

enjoy free shipping and free returns



on spring's new arrivals. [Shop now](#)



PIPERLIME

Terrorism & Security

Singapore raises terror alert on Malacca Strait, one of the world's most important oil shipping lanes

Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore raised terror alert levels after a tip-off that terrorists are planning to attack vessels in the Malacca Strait. The threat hasn't prevented millions of barrels of oil from being shipped through the strait daily.



A Police Coast Guard vessel patrols the shipping lanes near freighters off the coast of Singapore Thursday. The Singapore Navy has received indications a terror group is planning attacks on oil tankers in the Strait of Malacca between Indonesia and Malaysia, a key shipping lane for world trade.

Vivek Prakash/Reuters

By Ben Hancock Contributor / March 5, 2010

• ***A daily summary of global reports on security issues.***



Map of Malacca Strait

Recent posts

03.09.10

Last suspect in Bali bombing may be dead

03.08.10

Suicide car bomb kills 12; Pakistan says it captured US Al Qaeda member

Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore raised security alerts today following a foreign tip that terrorists are plotting to attack vessels plying the Malacca Strait, though millions of barrels of oil continue to pass through daily.

"All alert levels have been raised, not just for ships, but also for the security measures that we have undertaken for Singapore," Singapore's home affairs minister said today in Parliament.

In one of the world's busiest waterways, a disruption in the strait – the narrow body of water between Malaysia and Indonesia (see map) – would have a massive ripple effect on

03.05.10

Singapore raises terror alert on Malacca Strait, one of the world's most important oil shipping lanes

03.04.10

China's military spending slows, on paper

03.03.10

Iraq police and hospital attacked in triple suicide bombing ahead of Sunday election

Related Stories

[Pirates ahead!](#)

[Maritime officials seek more authority to confront pirates](#)

[Modern-day pirates use speedboats to raid Southeast Asian sea lanes](#)

regional and world economies. Roughly one-third of oil shipments transported by boat pass through the strait, making it one of the two most important oil shipping lanes in the world, according to 2006-07 data from the US Department of Energy.

The advisory sent out by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) on Wednesday has reportedly led to increased maritime and air patrols but has not affected shipping traffic. Singapore's Navy has put more ships into the strait and boosted the Coast Guard presence to prevent an attack on the island itself. Police boats have been "tasked to look out for, and inspect, small boats that come close to large vessels that are berthed at anchorages here," reports Singapore's **Straits Times**.

Malaysia's Coast Guard said it has increased security in the narrow waterway, and Indonesian Defense Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro told **Reuters** the country has also

stepped up patrols. "Oil tankers can pass, but we will increase our readiness," the minister said.

The original tip-off came from Japan, Reuters quoted a Thai official as saying, which informed the IMB that ships could be hijacked. A bureau official reconfirmed that this was a terror threat, not a piracy threat. (Read about Japan's increased efforts against piracy here.)

Security analysts have said the Malacca Strait, also bordered by Singapore, is a prime target because more than 30 percent of global trade and half the world's oil shipments pass through the narrow waterway.

John Harrison, a terrorism expert at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore, told the **Associated Press** that Al Qaeda and the Southeast Asian militant group Jemaah Islamiyah would be the most likely to carry out such an attack.

Harrison said Singapore's warning likely reflects a credible threat.

"Both the Singapore navy and Home Affairs Ministry are not bodies that are known to hype any threats," Harrison said. "If they are putting this information out, it means they are very concerned that something may be developing."

"The shipping industry should and is taking this very seriously," he added.

Indonesian police have blamed Jemaah Islamiyah for suicide bombings of the J.W. Marriott and Ritz Carlton hotels in Jakarta in July 2009 that killed seven people and the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people.

Singaporean Defense Minister Teo Chee Hean said the Republic of Singapore Navy took "immediate action" to respond to the alert, reports **Channel News Asia**.

Piracy along the 550-mile strait was a major problem until about a year ago, but the danger has tapered off in recent years thanks to increased patrols. Terrorism is seen as a new problem, and the city-state of Singapore recently set up a center to handle threats in the strait; six countries have liaison offices in the city-state.

So far the warning has not affected shipping insurance rates, and shippers were continuing to use the route, says Reuters.

"Are people going to avoid the straits? I would be stunned if they did," said energy consultant John Vautrain of Purvin and Gertz in Singapore. "If you have to take additional security measures, you take them. That is less difficult than bypassing Malacca."

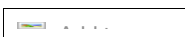
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Login

[This blog post](#)

[All blog posts](#)


Subscribe to this blog post's comments through...




 [Subscribe in NewsGator Online](#)

 [Add to My Yahoo!](#)


 [Feedblitz](#)

 [Add to Pageflakes](#)

 [Add to Google](#)

 [Subscribe with Bloglines](#)

 ...

 [RSS Icon](#) [RSS Feed](#)

Subscribe via email

[Subscribe](#)

[Follow the discussion](#)

Comment (1)

 [Logging you in...](#)

[Close](#)

Login to IntenseDebate

[Or create an account](#)

Username or Email:

Password:

[Forgot login?](#)

[OpenID](#)

[Cancel Login](#)

[Close](#)  **WordPress.com**

Username or Email:

Password:

[Lost your password?](#)

[Cancel Login](#)

[Close](#)

Login with your OpenID

[Or create an account using OpenID](#)

OpenID URL:

[Back](#)

Cancel **Login**

[Dashboard](#) | [Edit profile](#) | [Logout](#)

Logged in as

Sort by: [Date](#) [Rating](#) [Last Activity](#)

0 [Vote up](#) [Vote down](#)



Tony Gillotte · 4 days ago

An important story on this important maritime subject. However, not once did Hancock mention the cooperative approach, taking years to work out, that was arranged between Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan and Thailand to have their navies cooperate to reduce the threat of pirates boarding and hijacking vessels approaching and using the Malacca Straits. Not once did the author say how much pirate attacks had been reduced in the Malacca Straits. Not once did the author explain that this maritime chokepoint is one of three straits in the area that can be used by oil tankers in case of increased boardings or terrorist attacks in Malacca Straits. Not once did the author mention that most pirate attacks originated on the Indonesia side of the straits, especially in the coastline area near Aceh. Not once was it mentioned that an idea proposed to have armed guards on each oil tanker but the idea was discarded when the cooperating nations could not agree on the details. Other than that, the article was mostly correct.

Tony Gillotte

[Reply](#)

Post a new comment

Enter text right here!

Comment as a Guest, or login:

[Login to IntenseDebate](#)

[Login to WordPress.com](#)

[Login to OpenID](#)

Name

Email

Website (optional)

Displayed next to your comments.

Not displayed publicly.

If you have a website, link to it here.

OpenID URL

Comment as a Guest or login using OpenID

Submit Comment

Subscribe to

By clicking "Submit Comment", you agree to our [Terms of Service](#).

We do not publish all comments, and we do not publish comments immediately. The comments feature is a forum to discuss the ideas in our stories. Constructive debate - even pointed disagreement - is welcome, but personal attacks on other commenters are not, and will not be published.

Tip: Do not write a novel. Keep it short. We will not publish lengthy comments. Come up with your own statements. This is not a place to cut and paste an email you received. If we recognize it as such, we won't post it.

Please do not post any comments that are commercial in nature or that violate copyrights.

Finally, we will not publish any comments that we regard as obscene, defamatory, or intended to incite violence.

Comments by IntenseDebate

A promotional banner for Piperlime. On the left is a tan high-heeled sandal. Next to it are four daisies in white, light yellow, and yellow. The text "enjoy free shipping AND free returns" is written in orange, with "AND" in all caps. Below this, it says "on spring's new arrivals. [Shop now](#)". To the right of the text is a brown thong sandal. On the far right is the Piperlime logo, which consists of a green lime slice icon and the word "PIPERLIME" in green capital letters.

enjoy free shipping AND free returns
on spring's new arrivals. [Shop now](#) PIPERLIME

© The Christian Science Monitor. All Rights Reserved. Terms under which this service is provided to you. [Privacy Policy](#).