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BOUNDARY COMMISSION TO RESOLVE MARITIME BORDER ISSUES WITH GHANA, OTHERS, SAYS OFFICIAL

by Vanguard News Nigeria

The National Boundary Commission (NBC) says it is poised to resolve the country's maritime boundary issues with Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, and Sao Tome and Principe, to enhance good neighbourliness at the maritime level.

Dr Richard Oji, Director of internal boundary in the NBC, made this known in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Sunday in Abuja.

Oji said the Commission had been doing a lot both internally and internationally on boundary issues.

"On Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea maritime boundary, we have worked over the years and found areas that have oil fields. We are trying to resolve the issues on contentious areas.

"We have discordant views but we are trying to find a way by which we can equitably share the border resources to benefit both countries on percentage terms," Oji said.

On Sao Tome and Principe's maritime boundary with Nigeria, Oji said that a Joint Development Zone had been created on a 60:40 sharing formula, to enable both countries benefit from the resources in the zone.

"This led to the establishment of a Joint Development Agency, with offices in Abuja, to facilitate collaboration in the area of oil exploration and Aqua Marine resources.

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10 KIDNAPPED FROM CARGO VESSEL IN NIGERIA

by Jite Eriabie

Ten seafarers were kidnapped from the general cargo vessel Milan while underway some 14 nautical miles off the Pennington Offshore Terminal in Nigeria on Thursday.

The vessel was in transit from Escravos to Douala, Cameroon, according to the UK-based maritime security firm Dryad Global.

"AIS indicates that the vessel was in a southbound transit when she stopped on the evening of the 25th. The precise time of the attack remains unclear," Dryad said.

The latest incident pushed the total number of kidnapped seafarers to 128 across 24 incidents in the Gulf of Guinea in 2020.

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'CABOTAGE LAW REVIEW PASSES FIRST READING'

by Sulaimon Salau

The House of Representatives Committee on Maritime Safety, Education and Administration has disclosed that the Coastal and Inland Shipping Act Amendment Bill has gone through first reading.

Chairman of the committee, Lynda Ikpeazu, who made this known during an oversight visit to NIMASA, said the proposed amendment would reflect contemporary issues that would be beneficial to indigenous ship owners.

She said: "A more responsive Cabotage law will stimulate opportunities and policies for giving seafarers jobs and improve on shipbuilding capacity."

Ikpeazu expressed confidence in the current management of NIMASA led by the Director-General, Dr. Bashir Jamoh.

He said: "The Director-General has laid a good foundation for the committee and we are here to monitor the activities of the Agency and see how it has performed so far as well as further legislative assistance needed to generate more revenue for the government.

"The NIMASA boss is doing his best to ensure that he repositions the Agency to deliver on its mandates. We will make sure we give the DG the necessary support he needs because we have seen him moving in the right direction. He has made it clear to us that he wants to address insecurity at the Gulf of Guinea.

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ECONOMY ON EDGE AS MILITANTS BLOW UP SHELL/AGIP GAS PIPELINES

by Abiola Odotola

Oil facilities owned by Shell/Agip were attacked on Wednesday by unidentified people in a sign that militant activities may have resumed again in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

Several explosions were heard in the facilities located at the Ikarama community in Yenagoa Bayelsa forcing Shell to shut down the facility. Nigeria faces a precarious economic crunch that cannot afford to be worsened by militant on oil facilities.

What they are saying:

According to media reports tracked by Nairametrics, a spokesperson from Shell, Michael Adande, confirmed the explosions admitting that the facility was shut down to minimize the impact.

"We have report of an interference on our pipeline about one kilometer from Ikarama Community in Bayelsa State. We immediately shut-in the line and we have informed the regulatory agencies and stakeholders. A joint investigation team led by government officials will determine the cause of the interference,"

Residents of the Ikarama community where the facility is located complained that they were currently battling with air pollution as a result of the incident. This was disclosed by a youth leader of the community, Ben Warder, in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria.

He said, "The incident resulted in air pollution from the gas pipeline and crude leak which members of the affected communities are battling to cope with."

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GREEK SHIPOWNERS CALL FOR VACCINE PRIORITY FOR SEAFARERS

by Ship & Ports

Seafarers should be given priority to benefit when vaccines for Covid-19 are available says the Union of Greek Shipowners (UGS).

During this extraordinary global health crisis, the UGS said seafarers remain faithful to their duty to supply the citizens of the world with essential goods, energy, food, medicines and medical equipment.

"They do so with professionalism, facing tremendous difficulties and personal sacrifices. It is therefore, absolutely necessary that their indispensable role and pressing needs are recognized, even with delay, and catered for by the international community," said the Greek owners body.

UGS president, Theodore Veniamis said, "We are deeply indebted to all the key workers, the heroes of this uneven battle, the doctors, the nurses, the scientists and others, but also to our seafarers who work tirelessly day and night during the pandemic. We are all witnessing with great admiration the significant efforts and progress that have been made to end this nightmare, and we are looking more hopefully into the future after the news that vaccines for COVID-19 are now near.

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President Union of Greek Shipowners (UGS). Theodore Veniamis

MARITIME UK LAUNCHES NEW GUIDANCE ON AUTONOMOUS VESSELS

by Hellenic Shipping News

Maritime UK has launched an updated version of the industry Code of Practice for Maritime Autonomous Ship Systems.

The accelerating pace of change in maritime autonomy has required updated guidance for those owning and operating Maritime Autonomous Ship Systems (MASS), previously referred to as Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships.

The Maritime UK Autonomous Systems Regulatory Working Group (MASRWG) published the first code of practice to global industry-wide acclaim in November 2017, with the second version following in November 2018 and third in November 2019. Whilst not a legal text, the Code has been used by manufacturers, service providers, and others as part of their day-to-day work. Many manufacturers have reported clients requiring compliance with the Code as a basis for contractual negotiations.

This new Code of Practice ushers in a new focus on "Ship Systems" as well as adding chapters on Cyber Security, Pilotage, Dynamic Positioning, and Vessel Data Recording.

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