

LATE NIGHT: HIGH SEAS HIJINX - PIRATES AND MONKEYS ATTACK!

✖ Arrrrrr. Thats right matey, teh pirates be back. It was just last April that US flagged ship the Maersk Alabama was seized by Somali pirates causing a five day standoff finally resolved when Navy snipers took out the pirates which by then had the Maersk captain hostage in a lifeboat. The Maersk, its captain, crew and cargo were all intact and saved.

That was then, this is now; and now the Maersk Alabama, yep the same damn ship, has been involved in yet another pirate attack. This time, however, the pesky pirates were fended off by an onboard security team. From The Guardian:

Somali pirates attacked the container ship Maersk Alabama today for the second time in seven months. Private guards on board the US-flagged ship repelled the attack with gunfire and a high-decibel noise device.

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Four pirates in a skiff attacked the ship again today at about 6.30am local time, opening fire with automatic weapons from about 300 yards away, a statement from the US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain said. A security team repelled the attack by using evasive manoeuvres, small-arms fire and a Long Range Acoustic Device, which can beam earsplitting alarm tones.

Vice Admiral Bill Gortney of the US naval forces central command said the Maersk Alabama had followed the maritime industry's best practices in having a security team on board. "This is a great example of how merchant mariners can take proactive action to prevent being attacked and why we recommend that ships

follow industry best practices if they're in high-risk areas," he said in a statement.

Roger Middleton, a piracy expert at the Chatham House thinktank in London, said the international maritime community was solidly against armed guards, but that American ships have taken a different line.

Aye, they be rough seas for teh Alabama, but she made it through unscathed this time. If you are wondering why the Maersk Alabama was back at it on the same route, refer back to this old post, which explains that when transporting American humanitarian relief supplies, organizations must use a ship chartered in the US, US flagged, and American crew pursuant to US law. There are not that many available for this task, and the Alabama is one of them. Fascinating factoid: the respective captains of the Alabama for the two pirate attacks are good friends and side by side classmates together at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. Go figure.

And that is not the only news from the haunts of Davy Jones on the front burner today. Oh no. Back in March, as you may recall, an US submarine had a little oopsie and collided with an US warship. Turns out it was because those randy sailors were too busy kickin out the jams with their rigged up juke joint boom boxes in the control rooms. From the New York Times the results of the Navy investigation are announced:

The crew aboard a U.S. submarine made dozens of errors before the vessel collided with an American warship in the Persian Gulf, an accident that exposed lax leaders who tolerated sleeping, slouching and a radio room rigged with music speakers, a Navy review found.

Navy investigators placed blame for the March collision on the submarine's "ineffective and negligent command

leadership," including what they called a lack of standards and failure to adequately plan for crossing the busy Strait of Hormuz.

Radios? Wacky behavior? The Straits of Hormuz??
Oh yeah, you just know the real culprit is The Filipino Monkey! Oh, and by the way, that darn Filipino Monkey haunts the Potomac too!