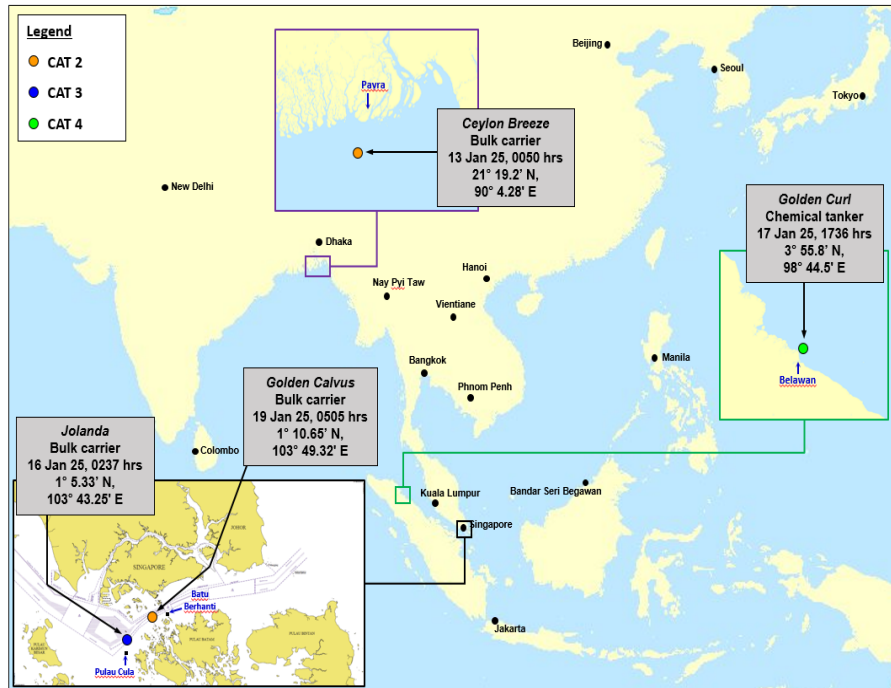


OVERVIEW

Four incidents of armed robbery against ships in Asia (two CAT 2¹ incidents, one CAT 3² incident and one CAT 4³ incident) were reported to the ReCAAP ISC. Of the two CAT 2 incidents, one occurred onboard a bulk carrier while anchored at Payra Outer Anchorage, Bangladesh on 13 Jan 2025, and the other occurred onboard a bulk carrier while underway off Batu Berhanti, Indonesia, in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) of the Singapore Strait (SS) on 19 Jan 2025. The CAT 3 incident occurred onboard a bulk carrier while underway off Pulau Cula, Indonesia, in the eastbound lane of the TSS of the SS on 16 Jan 2025. The CAT 4 incident occurred onboard a chemical tanker while anchored at Belawan Anchorage Area No. 6, Indonesia, on 17 Jan 2025. Details of the incidents are shown in table (*).



Factors	Location			
	Bangladesh	SOMS	Indonesia	SOMS
	Payra Outer Anchorage	2.96 nm north of Pulau Cula	Belawan Anchorage Area No.6	3.7 nm off Batu Berhanti
Type of ship	Bulk carrier	Bulk carrier	Chemical tanker	Bulk carrier
Date/Time	13 Jan 2025 at 0050 hrs	16 Jan 2025 at 0237 hrs	17 Jan 2025 at 1736 hrs	19 Jan 2025 at 0505 hrs
Number of perpetrators	10	2	2	6
Weapons	Knives and steel bars	Gun-like objects	Not armed	Parangs
Treatment of crew	Tied up	No injuries	No injuries	Tied up
Significance level	CAT 2	CAT 3	CAT 4	CAT 2
Items stolen	Ship property/stores	Nil	Unsecured items	Engine spares

AREA OF CONCERN

With the incidents in SS, a total of four incidents were reported in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) onboard ships since January 2025. The ReCAAP ISC advises ships to exercise enhanced vigilance when transiting SOMS and the littoral States to increase patrols and enforcement in these areas.

SITUATION OF ABDUCTION OF CREW IN THE SULU-CELEBES SEAS AND WATERS OFF EASTERN SABAH

Re-Assessment and Downgrading of threat level

The efforts by the Philippine Government in Zamboanga, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi through the conduct of continuous military operations led to the dismantling of the support base and neutralising the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Sulu archipelago. Against this backdrop, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), coordinated with other stakeholders and counterparts that have vital involvement in the maritime security of the Sulu-Celebes Seas, reviewed the threat situation and recommended further downgrading the threat level of 'Abduction of crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes Seas' from 'MODERATE' to 'MODERATE LOW', which implies that 'Incidents are unlikely to occur due to perpetrators' perceived lack of capability to orchestrate an attack. Nevertheless, minimal damages are expected to the vessel and crew in case of an attack'.

Update of ReCAAP ISC Advisory

- With downgrading of the threat on the 'Abduction of Crew for ransom in the Sulu-Celebes seas by the PCG, ReCAAP ISC have updated its Advisory for ships to **"exercise vigilance & adopt necessary preventive measures while transiting the area"**.
- For ships transiting the area, the **ship masters and crew are strongly encouraged to exercise extra vigilance and report** all incidents immediately to the Operation Centres of the Philippines and Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) of Malaysia. The **Contact Details** of the Operation Centres of the Philippines and ESSCOM of Malaysia are as shown in Picture 1.



Picture 1

¹ CAT (Category) 2 incident is moderately significant. Under this category, the perpetrators are likely to be armed with knives/machetes and in some incidents armed with guns. The crew is threatened or held hostage temporarily and, in some cases, the crew suffered injury and physical violence.

² CAT (Category) 3 incident is classified as "less significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are armed with knives/machetes or other items such as sticks or rods. Although the crew can be subjected to duress or threat during the incident, they are not harmed physically. In most CAT 3 cases, nothing is stolen. In cases where losses are reported, stores and engine spares are commonly stolen items.

³ CAT (Category) 4 incident is classified as "least significant" in nature. Under this category, the perpetrators are not armed, and the crew not injured.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ship master and crew are to report all incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the nearest coastal State and flag State, referring to the Poster on the *Contact Details for Reporting of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia*, exercise vigilance and adopt appropriate preventive measures taking reference from the *Regional Guide 2 to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia*; both produced by the ReCAAP ISC.

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Contact us at:	E: info@recaap.org	T: +65 6376 3063	F: +65 6376 3066

* Table at <https://www.recaap.org/resources/ck/files/Number%20of%20Incidents/2025/List%20of%20Incidents%20for%202025.pdf> for details of the incidents.