

Italian Navy comes to aid of disabled tanker after pirates steal cargo

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The Italian Navy was reported to be assisting South Korean product tanker **B. Ocean** (IMO 9377834) which was robbed and left disabled by pirates last week in the Gulf of Guinea. The tanker had tried to proceed under its own power to Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire, but it was then established that the tanker required assistance. It was not expected to reach port before later this week.

Italian patrol vessel Comandante Borsini was sent to assist the B. Ocean, which had been boarded by pirates on November 23rd.

The pirates left the vessel the following day and the captain of the tanker reported the incident to his bosses in South Korea.

Security forces reported losing communication with the tanker last Wednesday November 23rd and requested the assistance of vessels operating in the area to report sightings or any unusual activity in the area.

The Italian patrol vessel reported that when it reached the tanker it was adrift about 300 miles from the coast, suffering from technical problems with its engines. A security team from the San Marco Marina Brigade was transferred to the B. Ocean by helicopter. They said that the 19 crew members were safe, but that the pirates had robbed them of money and valuables. The pirates also stole a portion of the vessel's fuel cargo. In January 2022 it was reported that pirates stole 977 tons of fuel in a similar incident.

The technical team from the Borsini was working to assist to restore propulsion on the B. Ocean. The Italian Navy reported that the pirates had tampered with the navigation and communication systems. They had also caused extensive damage to the engine.

Initial reports indicated that the B. Ocean was expected to reach Abidjan on 2009-built, Marshall Islands-flagged, 3,978 gt. Ocean is owned by Ocean Marine Holdings Co Ltd care of manager SK Shipping Co Ltd of Seoul, South Korea. ISM manager is Doorae Shipping Co Ltd of Busan, South Korea. It is entered with Skuld

(Business Unit Skuld Hong Kong) on behalf of Ocean marine Holdings Ltd. No AIS since November 12th.