mongroo said the certificate followed a science-based and transparent assessment process, adding that the Authority will maintain strict oversight to ensure compliance with all conditions and national environmental legislation.

The application, submitted on 29 September 2025, underwent a detailed technical review that included multiple requests for clarification and coordination with the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries. Assessment areas covered stakeholder engagement, survey methods and vessels, marine mammal and sea turtle protection measures, waste management, baseline environmental data, and potential impacts such as underwater noise and vessel traffic.

Following that review, the EMA concluded that the information provided was sufficient and that a full Environmental Impact Assessment was not required for the proposed seismic activity.

Energy and Energy Industries Minister Roodal Moonilal credited the EMA for improving application turnaround times and noted that, if similar efficiency were applied across comparable projects, it could potentially translate into about $120 million per year in economic value for Trinidad and Tobago. The estimate was presented as an indicative outcome rather than a guaranteed return.

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Vietnam Appoints New PetroVietnam Chair

Vietnam appointed Le Ngoc Son as PetroVietnam chairman effective 26 December 2025, as the state energy group reported 2025 revenue exceeding VND 1.1 quadrillion.

Le Ngoc Son (Photo: Petrovietnam)

31, December 2025

Vietnam's government has reshuffled top leadership at PetroVietnam while highlighting the group's record-scale business results for 2025.

Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh has appointed Le Ngoc Son as Chairman of the Members' Council of PetroVietnam, with the decision taking effect on 26 December 2025, according to local reports covering the appointment ceremony.

The change follows the transfer of the previous chair, Le Manh Hung, who was appointed Acting Minister of Industry and Trade under a prime ministerial decision issued in late December 2025.

At the same time, Vietnamese media reporting on the group's year-end review said PetroVietnam delivered record-breaking revenue for 2025, exceeding VND 1.1 quadrillion. The same reporting cited total assets nearing VND 1.2 quadrillion and contributions to the state budget of nearly VND 166 trillion.

The leadership appointment comes as the state energy group is being asked to sustain output and investment momentum while supporting Vietnam's broader economic targets, as referenced in official and semi-official coverage of the year-end meetings

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McDermott lands EPCIC deal for Brunei gas project

Petronas has selected McDermott for EPCIC services on a major offshore gas development in Brunei, covering subsea production systems, tie-backs from six wells to a floating unit and a gas export pipeline to LNG facilities.

1, January 2026

A significant gas field development in the waters off Brunei Darussalam, led by Petronas, is being advanced to secure long-term regional gas supply, supporting both domestic demand and liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports.

As part of this programme, Petronas has awarded McDermott an EPCIC contract that covers subsea facilities and a gas export line for the development. The award combines engineering and procurement activities with offshore construction, installation, and commissioning responsibilities.

Under the subsea portion of the scope, McDermott will deliver a new production system with associated infrastructure. The work includes control umbilicals, along with riser and flowline systems, designed to tie in six wells to a floating production unit that will process natural gas from the field.

The EPCIC contract also encompasses a gas export pipeline that will route gas from the floating production facilities to Brunei's LNG infrastructure, providing feed gas to the country's liquefied natural gas sector.

This latest phase builds on earlier involvement by McDermott on the same project, where the company previously completed front-end engineering design (FEED), optimisation studies, and planning for execution readiness.

Project delivery will be managed from McDermott's engineering hub in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with further support from teams based in other offices and at project locations.

Mahesh Swaminathan, Senior Vice President, Subsea and Floating Facilities at McDermott, said the transition from FEED work into a full EPCIC award underlines the company's subsea engineering capabilities in the region and its track record on complex projects. He highlighted the collaborative approach taken with customers to maximise engineering value. He noted that McDermott intends to work closely with PETRONAS Carigali Brunei and its partners to execute the development safely and efficiently.

hmt-news.com

Harbour appointed operator of the Zama project in Mexico

1, January 2026

Harbour announces that it has been appointed operator of the Zama oil project offshore Mexico. The appointment was agreed by the Zama partners, including Pemex, Grupo Carso and Talos Energy who will have the option to appoint key personnel into Harbour's project team, and subsequently approved by SENER (Mexico's Ministry of Energy).

The Zama oil field, discovered in 2017 and successfully appraised in 2018 and 2019, is estimated to contain approximately 750 mmboe of gross recoverable resources. The next step will be to complete engineering and design work in 2026 ahead of a final investment decision.

Gustavo Baquero, Managing Director, Mexico, said:

"Harbour's appointment as operator of the strategically important Zama project is testament to the trust that the Mexican government, including Pemex, places in Harbour and our partners, Grupo Carso and Talos Energy. Once onstream, Zama will contribute materially to Mexico's domestic energy supply and to Harbour's production levels."

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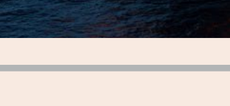
Vestas Breaks Into Korea Offshore Wind With 390 MW Deal



31, December 2025

Vestas has received a 390 MW order for the Shinan-Ui project in Jeollanam Province, South Korea, its first offshore wind order in the country. The wind farm is developed by Shinan-Ui Offshore Wind, a consortium of Hanwha Ocean, SK Eternix, KOMIPO (Korea Midland Power Co., Ltd.), Future Energy Fund, and Hyundai Engineering & Construction.

The contract covers 26 V236-15.0 MW offshore wind turbines and a 20-year service agreement to support reliable, optimised performance.

Purvin Patel, President at Vestas Asia Pacific, said the company will partner with Hanwha Ocean on the project and deploy the V236-15.0 MW platform in South Korean waters. He added that the turbine model is already being deployed in initial European projects, while production is ramping up to enable large-scale deployment globally.

Jong Hyun Son, Head of Eco Energy & Industrial EPC Division at Hanwha Ocean, said the Shinan-Ui development is Korea's first utility-scale offshore wind project to incorporate global standards fully. He cited the use of latest-generation turbines, wind turbine installation vessels, offshore transformer stations, and onshore grid connection systems. He highlighted a local supply chain supporting foundations, cables, electrical components, and transportation, as well as installation work.

Turbine deliveries are scheduled to commence in 2027, with commercial operations expected to begin in 2028. Vestas said its V236-15.0 MW received type certification in 2023 and that the platform has secured more than 9 GW of firm orders worldwide since launch.

hmt-news.com

Saipem wins $425 million Sakarya pipeline work

Saipem has won a $425 million EPCI contract for three subsea pipelines on Turkey's Sakarya Phase 3 project, linking the Goktepe gas discovery to Black Sea facilities alongside its earlier $1.5 billion scope.

2, January 2026

Saipem has secured a second contract on the third phase of Turkey's Sakarya gas development in the Black Sea, adding a $425 million scope to connect the recently discovered Goktepe field with Phase 3 facilities, the company said on Wednesday.

The award from Turkish Petroleum Offshore Technology Center (TP-OTC) is an EPCI contract covering three subsea pipelines with a total length of approximately 153 kilometres and associated subsea structures, forming the link between the Goktepe reservoir and Sakarya Phase 3 infrastructure.

The new contract is expected to run for about two and a half years and will be managed alongside Saipem's earlier Sakarya Phase 3 award signed in September, which is valued at about $1.5 billion.

Under that first package, Saipem is responsible for the EPCI of eight rigid flowlines and a 24-inch gas export pipeline of roughly 183 kilometres, running from the offshore field, where water depths reach around 2200 metres, to the onshore gas facility at Filyos on Turkey's Black Sea coast.

Offshore installation for the latest pipeline scope is scheduled for the second half of 2027 and will be executed using Saipem's pipelaying vessel Castorone, according to the contractor.

The Goktepe field is located in the Turkish sector of the Black Sea, about 80 kilometres from the Sakarya field, in water depths of approximately 2200 metres. In May, state-owned Turkish Petroleum estimated that Goktepe holds gas potential of around 75 billion cubic metres, based on geological and reservoir engineering studies.

Sakarya's third phase will use a new unit for floating production (FPU), supplied under contract, which will receive output from 27 wells in the Sakarya and Amasra fields. Production from these wells will be routed through a new trunkline to the Filyos onshore facility.

A series of major awards for international contractors has already been announced for Phase 3. In September, Baker Hughes reported it will provide subsea production systems and intelligent completion equipment for the development. In the same month, Wison New Energies confirmed an EPCIC contract to deliver the FPU.

In August, Subsea7 said it had been awarded an EPCI contract to install a SURF system comprising umbilicals, risers and flowlines for the project, in a deal valued at up to $1.25 billion.

With two contracts now awarded on Sakarya Phase 3, Saipem is one of several international players delivering subsea and pipelaying work on Turkey's Black Sea gas development.

hmt-news.com

Island Oil Names Christian Larsen Senior Trader to Build Denmark Trading Base

28, December 2025

Island Oil is expanding its northern European reach by appointing Christian Larsen as Senior Trader, a move the marine fuel supplier says supports the establishment of a new trading base in Denmark.

The company said its Danish launch is designed to selectively broaden its presence in priority marine fuel markets, adding capacity for trading activity alongside its existing international network.

In comments accompanying the appointment, COO Vangelis Marinakis linked the Denmark step to longer-term growth plans and said Larsen's experience and local market knowledge would help advance the strategy.

Larsen brings an eight-year track record in marine fuels trading, including roles at Monjasa and Oilmar DMCC, and previously served as Oilmar DMCC's Country Manager in Denmark. He said he looks forward to contributing to safe, efficient and reliable fuel solutions as Island Oil develops its regional footprint.

Headquartered in Limassol, Cyprus, Island Oil operates physical supply stations in Cyprus, Romania and Israel. The company also maintains trading desks in Dubai, Hong Kong, London, Piraeus, Seoul and Singapore, while operations in Denmark are being established as a dedicated trading base under its expansion plan.

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Christian Størvold Larsen (Photo: LinkedIn)

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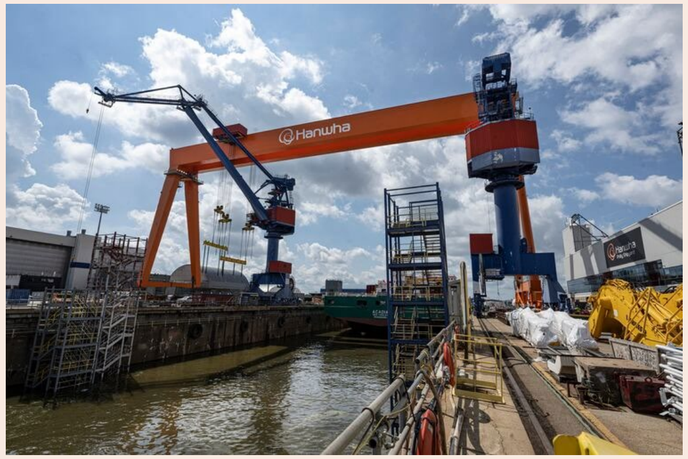
Hanwha Ramps Up Philly Yard Readiness as “Golden Fleet” Plans Take Shape

Hanwha Group is expanding hiring and upgrading Hanwha Philly Shipyard as “Golden Fleet” shipbuilding plans advance, positioning the yard for potential US naval workshare and future platform cooperation.



A Goliath crane freshly repainted in Hanwha’s signature orange and three-circles logo at Hanwha Philly Shipyard in Philadelphia on Wednesday, July 16, 2025. Photo: Jose F. Moreno / Staff Photographer

28, December 2025

Hanwha Group is stepping up preparations at Hanwha Philly Shipyard in Philadelphia as the United States advances a major naval shipbuilding expansion under the “Golden Fleet” banner, with the yard positioning itself for potential future workshare on high-end naval platforms.

At the center of the effort is capacity-building. Hanwha Defense USA’s shipbuilding leadership has described ongoing recruitment and training to expand the workforce, along with facility investment and readiness work related to technology transfer. The company has also been seeking specialists with experience in the design, construction, and operation of Virginia-class submarines, including modular production and block-assembly capabilities central to nuclear-submarine manufacturing.

While preparation work is underway, executives have emphasized that any transition to actual submarine production would depend on government-level coordination and decisions between Washington and Seoul, including timing and approvals.

The push coincides with US policy signals aimed at rebuilding domestic shipbuilding throughput, including new surface-combatant initiatives linked to the Navy’s evolving fleet mix. In parallel with submarine industrial-base discussions, US Navy planning has also highlighted a future class of smaller combatants, commonly referred to as the FF(X) concept, designed to complement larger multi-mission warships and broaden operational flexibility.

Hanwha Group officials have also outlined a working assumption for a two-track production approach: US Navy nuclear-powered submarine construction centered in Philadelphia. At the same time, Hanwha Ocean’s Geoje shipyard in Korea supports Korea’s own nuclear-submarine ambitions, subject to intergovernmental approvals and implementation frameworks.

Investment commitments are another pillar. Hanwha has said it will direct an additional $5 billion into the Philadelphia yard under a bilateral cooperation effort branded “MASGA,” following an earlier $100 million acquisition of the shipyard at the former Philadelphia Navy Yard. The company has linked the plan to broader Korea–US shipbuilding cooperation discussions that remain focused on structure, governance, and deployment of funding.

In Korea, market sentiment has tracked these policies and industrial signals. Shares of Hanwha Ocean and other defense-linked manufacturers have moved sharply alongside US statements about allied participation in future frigate construction, underscoring investor attention on whether industrial-base plans translate into funded procurement and sustained yard workloads.

hmt-news.com

Samsung Heavy Industries Halts Geoje Operations After Fatal Yard Accident

Samsung Heavy Industries has halted operations at its Geoje shipyard after a fatal fall during LPG carrier work, with the company admitting safety management shortcomings and launching yard-wide inspections.

28, December 2025

Samsung Heavy Industries (SHI) has suspended operations at its Geoje shipyard following a fatal workplace accident involving an employee assigned to an LPG carrier under construction, prompting a public apology from the company’s chief executive.

In a statement released on 23 December 2025, issued in the name of CEO Choi Sung-an, Samsung Heavy Industries acknowledged shortcomings in its safety oversight and expressed condolences to the victim’s family. The company said it had not fully met its responsibilities in safety management and pledged to cooperate with follow-up measures.

The incident occurred the previous afternoon, 22 December 2025, at approximately 3:00 p.m., during preparatory work for dust removal inside a cargo tank of a liquefied petroleum gas carrier. According to the company, a site supervisor fell approximately 20 m while working inside the tank structure. The worker was transported to the hospital but later died from the injuries sustained.

As an immediate response, Samsung Heavy Industries ordered all work on the vessel involved to stop. The company also expanded the suspension to the entire Geoje shipyard, announcing a temporary halt of yard-wide operations while conducting special safety training and inspections.

The company said the decision to pause operations across the yard was intended to prevent secondary incidents and to reassess on-site safety procedures, particularly for enclosed-space and high-elevation work commonly associated with LNG and LPG carrier construction.

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Kuang Ming Contracts Four Ultramax Bulkers at Japanese Yards

27, December 2025T

Taiwanese liner operator Yang Ming has placed an order for four ultramax bulk carriers in Japan through its dry bulk subsidiary Kuang Ming Shipping.

In a stock exchange filing, Kuang Ming Shipping put the combined contract value at NT$4.9bn to NT$5.4bn (about $155m–$171m).

The programme includes two ultramax vessels split between Nihon Shipyard and Imabari Shipbuilding, with each ship priced at roughly NT$1.2bn to NT$1.4bn. A further two ultramaxes were booked at Oshima Shipbuilding together with Sumisho Marine, at similar price levels. Delivery dates were not disclosed.

Kuang Ming Shipping currently operates 11 bulk carriers. The fleet comprises 10 owned vessels ranging from ultramax to kamsarmax size, plus a capesize held on a long-term charter.

Founded in 1990, Kuang Ming Shipping initially worked as a booking agent supporting Yang Ming’s container business. It entered the dry bulk sector in 2008 as part of the group’s diversification.

The latest contracts are Kuang Ming Shipping’s first newbuilding orders in nearly a decade. Its previous newbuilding round involved four ultramax vessels ordered at Iwagi Zosen in 2014 and 2015, with deliveries completed between 2016 and 2018.

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Korean Shipyards and Defense Firms Unite to Develop Combat USV Core Systems

HJ Shipbuilding & Construction, HD Hyundai Heavy Industries and LIG Nex1 formed a consortium to develop integrated control and autonomous mission core technologies for combat USVs, including a large verification platform build.

HD Hyundai’s in-development uncrewed surface vessel (USV), TENEBRIS. (Image: HD Hyundai)

28, December 2025

South Korea’s shipbuilding and defense sector has formed an uncommon “single-team” structure for a naval unmanned program, with HJ Shipbuilding & Construction joining LIG Nex1 and HD Hyundai Heavy Industries to pursue core technologies for combat unmanned surface vessels (USVs).

Rather than starting with a finished ship design, the consortium’s work centers on the “brain and nervous system” required to operate a combat USV: integrated control and autonomous mission functions that allow an unmanned craft to execute maritime tasks through remote operation or autonomous navigation. Combat USVs are generally viewed as a pathway to reduce personnel exposure while expanding surveillance, reconnaissance, and mission coverage at sea.

Under the project framework, HJ Shipbuilding & Construction has signed an agreement with the Agency for Defense Development (ADD) to act as designer and builder of a verification platform—effectively a large unmanned vessel intended to validate the integrated control and autonomous mission technologies developed under the program.

The core-technology effort is being advanced through a government-led structure that involves defense acquisition and research stakeholders, with the stated goal of securing capabilities required for the Navy’s Batch-II combat USV system development. The program is positioned as part of South Korea’s broader push toward manned–unmanned teaming at sea.

Workshare inside the consortium is split between platform and system integration. HD Hyundai Heavy Industries and HJ Shipbuilding & Construction are to design and construct the unmanned surface vessel platform used for verification. At the same time, LIG Nex1 is tasked with developing and validating the integrated control system, weapon control system, and autonomous mission system that link the platform to mission equipment.

The consortium had been preparing the proposal jointly and was selected as the preferred negotiation partner in August, before formalizing project arrangements disclosed on 23 December.

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ZPMC Signs $164 Million Deal for 1,600-tonne DP-2 Deepwater Crane Vessel

Erhang Zhuoyue, a crane vessel built by ZPMC.

28 December 2025

ZPMC has secured a major shipbuilding contract with Guangzhou Salvage Bureau for a new deepwater crane vessel designed for heavy pile-driving and rapid-response salvage operations, with delivery targeted before 30 June 2027.

The winning bid notice puts the contract value at about RMB 1.1488 billion (around $164 million). The vessel will be equipped with a 1,600-tonne slewing-around-pile crane and a 400-tonne full-rotation crane, supported by DP-2 dynamic positioning to improve station-keeping during complex lifts and installation work.

A central design feature is piling capability at substantial depth. ZPMC says the unit will operate with 142 m pile legs and deliver pile-driving capacity at 90 m water depth—paired with a maximum 1,600-tonne piling workload—positioning it as a top-tier fully rotating pile-driving crane vessel in China.

Although offshore wind support is included in the mission set, the primary tasking is emergency response and salvage in waters under China’s jurisdiction. The vessel is intended to support rapid mobilisation for marine casualties and to conduct salvage work in waters shallower than 90 m.

Operationally, the platform is designed to handle a broad range of heavy marine tasks: lifting equipment at salvage sites, full recovery of smaller wrecks, assistance with larger wrecks, cargo removal, including hazardous materials, oil offloading from tanks, and life-support capability for personnel working on the scene. The crane and deck arrangements also allow transportation and installation of offshore wind components—foundations, support towers, nacelles, and blades—plus nearshore lifting and platform maintenance support.

The contract was signed following a ceremony and project discussions held on 26 December (year not stated), according to ZPMC.

In parallel, ZPMC is also expanding its offshore engineering vessel orderbook. The company recently received an order from Far East Hold for a multi-purpose cable-laying vessel intended for offshore wind cable installation, subsea cable maintenance, and wind farm operations and maintenance activity. The cable-layer is described as having unlimited navigation, a concentric dual-output cable-laying system, a rotatable cable turntable, and DP2 capability.

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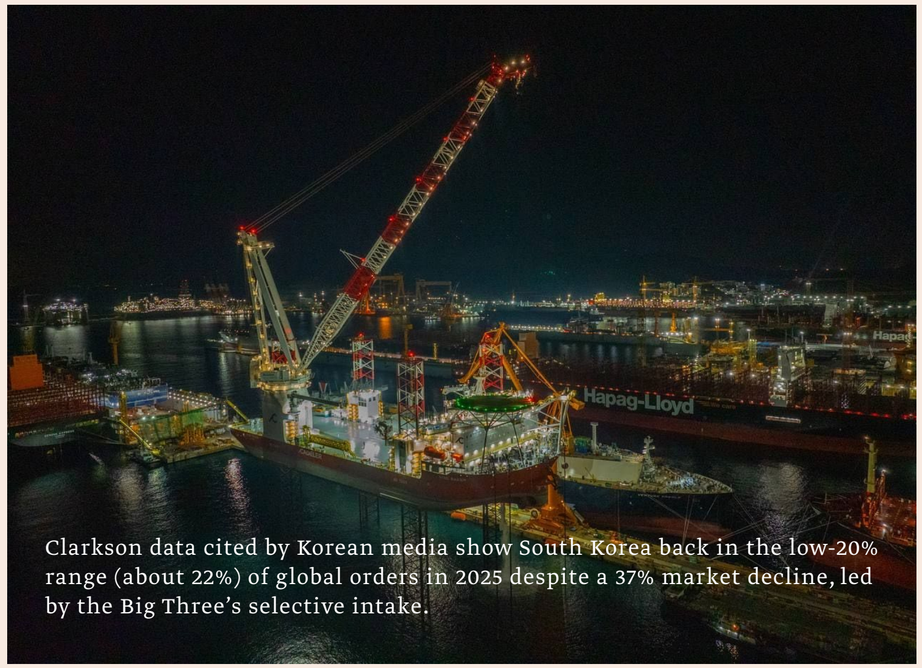
South Korea's Big Three Hold Ground as Global Ship Orders Slide



Clarkson data cited by Korean media show South Korea back in the low-20% range (about 22%) of global orders in 2025 despite a 37% market decline, led by the Big Three's selective intake.

Image source: Hanwha Ocean

30, December 2025

South Korea's largest shipbuilding groups—HD Hyundai, Hanwha Ocean, and Samsung Heavy Industries—are closing out 2025 with order books that held up better than the broader market, helping the country move back into the low-20% range (about 22%) of global newbuilding demand even as worldwide contracting fell sharply.

Industry data compiled by Clarkson Research shows global orders of about 44.99 million CGT (1,627 vessels) from January to November 2025, down 37% year-on-year. In that period, South Korea booked around 10.03 million CGT (223 vessels)—roughly a 22% share—while China secured about 26.64 million CGT, despite a steeper year-on-year decline.

Company by company, the year has been defined less by chasing volume and more by pricing discipline. Hanwha Ocean's disclosed order intake reached $9.83 billion for 51 vessels, including 20 VLCCs and 13 LNG carriers, exceeding its 2024 total, according to multiple Korean business reports.

For HD Hyundai, industry reporting said HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering (HD KSOE)—the intermediate holding company for the group's shipbuilding units—secured $18.2 billion in orders for 129 vessels in 2025 to date, meeting 100.6% of its annual target of $18.1 billion. Korean coverage linked the year-on-year decline in total order value to a more selective contracting stance and already-committed dock capacity.

Samsung Heavy Industries reported $7.4 billion in orders for 2025 so far, spanning LNG carriers, shuttle tankers, and other merchant segments, against an annual target of $9.8 billion, Korean business outlets reported in late December.

The stronger showing comes after a weak 2024 share outcome: Korean outlets citing Clarkson data described last year's domestic share at 17%, the lowest since 2016, before the 2025 rebound toward the low-20% range.

Geopolitics has also become part of the commercial backdrop. Korean media and industry observers have pointed to policy uncertainty around the U.S. Trade Representative's Section 301 process targeting China's maritime and shipbuilding sectors—including proposals and announcements related to port-fee frameworks affecting China-linked and Chinese-built tonnage—as a factor that may be influencing shipowner sentiment.

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India Launches New Shipbuilding Initiatives Worth ₹44,700 Crore

India issued guidelines for ₹44,700+ crore shipbuilding schemes, combining 15–25% milestone-linked support with yard upgrades, clusters, and a credit note worth 40% of Fair Scrap Value.

29, December 2025

India has issued operational guidelines for two national shipbuilding programmes with a combined outlay exceeding ₹44,700 crore, positioning the package as a multi-year effort to expand domestic capability and improve competitiveness.

The Shipbuilding Development Scheme (SbDS) carries an allocation of ₹19,989 crore and is designed to strengthen shipyard capability through infrastructure upgrades, technology adoption, and skill development. The framework also includes new greenfield shipbuilding clusters and the modernisation of existing shipyards, alongside a plan to establish an India Ship Technology Centre at the Indian Maritime University to support research, design, innovatio,n and training.

In parallel, the Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme (SBFAS) is backed by ₹24,736 crore to provide project-linked support for newbuild activity across vessel categories. The guidelines set assistance in a 15%–25% range, depending on the vessel segment, with disbursement tied to defined milestones.

The package also introduces a recycling-linked incentive: shipowners scrapping older vessels at Indian facilities can receive a credit note equal to 40% of the vessel's Fair Scrap Value, as defined under the scheme rules.

Implementation is expected to be coordinated through a planned National Shipbuilding Mission. In government communications and reporting around the rollout, SBFAS has been described as capable of supporting shipbuilding projects worth around ₹96,000 crore over the next decade. The longer-term ambition cited alongside the initiatives targets shipbuilding capacity of about 4.5 million GT per annum by 2047.

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USCG taps Bollinger Shipyards and Finland's Rauma Marine Constructions for up to six Arctic Security Cutter icebreakers

First deliveries targeted for 2028 and 2029 under the ICE Pact-linked approach.

Image: Seaspan Shipyards

30, December 2025

The U.S. Coast Guard has accelerated its medium icebreaker recapitalization by awarding two build contracts for up to six Arctic Security Cutters (ASCs), splitting early production between Finland and the United States. The service announced the awards on 29 December 2025, with the contracts dated 26 December 2025.

Under the arrangement, Rauma Marine Constructions will build up to two ASCs in Rauma, Finland, with delivery of the first ship targeted for 2028. Bollinger Shipyards will build up to four ASCs at its Lockport, Louisiana operation, with the first U.S.-built cutter expected in 2029.

The Coast Guard framed the split-build approach as a way to draw on Finland's established icebreaker delivery track record while "on-shoring" know-how to expand U.S. capacity over time. The program also sits within the service's broader Force Design 2028 modernization agenda.

Design work will leverage the Multi-Purpose Icebreaker (MPI) baseline from Seaspan Shipyards, developed with Aker Arctic Technology Inc., and adapted for the ASC mission set.

The awards also align with the trilateral ICE Pact (United States–Canada–Finland), which is intended to strengthen cooperation on icebreaker design, construction, and industrial capacity, including knowledge exchange across partner shipyards and supply chains.

For the Coast Guard, the schedule matters: industry reporting notes the first ASC deliveries would mark the service's first new Arctic icebreaker newbuilds since USCGC Healy, delivered in 1990. With the ASC program expected to complement the heavier Polar Security Cutter effort, the service is positioning for more persistent Arctic operations as access and strategic competition increase.

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COSCO Zhoushan Starts Upgrade to Lift High-End Shipbuilding Capacity

COSCO Shipping Heavy Industry (Zhoushan) has begun a 42,831.51 sq m energy-efficiency upgrade, targeting Q1 2027 completion to enhance productivity and high-end shipbuilding capability.

31, December 2025

COSCO SHIPPING Heavy Industry (Zhoushan) has formally launched a large-scale shipbuilding energy-efficiency improvement programme, reinforcing its long-term strategy to enhance production efficiency and expand into higher-value vessel construction.

The project entered the construction phase following a groundbreaking ceremony on 30 December 2025, after COSCO SHIPPING Group approved it on 5 November 2025. The development is scheduled over 400 calendar days, with completion and delivery planned for the first quarter of 2027.

COSCO Zhoushan launches energy-efficiency shipyard upgrade

Spanning a total construction area of 42,831.51 sq m, the programme focuses on upgrading core production support infrastructure. It includes the expansion of Hull Workshop No. 2 and the distribution plant, alongside the construction of Coating Workshop No. 4, Sandblasting Workshop No. 4, a power distribution station, and dedicated paint as well as oil and chemical warehouses. The integrated layout is intended to improve workflow efficiency and reduce energy intensity across key shipbuilding processes.

Once completed, the upgrade is expected to significantly strengthen the yard's capability to construct 200,000–300,000 DWT bulk carriers, while providing a technical and operational foundation for developing higher-end ship types. The company has positioned the project around the principles of green production, digital operation, and intelligent manufacturing, aligning facility investment with efficiency-driven and low-carbon objectives.

The energy-efficiency programme comes amid a broader capacity expansion at the Zhoushan base. Outfitting quay No. 9 entered operation on 30 August 2025, while outfitting quay No. 8 completed its acceptance inspection on 30 October 2025. Both quays are part of a project that began construction on 30 September 2024, adding a 300,000-tonne-class outfitting quay and a 150,000-tonne-class outfitting quay, supported by approach bridges and related infrastructure.

In parallel, the main structure of Dry Dock No. 4 has recently been completed. Designed as a modern 300,000-tonne-class shipbuilding and repair dock, the facility measures 430 m in length, 120 m in width, and 15.2 m in depth, with a total construction area of 51,600 sq m. The dock is intended to support the construction and repair of new-energy vessels and other high-technology, high-value ship types.

With the progressive commissioning of new quays and the forthcoming completion of Dry Dock No. 4 and the energy-efficiency upgrade, COSCO SHIPPING Heavy Industry (Zhoushan) is set to achieve a systematic improvement in production layout, technical capabilit,y and resource utilisation, strengthening its competitiveness in both large-scale and high-end shipbuilding markets.

hmt-news.com

Colombo Dockyard's SGIP shifts focus to high-value marine works

Colombo Dockyard PLC is using its SGIP to pivot from traditional ship repair and construction into specialized marine infrastructure projects, expanding in the Maldives while managing higher financial and market risks.

Source: Colombo Dockyard

31, December 2025

Colombo Dockyard PLC is repositioning its business towards higher-value engineering through its Strategic Growth and Innovation Programme (SGIP), placing specialized marine infrastructure at the centre of its growth strategy and stepping up activity in overseas markets, particularly the Maldives.

Building on five decades of heavy engineering and shipbuilding experience, Colombo Dockyard PLC is using SGIP to move beyond its traditional core of ship repair and newbuilding. The programme directs the company towards niche engineering solutions and complex marine infrastructure projects, marking a deliberate shift in business portfolio and regional ambitions.

This strategic redirection is influencing the broader regional maritime economy. A key example is the delivery of underwater restaurant projects for resort developments in the Maldives. These landmark contracts have broadened Colombo Dockyard PLC's revenue base while enhancing Sri Lanka's standing in advanced marine engineering capabilities.

At the same time, the new direction brings structural pressures. Specialized marine infrastructure projects typically require significant upfront capital, longer execution horizons and a higher degree of exposure to foreign market fluctuations. These factors, taken together, have the potential to affect the dockyard's overall financial stability.

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HD Hyundai Heavy Industries Validates Ethanol Operation on HiMSEN DF Engine

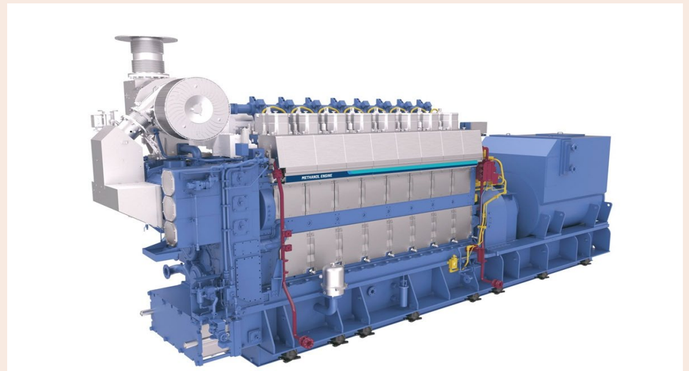


Photo: Hyundai Engine & Machinery

1, January 2026

HD Hyundai Heavy Industries has confirmed that its four-stroke HiMSEN dual-fuel engine can run stably on "ethanol fuel," widening its fuel-flexibility range for eco-friendly applications.

The verification was carried out through combustion and operational characteristic testing, applying ethanol to the methanol dual-fuel engine platform (H32DF-LM). According to the company, stable operation was confirmed across all load points.

The programme focused on startability, combustion stability, power output stability, and exhaust-gas characteristics under differences in fuel properties. During the work, the existing methanol-engine hardware configuration was maintained as much as possible.

Ethanol, like methanol, can be handled as a liquid under atmospheric conditions and can be produced from bio-based sources, making it a carbon-reduction potential alternative fuel. The firm also points to growing interest from shipowners and the shipbuilding industry, citing ethanol as an option that can respond to regional methanol supply conditions and price volatility.

Following the ethanol application test, the company said it has further reinforced technological competitiveness in fuel flexibility. It plans additional durability tests that align with classification society requirements and commercial operating conditions, and it views the results as a meaningful step toward expanding customer choices in the eco-friendly fuel market.

hmt-news.com

China's first large offshore well stimulation ship on trials

31, December 2025

Haiyang Shiyou 696, China's first large ship dedicated to offshore well stimulation, has entered sea trials. The WS25000-class unit in the Tuna Offshore Series is designed for large-scale offshore fracturing campaigns and can also perform both fracturing and proppant-filling operations.

With an overall length of 99.8 m and a breadth of 22 m, Haiyang Shiyou 696 is outfitted with a full spread of well stimulation equipment, including fluid supply, blending and sand-mixing systems. Its design focuses on a high level of system integration and intelligent control, combining high displacement and power with large storage capacity and enhanced operational safety. These features enable efficient, high-volume fracturing work in offshore fields. The vessel is the first integrated large well stimulation ship to be built in China.

The vessel was independently developed as part of the Tuna Offshore Series by Shanghai Ship Research and Design Institute (SDARI) and constructed by Wuhu Shipyard for CNOOC (China) Limited.

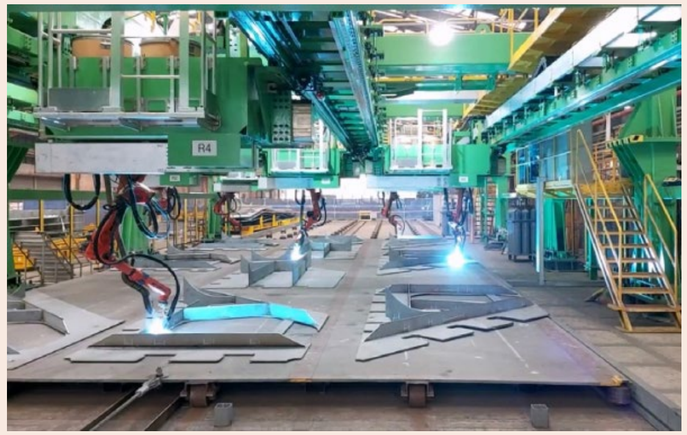
Construction of Haiyang Shiyou 696 started in early 2024. The keel was laid on 21 November 2024, and the ship was launched on 3 April 2025. Wuhu Shipyard held the sea-trial departure ceremony on 26 December 2025, marking the official start of sea trials.

hmt-news.com

Korean shipbuilders deploy AI welding robots and automated procudtion lines

Korean shipbuilders are expanding AI-driven automation as welding robots and automated production lift productivity and shift workers toward monitoring and process control roles.

2, January 2026



At Hanwha Ocean's Okpo shipyard on Geoje Island, a pipe-welding station that once demanded awkward postures and constant heat exposure has been reorganized around a collaborative robot. A worker sets a guide and initiates the sequence, then monitors welding conditions and makes fine adjustments from a short distance away—illustrating how on-site roles are shifting from manual execution toward process control as automation expands.

A similar transition is taking shape in Ulsan. Inside HD Hyundai Heavy Industries' Yongyeon Factory in Namgu, ceiling-mounted welding robots have been introduced to small-scale assembly, an early production stage where smaller ship structures are built before block assembly. In one operating setup, steel members around 1.5 m long are arranged in parallel rows with 80 cm spacing, while four robots move overhead to weld joints continuously. The yard's comparison for a 1.2 m weld seam is 15 minutes by hand versus five minutes by robot.

According to site-level performance figures, the impact has been tangible. Robots were introduced to the Yongyeon line in November 2024, replacing a workflow in which six skilled workers welded about 500 tonnes per month. With four robots running from 08:00 to 04:00 the next day, monthly throughput has increased to 900 tonnes, described as a productivity gain of more than 80%. The current phase focuses on accumulating production data so AI can model material characteristics, with a subsequent stage aimed at allowing AI systems to select optimal welding paths autonomously.

Across its shipyards, HD Hyundai has deployed about 200 robots, including industrial and collaborative units, as automation spreads into repetitive and high-risk tasks. One of the most advanced applications is lug manufacturing—hooking components used to lift and move blocks by crane. Each vessel requires roughly 2,000 lugs, which skilled workers previously fabricated. In the automated line, 3D vision AI identifies position and geometry with up to 0.1 mm precision, while robots perform cutting, alignment, and welding. Material transport and post-use lug servicing have also been automated. The company has estimated annual cost savings of approximately KRW 500 million from the lug process and plans to expand automated production from three high-demand lug types to 43 types by 2026.

Other Korean shipbuilders are advancing similar initiatives. Samsung Heavy Industries has announced a collaboration with Rainbow Robotics to develop shipyard-capable robot platforms, including mobile dual-arm and quadruped systems. In parallel, Hanwha Ocean has outlined investments aimed at building a data-driven "smart yard" that integrates robots and AI across production processes.

Shipbuilders described the initiatives as responses to shortages of skilled welders and rising safety risks in high-burden processes. Shipbuilders noted that automation has historically been limited by large block sizes, process variability, and outdoor working conditions typical of shipyards. In industry briefings, these projects have been presented under the "M.AX (Manufacturing AI Transformation)" framework, which emphasizes AI-supported decision-making and process optimization rather than simple task automation.

Source: The Chosun Daily, Asia Business Daily

South Korean Mid-Sized Shipyard Daesun Sells Yeongdo Yard to Hanla IMS

Photo: Daesun Shipbuilding

2 January 2026

Daesun Shipbuilding has completed the sale of its Yeongdo shipyard site in Busan to Hanla IMS, closing the transaction on 26 December 2025 for KRW 107.15 billion (reported at about $74 million).

The disposal completes a key step in Daesun Shipbuilding's two-year creditor-led financial restructuring that began in 2023. The sale process used a "stalking horse" structure, with Hanla IMS selected as the preferred bidder in October 2025 before a subsequent bidding round closed in early December.

Daesun Shipbuilding said it will use the proceeds to repay debt and finalize its restructuring. Going forward, the company plans to consolidate operations at its Dadaepo yard in Busan and shift its business toward ship equipment and fabrication work—such as hull sections and superstructures—supplying larger shipbuilders as a subcontractor. The company has also indicated it may consider a return to shipbuilding in the mid-to-long term.

For Hanla IMS, the Yeongdo acquisition expands its industrial base by growing marine equipment production and related services. The company has previously expanded its footprint through the acquisition of a yard in Gwangyang in 2021 and the commissioning of a 7,000-tonne floating dry dock in 2024.

The deal comes as South Korea's mid-sized shipbuilding segment has rebounded in recent years due to strong demand and limited berth capacity at the most prominent shipyards, while the number of players has consolidated from more than 20 to four. Besides Daesun Shipbuilding, the remaining mid-sized shipbuilders commonly cited are Daehan Shipbuilding, HJ Shipbuilding, and K Shipbuilding. Reports also indicate K Shipbuilding is progressing through a sale process led by its controlling investors.

hmt-news.com

Russia Renews Strikes on Odesa Ports, Damaging Vessels and Energy Facilities

Russian strikes in late December damaged vessels, grain facilities and energy infrastructure in Ukraine's Odesa region, causing fires and power outages.

29, December 2025

Russian forces carried out renewed long-range attacks across Ukraine in late December 2025, hitting energy facilities and port infrastructure in the Odesa region and causing widespread disruption.

According to Ukraine's deputy prime minister for restoration and minister for communities and territories development, Oleksii Kuleba, drones struck port infrastructure in the Odesa region overnight into 26 December 2025. The attack damaged multiple vessels and a barge, while fires broke out at impact sites. Emergency services were deployed, and port workers began assessing damage amid partial power outages.

Kuleba said that grain elevators and warehouses operated by civilian companies were also hit during the strikes. Repair crews continued restoration work while critical port operations relied on backup power supplies.

The Odesa region had already been under sustained pressure earlier in the week. Ukrainian authorities reported that a separate attack triggered a fire at the port of Pivdennyi, leaving more than 120,000 electricity customers without power. Critical infrastructure remained operational using emergency systems while repairs progressed.

On 27 December 2025, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russia launched another large-scale overnight assault, deploying nearly 500 drones and around 40 missiles, including Kinzhal systems. He stated that Kyiv was among the main targets, with energy facilities and civilian infrastructure hit. Several residential buildings were damaged, and electricity and heating supplies were temporarily unavailable in parts of the capital.

Firefighting and emergency response operations continued while energy workers began repairs where security conditions allowed. At other sites, crews remained in shelters until air raid alerts were lifted.

Ukraine's foreign minister Andrii Sybiha said the strikes deliberately targeted civilian and energy infrastructure during winter conditions, worsening the humanitarian impact. Sweden's foreign minister, Maria Malmer Stenergard, also condemned the attacks, stating they demonstrated Russia's lack of intent to pursue peace.

hmt-news.com

Image: Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister for Restoration and Minister for Communities and Territories Development, Oleksii Kuleba.

Norway Pushes Back FuelEU Maritime Start, Now Expected Later in 2026

29, December 2025

FuelEU Maritime, the EU framework aimed at reducing the greenhouse-gas intensity of energy used onboard ships, is fully applicable in the European Union from 1 January 2025 under Regulation (EU) 2023/1805. The European Commission also notes that certain provisions linked to monitoring plans apply earlier, from August 2024.

Norway, however, will not introduce the regime on 1 January 2026 as previously anticipated. In an update published on 22 December 2025, the Norwegian Maritime Authority said it had worked toward enabling applications from the start of 2026, but could not obtain the necessary clarifications between the EEA/EFTA states and with the EU in time.

The Authority now expects entry into force in Norway later in 2026, adding that a more detailed timetable will be communicated once confirmed.

The announcement follows a 12 December 2025 notice to industry that FuelEU Maritime could still take effect in Norway at very short notice—potentially as early as 1 January 2026—after public consultations on amendments to Norwegian legislation were completed.

In that earlier notice, the Authority also indicated that an earlier start could bring technical and operational benefits for parts of the maritime sector, while acknowledging that uncertainty over the start date could complicate planning and compliance preparations.

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Image for illustration purposes only (Photo: Shutterstock / 1157355343)

Glen Rosa Handover Reset to Q4 2026 After New Defects

Photo: Ferguson Marine.

27, December 2025

The LNG dual-fuel ferry MV Glen Rosa will now be delivered in the fourth quarter of 2026 after additional defects were identified during inspection work linked to the vessel's initial dry-dock period.

During inspection, corrosion was found in the stern tubes, while sections of the hull coating below the waterline showed signs of deterioration. The required remedial work means the vessel must return for a second dry-dock, with the earliest available slot falling in the second half of 2026. As a result, the delivery schedule has been revised to Q4 2026.

MV Glen Rosa was ordered in 2015 for operation within Scotland's ferry network. The updated timeline represents a further delay from the previously indicated acceptance window in the second quarter of 2026.

Responding to the revised schedule, Ferguson Marine chief executive Graeme Thomson said the shipyard recognised the disruption caused by the continued delay, particularly for island communities awaiting the vessel's entry into service. He said the company remained focused on completing the work and would continue to provide clear updates on progress.

The shipbuilder has acknowledged that construction of MV Glen Rosa exposed operational weaknesses that required urgent attention. Measures are under way to address these issues, including process improvements and targeted upgrades aimed at stabilising delivery performance.

Separately, public disclosures have highlighted financial pressure on the yard, with only about £570,000—around 4%—of a pledged £14.2 million investment package having been received to date.

Completing MV Glen Rosa remains the shipyard's primary near-term objective, while efforts continue to secure follow-on work to avoid a potential gap in orders beyond 2026.

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MOL finances Singapore's first FSRU for Second LNG Terminal

Image: Hanwha Ocean

29 December 2025

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL) has signed a project finance agreement covering a newbuild floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) that will be operated by Singapore LNG Corporation Pte Ltd (SLNG) as Singapore's Second LNG Terminal.

The banking syndicate includes Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG), DBS Bank (DBS), Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation Limited (OCBC), and Standard Chartered Bank (Singapore) Ltd. (SCB).

MOL said the project represents the first deployment of an FSRU in Singapore. The company also noted that the country relies on imported natural gas for about 95% of domestic power generation.

An FSRU is a floating facility that stores LNG and regasifies it for delivery into a gas network. MOL described the financing as a joint outcome of its FSRU supply-support strategy, JBIC's support for Japanese business expansion in Asia, and the participating banks' emphasis on energy transition and decarbonisation initiatives in the region.

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South Korean Court Confirms Illegal Transfer of Submarine Design Technology to Taiwan

South Korea court confirms submarine tech leak to Taiwan.

30, December 2025

A South Korean court has confirmed a rare case in which core domestic defence technology was illegally transferred overseas for use in foreign military submarine construction, convicting a former Republic of Korea Navy commander and a defence company linked to him.

According to South Korean media reports, the Changwon District Court sentenced a former Navy lieutenant commander, identified only as A, to two years and six months in prison for violating South Korea's export control laws, including the Foreign Trade Act. A was serving as the representative of a defence-related company at the time of the offence. The court also imposed a fine of 15 billion won (roughly $11 million) and ordered the forfeiture of 95 billion won (approximately $72 million) against the company.

The ruling found that A had illegally transferred submarine design data originally developed at Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering, now known as Hanwha Ocean, to entities in Taiwan without the required government authorisation. Two former DSME engineers who assisted in the theft were each sentenced to one year and six months in prison, while two other accomplices received suspended sentences.

Court findings show that in August 2019, A signed a $110 million contract with a Taiwanese company to manufacture and supply submarine torpedo tubes and storage compartments. In October 2019, after travelling to Taiwan, A obtained hundreds of confidential submarine-related documents from former DSME employees using the email account of his Taiwanese branch office. The materials included system descriptions, basic and detailed designs, and manufacturing drawings.

The court determined that A subsequently transferred the data to Taiwan using USB drives, CDs, and other portable storage media. Under South Korea's export control regime, the overseas transfer of strategic or military goods requires prior approval from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy or, for defence items, the Defense Acquisition Program Administration. No such approval was granted.

Investigators established that the leaked designs were associated with the DSME1400 submarine, a model previously exported by DSME to Indonesia under a $1.1 billion contract signed in 2011, with deliveries completed in 2019. Prosecutors argued that the unlawfully transferred technology was later applied, at least in part, to Taiwan's domestic submarine programme.

The judgment found that the transferred drawings were used in the construction process of the Haikun submarine, built by CSBC Corporation, Taiwan. The vessel was launched in September 2023 at CSBC's Kaohsiung shipyard, following an estimated NT$50 billion construction programme, and is scheduled for delivery in 2025.

A argued in court that the drawings were derived from reverse-engineering data supplied by Taiwan, based on submarines acquired from the Netherlands in the 1980s, and therefore did not constitute South Korea's core technology. The court rejected this defence, noting that the contract explicitly stated that intellectual property rights belonged to A's company, and that the export licence in question covered the leaked core drawings themselves—not any alleged "refinement" work.

Both the prosecution and A have appealed the first-instance ruling, meaning the case will continue through South Korea's appellate courts.

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Spanish Reporting Flags “Undeclared Heavy Cargo” on Ursa Major Before 2024 Sinking

Reports citing Spain’s La Verdad say investigators suspect Ursa Major carried undeclared VM-4SG reactor hulls allegedly bound for North Korea before it sank off Cartagena in December 2024.

30, December 2025

Rescue services captured the cargo ship Ursa Major with its engines stopped and a starboard list. Image credit: La Verdad.

Reporting attributed to a Spanish investigation into the December 2024 loss of the Russian heavy-lift vessel Ursa Major says the ship was carrying undeclared, strategically sensitive cargo, according to Spanish regional newspaper La Verdad, as cited by maritime and defense outlets.

The reports say investigators believe the ship was transporting two VM-4SG naval nuclear reactor hulls and that the destination was North Korea—an assertion that, if accurate, would point to an illicit transfer of nuclear-related technology. An official public release in the materials available to these outlets has not corroborated La Verdad’s account.

Reuters’ contemporaneous coverage of the sinking in December 2024 described Ursa Major as having gone down in the Mediterranean after an engine-room explosion, with 14 crew rescued and two missing, and with the owner saying the voyage to Vladivostok involved port cranes and icebreaker-related cargo.

Where the Spanish investigation reporting differs is on the cargo declaration and the damage narrative. The captain had declared that the cargo consisted of empty containers and port-related equipment, the outlets reported. Still, aerial surveillance allegedly identified heavy containers at the stern that were not listed. According to the same reporting, Spanish authorities recorded a sudden course change and propulsion loss on 22 December 2024, followed by a distress call the next day from roughly 60 nautical miles off Cartagena.

The same accounts say an examination found a hull breach with metal deformation inward—an indicator consistent with an external impact rather than an internal blast. They further speculate that the breach pattern did not resemble a conventional torpedo and could align with a high-speed supercavitating weapon. However, this remains an inference in the reporting rather than a confirmed attribution by Spanish authorities.

The incident response described in the report includes the appearance of the Russian landing ship Ivan Gren, which allegedly demanded that Spanish vessels withdraw from the area, followed by flares and electronic warfare activity. The ship then disappeared from the surface and ultimately sank to a reported depth of about 2,500 m, with seismographs said to have recorded vibrations consistent with a low-yield underwater detonation at the time of the final descent.

Subsequently, the Russian oceanographic vessel Yantar arrived on scene; analysts cited by the outlets suggest it may have supported an operation to remove, destroy, or conceal remnants of the alleged cargo.

The claims have gained additional attention as North Korea has recently publicized progress on a nuclear-powered submarine hull, raising renewed questions among analysts about how Pyongyang could source reactor-related know-how and components.

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Japan Bars Kawasaki Heavy Industries From Defense Bids After Submarine Engine Data Fraud

Japan’s Defense Ministry suspended Kawasaki Heavy Industries from bidding after confirming falsified submarine engine test data affecting 23 active submarines and improper gifting tied to repair contracts.

A submarine handover to the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force by Kawasaki Heavy Industries (early 2023). Credit: Kyodo News (© Kyodo).

30, December 2025

Japan’s Ministry of Defense has suspended Kawasaki Heavy Industries from bidding on ministry projects after investigations confirmed falsified test data for submarine engines and improper gifting tied to ship repair and procurement practices, according to Japanese and industry reporting.

The ministry said fuel-efficiency test data were manipulated for engines fitted on 23 of Japan’s 24 active submarines, with only the most recently delivered boat unaffected. Reports said the falsification involved using target figures—rather than measured results—in trial documentation for items such as fuel efficiency, and authorities stated the issue did not undermine safe operation but meant contractual fuel-consumption requirements were not met.

Japan’s penalty is a 2.5-month bidding suspension, Japanese outlets reported. Maritime industry reporting said officials initially considered a five-month suspension but reduced it in light of the company’s notification, admission, and cooperation.

In a detailed notice dated 26 December 2025, Kawasaki Heavy Industries said internal investigations found misconduct spanning submarine repair work, marine-engine testing, and related governance controls, describing the situation as “very serious” and outlining measures to prevent recurrence. The company’s disclosures include efforts to strengthen controls, including work to increase the use of automation in inspection and verification processes.

The ministry’s actions also followed findings on inappropriate benefits provided to some naval personnel. Reports said items included consumer electronics and leisure goods, with authorities estimating $7,400 in gifts over the past six years, while disciplinary steps were taken against sailors involved in overseeing repair and supply contracts.

The case sits within a broader scrutiny of marine engine test integrity in Japan. A separate disclosure by IHI Power Systems in 2024 described improper alterations to fuel-consumption records, and Hitachi Zosen (now Kanadevia) also disclosed misconduct in 2024 related to shop-trial fuel-consumption data.

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US FMC Presses Spain Port-Access Probe After 2024 Maersk Denials

The FMC is seeking additional comments as it investigates Spain’s Algeciras denials of US-flagged Maersk vessels in November 2024 and weighs possible countermeasures.

Photo source: marinetraffic / © John Clark

31, December 2025

The US Federal Maritime Commission has widened its information-gathering in an investigation into Spain’s alleged restrictive port practices, after Spanish authorities refused docking privileges at Algeciras to US-flagged vessels operated under Maersk in November 2024.

In a notice published on 22 December 2025, the FMC said it is seeking additional public comment on “ongoing restrictions” that may be creating conditions unfavourable to shipping in US foreign trade, and on potential measures the Commission could consider to counterbalance those restrictions. Comments are due by 20 February 2026.

The FMC said multiple sources confirmed that, between 9 November 2024 and 14 November 2024, Spain refused docking privileges at APM Terminals in Algeciras to three US-flagged vessels operating under the US Maritime Security Program: Maersk Denver, Maersk Nysted, and Maersk Seletar.

In an update issued on 19 December 2025, the Commission reiterated that arbitration or commercial arrangements do not limit its ability to examine foreign government practices affecting US shipping, and outlined a range of potential remedies it may weigh. These include limitations on cargo, refusal of entry to vessels operating under Spain’s flag, or fines up to the current inflation-adjusted limit of $2,304,629 per voyage on Spanish-flagged vessels, depending on any findings.

The matter was initially opened in December 2024, when the FMC launched a formal investigation and requested industry input on reported denials of entry into Spanish ports involving vessels linked to US foreign commerce.

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Kidnapped CGas Saturn Crew Released After Gulf of Guinea Attack

Photo source: Wolgrang Berthel / Marine Traffic

30, December 2025

The nine seafarers taken during a pirate boarding of the LPG carrier CGas Saturn earlier this month have been released and are now safe, according to Christiania Gas.

The vessel was attacked on 3 December while transiting the Gulf of Guinea on passage toward Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. At the time, four crew members remained onboard and maintained control of the ship as it proceeded to safer waters. One of the mariners who stayed onboard sustained minor injuries and received medical attention.

In an update issued on 29 December, Christiania Gas said the abducted seafarers have been able to contact their families and are being repatriated to their home countries.

The case highlights the persistent, if diminished, security exposure in West African waters. Industry reporting citing International Maritime Bureau (IMB) figures indicates the Gulf of Guinea continued to record kidnapping-linked incidents in 2025, underscoring the ongoing need for voyage risk assessments and layered onboard security procedures when routing through the region.

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Liberia to enforce ISO rules on ship boarding gear

1, Janyuuary 2026

A new Marine Notice from the Republic of Liberia will require shipboard boarding arrangements to follow ISO-based standards from 1 July 2026. The circular covers accommodation ladders, aluminium shore gangways, their winches, and the related use of safety nets when people move between ship and shore.

Within the notice, a “safety net” is described as netting stretched between the vessel’s side and the boarding arrangement, intended to prevent a person using the ladder or gangway from falling into the sea or down onto the quay. Such netting is to be rigged in the way of accommodation ladders and gangways whenever there is a realistic risk that someone might fall from the access equipment itself or into the gap between the hull and the quay.

The Marine Notice also explains when this safety net may be omitted. The net is not required if both conditions are satisfied. First, the danger of a person slipping through the open sides of the access way is controlled by a rigid top rail and a side net fitted between that rail and the base of the accommodation ladder, including its upper and lower platforms, or the gangway structure. Second, the risk of a person going over the top rail is adequately reduced because the rail is installed in accordance with appropriate international standards and has a height of at least 1,000 mm.

s completed from 1 January 2010 onwards, any accommodation ladder or gangway used for boarding or leaving the ship and fitted on or after 1 July 2026 must comply with international standards accepted by the Administration. The notice refers in particular to ISO 5488:2015 for accommodation ladders and ISO 7061:2015 and ISO 7061:2024 for aluminium shore gangways serving seagoing ships, as well as comparable national rules approved by the flag.

Ships built before 1 January 2010 are subject to a slightly different approach. Where accommodation ladders or aluminium shore gangways are installed from 1 July 2026 on these older ships, they should, so far as is reasonably practicable, follow relevant international standards. The Marine Notice mentions ISO 5488:1979 and ISO 5488:2015 for accommodation ladders, and ISO 7061:1993, ISO 7061:2015, and ISO 7061:2024 for aluminium shore gangways, or national standards that the Administration has accepted.

The exact date thresholds apply to accommodation ladder winches. On ships completed from 1 January 2010, winches fitted from 1 July 2026 for operating accommodation ladders are to be designed and tested in line with international standards such as ISO 7364:2016, which covers deck machinery and winches for accommodation ladders.

For ships built before 2010, accommodation ladder winches installed from 1 July 2026 should, as far as reasonably practicable, comply with international standards recognised by the Administration, including ISO 7364:1983 and ISO 7364:2016.

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Engine Failure Leaves Bulker and Tug Aground off Hualien

A Panama-flagged bulk carrier and a harbour tug both ended up aground off Hualien on 1 January 2026 after an engine failure and a fouled tow line in rough monsoon seas, underlining towage risks in heavy weather.

The Panamanian-flagged vessel Tong Hong ran aground, and the rescue tugboats also became stuck.

2, January 2026

A New Year incident off Hualien, Taiwan, involving the Panama-flagged bulk carrier CSE PROSPERITY EXPRESS and a harbour tug is being cited as a sharp reminder of how a machinery breakdown in rough metocean conditions can quickly turn into multiple casualties.

On 1 January 2026, the bulk carrier reported a main engine failure while on pilot boarding standby for Hualien Port’s Berth 22. With propulsion lost, the ship was driven by strong northeast monsoon winds and heavy seas, drifting toward the coast and finally grounding on the northern side of the Hualien River mouth, near the Huaren seawall and the nearby beach area.

Harbour authorities deployed two port tugs to connect towing gear and support refloating efforts. During these manoeuvres, one tug experienced a serious problem when a tow line reportedly fouled its propulsion system. The tug then lost power and, in turn, ended up aground or stranded near the rocky and sandy shoreline.

Given the sea state and the tug’s position close to the surf zone, evacuation by boat was considered too risky. A Black Hawk helicopter was tasked with the winch operation, airlifting five crew members from the tug. One of them suffered a head wound and was taken ashore for medical treatment.

According to publicly available reports, seafarers on board the CSE PROSPERITY EXPRESS remained safe and were not in immediate danger. Authorities convened an emergency response meeting and arranged extra towage and salvage capacity. Further information on refloating efforts, the ship’s structural condition, and any pollution threat is expected to be released through official channels.

For ship operators and marine insurers, the sequence of events illustrates how a combination of technical failure and adverse metocean conditions can escalate. Losing power while a vessel is waiting for a pilot or anchorage in strong wind and swell can quickly result in uncontrolled drift and grounding. Towing operations under these conditions depend heavily on disciplined line handling, clear timing windows, and sufficient manoeuvring room; one entangled or parted line can convert a rescue platform into another casualty.

Early, conservative choices regarding weather limits, standby tug readiness, and the use of contingency anchors can significantly reduce the severity of such incidents. Confirmed findings on the cause of the engine breakdown, the extent of damage, and the progress of any refloating work are expected to be communicated through official updates and should be closely monitored by stakeholders.

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