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Top of the World Telegraph

...telecommunications and transportation news
from the Arctic

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THIS WEEK FROM AROUND THE ARCTIC

Russia's nuclear industry looks towards Arctic shelf

BarentsObserver, 11/14/08

The Russian nuclear industry sees the Arctic shelf as its new growth market. It now suggests the construction of nuclear-powered underwater drilling ships, as well as using nuclear-powered icebreakers and floating nuclear power plants in the development of offshore hydrocarbon projects.

Voxbone announces iNum: the Internet's first global 'country code'

TeleGeography's CommsUpdate, 11/12/08

Voxbone, a provider of local telephone numbers to communications service providers and businesses worldwide, has launched iNum, a global telephone number that enables anyone to establish a local presence anywhere in the world. Voxbone will use the +883 'country code', newly created by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), to create a global country code and associated banks of direct-inward-dial (DID) numbers.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

MARITIME

ALASKA/UNITED STATES

MARAD – Oil prices, modal shift (MarineLink, 11/17/08)

<http://www4.marinelink.com/Story/ShowStory.aspx?StoryID=213532>

The Maritime Administration (MARAD) issued a report on the impact of oil prices on transportation markets. Among other things, the study found that the more fuel efficient modes, such as water transportation, are far less likely to be affected by fuel price increases than are the less fuel efficient means of transportation, particularly over longer shipping distances.

(11/12/08). *Link to [full report](#).*

CANADA

Supply ships running up bills (The Chronicle Herald, 11/13/08)

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/Canada/1089985.html>

The Canadian navy has spent millions of dollars over the past three years to keep old supply ships afloat. Documents obtained by Le Journal de Montreal under the Access to Information Act, show one ship, Halifax-based HMCS Preserver, required \$17.4 million in repairs since 2005. HMCS Preserver and the Esquimalt, B.C.-based HMCS Protector are about 40 years old and Canada's sole tanker supply ships.

NORWAY

Norwegian firm orders ships to sail around Africa (MSN Money, 11/18/08)

<http://news.moneycentral.msn.com/provider/providerarticle.aspx?feed=AP&date=20081118&id=9389175>

The Norwegian shipping group Odfjell SE has ordered its more than 90 tankers to sail all the way around Africa to avoid the risk of attack by Somali pirates, instead of taking the Suez Canal shortcut through the Gulf of Aden.

Salvage contract for U-864 (MarineLink, 11/12/08)

<http://www4.marinelink.com/Story/ShowStory.aspx?StoryID=213488>

On 9 February 1945, the German submarine U-864 was torpedoed by the British submarine HMS Venturer. The U-864 sank about two nautical miles west of the island Fedje, just north of Bergen, with the loss of all 73 on board. The submarine's cargo included approximately 67 tons of metallic mercury which is highly toxic. As the U-864 was on a mission it was also carrying a full load of weapons. The vessel's wreckage is considered to be a potential long-term threat to human health and the environment.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

ALASKA/UNITED STATES

Obama preparing comprehensive technology policy (International Herald Tribune, 11/12/08)

<http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/11/12/style/otech.php>

President-elect Obama has called for tax and loan incentives to spur construction of broadband networks. He wants to divert some of the Universal Service Fund, which the federal government uses to subsidize telephone service in rural areas, to build high-speed Internet lines that could also carry phone traffic.

ICELAND

Iceland green data centre dream still alive (IceNews, 11/13/08)

<http://www.icenews.is/index.php/2008/11/13/iceland-green-data-centre-dream-still-alive/>

Several Icelandic companies have ambitions to use Iceland's renewable energy, ample land, cool climate, educated workforce and low crime rate to turn the country into a global data centre hub. The country's location means the direct export of electricity is difficult, expensive and

inefficient. This means aluminium smelting, data centres and other energy intensive activities become default ways of exporting the energy.

RUSSIA

Russia's high-tech sector reels (New York Times, 11/17/08)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/17/world/europe/17russia.html?ref=technology>

Last month, as Russia's stock market swooned and the credit crunch took hold around the world, Russian companies spooked by memories of previous bank collapses scrambled to protect what cash they had. Venture capital dried up virtually overnight

AVIATION

ALASKA/UNITED STATES

Bush trying again to stem holiday flight delays (New York Times, 11/18/08)

http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/washington/AP-Bush-Holiday-Travel.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=aviation&st=nyt&oref=slogin

Anticipating another holiday travel crunch, President Bush said on Tuesday that his administration was taking steps to prevent frustrating flight delays during the busy Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday seasons.

REGION

Russia invited to Iceland's airbase (BarentsObserver, 11/12/08)

<http://www.barentsobserver.com/russia-invited-to-icelands-airbase.4525408-16149.html>

In an official lunch with foreign diplomats, Icelandic President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson shocked neighboring Nordic countries with inviting Russia to take use of the strategically important airbase.

Ryanair mulls flights from Sweden to U.S. (The Local, 11/12/08)

<http://www.thelocal.se/15632/20081112/>

A planned new transatlantic venture from budget airline Ryanair may see flights departing from Sweden to the United States within the next few years. "Our first routes will be to New York, Boston and Washington, with Florida and Chicago also hopefully joining. Depending on the success of these flights, we will then roll out other routes to the west coast and onwards," said Ryanair spokesman Stephen McNamara.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

Air New Zealand sets date for biofuel-powered flight (Energy Business Review, 11/13/08)

http://www.energy-business-review.com/article_news.asp?guid=7DA57E0D-AC42-417F-B4D7-44C0F685CDEE

Air New Zealand and Boeing have announced December 3, 2008, as the date for the airline's first sustainable biofuels flight from Auckland, New Zealand using a 747-400 jetliner. Using proprietary UOP fuel processing technology, the jatropha crude oil was successfully converted

to biojet fuel, marking the world's first large-scale production run of a commercially viable and sustainable biofuel for aviation use.

OTHER AREAS OF GENERAL INTEREST

ALASKA/UNITED STATES

CANADA

New film underlines Arctic relocation of the 1950s (SIKU News, 11/18/08)

<http://www.sikunews.com/art.html?artid=5762&catid=1>

In the 1950s, the Canadian government brought families of Inuit peoples to the High Arctic with promises of plentiful game and better living conditions, as a means of establishing sovereignty over these islands – thus misleading them into accepting the “temporary” and “voluntary” relocation without being informed of the political stakes.

ICELAND

Iceland between Europe, Russia, Norway (BarentsObserver, 11/18/08)

<http://www.barentsobserver.com/iceland-between-europe-russia-norway.4527261-16149.html>

The deep financial crisis at Iceland might make the country apply for EU membership. At the same time, the strategically located island continues negotiations with Russia over a major loan.

REGION

20 million EUR on cooperation with Russia (BarentsObserver, 11/18/08)

<http://www.barentsobserver.com/20-million-eur-on-cooperation-with-russia.4526375-16149.html>

Finland plans to spend 20 million EUR on joint projects with Russia in 2009. This week a Russian-Finnish intergovernmental group on cross-border cooperation listed priorities for the period 2009-2011.

Arctic ice melt sparks plankton blooms (Discovery News, 11/12/08)

<http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2008/11/12/arctic-ocean-plankton.html>

Record summer sea ice losses in the Arctic Ocean are now leading to bursts of ocean life in the newly open waters, say researchers watching the north polar sea from space. What makes the phytoplankton trend surprising is that the microscopic plant-life continues to boom each summer without any signs of slowing.

UNCLOS (UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA)

Commission backs Norwegian perspective on Arctic: No new treaty (EUobserver, 11/13/08)

<http://euobserver.com/9/27104>

No new treaty is necessary to protect the Arctic, according to the European Commission. The current Law of the Sea is sufficient. "It's important to both Norway and the EU that the [UN

Convention on the Law of the Sea applies," said Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. "Of course there is a need for more regulations from the International Maritime Organisation, but the fundamental approach must be the Law of the Sea."

Canada's Arctic claim 'promising': researcher (National Post, 11/11/08)

<http://www.nationalpost.com/news/canada/story.html?id=950752>

The federal scientist heading Canada's bid to claim thousands of square kilometres of Arctic Ocean seabed under a UN convention says a joint U.S.-Canada mapping mission to the Beaufort Sea this fall yielded "very promising" results that could vastly extend this country's territory in one of the polar region's richest target zones for offshore oil and gas.

FISHERIES

Alarm at shrimp shortage in Greenland (Sermitsiaq, 11/13/08)

<http://sermitsiaq.gl/erhverv/article62937.ece?lang=EN>

Biologists at Greenland's Nature Institute in Pinngortitaleriffik fear a severe blow in shrimp stocks if catches are not reduced by 20,000 tons. Recent surveys from Cape Farewell to Upernavik area and catch reports from fishing fleets show that there are too many shrimp being caught. As a result, biologists are recommending reducing the total quota for West Greenland to 110,000 in 2009.

Herring fishing successful in Iceland (IcelandReview, 11/12/08)

http://www.icelandreview.com/icelandreview/daily_news/?cat_id=28304&ew_0_a_id=315246

Herring fishing has been successful in Iceland this season and so far roughly 6,000 tons have been transported to the Westman Islands, south of Iceland. The Westman Islands have a total herring quota of nearly 40,000 tons. The herring is mostly caught in Breidafjörður fjord, west Iceland.

Audio: Pollock fishery closes with nearly all the quota caught (APRN, 11/11/08)

<http://aprn.org/2008/11/11/pollock-fishery-closes-with-near-all-of-the-quota-caught/>

The pollock fishery has closed for the year. All together the sectors caught nearly all of the quota. Salmon and halibut bycatch numbers are down, thanks to enforcement of Amendment 80, which affected the non-pelagic catcher-processors in the Bering Sea.

CLIMATE CHANGE

UN says greenhouse gas emissions rose in 2000-06 (New York Times, 11/17/08)

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/business/AP-EU-Germany-Climate-Change.html>

Greenhouse gas emissions by 40 industrialized nations that signed the Kyoto Protocol climate treaty have dropped an average of 5 percent below 1990 levels, U.N. officials reported Nov. 17. The 1997 treaty required the industrialized nations that signed it to collectively reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other warming gases by about 5 percent below 1990 levels by

2012 -- the amount now reached. But the drop reported Monday was attributed mostly to economic decline in former communist eastern European countries in the 1990s.

Russia the next climate recalcitrant (The Australian, 11/17/08)

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24659919-2703,00.html>

The melting of the Arctic ice cap has created an awkward new threat to international climate change talks by convincing senior officials in Moscow that Russia stands to reap an economic bonanza from ice-free northern oceans. Analysts and negotiators in Moscow and other capitals say Russia has taken "a backseat role" in negotiations about a new treaty to fight global warming, and warn that Russia could replace the Bush administration as the leading obstacle to a new Kyoto-style agreement.

Climate change could produce inbred bears: scientists (Nunatsiaq News, 11/14/08)

http://www.nunatsiaq.com/news/climate/81114_1705.html

Groups of polar bears in southern Hudson Bay may be cut off from potential mates during their breeding season if shorter periods of ice cover mean they can't move around the region as easily as they do now. If these groups of polar bears become isolated, the resulting inbreeding could affect their health, suggests a recently published study by scientists from Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.

FROM THE TELEGRAPH WIRES

FROM THE TELEGRAPH WIRES provides readers the opportunity to share their views on a specific news article and/or notify readers where other published news articles on Arctic marine transport, aviation or telecommunications can be found by electronic means (e.g., web link). Please direct all inquiries to nhemsath@institutenorth.org. We look forward to your input.

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