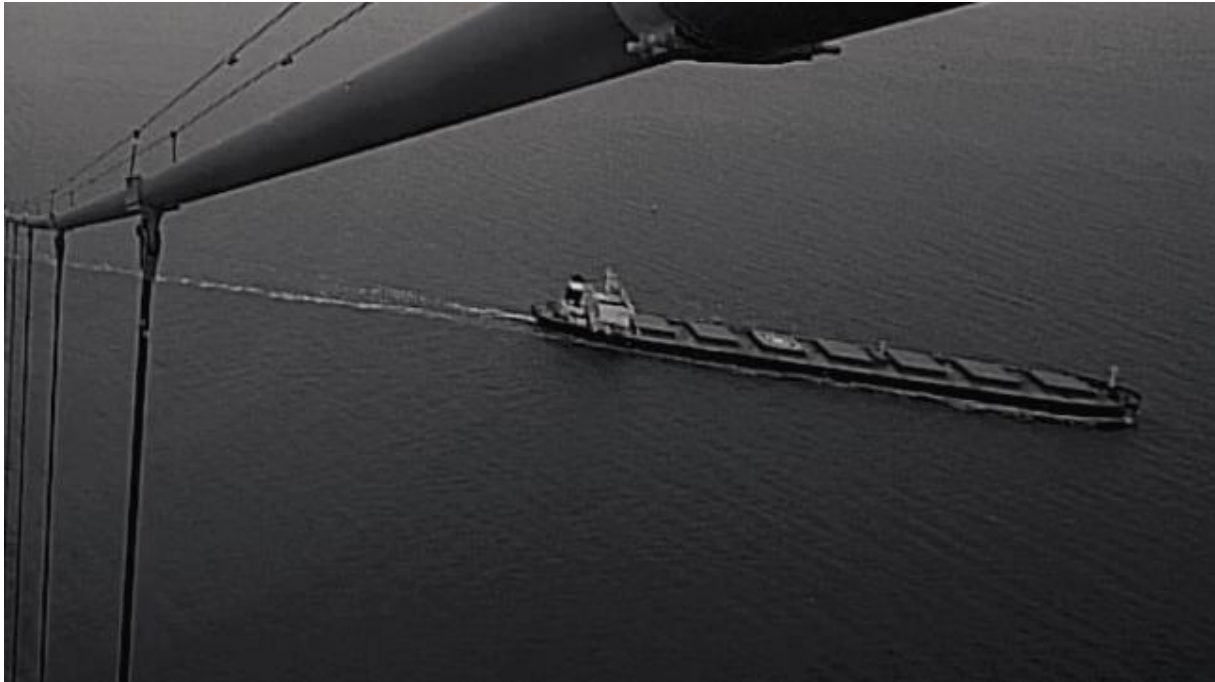


Chinese Ship Suspected of Subsea Cable Sabotage Has a Twisted Anchor



Yi Peng 3 passes under the Great Belt Bridge (Storebaelt Bridge webcam)

Published Nov 24, 2024 5:22 PM by [The Maritime Executive](#)

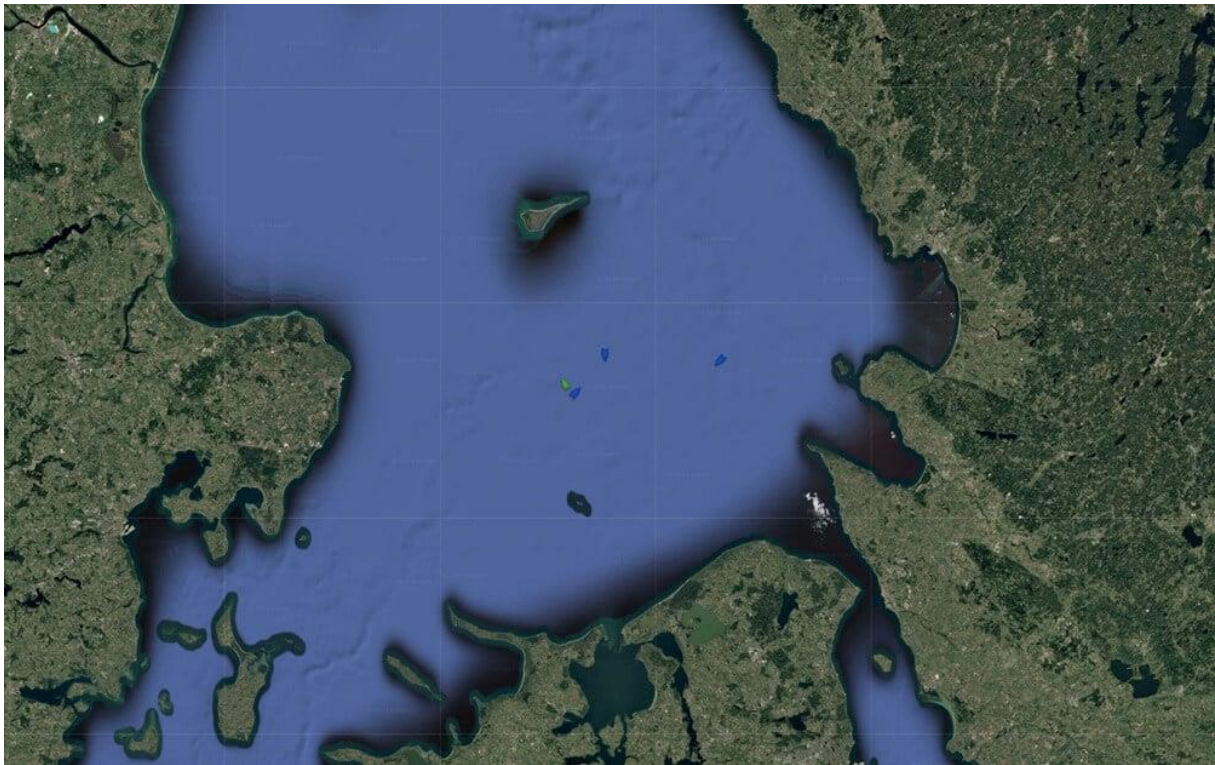
A Chinese bulker happened to be maneuvering near two subsea cables at the time they were severed last weekend, and it appears to have a damaged anchor, according to Danish public radio outlet DR.

The bulker *Yi Peng 3* was outbound from St. Petersburg in the Baltic during the timeframe of two back-to-back cable breaks on November 17-18. Its AIS record shows that it exhibited unusual course and speed changes at suspicious locations, attracting scrutiny from the authorities. "The ship has been near the two places at certain times when the incidents have taken place," police inspector Per Engstrom told SVT.

A Danish Navy patrol vessel intercepted and shadowed the *Yi Peng 3* as it transited towards the Great Belt, and the bulker decided to interrupt its voyage to go to anchor in the Kattegat shortly after. Denmark stopped short of saying that the *Yi Peng 3* had been detained, but a Danish patrol vessel has been monitoring it closely. Two other NATO vessels - German and Swedish - have joined to create a growing government flotilla near the *Yi Peng 3*.

Engstrom told SVT that the authorities would need evidence of a crime in Swedish waters to justify a detention or a boarding, and the available information does not yet rise to that standard.

"Everything points to the Chinese ship. It has slowed from 6.9 to 3.4 knots around the damaged cables and was in a Russian port before sailing out into the Baltic," former chief Danish defense intelligence analyst Jacob Kaarsbo told outlet TT over the weekend.



Yi Peng 3 (green) accompanied by the NATO government vessels HDMS Hvidbjoernen, Bad Deuben and Poseidon (blue) ([Pole Star](#))

DR obtained a photo of the *Yi Peng 3*'s port side anchor, and the news outlet showed the image to several maritime experts for their thoughts. The [photo shows](#) that the anchor's flukes are clearly twisted at the tips.

"They are twisted in different directions, which may very well indicate that one side of the anchor has become stuck in something down on the bottom or in some rocks," mariner Capt. Lars Bo Nielsen told DR. "I have never seen such a bent anchor before."

The last serious cable break in the Baltic was caused by the Chinese boxship *NewNew Polar Bear*, Chinese authorities confirmed earlier this year. Half of the *Polar Bear*'s [anchor was recovered](#) near a ruptured gas pipeline between Finland and Estonia: it had been dragged for hundreds of miles, its stock had torn in two, and one fluke had broken off. An investigation into the *NewNew Polar Bear* incident is still under way, and investigators have not yet concluded whether the anchor damage was accidental or an act of sabotage.

This time, governments around the Baltic are working on the assumption that the cable damage was intentional. "No one believes that these cables were accidentally damaged. And I don't want to believe in the versions that anchors are to blame," said German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius last Tuesday. "So we have to conclude, without knowing who did that, that this is a hybrid action. And we also have to assume, without knowing, of course, that this is sabotage."