



MAKING WAVES

The Fortnightly e-News Brief of the National Maritime Foundation

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Regional Peace with CSCAP

- Ron Huisken and Anthony Milner

First, how not to step forward: in June 2008 then Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd argued that the Asia-Pacific was moving into a new, more dangerous era.

He saw the need to strengthen regional institutions, especially through cementing US participation. In a speech that grabbed wide international attention he proposed the creation of an Asia-Pacific Community.

The excitement of this initiative diminished during the following months as it became clear that no country in Asia would offer serious support. Arguably, Rudd's campaign weakened rather than enhanced Australia's influence in the region. He failed to recognise that institutional progress in Asia, when it takes place at all, tends to be achieved through gradualist diplomacy and often informal channels.

One recent example comes from the Council for Security Co-operation in the Asia Pacific. At a glance, the advance may seem modest and subtle; it focuses on the way current regional institutions may relate to one another — but it is based on a genuine regional consensus, and is significant.

CSCAP is a network of security specialists in which Australia works with China and even North Korea as well as the US, Japan and 16 other Asia-Pacific countries. Developed across more than two decades — and with Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries playing a central role — CSCAP is a non-government process, but its members tend to have close contact with their national governments, and seek to make the organisation's work relevant to government priorities.

CSCAP members tend to agree that the Asia-Pacific is becoming more dangerous, especially with growing strategic competition between the major powers, and sympathise with those in government who consider the extant multilateral institutions — the ASEAN Regional Forum, the East Asia Summit and so forth — not yet strong enough to play a full role in preserving regional stability.

CSCAP, however, understands that any progress depends on the patient building of consensus. A high-profile proposal from one country can sharpen rather than moderate national rivalries. Governments are not always the best agents of change. Exploring new regional initiatives in so-called track two bodies such as CSCAP is less hazardous. It is offering the opportunity to test ideas for regional co-operation without locking national governments into rigid, and often contentious, policy settings.

In this spirit, CSCAP met in Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and Tokyo during the past year and forged agreement on key issues on the management of security in our region. The proposals are constructive and, equally important, grounded in a widespread regional consensus.

They acknowledge first that ASEAN must remain central in the multilateral architecture. This in itself can provoke criticism. Some argue that this 10-member Southeast Asian organisation is neither weighty nor robust enough to support such a role. Others, however, point out that it is the most successful regional endeavour so far in Asia, and that any other claim to leadership (for instance, from China or Japan) would be hotly contested. The CSCAP meetings backed ASEAN, but at the same time suggested ways to bolster the capacity of the several ASEAN-related institutions to promote stability.

These institutions include the unwieldy 27-country security dialogue, the ASEAN Regional Forum; the more recent ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus; and the East Asia Summit (a heads-of-government meeting, begun in 2005 and including all the ADMM-Plus countries). As a leaders' meeting, the EAS has clear potential to articulate a more comprehensive and compelling vision for the continued security and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific.

The CSCAP deliberations focused on the summit, urging that it offer such strategic direction while the ARF continues as a forum for structured security dialogue, and practical security co-operation is developed in the ADMM-Plus and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum. To enhance the EAS's influence and authority CSCAP argues its annual meeting needs to be extended and the other institutions must be "promptly and formally advised of its outcomes".

The ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta should certainly be expanded and consideration also given to creating a specific EAS secretariat to help build continuity between summits, and to develop the qualities of responsibility and accountability essential to be effective.

To promote a clear and wider sense of ownership of this process for achieving a more stable and orderly region, the CSCAP group even proposed the idea of joint chairmanship of the EAS with non-ASEAN countries.

It is important to recall how jealous ASEAN has been of its leadership role in regional institutions. CSCAP itself has tested a joint chairmanship arrangement in which Japan, India, Australia and other non-ASEAN countries serve as regional co-chairs alongside an ASEAN country co-chair. This has been so successful that ASEAN members see the arrangement as a model for the EAS.

It is also important to remember that in the past China and other East Asian countries have been hesitant about giving a greater role to the summit. They are cautious about an organisation in which countries from outside the immediate East Asia region may have a strong voice.

It is an achievement, therefore, that the CSCAP recommendations were supported from every side; everyone present put the objective of a peaceful and prosperous region ahead of individual national anxieties.

There is no big bang in CSCAP's recommendations for regional architecture. What we do have is some careful thinking, aimed at consolidating existing institutions in particular, by enhancing the authority of the East Asia Summit.

The task now is to convince track one — the various national governments and inter-government regional organisations — that CSCAP's proposals, and the consensus that gives them force, may offer a basis for real institutional reform.

Source: [Australian](#), 2nd July, 2014

Brazil and India: Rising Powers in Maritime Security

-Marex

In the fluid, highly uncertain context of the post-Cold War period, rising powers have begun to engage more intensely in region-building, redefining their strategic vicinities through a combination of inter-state cooperation and military build-up. Although this topic has been addressed in depth with respect to China's behavior in the Pacific and Russia's actions in the Arctic, relatively little has been published on region-building efforts by rising powers in the Southern Hemisphere.

In the article Region-Building by Rising Powers: the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean Rims Compared, published last March in the Journal of the Indian Ocean Region, we compare the strategies that these two countries have pursued within their respective maritime spaces: the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. Although the geopolitics of those two regions are vastly different—broadly put, the Indian Ocean is marked by much sharper tensions and competitive dynamics—we find that these two rising powers have increasingly turned to the seas, and more specifically to maritime perimeters, as they work to increase opportunities and influence abroad.

In the case of Brazil, the government has drawn an analogy to the Amazon—long its foremost defense concern—to launch the “Blue Amazon” campaign, geared at convincing primarily domestic audiences of the need to improve naval dissuasion power in the South Atlantic, particularly in light of the discovery (announced in the

mid and late 2000s) of substantial oil reserves on and off the Brazilian continental shelf in the Atlantic.

Concurrently, Brazil has launched a naval upgrading program that centers on the development, in cooperation with France, of a nuclear-powered attack submarine. Finally, Brazil has stepped up its cooperation with states all around the South Atlantic perimeter, in South America as well as in Africa, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Bilaterally, Brazil has become an important provider of South-South development cooperation to these states, but it also helps coastal states in Africa to conduct their own continental shelf surveys and to upgrade their naval forces.

On the multilateral front, Brazil has worked to revive the South Atlantic Zone of Peace and Cooperation, a Cold War-era construct that had lost steam after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Through this effort, Brazil has tried to strengthen local states' positions in favor of a non-nuclear South Atlantic, and one where the presence of "external actors" is minimized.

This takes place just as tensions over the Malvinas/Falklands have resurfaced between Argentina and the United Kingdom. Greater attention to the South Atlantic has also meant that Brazil has reaffirmed its commitment to improving its Antarctic program, including by cooperating with its South American neighbors.

As for India, it exhibits many of the same strategies as Brazil, although—unlike its South American counterpart—India, itself a nuclear power, has to contend with the presence of Pakistan on the perimeter of the Indian Ocean Rim. Another strategic concern is the operational presence established by the Chinese navy within the Indian Ocean since China joined anti-piracy efforts off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. This presence has heightened competitive dynamics that are reflected not only in India's own attempts to build up naval power, but also in these two countries' vying for development cooperation in partner states all around the Indian Ocean Rim, from Africa to Southeast Asia. Multilaterally, India has worked to revive the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IOR-ARC) by enlarging its agenda—previously focused on economic cooperation—to include security issues. It has also backed the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, a naval forum established in 2008.

Both Brazil and India face several factors that constrain the reach and effectiveness of their region-building efforts. As developing countries, they have domestic priorities and resource constraints, and as democracies, their governments are subjected to internal challenges to the region-building practices already mentioned. In addition, both rising powers are contested by other large states within their respective regions.

More broadly, these states have also encountered some scepticism abroad regarding their real capacity to assume greater responsibility in regional security

affairs, especially because they continue to rely on Northern actors for the provision of some equipment and coordination efforts, as in the case of anti-piracy initiatives. In addition, it remains to be seen how strong an influence Brazil and India—both rising powers that aspire to become norms-makers rather than rules-takers—will have in shaping the multilateral normative frameworks related to maritime spaces, especially within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Nonetheless, at a time when NATO states and other global powers are either war-weary or focusing on other regions, these rising powers find a window of opportunity to enlarge their strategic vicinities in light of their own interests. It is worth noting that Brazil and India, despite the geographic distance separating them, are also increasingly connected, particularly via the loose groupings that have proliferated in the post-Cold War.

Through the BRICS, they have deepened as well as broadened their dialogue, including on security issues. Via the India Brazil South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum, they have engaged even more closely with naval issues. Through the IBSAMAR exercises, Brazil and India send warships across vast distances to rendezvous off the South African coast in a series of exercises and simulations that serve not only to build up mutual trust and increase interoperability, but that also underscore the geographic, climatological, and strategic interconnectedness of the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean. These emerging linkages suggest that maritime spaces are acquiring a new significance for rising powers, with concrete consequences for the states and societies along their perimeters, as well as for countries from other regions that play a role within these spaces.

Source: [Maritime Executive](#), 3rd July, 2014

China's RIMPAC Debut: What's in it for America?

- Andrew S. Erickson and Austin M. Strange

As tensions simmer in the East and South China Seas, clouds of doubt overhang China's presence at Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2014. The world's largest international maritime exercise, it is hosted biannually by the U.S. Navy. But despite concerns that Beijing's participation constitutes a net loss for Washington, the U.S. can in fact derive substantial value from including China while building global maritime security partnerships. This "big tent" approach demonstrates willingness to weather regional turbulence to advance a longer-term push for Beijing to recalibrate its contributions to global maritime security to levels commensurate with its growing power.

After a 16-day transpacific voyage beginning on China's eastern shores, a People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) four-ship flotilla docked at Pearl Harbor on June 24. Running from June 26-August 1, RIMPAC includes a collection of 49 surface vessels, six submarines, over 200 aircraft, and over 25,000 personnel from 22 countries. 1,100 Chinese personnel and four ships are participating, including missile destroyer Haikou, missile frigate Yueyang, supply ship Qiandaohu, hospital ship Peace Ark, as well as two helicopters, a commando unit, a diving squad, and a medical team. Notably, China's task force is the largest of any nation after America's. It first rendezvoused in Guam with ships from the navies of Singapore, Brunei (another first-time participant) and the U.S., with whom it then sailed into Pearl Harbor.

China's task force will be moving smartly throughout the six-week exercise. Its activities encompass light weapons and artillery fire, damage control, integrated exercises, supply sealifting, surface platform drills, coordinated interceptions and landings, joint warship and helicopter assaults, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, diving, medical exchanges and cultural activities. The initial portion of China's participation, from June 25-July 8, reportedly includes mostly "soft" activities, from press conferences to basketball games. From July 9-30, it will focus on maritime drills. As has become customary practice before, during and after their anti-piracy escorts off Somalia, PLAN ships will conduct friendly visits following its RIMPAC participation. After a port call in San Diego, the flotilla will conduct medical operations in Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea.

For China, the manifold benefits of RIMPAC participation are plain. First, strong performances off Hawaii will burnish the PLAN's domestic and international reputation as a dynamic, world-class navy. Second, as with Gulf of Aden anti-piracy, other than providing a rare window to showcase maritime prowess cooperatively, RIMPAC offers a useful platform for China to learn about the technologies, equipment, personnel, tactics, and procedures employed by the world's leading navies. The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) forecasts "China will probably build multiple aircraft carriers over the next 15 years" in addition to the 2012-commissioned Liaoning. As a result, surface vessels such as frigates and destroyers—indispensable components of any future carrier strike groups—desperately need blue water experience. That RIMPAC has traditionally involved deck aviation operations certainly adds an extra layer of enticement for China. Third, given the uncertain future of Somali anti-piracy operations, engaging in the U.S.-hosted exercise offers particularly useful pretext for deploying a variety of PLAN platforms, equipment, and servicemen outside of East Asia to accumulate experience and sharpen skills, many of which are applicable to missions closer to home. Finally, given the diplomatic damage wrought by Beijing's increasingly assertive tactics in the East and South China Seas, RIMPAC is the PLAN's latest "Far seas foil" that exudes cooperation and progressiveness, temporarily offsetting destructive themes surrounding island and maritime disputes. While China certainly

cares about its image abroad, it appears willing to pay image costs to uphold and further its self-described core national interests, including territorial claims. For cooperative international platforms such as RIMPAC, the lack of an “image-interest” tradeoff makes participation a no-brainer for China.

America’s desire for China’s RIMPAC participation appears more complex. “Sunk costs” surely factor in. China’s participation has been years in the making, the result of considerable sweat equity invested by American and Chinese officials. Washington’s formal invitation to Beijing was delivered by then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta in 2012. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus reiterated America’s welcome during his visit to Beijing in November 2012. Yet these gestures were the fruit of protracted efforts—eclipsed by strategic tensions on multiple occasions—to engage China more directly at sea.

More controversial is China’s participation amid maritime tensions across the Asia-Pacific. The PLAN’s arrival at Pearl Harbor has understandably been described as “awkward” amid escalatory Chinese behavior towards U.S. allies. Since 2012, China has employed a medley of unconventional “salami-slicing” tactics to incrementally assert its sovereignty in and over nearby and not-so-nearby waters, including the establishment of a Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) over the East China Sea, as well as the deployment of oil rigs and scaling up of land reclamation “island-building” near and on the Spratly Islands. Outside the maritime domain, a spate of recent unprecedented cyber activities and espionage accusations has further soured the bilateral security relationship. Given this context, U.S. politicians and analysts alike contest the notion of rewarding China with RIMPAC initiation. The same critics charge the current administration with overvaluing the need to “reassure” China at the expense of American and allied interests.

Confusion over China’s presence at RIMPAC is further fueled by perceptions that the costs of China’s presence exceed any benefits for the U.S. For example, neither American nor Chinese observers hold the illusion that China’s inclusion will remove core tensions between Beijing, Washington, and any of the Asian capitals currently embroiled in East Asian maritime disputes. In this way, China’s participation in RIMPAC is similar to other recent instances of Sino-American maritime cooperation. Like anti-piracy coordination in the Gulf of Aden, it represents progressive cooperation amid persistent tensions. However, it is not expected to resolve underlying problems that perpetually frustrate bilateral security ties.

Others contest China’s attendance based on concerns that Beijing will engage in an “intelligence bonanza” to steal American and allied naval technologies and know-how. They argue that the U.S. should have considered suspending China’s invitation partly because of potentially “massive Chinese intelligence penetration” at the expense of Washington and its allies.

The above reservations have generated anxiety, skepticism, and in some cases utter opposition towards China's presence at RIMPAC 2014. Why, especially now, would China be invited to participate in an event designed for the U.S. and its allies to improve naval interoperability? The rationale becomes more coherent when considering both immediate and long-term consequences.

First, aforementioned security concerns related to Chinese espionage are reasonable given China's demonstrated willingness and ability to collect secrets both directly and remotely. But they should be tempered with knowledge that

- (1) China has previously observed RIMPAC (in 1998) and
- (2) Its participation in 2014 is limited primarily to low-sensitivity activities.

Most PLAN engagements at RIMPAC are not unprecedented within Sino-American maritime relations, and many are primarily nontraditional operations aimed at non-state actors or scenarios not necessarily related to fighting other navies. Of course, relevant U.S. personnel must take great pains to deny China access to sensitive and classified information, though China's exclusion from many exercises such as carrier operations signals that America remains on guard.

Second, China has collected, and will continue to collect, all the information it can regardless of whether or not it receives formal RIMPAC invitations. Consider the following well-documented examples:

- (1) The PLAN was obviously not invited to monitor a U.S. Navy exercise off Japan in November 2007, but a Song-class submarine popped up near the USS Kitty Hawk carrier strike group anyway.
- (2) "Chinese maritime intelligence collection operations increased in 2012," Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command Admiral Locklear testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee in April 2013, "with historic first such missions into the Indian Ocean and within the U.S. exclusive economic zones off of Guam and Hawaii."

These types of missions—which the U.S. utterly lacks the ability to "disinvite" China from conducting—are likely being executed by some combination of the PLAN's most capable ships engaged in active intelligence collection, surveillance, and reconnaissance for military purposes. Specifically, the Type 815 Dongdiao-class, which specializes in military signals intelligence processing and analysis, is likely bringing its giant soccer ball-like radomes to bear. Beijixing (pennant number 851), based in the East Sea Fleet, which has been spotted frequently near Japan, may have led initial efforts given its considerable experience. The two other hulls are Qimingxing (852), based in the North Sea Fleet, and Tianwangxing (853), in the South Sea Fleet. If the PLAN can already enter Hawaii's EEZ with high-capacity

intelligence collection vessel(s) unencumbered, is it really crossing the information rubicon to invite non-intelligence-dedicated vessels to participate in limited, cooperative exercises there under strictly-monitored conditions?

Third, like China, the U.S. Navy reaps instant benefits from the PLAN's presence. These include six hard-earned weeks of engagement with Chinese sailors as well as moderate insights into present Chinese naval strengths and weaknesses. The PLAN sent some of its most advanced surface platforms, nearly all of which have deployed for anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. The long duration and integrated nature of RIMPAC will expose Chinese naval personnel and equipment more than previous joint exercises have. This contact is essential if the U.S., Chinese and other navies plan to build on previous nontraditional maritime security cooperation such as Gulf of Aden anti-piracy and safeguarding destruction of Syrian chemical weapons.

Four, the PLAN's inclusion is a small-but-tangible counterweight to negative depictions of the U.S. Asia-Pacific Rebalance, which many Chinese view as a scarcely disguised containment strategy. It capitalizes on China's desire to offset its deteriorating reputation in East Asia through cooperative initiatives like RIMPAC. Moreover, as RIMPAC's host, America is effectively providing a modest communication platform for the navies of China and its rival claimants Japan and the Philippines. China currently is embroiled in territorial disputes with seven RIMPAC invitees including Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The biannual exercise is a rare window for forward-looking engagement among all parties. China's participation does not harm U.S. credibility, and America is using other means to assure its allies in their home waters.

Instead, RIMPAC offers a powerful comparison. In the warm waters off Hawaii, it juxtaposes America's proactive, progressive global maritime partnerships approach with Beijing's increasingly parochial obduracy—making it clear for all to see that China is essentially “containing itself.” Beijing's naval neighbors will increasingly have reason to ask pointedly why the same navy that worked professionally with them off Honolulu is harassing them closer to home — often in coordination with a unifying China Coast Guard whose hull numbers are projected to grow 25% over the next few years. Additionally, while critics have argued against China's inclusion based on its assertiveness in the East and South China Seas, RIMPAC is not a region-specific exercise. As in the past, the U.S. has invited navies from five continents to the 2014 exercise. China's participation further signals that America's maritime posture is truly global and Sino-American military relations do not hinge merely on events in one region or issue domain such as the East and South China Sea disputes. Uninviting China's Navy, as happened recently with Thai observers, would greatly undermine this perspective while playing into the hands of Beijing's able propaganda apparatus.

Fifth, and most importantly, China's attendance at RIMPAC benefits America's long-term efforts to make China more accountable as a global maritime actor. Beyond the immediate benefits to the U.S. Navy outlined above, inviting China (and not cancelling its invitation despite Beijing's growing assertiveness since 2012) is symbolically significant. America wants China to "carry its weight" in the realm of global maritime governance despite tensions in East Asia. Other states will share this desire more explicitly if America's ability to police the world's oceans faces growing constraints in coming years. Despite its great power aspirations, China remains a "passive power" that has yet to embrace the role and responsibilities of a world-class power. Moreover, for now China's economic and military might does not translate into proportional amounts of real influence in world affairs.

As the Gulf of Aden experience has demonstrated, encouraging China to participate more actively in global governance by integrating it into existing maritime governance mechanisms is realistic. However, it requires the efforts of multiple states as well as substantial flexibility and retrofitting. American officials have acknowledged inevitable friction in the bilateral relationship, but rightly dismiss the notion that it must preclude pragmatic cooperation between the world's two largest navies and their partners to secure global sea lines of communication (SLOC), combat nontraditional threats such as natural disasters, piracy, terrorism, and other forms of maritime crime. After taking a commanding lead in securing the world's oceans throughout the post-Cold War era, Washington is gradually setting precedents that will press Beijing to increasingly provide public goods commensurate with its naval abilities and ambition. RIMPAC 2014 suggests that American naval leaders are pursuing an unspoken strategy of "competitive coexistence" wherein unavoidable tension does not preclude pragmatic engagement designed towards balancing states' contributions to international security and their abilities and aspirations.

And so, the U.S. has wisely, warily welcomed China to RIMPAC. It should continue to strive for competitive coexistence with China on the high seas by encouraging Chinese maritime public goods provision even while opposing its bullying behavior in the East and South China Seas. Fortunately, early signals suggest that China's 2014 invitation will not be its last. It would be shortsighted to fixate on "who wins" at RIMPAC 2014, which is merely one event in the broad and developing waterfront of Sino-American relations. U.S. policy objectives vis-à-vis China and international security are far larger and deeper than a biannual exercise. Desires on the part of America and other states for greater Chinese contributions to global maritime security constitute a rising tide even as problematic whirlpools remain.

Source: [National Interest](#), 3rd July, 2014

Beijing Making a Counter-Play to Washington's Asia-Pacific Pivot

The Silk Road, an obscure Kazakh-inspired security forum, and a US\$50 billion Asian infrastructure bank are just some of the disparate elements in an evolving Chinese strategy to try to counter Washington's "pivot" to the region.

While Chinese leaders have not given the growing list of initiatives a label or said they had an overall purpose, Chinese analysts and diplomats said Beijing appeared set on shaping Asia's security and financial architecture more to its liking. "China is trying to work out its own counterbalance strategy," said Sun Zhe, the director of the Centre for US-China Relations at Beijing's Tsinghua University, who has advised the government on foreign policy.

Added one Beijing-based Western diplomat who follows China's international relations: "This is all clearly aimed at the United States." US President Barack Obama's pivot, as the White House initially dubbed it, represented a strategy to refocus on Asia's dynamic economies as the United States disentangled itself from costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

China sees the pivot as an attempt to contain its growing influence, especially given that the United States is strengthening its ties with Asian security allies such as Japan and the Philippines, which have bitter territorial disputes with Beijing in the region's waters. Washington denies this.

One key part of China's diplomatic outreach has been to breathe life into the little-known Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which has languished since Kazakhstan proposed it in 1992 in order to promote peace and security. CICA comprises two dozen mostly Asian nations, as well as Russia and some Middle Eastern countries. The United States, Japan and the Philippines are not members.

China took over as chairman of CICA for three years at a summit in Shanghai in May. There, President Xi Jinping spoke about a new "Asian security concept", saying China would explore the formulation of a code of conduct for regional security and an Asian security partnership programme. While Xi gave few details and made no direct mention of disputes in the South China Sea, he warned Asian nations about strengthening military alliances to counter China, an oblique reference to the US pivot. "Asian problems must be resolved by Asian people, and Asian security must be protected by Asian people," Xi said.

Another Chinese initiative is the US\$50 billion Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which Xi proposed in October during a visit to Southeast Asia. Finance Minister Lou Jiwei said this week that Beijing would likely have a 50 per cent stake in the bank, which diplomats see as a possible rival to the World Bank and the Asian

Development Bank (ADB), though China says its role is a complementary one, not competitive.

Washington and Tokyo have the biggest voting rights in both the decades-old institutions. China sees the infrastructure bank as a way to spread the message of its benign intentions in Asia, where developing countries such as the Philippines and Vietnam accuse Beijing of being the aggressor over territorial claims. "China upholds a basic guiding principle in regional diplomacy - being friends and partners with our neighbours," Lou said.

China has also dangled financial and trade incentives to Central Asia, backing efforts to resurrect the Silk Road trade route that once ran between China and the Mediterranean. China is also pushing ahead with various trade pacts in the region, but is not part of negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a 12-nation bloc whose two biggest economies are the United States and Japan.

Not everyone is convinced China's initiatives will amount to much. "Some of those things are more about the optics of these issues rather than the realities of a Chinese-led order," said Matthew Goodman, senior adviser for Asian Economics at the Centre for Security and International Studies in Washington.

China's foreign policy since the country began economic reforms three decades ago has traditionally followed the maxim of late paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, of "hiding one's strength and biding one's time". Asked this week whether China was carrying out its own pivot, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said China was pursuing a policy of good neighbourliness.

A senior Obama administration official said Washington was paying close attention to Xi's approach to Asia. "We noted his statement at the CICA conference about Asia for Asians, the growing criticism of US alliances and the Asian infrastructure bank," said the official, who requested anonymity. "It's raising serious questions about whether the US vision and the Chinese vision are fully compatible," he added.

A second senior US official said Washington had not been assured that the infrastructure bank would adopt the high governance and other standards of institutions such as the World Bank and the ADB. He said the administration did not see how such an entity "add value" for the region and that Washington would be making this point to Asian allies. While they were not members, the United States and Japan were welcome to join the bank, Lou said.

Top Chinese and US officials will get the chance to discuss the bank and other issues during annual talks in Beijing next week, a meeting known as the strategic and economic dialogue. At the start of the CICA summit, China turned on the pomp, with live television showing Red Flag limousines delivering leaders one by one to a

Shanghai conference centre, where they walked down a red carpet to shake hands with Xi.

Most recently, Xi feted suspicious neighbours India and Myanmar last Saturday to celebrate the 1954 signing of almost forgotten principles of peaceful coexistence. He cited Indian Nobel literature laureate Rabindranath Tagore in a speech to India's Vice-President on the 60th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, an early cold war pledge of peace between China, India and the country then known as Burma.

Xi has gone out of his way to court India, which hosts exiled Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama and with which China has a festering border dispute.

Still, China's messages of peace can come across as ham-fisted. "China has long engaged in a kind of smile diplomacy in the region but the challenge for China is that many of its neighbours can see the glint of steel beneath the robe," analyst Goodman said.

Source: [South China Morning Post](#), 5th July, 2014

India-EU: Exploring Maritime Convergences

- Vijay Sakhuja

The much awaited European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) was approved last month by the General Affairs Council of the European Union (EU). The document builds on the European Commission's Joint Communication, titled 'for an open and secure global maritime domain: elements for a European Union maritime security strategy', and is a link between the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and the European Security Strategy (ESS). This paves the way for the 28 nations of the EU to identify and undertake concrete actions and projects to enhance the EU's maritime security.

To implement the strategy, a rolling action plan is expected to be in place by the end of 2014 – that will focus on pan-Europe maritime domain awareness, exchange of information among the EU member states, navies, civil and marine authorities; addresses issues of technology development, common training; and multinational research programmes.

In its geographic scope, the EUMSS covers the European sea basins (the Mediterranean, Baltic Sea, Black Sea, North Sea, Arctic waters, the Atlantic Ocean) and as far beyond as Asia, Africa and the Americas – thus giving it both an internal and external dimensions. The strategy aims to address a number of asymmetric

threats and challenges, at home and overseas, that impact the freedom of navigation at sea. These include piracy and armed robbery, maritime terrorism, trans-national organised crimes such as drug smuggling, gun-running, human trafficking, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, security of maritime infrastructure, cyber warfare and environmental risks.

The EUMSS action plan will also have to address the issue of material and human resources. This is likely to pose a major challenge for the EU since some member states have scaled down their defence spending resulting in significant reduction in inventories of the respective naval and maritime forces. Although France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, and the UK are major naval powers, possess significant capabilities, and are forward-deployed across the globe, there are others who can barely manage to protect their national waters.

One of the significant aspects of the EUMSS is maritime multilateralism. The strategy acknowledges that modern day maritime threats and challenges are complex and some of these may require 'international response' that would necessitate engagements with international partners and participation in regional and global forums. In that context, EU's engagement in the Indian Ocean through the EU Naval Force in Operation Atlanta in the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Somalia to counter piracy is significant. EU naval and air assets work closely with the US-led Task Force 150, NATO, and other Asian navies to fight piracy.

The EUMSS also notes that sea lanes between Asia and Europe are of critical importance to the EU. A huge proportion of EU commercial traffic passes through Asian waters and according to an assessment, the volume of trade is expected to increase by 121 per cent between 2006 and 2016. Therefore, the Indian Ocean is strategically important to the EU's economic vitality.

Among the Indian Ocean states, India is a major regional power with whom the EU signed a strategic partnership in 2004. The India-EU Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plans (2005 and 2008) offer the framework for dialogue and cooperation in maritime security domains such as counter-terrorism, organised crime, piracy, counter drug and illegal arms trafficking, cyber-terrorism, and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

The level of cooperation between India and the EU in the ongoing counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia is noteworthy and is a good example of a broader multilateral framework. It can be a model for future India-EU maritime cooperation under the EUMSS and can be leveraged in times of crisis. At the tactical level, interoperability will be essential for developing a common doctrine and establishing standard operating procedures for conducting operations with EU navies. This would not be a major problem given that the Indian Navy conducts naval exercises with a number of EU navies at a bilateral level; for instance, the Varuna series with the

French Navy and the Konkan series with the British Royal Navy. These exercises have become more sophisticated in content and both sides field a number of advanced platforms including aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines. Besides the Spanish Navy and the Italian Navy, several other European navies have engaged in passage exercises with the Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean and Atlantic waters. Capacity building, particularly of the smaller states of the Indian Ocean Region such as Mauritius, Seychelles, the Maldives and Madagascar can be a substantive agenda for cooperation between India and the EU.

Finally, the EUMSS offers a number of opportunities for India and the EU to identify issues of cooperation and build synergies under its aegis to address complex maritime threats and challenges in the Indian Ocean.

Source: [IPCS](#), 7th July, 2014

U.S. Must Maintain Military Might

-Carl J. Asszony

The crisis in the Mideast, the tension in the Ukraine, and the multitude of internal problems in the United States, have drawn attention away from another part of the world which will have a profound impact on U.S. military and foreign policy — the Asiatic-Pacific region.

While the United States is downsizing its military and reducing its military budget, China is increasing its military budget by 12 percent this year and has increased it over 30 percent since 2011. Its military spending will be the second largest in the world next to the U.S. The Chinese have recently launched an aircraft carrier and tested stealth fighter planes. Chinese companies are developing drones for China's own military use and possible sale to foreign countries. In addition China expects to have 78 submarines by 2020 and an additional three aircraft carriers by 2025 and has commissioned 17 new warships. China appears to be aiming for military supremacy in the Asiatic-Pacific region.

As China flexes its military muscle by asserting territorial claims over certain islands in the South China Sea, Japan is considering the expansion of its military to go beyond self-defense. Since the end of World War II, Japan has been limited in the use of its military. Under a Constitution devised by the U.S. after the war, Japan is forbidden to go to war except in a case of self-defense. Now the leadership of Japan has decided to "reinterpret" that Constitution allowing a wider range of military activities including shooting down rockets aimed at the U.S. and using Japanese

warships to help protect U.S. ships defending Japan. It is known as “collective self-defense” and the U.S. is backing such a proposal.

Because the U.S. military is stretched both financially and in manpower, the U.S. welcomes the changes in Japan’s military policy. In addition, the U.S. military downsizing, combined with problems in Europe, the Mideast and Africa, the previous plan to “pivot” 60 percent of America’s military power to the Pacific region no longer seems possible. Therefore, it is to America’s advantage to have a strong, combative, military ally in the Asiatic-Pacific region such as Japan.

However, with Japan taking on a combat role, will the U.S. expect it to take that “collective self-defense” posture to assist the U.S. in other parts of the world? If so, some experts feel Japan could then open themselves as targets of extremist groups.

The U.S., however, needs to continue its treaty obligations with Japan and the Philippines while still being friendly with China. The U.S. is in debt to China for \$1.2 trillion and cannot afford to antagonize China and possibly lose that “Chinese credit card.”

Admiral Samuel J. Locklear made it clear that U.S. military power in the Asiatic-Pacific region “is diminishing” He added that Washington’s focus on the Middle East has detracted from U.S. military needs in the Pacific. With the growing military might in China, Russia flexing its military muscles, combined with U.S. military reduction, the question becomes: Can the U.S. remain the world’s superpower? The remarks of Admiral Gary Roughead, former U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, showed his concern: “The trend towards a more chaotic world is not going to change anytime soon. Can we cope with the level of naval and air requirements that it produces? Now, yes. But, over time, it begins to seriously stretch our equipment and our people.”

One observer of international studies noted, “What is remarkable is not that things are changing, but that they are changing with so little fanfare.”

Source: [Daily Record](#), 11th July, 2014

The Geopolitics of Sino-Russian Rapprochement

- Peter Harris

Is a Sino-Russian alliance in the offing? Some analysts answer this question in the affirmative, pointing to Beijing and Moscow’s signing of a landmark natural gas deal, joint naval exercises in the East China Sea, and cooperation in the United Nations over Syria and other international issues. More broadly, it is argued that

China and Russia share a general interest in curbing U.S. influence on the world stage and hastening the global transition from unipolarity to multipolarity.

While there is considerable room for debate over the future extent of Sino-Russian relations (a formal alliance looks far from likely), it is worth considering the potential geopolitical implications of a growing entente between the two Great Powers. In no short measure, close alignment between Beijing and Moscow would accelerate the decline of U.S. relative power and hinder Washington's capacity to influence international politics. While this scenario is particularly ominous in (East) Asia, it also has the potential to manifest in truly global terms.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the British Empire faced a similar strategic quandary. Already experiencing relative decline vis-à-vis the rising states of the day – especially the United States, Germany and Japan – Britain's geopolitical calculus was thrown into disarray when its two nearest peer competitors, France and Russia, concluded a military alliance in 1892. Taken together, the French and Russian militaries threatened to upend the balance of power in Europe, which had been relatively stable since Berlin's victory in the Franco-Prussian War.

According to the historian George Monger, however, it was at sea that the Franco-Russian rapprochement mattered most from London's perspective. For the first time in generations, Britain's naval supremacy in the Mediterranean Sea – a vital link between Britain and its eastern dominions – was called into question. To maintain mere parity with the combined Franco-Russian fleets in the Mediterranean, Britain would have to scale back its commitments elsewhere. In turn, there would be inevitable knock-on effects for international politics across the globe.

How could Britain retain its dominance in the Mediterranean? Already withdrawing from the Western Hemisphere and unable to bankroll a massive shipbuilding program ("internal balancing") because of domestic pressures to keep fiscal outlays to a minimum, any new deployments to European waters would have to come at the expense of the Asia-Pacific. Yet this region was a geopolitical tinderbox: the European colonial powers seemed on the verge of an all-out "scramble for China," Russia was feared to have designs on British India, and Japan's growing power meant that, ideally, the Royal Navy should be deploying *more* ships to the Far East rather than fewer. To scale back in Asia would be to jeopardize the security of colonies and Dominions such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Canada and New Zealand. Ultimately, even India – the jewel of Britain's empire – might become difficult to defend against predation if the naval situation was not handled with the utmost care.

The diplomatic solution that London ultimately settled upon was to co-opt Japan as a partner in East Asia. With Japan's growing naval strength allied to its own, Britain could reliably retain naval mastery in East Asia while simultaneously checking the

emerging threat posed by France and Russia in Europe. At times, Japan was even approached to assist in the defense of India.

In time, Britain's strategic bind eased as diplomats were able to iron out the country's various diplomatic disputes with France and Russia. In the early twentieth century, London even aligned with Paris and Moscow as part of the so-called Triple Entente. Nevertheless, Britain's longstanding policy of "splendid isolation" had been consigned to history and it would never again be able to press its interests on the world stage without the cooperation of allies.

A serious rapprochement between Russia and China has the potential to change the strategic calculus of the United States in ways reminiscent of the challenge to Britain in the late nineteenth century. Today, the United States also risks losing naval supremacy, especially in the South China Sea, which Robert Kaplan calls "Asia's Mediterranean," if it becomes out-manuevered in the diplomatic realm.

According to Kyle Mizokami, China and Russia boast the world's second and third strongest navies, respectfully. Moreover, both governments are busy expanding their navies. While they are still no match for the U.S. fleet on paper – and are far from being able to challenge the U.S. in the open Pacific let alone farther afield – Beijing and Moscow's navies would nevertheless achieve a major strategic advantage if they were to grow to a size where they threatened U.S. preponderance the East and South China Seas.

As E.B. Montgomery has argued, military and technological innovation by China already has gone a long way towards undermining Washington's potential military effectiveness in East Asia. An alliance with Russia would further embolden Beijing and undermine the U.S. capacity to deter aggression in the East Asian littoral, not only because it would help to close the power disparity between the U.S. and its rivals but also because it would force the Pentagon to prepare for crises emerging on two or more fronts. How would the U.S. react if it was forced to balance against China and Russia in the East and South China Seas while simultaneously deterring Russian meddling in Central Asia, the Middle East, or Eastern Europe?

There are several options from Washington's perspective, although perhaps none of them promise to staunch the inevitable migration of power and influence away from Washington. First, the U.S. can – and, out of strict self-interest, probably should – try to prevent an alignment from occurring between China and Russia. This means actively pulling all diplomatic levers available while also refraining from making any mistakes that would push the two together.

Second, the U.S. can look for allies of its own to counter the joint threat posed by China and Russia. As for Britain in the late Victorian era, Japan again appears the most likely candidate: Under Shinzo Abe, Japan is already taking steps to expand its

capacity to deploy its (considerable) maritime forces in the service of collective security. Embracing Japan, however, entails the obvious risk of pushing Russia and China even closer together.

Greater cooperation between the U.S. and India would be another way to buttress America's ability to affect change in Asia, yet New Delhi has historic and enduring ties with Moscow that render India's support for U.S. foreign policy goals impossible to take for granted.

Further afield, smaller (potential) allies like Australia, which is a reliable supporter of the U.S., and the ASEAN member states, most of which have reason to be wary of China's rise, offer the potential for a broad (if tacit) anti-Chinese coalition. Yet these states have little direct stake in balancing against Russia and even their combined strength would be unlikely to buoy U.S. maritime dominance to a significant extent.

In the long-run, the drift towards greater multipolarity – first in East Asia, ultimately on the world stage – looks inevitable. Whether or not its demise will be hastened by a Sino-Russian rapprochement, America's "unipolar moment" cannot last forever. The broader challenge, then, is how to maintain peace and stability in a multipolar world, not how to maintain U.S. hegemony in perpetuity. The descent from unipole to *primus inter pares* will be treacherous for U.S. leaders. A successful navigation will require adroit diplomacy and reliable allies. From Washington's perspective, it would be better to begin planning now for how the transition will be managed rather than wait for others to take charge of the process.

Source: [Diplomat](#), 11th July, 2014

Crime in Somalia: Pirates vs Economists

Ships navigating the lawless seas of the Gulf of Aden must keep a constant lookout for Somali pirates. The roots of Somalia's maritime banditry lie in its desperately poor coastal villages, where the choice between fishing and piracy is an easy one for many. But whereas plenty of attention has been given to pirates' own economic motives, less has been paid to the question of why influential local clans put up with the marauders in their midst. New research by economists at the University of Oxford and King's College London sheds some light on that issue—and suggests a way in which the pirates could be run aground for good.

Anja Shortland and Federico Varese mapped the locations of hijacked ships between 2005 and 2012. They found that hijacked vessels were always anchored far away from regional trading routes, and that big ports were not prone to piracy. There is a reason for that. Somali clans control local trade by issuing licences and charging

informal taxes. The researchers reckon that communities which can tax imports and exports refuse to protect pirates because trade is a safer and more lucrative source of revenue than pirate earnings. Only clans that have no other income offer the pirates protection, in return for a share of their loot.

The theory seemed to hold up during a ban on Somali livestock imports imposed by Saudi Arabia between 2000 and 2009. Most Somalis are farmers and Saudi Arabia is their main livestock market, so the embargo hammered the economy. Clan leaders in heavily hit cities such as Bosaso, in the coastal state of Puntland, began offering refuge to pirates instead. After the ban was lifted and customs duties began flowing again, the pirates were promptly locked up.

The study's authors think their findings offer a new way to scuttle Somalia's pirates. Hijackings off the Horn of Africa have fallen sharply since shipping companies beefed up their security and international navies upped their patrols. Only 15 incidents were reported off Somalia's coast last year, down from 75 in 2012 and 237 in 2011. But those security measures are expensive, and do not tackle the underlying causes of the problem. A more lasting solution would be to build new roads and ports, which would allow remote areas to start trading. With alternative sources of income, fewer communities would be willing to harbour pirates.

Donors keen to advance shaky security gains pledged around \$1.5 billion to Somali reconstruction last year. Part of that could be allocated to remote coastal areas, rather than big cities like Mogadishu, which get the lion's share. "The demand is there," says Ms Shortland. A former president of Puntland repeatedly requested a road be built to Eyl, a rough-and-ready coastal town, as a quid pro quo for giving up piracy. His request was turned down, and piracy continued.

Source: [Economist](#), 12th July, 2014

US Surrenders Naval Logistics Supremacy

- James R. Holmes

If the United States wants to escape the danger zone in its strategic competition with China — disproving Beijing's fancy that it can rule the Western Pacific — decommissioning the U.S. Navy's fastest, most capacious combat logistics ships is no way to do it. Just the opposite. It telegraphs that America is no longer serious about fighting far from North America for long spans of time. Competitors will take note.

Yet budget-cutters in Washington are compelling naval leaders to consider narrowing this competitive advantage. And they're doing so at a time when China

finally appears to be putting its own combat logistics house in order after decades of neglect. Over at Defense News, Chris Cavas reports that U.S. Navy officials are considering decommissioning — or laying up, a halfway status between active service and the boneyard — the workhorse Supply-class T-AOEs.

T-AOEs are big, fast ships. In effect they're mobile, floating warehouses that deliver fuel, ammunition, and stores of myriad types to task forces underway at sea. They displace about the same as a big-deck amphibious carrier such as USS America, a newcomer to the active fleet. And unlike their slower, smaller brethren, they can keep up with the speediest non-nuclear ships in the U.S. Navy fleet. The picture at the top depicts USS Sacramento, one of the Supply's forebears, rearming not one but two Iowa-class battleships at the same time, in the Persian Gulf in 1991. That gives you an idea of the size and capability of these vessels.

That's an unglamorous capability, to be sure. But it's a capability as irreplaceable as weapons and sensors for pummeling enemy fleets or enemy shores. Underway replenishment — UNREP, meaning the capacity to refuel, rearm, and re-provision at sea without detouring into port — has constituted a core U.S. Navy advantage since the days when seamen bearing names like Halsey and Spruance plied the deep. It makes the fleet a free-range fleet. Task forces thus equipped can roam the seas without putting into port for supplies. Mahan noted, in his pre-UNREP age, that warships without forward bases are like "land birds," unable to fly far from home. So it is for seagoing forces without their own logistics contingents.

UNREP is handy in peacetime. It's indispensable in wartime, when no friendly port may be nearby. Without a supply ship, a task force has to quit its station to find stores. Abandoning contested waters surrenders command of those waters, or leaves soldiers or marines stranded on hostile shores without naval fire or air support. This is a bad thing all around. Before he met his maker, General Tōjō credited U.S. Navy UNREP as one of three decisive factors in Imperial Japan's downfall. High praise from a defeated foe. Combat logistics, then, is an operational technique commanding strategic importance.

Think about logistics ships this way. Mahan depicts foreign commerce, merchant and naval shipping, and forward bases as the three struts on which sea power rests. UNREP vessels comprise part of two, not just one, of Mahan's nautical pillars. They're ships, obviously. But they're also substitute bases. So if adding stores ships lets U.S. Navy task forces fight or patrol the sea continuously, subtracting them compromises two pillars of American sea power. The same might be said of destroyer and submarine tenders, floating workshops that can manufacture spare parts and fix all manner of engineering troubles without requiring a visit to a shore maintenance depot. The navy's tender fleet is woefully thin as well, at two sub tenders.

Granted, the maneuvering over the Supply-class T-AOEs is part of the never-ending kabuki dance over the defense budget. It does appear, nevertheless, that a weird dynamic has taken over Beltway deliberations over the past few years. The administration and Congress constrict naval spending more and more obtusely even as the need for a fleet with surplus capability — a fleet capable of taking heavy losses in combat and fighting on anyway — grows inexorably. It's almost as though our leaders are deliberately recreating Walter Lippmann's pre-World War II era of "monstrous imprudence," when Washington took on vast Pacific commitments yet skimmed on the naval means to defend them.

We know how well that worked out. The "just-in-time" philosophy currently in vogue in industry seems to have seeped into military and congressional thinking. To keep costs low, that is, business potentates maintain no excess inventory, getting widgets out to users when they demand it. That works fine for commercial enterprises. No one tries to interdict commercial supply chains. But if a navy maintains just enough logistics capacity to get by during peacetime steaming, when the demand is relatively low, what happens in wartime, when demand for supplies spikes and stays spiked? Bad things, me thinks.

And how about when a smart adversary targets the UNREP fleet? That's what I would do if — heaven forbid — some rash individual gave me command of Chinese or Iranian anti-access forces. Skip the combatants. They're difficult targets. Cripple or sink the combat logistics fleet and the carriers, cruisers, and destroyers shrivel on the vine, deprived of the fuel and stores they need to remain on station. They'll go away, or maintain an intermittent presence at best. The anti-access defender gains time and options — or wins outright.

Better an excess than a shortfall of logistics ships, then. As Admiral Wylie points out, Congress makes strategic decisions through the budgeting process all the time. In this case, capping the means necessary to stage operations along the Asian rim lands could rule out little things like, oh, honoring the U.S. security treaty with Japan, keeping the Strait of Hormuz open, or upholding the rule of law on the high seas. A just-in-time fleet optimized for peacetime cruising is apt to be an ops fleet in wartime.

Source: [Diplomat](#), 14th July, 2014



Iran, Kazakhstan Keen to Expand Port, Maritime Cooperation

Iranian and Kazakh officials in a meeting in Tehran on Tuesday underlined the need for the further expansion of mutual cooperation in ports and maritime areas.

During the meeting in the Iranian capital today, Director General of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) Jalil Eslami and Head of Aktau International Trading Port Company Mikhail Yuriovich explored avenues for bolstering and reinvigorating relations in ports and maritime fields.

Eslami pointed to the status quo in the Iran-Kazakhstan cooperation in ports and maritime fields, and said, "The Fourth Iran-Kazakhstan Ports and Maritime Cooperation Meeting is being held following the enhancement of ports and maritime cooperation and a rise in bilateral trade ties and development of training and technical cooperation." Aktau is a city of approximately 200,000 citizens located on the banks of the Caspian Sea in Kazakhstan.

In recent years, Iran has striven to expand its ties and cooperation with the regional states, specially those in the Central Asia. Iranian Deputy Industry, Mines and Trade Minister Mojtaba Khosrotaj and his Kazakh counterpart in a meeting in Tehran in April conferred on ways to expand transportation and transit relations between the two countries.

During the meeting, Khosrotaj referred to the new policies proclaimed by Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei for the consolidation of the relations with the neighboring states, and said, "In this directive the issue of transit has come under notice; therefore, we are studying the transit potentials of Kazakhstan's Inche- Boroun and (Iran's) Sarakhs regions."

The Kazakh official, for his part, announced Astana's readiness to increase the volume of wheat and metals exports to Iran, and expressed the hope that launching Kazakhstan's railway would link his country to Iran's port city of Bandar Abbas on the rims of the Persian Gulf, and that container transportation between the two countries would increase.

Source: [Far News](#), 1st July, 2014

RIMPAC Exercise Emphasizes Cooperation in Maritime Security

The Rim of the Pacific biennial maritime security exercise now underway is a unique training opportunity that helps participants foster and sustain the cooperative relationships critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's oceans, the commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet said this week.

"I think it's important to note that by simply attending RIMPAC, every nation here is making the bold statement that we must improve multilateral military cooperation despite disagreements," Navy Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr. said June 30. "Today, maritime cooperation is more vital than ever," Harris added. "For centuries, the world's oceans kept us apart, but in this increasingly globalized world, the world's oceans bring us together."

Participating nations will conduct training ashore and out at sea in a coalition and joint effort during this 24th RIMPAC exercise. "It's going to be very valuable training, but make no mistake -- it's going to be very hard work," said Navy Vice Adm. Kenneth E. Floyd, Combined Task Force commander. "I'm already proud and very honored to have the opportunity to lead the 25,000 people from 22 different countries on the RIMPAC team this year, and I'm looking forward to all that they are about to do out on the high seas."

Harris said that building mutual trust and opening lines of communication are critical for success. RIMPAC offers participants the chance to work alongside other nations in preparation for real world events, he added, and the exercise is designed to strengthen rebalancing efforts in the Asia-Pacific region.

"The rebalance is based on a strategy of cooperation and collaboration, and that's why it's imperative that we work together to build trust and confidence to solve our collective maritime challenges," Harris said. "When great nations work together, we can accomplish great things. Collaboration and cooperation -- that's why we're here: to learn together, to operate together and to sail together." The exercise began June 26 and ends Aug. 1.

Source: [US Department of Defence](#), 1st July, 2014

Four NATO Warships Enter Black Sea to Conduct Breeze-2014 Exercise

Four NATO warships have entered the Black Sea to conduct Breeze-2014 exercise with the US Navy, an official statement on NATO's website said.

"Four NATO ships entered the Black Sea today in a regularly scheduled deployment to enhance NATO solidarity and readiness in the region," NATO said in a statement.

The ships are from NATO Mine Counter-Measures Group TWO, the flagship is an Italian Navy frigate, the ITS AVIERE. On Friday, the ships are to arrive at the port of Burgas in Bulgaria.

On Thursday, Bulgaria's Ministry of Defense announced that Breeze-2014 is to take place from July 4 to 13. Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Turkish and US warships are to take part in the exercise, as well as a US patrol warplane and four NATO ships.

NATO has been flexing its muscles near the Russian border since Crimea's reunification with Russia in March. Moscow has repeatedly expressed concern over Western pressure on Russia.

Source: [Ria Novosti](#), 4th July, 2014

Board to Demarcate IMBL Erected on Island

A huge board to demarcate the international maritime boundary line (IMBL) has been erected on an island off Rameswaram coast. A statement from the Indian Coast Guard said that Indian fishermen have been crossing the IMBL in the southern Palk Bay as there was no demarcation of boundary near the Fifth Island. "Several requests from the fishermen had come for demarcation of the boundary. District collector K Nandakumar instructed the public works department officials to construct the board at Fifth Island so that it is prominent and seen from a longer distance by the fishermen to avoid crossing the IMBL," said the statement. The board in bold letters declares "India" on the island. A similar board was in place on Fifth Island till 2009 but was corroded and slumped.

But fishermen as well as some in the fisheries department expressed apprehension that it could end up a pointless exercise. "Almost all fishermen are aware of the IMBL. It is the water current and lure for more catch that takes them beyond IMBL," said a fishermen association functionary. Another fisherman said that the board would be futile as they venture out mostly in the nights.

Source: [TOI](#), 5th July, 2014

PLA YJ-12 Missile the Most Dangerous Threat to US Navy: US Expert

In an article written for the Washington-based military website, War on the Rock, Robert Haddick, an American military analyst said that the People's Liberation Army Navy's YJ-12 anti-ship cruise missile is the most dangerous threat to the US Navy in the Western Pacific.

On page 40 of the Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2014 published by the Pentagon for congress indicated, this cruise missile provides an increased threat to naval assets, due to its long range and supersonic speeds. In addition, the YJ-12 is capable of being launched from PLA Navy Air Force's H-6 strategic bombers. Haddick said, therefore that the YJ-12 poses more of a risk than the DF-21 anti-ship ballistic missiles.

Citing a study conducted by the US Naval War College in 2011, Haddick said that the YJ-12 has a range of 400 kilometers. This makes the YJ-12 one of the world's longest-range anti-ship cruise missile. Haddick said that the range of the US Navy's Harpoon missile is only 124 kilometers. The extended range allows the PLA Navy's aircraft to launch the YJ-12 beyond the engagement range of the Navy's Aegis Combat System and the SM-2 surface-to-air missiles that protect US aircraft carrier strike groups.

The missile can be even more dangerous when they are deployed in Su-30 and J-11 fighters from the PLA Navy's two Flanker regiments. With a combat radius of 1,500 kilometers, the Chinese fighters can carry between two and four missiles into the battlefield. Haddick said that the US carrier strike group will have to defend itself against over a hundred supersonic ASCMs approaching from several directions at a wave-top height, allowing the group's close-in air defenses less than 45 seconds to respond.

Source: [Want China Times](#), 7th July, 2014

Indian Army Chief visits China Naval Base

Army Chief General Bikram Singh visited a naval base and a naval ship in Shanghai on the final day of his China visit during which he interacted with the People's Liberation Army top brass to improve ties between the two militaries. General Singh visited the naval base, one of the biggest of PLA's Navy (PLAN) and interacted with local commanders, officials said.

Source: [Hindu](#), 6th July, 2014

Indian Ocean Rim Association meets in Durban

The economic importance of the Indian Ocean came under the spotlight in Durban when the Australian High Commission jointly hosted a seminar on strengthening maritime security co-operation.

Australia is the current chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and this position saw it co-host the seminar with the Durban University of Technology (DUT). Speakers were the Australian High Commissioner to South Africa, Graeme Wilson; immediate past Chief of the SA Navy and now Armscor chairman, retired Vice Admiral Johannes Mudimu; and Dr Anil Sooklal, Deputy Director General, Asia and the Middle East at the Department of International Relations and Co-operation (DIRCO).

Australia took over chairmanship of IORA last year and, Wilson said, is building on the work done by India as immediate past chair. "Australia looks to the Indian Ocean as a region of growing strategic and economic importance. We share with all Indian Ocean littoral states, and key extra-regional countries, an interest in addressing ongoing challenges facing the region, including for example, sustainable economic growth and development. "The stability and prosperity of the Indian Ocean region is increasingly important globally. "The IORA membership represents a broad cross section of the world's nations. While we are a diverse group, we have much in common, including a shared commitment to the peaceful, sustainable use of the Indian Ocean," he said.

The 20 IORA member states are Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Its six dialogue partners are China, Egypt, France, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. IORA is, according to the High Commissioner, the only ministerial level grouping with a broad-based mandate spanning the Indian Ocean region.

It has six agreed priority areas - maritime safety and security, trade and investment facilitation, fisheries management, disaster risk management, academic and science and technology co-operation; and tourism and cultural exchanges. During Australia's term as chair IORA has had its first Ministerial forum on renewable energy. Other activities include a workshop on strategic stability in the Indian Ocean; a conference of the political economy of maritime Africa and an IORA senior officials meeting.

Mudimu said the South African experience of Indian Ocean maritime security challenges was it could not be seen as an end in itself. Mudimu told the seminar: "As regards the South African experience of maritime security challenges in the Indian Ocean this is not a stand-alone concept but an enabler of human progress and economic prosperity". With colonialism a thing of the past, the way was now open for Indian Ocean states to jointly develop trading platforms and address "the real and pressing need" to ensure the safety and security of people. The Indian Ocean, Mudimu said, has been described as a "wide common" because of its vastness and that it is the world's third largest ocean. It constitutes about 20% of earth's seas surface and traverses the Indian sub-continent, East Africa and the Southern Ocean.

He sees IORA as being one platform to effectively address at least three challenges faced by Indian Ocean states. These are climate change – “no longer an issue for scientific inquiry by often forgotten laboratory professors”; the plundering of marine resources, which is a threat to food security; and de-stabilisation of coastal communities and inland civil unrest spreading to the maritime domain through human trafficking, drug smuggling and threats against territorial integrity putting the brakes on continental progress. “Maritime security forms a critical element of collective human security and is fundamentally linked to the development and economic prosperity of the African continent. We, as South Africans, see the maritime security agenda as having far broader implications than only the military domain addressing also existential survival. “The challenges of maritime security can only be tackled if and when the littoral states acts together as a common force for the continent and the region,” he said.

Source: [Defence Web](#), 7th July, 2014

US to sell two dozen submarine missiles to India

The US will be selling a number of submarine missiles to India in the near future.

According to a press release put out last week by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the US is planning the sale of 12 UGM-84L Harpoon Block II Encapsulated missiles, 10 UTM-84L Harpoon Encapsulated Training missiles, and two Encapsulated Harpoon certification training vehicles.

Additionally, the sale will include containers, spare and repair parts, support and test equipment, personnel training and training equipment, publications and technical data, U.S. Government and contractor engineering and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support.”

The Department of State is in the process of requesting Congress for approval on the sale; as of July 1, the date of the press release, that request is still pending. If approved, then the sale will go through as soon as possible, to the tune of an estimated \$200 million. “This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to strengthen the U.S.-India strategic relationship and to improve the security of an important partner which continues to be an important force for political stability, peace, and economic progress in South Asia,” says the DSCA press release.

The Harpoon missile system will be used by the Indian Navy’s Shishumar class submarine (Type-209). These will complement the Harpoon missiles India has

already purchased for its Air Force Jaguar aircraft and its Navy P-81 maritime patrol aircraft. The sale is expected to go through, and integration of the purchased material into India's existing fleet is not expected to have any major hitches.

The principal contractors involved with the sale are Boeing and Delex, which could be "expected to conclude offset agreements with the Government of India but no offset agreement is currently known to have been proposed in connection with this potential sale," as per the guidelines of the Indian Defense Procurement Policy.

Source: [American Bazaar](#), 7th July, 2014

US increases interoperability with Japan in 1st GUAMEX

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Pinckney (DDG 91) completed the first Guam Exercise (GUAMEX) alongside the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), July 9.

Pinckney operated off the coast of Guam with eight JMSDF ships practicing naval gunnery, anti-submarine warfare, tactical maneuvering, communications drills, and personnel exchanges. "The purpose of this exercise is aimed at enhancing the interoperability of the U.S. Navy and the JMSDF and strengthening personnel ties between our respective forces," Pinckney's commanding officer, Cmdr. Frank Okata, said.

Capt. Shan Byrne, commodore, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15, embarked Pinckney to witness GUAMEX first-hand. At an all-hands call with Pinckney's crew, Byrne stated that GUAMEX allowed the ship to spend time at sea as a ship, learning as a crew, and completing missions as a team. He also remarked on Pinckney Sailors' significant achievements during their deployment.

Newly-qualified Officer of the Deck Ensign Shannon McCarthy oversaw each of the exercises. Pinckney is on deployment in the 7th Fleet area of operations protecting and defending the collective maritime interest of the U.S. and its allies and partners in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

Source: [Dvids](#), 10th July, 2014

Nigerian Piracy Threatens UK Economy

The UK economy is heavily exposed to lawlessness off the coast of Nigeria, a new report published by the UK Chamber of Shipping says. The report found that almost

all of the UK's annual £6.3bn of trade with the region is put at risk by being moved through the high maritime crime region of the Gulf of Guinea, including 12 percent of the UK's oil.

Guy Platten, chief executive of the UK Chamber of Shipping, said: "This report sets out for the first time the economic threats of the regions' lack of maritime security. Most people are aware of pirate activity off Somalia, but lawlessness in the Gulf of Guinea is a major threat to our seafarers, the UK's energy and trade security, and to the economic development of the region. Nigeria and other states in the region have known for 30 years that piracy was a problem, but too little has been done and enough is enough."

The report shows that:

- In the past decade, 45 seafarers have been killed and 459 seafarers have been held hostage
- There is at least one attack per week on a ship operating in the region, but up to two thirds of attacks are believed to go unreported
- In 2013, 60 percent of attacks took place in Nigerian territorial waters and there is a trend for increasing violence within attacks
- Around 12 percent of the UK's crude oil is imported from Nigeria, and by 2050 the region will hold 25 percent of the world's oil production
- Around 5000 vessels, of all nationalities, call at Nigerian ports every year
- Nigerian statistics shows that 300,000 barrels of oil are stolen every single day

Platten adds: "The lack of security in the region costs Nigeria £7.2bn a year in oil theft alone, which shows criminal activity is severely hampering the region's potential for prosperity. Put simply, these countries will remain poor until their maritime security issues are tackled. "Ghana and Togo have recently acknowledged the economic benefits of improved maritime security, and have seen additional economic activity result from improvements they have put in place. Their maritime security has improved by investing in additional security patrols, and is now seen as more secure economies for maritime trade. Nigeria, however, lags behind and has done very little – and it is costing them and us dear. "This report highlights the UK's global leadership in combating poor maritime security, but it is clear that if our seafarers, and the cargo they help move, are to be protected, more needs to be done at a global level."

The report argues that having made the link to economic development, UK Government needs to do more to build maritime governance in the region. This means using UK-based expertise to help train local law enforcement judicial services and making sure criminals are brought to justice.

Source: [Maritime Executive](#), 9th July, 2014

Tsunami Warning System made Fully Functional in Indian Ocean

The Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC) was established and made fully functional since 2007 and is now rendering operational services as a Regional Tsunami Watch Provider (RTWP) for whole of the Indian Ocean Region by the Earth System Science Organization – Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Sciences (ESSO-INCOIS) located in Hyderabad.

ITEWC comprises real-time seismic monitoring network broadband seismic stations apart from national and international seismic stations to detect under- sea tsunami-genic earthquakes from the two known subduction zones of the Andaman-Sumatra and the Makran coast in the Indian Ocean which can potentially affect the Indian coastal states and Island regions, a network of 6 real-time sea-level sensors with Bottom Pressure Recorders (BPR) in the open ocean, HF Radars for coastal currents and 25 coastal tide gauge stations to capture tsunami wave amplitude on 24 x 7 basis. The data is analysed on a continuous basis. All types of data collected from the ITEWC are fully archived and is fully accessible to the Decision Support System (DSS). A host of communication systems are being employed for timely dissemination of advisories.

The centre is capable of detecting tsunami-genic earthquakes occurring in the Indian Ocean region as well as in the Global Oceans within 10 minutes of their occurrence and disseminated the advisories to the concerned authorities within 20 minutes through various modes of communication like email, fax, SMS, GTS and website.

This was stated by Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Ministry of Earth Sciences Dr. Jitendra Singh (Independent Charge) in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

Source: [India Education Diary](#), 9th July 2014

Vietnam Earmarks US\$ 540m for New Coast Guard Fleet

In anticipation of further maritime disputes with China, Vietnam's prime minister, Nguyen Tan Dung, has announced that the government will spend US\$540 million to build 32 patrol ships for its coast guard, according to China's Global Times on July 8.

Nguyen apparently made his decision after a Vietnamese fishing boat with a crew of six was seized by a Chinese maritime security vessel on July 3. The standoff between two nations' patrol vessels and fishing boats has been going on since May, when China National Offshore Oil Corporation deployed the oil platform Haiyang

Shiyou 981 off the disputed Paracel islands, prompting violent anti-China protests in Vietnam.

To avoid a direct confrontation with the People's Liberation Army, the Vietnamese government established its first Directorate of Fisheries in 2013 to conduct irregular operations against Chinese vessels, Teng Jianqun, a researcher with the Beijing-based China Institute of International Studies, told China's state broadcaster CCTV. A confrontation between coast guard vessels of the two nations is likely to take place before a clash between their armed forces.

Vietnam currently has only 40 patrol ships, Teng said in the CCTV interview, and for this reason needs a bigger coast guard fleet to watch over its territorial claims in the resource-rich South China Sea.

Source: [Want China Times](#), 9th June, 2014

Russia in Charge of Maritime Safety in Black Sea

Russia has reassured the International Maritime Organization (IMO) that all obligations concerning maritime safety and that of shipping are being enforced in the Black Sea.

“The Russian Federation has taken up the actual compliance with the measures aimed at ensuring continuous international shipping in the Black Sea, in the sea areas off the coast of Crimea and in the sea ports of the Crimea peninsula, including navigation safety measures and protection of the marine environment against pollution,” The Mission of the Russian Federation said in a letter to the IMO.

The letter added that Ukraine is not currently carrying out activities in the region as provided for in the relevant international instruments on international shipping. “A complex system is operating in the Russian Federation to ensure maritime safety and marine environment pollution protection including: vessel traffic services (VTS), port state control of ships, Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), ship reporting systems, vessel traffic control, pilotage, shore automatic identification systems, long-range identification and tracking systems (LRIT), navigational and hydrographic navigational support, etc.

“Information on the navigational and weather conditions in sea ports and approaches thereto is transmitted to seafarers by means of communication as provided for in the relevant international instruments”, the letter read. On the other hand, Ukraine announced its intention to close the ports located on the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea for international shipping.

The decision on closing relates to the ports Evpatoria, Kerch, Feodosia, Yalta and Sevastopol. Transport and navigation in this area has been attributed with a “high level of risk” by the Ukrainian port authorities that claimed they could not vouch for navigational safety in waters around Crimean ports.

Source: [Port News](#), 10th July, 2014

INS Kolkata Handed over to Navy

The INS Kolkata, lead ship in the Kolkata-class stealth destroyers, was handed over to the Indian Navy on 10 July after extensive sea trials and tests; 11 years after the construction began in 2003 at the Mazgaon Docks Limited (MDL). The ships are the second group of three indigenously built stealth warships after the Shivalik-class boats, while the official commissioning ceremony is expected to take place in a month's time.

The same ship had seen naval engineer Commander Kuntal Wadhwa lose his life after a prolonged exposure to CO2 gas on March 6, suspected to be caused by a malfunctioning fire-fighting system. “The ship has finished construction with all user acceptance trials, sea trials and testing of the weapons systems completed. The ship will still be called Yard 701 but designated the INS Kolkata after the commissioning ceremony,” said Rear Admiral (retired) R.K. Shrawat, MDL's chief managing director.

Most importantly, the naval version of the Brahmos cruise missile was also fired from the ship off the coast of Karwar about a month ago, to prove the boat's and weapon handling system. “The purpose was to test the ship's capability to withstand the missile, but not the missile itself,” said an MDL source. The main feature of the ship, however, according to naval officers, is the ‘multi-function radar’, the first of its kind in the country. “It is more in tune with modern naval warfare technologies than the stealth feature,” said an officer.

The Indian Navy can come back with technical complaints or suggesting modifications by availing the one-year guarantee period in the next 12 months, in the event of which Form D448 would be invoked. Sources, however, said that all technical issues were raised by the IN team, liaising with the MDL, during the construction phase itself.

Meanwhile, two other sister ships of the class, INS Kochi and INS Chennai are undergoing construction with the handing over to the IN slated to be in late 2014 and mid-2015 respectively.

Source: [Asian Age](#), 11th July, 2014

HC Trashes Cases against Crew of American Ship

About nine months after an American ship dubbed by security and intelligence personnel as a 'floating armory', was detained off Tuticorin port with a huge cache of arms and ammunition, the Madras high court on Thursday trashed the conspiracy theory and quashed the criminal case against all the 35 crew members including five Britons.

Justice P N Prakash made it clear that they could not be tried under the stringent Arms Act and said, "I hold that the anchoring of MV Seaman Guard Ohio within our territorial sea was out of necessity and their action is saved by the principle of 'innocent passage' contemplated by Section 4(1) of the Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zone Act, 1976 and Article 18 and 19 of UNCLOS. Therefore, the crew and the security guards cannot be prosecuted for an offence under the Arms Act."

The vessel flying Sierra Leone flag was taken into Tuticorin port on October, 12, 2013. After finding the crew members heavily armed, various investigating agencies were alerted and a joint interrogation team was constituted for interrogating the captain and the crew of the ship. The team comprised officials from the Indian Coast Guard, Customs, Intelligence Bureau, Superintendent of police, Tuticorin, Q Branch (a special unit of the Tamil Nadu police which deals with terrorists and extremists), Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and Marine Police.

On October 16, 2013, Q Branch sleuths seized 35 firearms, 5,682 ammunition and 102 magazines. On October 18, 2013, a total of 35 crew members were arrested, while the ship's captain and another person were allowed to be in the vessel for its maintenance. The next day, the two were also arrested. Prakash, quashing the charges, said, "The ship had made a distress entry into our waters in search of food and fuel. It anchored at the outer port limit of Tuticorin port and was waiting for supplies. When the Coast Guard questioned them, they admitted straight away that there were arms and ammunitions on board the ship. The ship was brought into the Tuticorin port for further investigation by the Indian Coast Guard. After having brought them into our port for investigation, they cannot be prosecuted for violation of the notification."

Even according to the prosecution, the ship had 11 crew members of whom 8 are Indians and it had 24 security guards, of whom four are Indians with permanent addresses and Indian passports, the judge said. "It is not the prosecution's case that these people are pirates or they are working for a nation that is inimical to India. All these people are Indian passport holders who have joined the first accused Company as security guards. Therefore, I have no doubt in my mind that MV Seaman Guard Ohio is a ship registered in Sierra Leone and is into anti-piracy business.

The judge pointed out that one Selvam carried 20kg of mutton, 60kg of fish and 200 chicken, vegetables and fruit juices to the ship, but he had to return as he could not locate the ship in the sea. For this aborted attempt, he was charged with conspiracy for keeping prohibited arms. "It is indeed startling and undoubtedly pricks my judicial conscience," Justice Prakash said. Similarly, the prosecution of Ranjithkumar for lending his e-mail ID, and Murugesh for permitting his employer Mariya Anton to use his HDFC Bank account for getting money from had been made to face conspiracy charges as if there was a grandeur conspiracy between these local fisher folks and those on board the ship for possession of firearms, he said, adding, "it is indeed too harsh".

Pointing out that the vessel is a registered entity, Justice Prakash said the Centre has recognised the fact that there are private maritime security companies that provide security for merchant vessels while they traverse through pirate infested locations.

Source: [TOI](#), 11th July, 2014

Indian Navy Light Combat Aircraft to soon Begin Test Flights

The naval variant of India's indigenous light combat aircraft (LCA) is due to soon begin ramp trials.

Avinash Chander, scientific adviser to the Defence Minister and Director General Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), told India Strategic magazine (www.indiastrategic.in) that the LCA-Navy had already done more than 25 test flights from a runway. As these were successful and met the designated parameters, the aircraft will now be deployed at a naval base in Goa to commence ramp flights, probably after the monsoon.

Goa, on the Arabian seafloor, has a major naval air station, INS Hansa, where the MiG-29Ks for Indian aircraft carriers are also located.

The station has a 14-degree ramp along with necessary testing sensors and paraphernalia to monitor the flights and was specifically built as part of the indigenous LCA-Navy development programme. But as it is a national naval asset, it is shared by the MiG-29Ks for training pilots and flight tests.

Both the aircraft need the same degree in the ramp, matching the one on INS Vikramaditya, acquired from Russia, and INS Vikrant, now being built at the Kochi shipyard.

Chander said that the flight tests are being conducted with LCA Mark-I to prove certain technologies and to familiarise the naval pilots with them. One aircraft is operational, another is on the anvil and a third will soon be available to complete the trials. After that, for full weaponised operations aboard carriers, will come the LCA Mark-II powered by GE 414 engines, according to India Strategic.

The naval variant, being tested from the HAL airport in Bangalore, has a bigger undercarriage that Hindustan Aeronautics has built to facilitate deck landings. The development programme is coordinated by a one-star naval pilot.

Source: [IBN](#), 11th July, 2014

Russia, India to Hold Naval Exercises in Sea of Japan

A task force from the Indian Navy will arrive in the port of Vladivostok in Russia's Far East on July 14 to take part in joint exercises with the Russian Pacific Fleet, a spokesman for Russia's Eastern Military District. "On July 14, an Indian Navy task force, which consists of INS Ranvijay destroyer, the INS Shivalik frigate, and INS Shakti fleet tanker, will visit the city of Vladivostok," Capt. 1st Rank Roman Martov said.

The program of the six-day visit includes joint Indra-2014 exercises. The Pacific Fleet will be represented by the Varyag guided-missile cruiser, the Admiral Vinogradov destroyer, the Peresvet and several auxiliary ships. Both sides will use extensively naval aircraft and helicopters. According to Martov, the active phase of the exercises will take place on July 17-19 in the Peter the Great Gulf in the Sea of Japan. During the exercises, the ships will hold tactical maneuvering drills, artillery and missile firing drills, as well as helicopter deck-landing drills.

The exercises will end on July 19 with a debriefing aboard the Varyag, the flagship of the Pacific Fleet. Since 2003, India and Russia have conducted seven large exercises under the so-called Indra series of joint ground and naval drills. In 2011, Russia canceled joint naval drills with India in the Pacific Ocean, citing the tsunami and subsequent nuclear crisis in Japan.

Source: [Turkish Weekly](#), 11th July, 2014

The South China Sea's Oil Tanker Hijackers Have Rewritten the Piracy Playbook

Somewhere in the South China Sea, an oil tanker carrying 1,160 barrels of fuel went missing on July 4. The Honduran vessel the Moresby 9 was boarded by attackers, and by the time the Indonesian navy arrived, it had disappeared. Its location is still unknown. The apparent hijacking appears to be the latest in a string by highly skilled pirates who troll the region looking for one specific thing: oil.

In the past few months, sophisticated pirates have hijacked eight tankers in the South China Sea and Malacca Strait, mostly for their marine gas oil (MGO)—a fuel similar to diesel—and other refined petroleum. These attacks aren't smash-and-grab robberies, where pirates snatch cash, laptops and cell phones and then make a quick getaway. These pirates follow a different and more lucrative business model: They commandeer the whole tanker, take it to a secret location, and expertly drain it of its oil.

While piracy off Africa's coasts tends to get more attention (and even lately the Hollywood treatment), Indonesia's waters actually saw the most attacks worldwide in the first quarter of 2014. Southeast Asia is the region with by far the highest numbers of attacks, by the British research company Dryad Maritime Intelligence Services.

Experts have warned that these Asian pirates' attacks are intricately pre-planned and complex. They're relatively non-violent compared to those in West Africa, and although crew members have been held hostage, none have been killed.

James Bridger, a maritime security consultant at Delex Systems Inc., said the common modus operandi used by these pirates indicates that the attacks are likely the work of one gang that's receiving information and pay checks from a crime syndicate with roots in Indonesia and ties to Singapore. Since no pirate, nor anyone from this alleged crime syndicate, has been caught, not much is actually known about them, but Bridger tells Quartz that the pirates are likely to be from Indonesia. They also seem to know when the vessels are leaving the port in Singapore, suggesting they're getting intel from there.

These pirates target small tankers with low decks, which make them easy to board. And once they hijack the ship, they make it disappear for some time—a few hours to a couple days. They paint over the vessel's name to hide its original identity, keep the whole crew hostage, and efficiently siphon off the oil, Bridger said.

Stealing a tanker of oil via ship-to-ship (STS) transfer is no easy task. Not only does it require a pirate tanker to meet the hijacked vessel at a predetermined location and time, but it also necessitates a properly trained crew to make the transfer. Only expert engineers or crews with experience in this field could pull off such a thing.

But it's probably not too difficult to recruit these ship-to-ship transfer experts, Bridger believes. They are simply able to make far more money working for pirates than at above-board jobs. "Perhaps they already knew each other from other elements of the black market fuel game, or it's possible that the STS experts are 'moonlighting' with the pirates while still keeping their regular jobs," he said.

Once taken, Bridger said, the oil is sold on the regional black market—Singapore, Malaysia, Borneo, Thailand and Vietnam. High oil prices in Singapore have nurtured a very large black market for fuel. The city-state, with one of the world's busiest ports driving its economy, has plenty to lose if it doesn't address its piracy problem. With most of the attacked ships coming out of Singapore, the port could be classified as high-risk, which would mean a greater premium for ships' insurance and diminished traffic.

With these pirates' exceptional success rate so far, Bridger says these types of attacks will probably continue, at least through the dry season of March to October, when waters are calmer. Analysts at Dryad also point to a lack of effective law enforcement in the region. According to their recent report, "Dryad is not expecting to see the level of maritime crime to fall in this region for the remainder of the year unless there is significant investment by local maritime forces in proactively countering this crime."

Source: [Quartz](#), 11th July, 2014

UN Tribunal Resolves 40-Year-Old Maritime Dispute between India and Bangladesh

Ending a 40-year-old dispute, a United Nations tribunal delivered its verdict on Tuesday on India and Bangladesh's maritime boundaries in the Bay of Bengal, awarding nearly four-fifth of the 25,000 sq km of the exclusive economic zone to Bangladesh.

The verdict, binding on both countries, opens the way for Bangladesh to explore for oil and gas in the Bay of Bengal, and ends a dispute over a sea border with India that has ruffled ties between the neighbours. So has India lost out? NDTV has accessed an internal government of India note that suggests otherwise. Even though India believes the delimitation has been done in an arbitrary fashion, it is not the loser. Control of the disputed New Moore Island and concomitant access to Hariabhanga river is a significant gain. The island, supposedly rich in oil and natural gas, has been a traditional sore point between the two neighbouring countries. The Hariabhanga river, which flows around the Sundarbans in West Bengal and borders Satkhira district of Bangladesh, and the region holds twice the amount of

hydrocarbons as compared to the Krishna-Godavari basin in Andhra Pradesh. The verdict is also good news for the fishermen of both countries who now have access to a larger area for fishing. Both the governments have called it a win-win situation. "It is the victory of friendship and a win-win situation for the people of Bangladesh and India," Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali said on Tuesday after the ruling of the Hague-based Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). "The settlement of the maritime boundary will further enhance mutual understanding and goodwill between India and Bangladesh by bringing to closure a long-pending issue," India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

Incidentally, Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj chose Bangladesh as the destination of her first standalone visit, which perhaps goes on to show the importance India attaches to its relationship with Bangladesh.

Source: [NDTV](#), 13th July, 2014

United States: We are Not Outsiders in Asia

Washington has addressed criticisms that it does not have a role to play in East Asia and has no say in its development and stability amid growing territorial tensions over the South China Sea. In a speech addressed to an influential Washington-based think tank, Michael Fuchs, the second top American policymaker in the region, justified President Obama's foreign policy and military pivot to Asia Pacific.

China has maintained that the US is not a party in its dispute with the Philippines, Japan and Vietnam and has pressed for President Xi Jinping's new security vision for Asia that rejects the leadership of a non-Asian power. Fuchs said that the US has been "essential" to peace and prosperity in the region for decades, with its strongest naval force postured in the western Pacific.

"Some call us 'outsiders' and tell us not to intervene in regional issues," said Fuchs, United States assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. "But they ignore that for decades the United States has been a Pacific power, integral to regional peace and stability, and that our interests are directly affected by what happens across the Asia-Pacific," he said in a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies' conference on the South China Sea.

Fuchs also denied that the US is half-hearted in its supposed rebalancing strategy given its role in the Middle East and European crises. He also noted that the US has recently modernized its defense alliances with the forging of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement with the Philippines and the Force Posture Agreement with Australia.

Fuchs also cited "provocative actions, increased military spending, strident nationalism, and rehashing of painful history" as main concerns of the US. "[These] make up a combustible mix that threatens the region's stability and its future prosperity," Fuchs said. "These challenges highlight the need to strengthen the transparent, rules-based order and institutions that have helped the region thrive for decades," he added.

Besides defense and security, the US has improved in economic and people-to-people ties with Asian nations including China, Fuchs said. "The best demonstration of our how the rebalance continues to move forward despite competing priorities is that the United States – our people, our businesses, and our security presence – is woven into the fabric of the Asia-Pacific," he said.

The US and China have recently concluded its economic and strategic dialogue in Beijing where both sides carried out a "candid and in-depth exchange" on economy, investment and finance but did not reach a consensus on the sea disputes involving the US' allies Japan, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Source: [Philstar](#), 14th July, 2014

Indian Warships in Russia for INDRA Series of Naval War-Games

Three Indian Navy warships entered Vladivostok in Russia for the INDRA series of naval war games with that country. After the exercises with the Russian navy, the warships will proceed to the Pacific Ocean where they will hold the multilateral 'Malabar' series exercises with the US and Japanese Navy there

"After travelling over 5,000 nautical miles, three Indian Navy warships, including the Rajput-class destroyer INS Ranvijay, stealth frigate INS Shivalik and fleet tanker INS Shakti, entered the Russian port of Vladivostok," a Navy spokesperson said. India and Russia hold the INDRA series of exercises between their navies and armies where they practice counter-terrorism manouveres and further improve their inter-operability.

For the multinational Malabar series war games, India had invited Japan to participate in this year's edition of the war games during Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to New Delhi in January. India had decided against making the Malabar series exercises multilateral after China opposed the presence of Japan, Singapore and Australia in the naval war games in the 2007 edition held close to the Japanese waters. India and the US have held over 60 exercises between their armed forces.

Source: [ET](#), 14th July

Asia Fears China Military Conflict Over Sea Claims

China's neighbors are increasingly anxious that Beijing's maritime disputes with countries like Vietnam and the Philippines will lead to military conflict, a US research group said in findings released. Even in China itself, polling showed that 62 percent of the public worried that territorial disputes between China and its neighbors could lead to an armed conflict, according to a broad study conducted in 44 countries by the Pew Research Center.

"This year in all 11 Asian nations polled, roughly half or more say they are concerned that territorial disputes between China and its neighbors will lead to a military conflict," the study found. At 93 percent, Filipinos were most concerned, followed by the Japanese at 85 percent, Vietnamese at 84 percent and South Koreans at 83 percent, according to Pew.

Beijing and Hanoi in particular are embroiled in an increasingly heated territorial row, the latest chapter of which was sparked by China's positioning of a major oil rig in waters claimed by Vietnam.

But the Asian giant has also seen tensions rise with Japan and the Philippines, both of which claim Beijing has taken inappropriate steps in the East and South China Seas, where claims of several island chains are under dispute. According to the report, Japan, the Philippines and Vietnam see China as the greatest threat, while China as well as Malaysia and Pakistan list the United States as the biggest threat.

Every other Asian nation surveyed, including Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Thailand, see the United States as their greatest ally -- although Indonesia also sees America as its greatest threat. Among citizens of the 44 nations surveyed, 40 percent said they believe the United States was the world's present-day super power, compared to 49 percent who said so in 2008.

The number who considered China the leading super power, meanwhile, rose from 19 percent six years ago to 31 percent. Fifty percent of respondents said China would eventually replace or has already replaced the United States in that role, compared to just 32 percent who said China would never do so.

Across the nations surveyed, excluding China, 49 percent of people expressed a favorable opinion of China, compared to 32 percent unfavorable.

Source: [Global Post](#), 15th July, 2014



National Waterway-5 Coming up in Odisha

The National Waterway-5, for facilitating cargo movement through inland waterway, is expected to be completed by June 2017.

The first phase of the project comprises 201 km stretch between Jokadia/Pankapal (Kalinganagar) and Dhamra and Paradip ports, while the second phase has a length of 131 km between Talcher and Jokadia/Pankapal (Kalinganagar).

The State Government, Paradip Port Trust (PPT) and Dhamra Port Company Limited (DPCL) on Monday signed memoranda of understanding (MoU) with Inland Waterway Authority of India (IWAI) for the development of the waterway.

The MoU was signed between IWAI chairman Amitabh Verma, secretary in the Commerce and Transport department G Mathivathanan, PPT chairman Sudhanshu Mishra and Dharma Port CEO Santosh Mohapatra at the State secretariat here in the presence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

The State Government would provide land free of cost and all possible assistance to fast track the project estimated at `2,000 crore. The Chief Minister said the organisations will work in tandem to connect and develop waterway between Talcher, Kalinganagar, Dhamra and Paradip. This will provide water transport facilities to the industrial hubs in these areas, he said and added that the waterway will also provide an economical and environmental-friendly transport system and help reduce the burden on the existing road and rail network.

The IWAI will prepare the project proposal within five months from the date of MoU and obtain necessary sanction of the estimated cost of the project within the next three months. The State Government will develop cargo terminal facilities at Pankapal/Jokadia through a Joint Venture/Special Purpose Vehicle with the PPT, DPCL and other stakeholders.

Besides, the PPT and DPCL would develop suitable terminal facilities on their premises as captive facilities to operate, maintain and manage cargo loading and unloading operations.

The IWAI will initiate activities for providing the desired fairway from the Central budgetary support by dredging, repairing/reconstructing weirs, navigational locks and installing navigational aids.

Source: [Indian Express](#), 1st July, 2014

India, Singapore Sees Mutual Cooperation in Smart Cities, Shipping and Port Management

India and Singapore sees mutual cooperation in an array of fields including skill development, development of smart cities, water management, shipping, port management and coastal development. This was among the issues discussed in depth by Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Minister for Law, K. Shanmugam, when he called on the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. The government plans a major thrust in low-cost and affordable housing, and sought Singapore`s assistance in construction technology for this purpose, said Modi. India plans to build heritage cities and 100 new smart cities.

Singapore is the source of the largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flow into India last year. It is also the destination of the largest flows of foreign investment from India abroad last year. Shanmugam, who is on a five day official visit to India, also conveyed the message of the Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong, that the relations between the two countries, which are based on mutual trust, should be made even stronger through a series of concrete steps.

During the meeting, it was planned that a year-long series of events be held to mark the completion of fifty years of diplomatic relations between Singapore and India. Both Prime Ministers are keen that the occasion should be celebrated in a way that further expands the canvas of the relationship.

Observing that Singapore is one of the top tourist destinations worldwide, Modi suggested that Indian states should hold one-month long special campaigns in Singapore to highlight their tourism potential, during celebrations of the fifty years of relationship. The meeting was also attended by India's Minister of External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj, High Commissioner of Singapore to India, Lim Thuan Kuan and senior officials from both sides.

Source: [Bernama](#), 2nd July, 2014

CMA CGM Signs Agreement for New Indian Terminal

France-based CMA CGM Group has signed an agreement with Adani Ports for a fourth container terminal in Mundra, India.

The new terminal will be developed and operated by a new 50:50 joint venture that will be formed in Mundra by CMA CGM Group subsidiary CMA Terminals and India-based Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ). The JV will develop and operate the new fourth container terminal, a state-of-the-art facility with an annual

handling capacity of 1.3 million TEUs. The move comes after CMA CGM Group signed an agreement with APSEZ – India's largest port developer and part of Adani Group – for the development of a new, common user container terminal at Mundra Port.

The new terminal will be 650m long and have 27ha of back area. The project also comprises the design and construction of a 650m jetty with a water depth of 16.5m. It will initially have four 65 tonne-capacity rail-mounted quay cranes capable of handling 18,000 TEU vessels as well as super, post and ultra large container vessels.

The new terminal will help make Mundra India's container port will be the largest container port in the next 24 months, with a total container handling capacity reaching 5.5 million TEUs. The project is CMA CGM Group's first port investment in India.

Source: [Port Technology](#), 4th July, 2014

Accidents Raise Safety Questions on Hong Kong Waters

Hong Kong is one of the world's busiest ports, but as a growing number of container ships compete with fishing boats for space in an ever-shrinking harbour, a spate of accidents has raised fears for maritime safety.

The city, whose name means "fragrant harbour" in the Cantonese dialect, is as famous for its crowded shipping lanes as it is for its bustling streets. But a fatal collision between a local ferry and small pleasure boat in October 2012 left 39 people dead and sparked an investigation that discovered a "litany of errors" contributed to the tragedy.

Since then, a number of other incidents -- including two high-speed ferry accidents that injured scores of passengers and the grounding of a large container ship -- have left those who ply Hong Kong's waters worried. Hong Kong's glittering skyscrapers are built around the iconic Victoria Harbour, where thousands of people criss-cross the waterways that separate the mainland and the city's islands daily.

Annual vessel arrivals in the southern Chinese city have almost doubled since 1990 to almost 200,000 in 2013. Much of this increase is due to the construction of ports in the neighbouring Chinese trading hub of the Pearl River Delta, which has led to more container ship traffic. Hong Kong itself is home to the world's fourth-largest container port. Kwok Mook-kiu, 69, who has worked as a small fishing boat or "sampan" operator for more than 30 years, said it is increasingly difficult to navigate a safe path.

"Few ports have the same intensity of marine traffic, or range of vessel sizes," said Richard Colwill, who has worked as a marine planner in the city for 17 years. Around 1,000 container ships and high-speed ferries use the city's waters each day, said Colwill, sharing routes with fishing boats, tug boats, yachts, cargo barges and local ferries. But while he believes the waters are safe, the increasing number of ferries means that if there is a collision, the potential for casualties is greater. In May, a high-speed ferry collided with a cargo ship, injuring more than 30 people, and in November last year a high-speed ferry crashed into an unidentified object, leaving 87 hurt.

That incident also highlighted the problem of rubbish strewn across the waterways. Tony Yeung, a former captain who now heads a local marine training institute, says obstacles as large as beds and refrigerators would force him to make a detour on busy sea routes. "When you are riding a high-speed ferry and you run into any of them, it can be very serious. When you go around them quickly, there may be other ferries beside you that you can crash into," he said.

Boat operators say there is also a problem with land reclamation, which has seen Victoria Harbour shrink over the decades to create more space in a densely packed city. "The harbour has shrunk. The government wants land everywhere," sampan operator Kwok said, adding that this increases risks. But the government's marine department defends its safety record, saying the number of collisions has fallen, from 327 in 1995 to 183 in 2012. "The average number of collisions is about 170 cases in the past five years. Most of the cases were minor in nature," a marine department spokeswoman told AFP, describing there to be about 135,000 passenger trips made daily on local passenger vessels.

The probe into the 2012 tragedy found safety measures were not enforced by inspectors for the department, described as "understaffed and underfunded" for the past decade by Paul Zimmerman, CEO of Designing Hong Kong, which campaigns for better planning and policies in the city. "The report thereafter basically found that in the last 20-odd years, the marine department adhered to some very casual attitudes and has not put good effort into maintaining a comprehensive inspection system," lawmaker James To, who assisted the families of the victims, told AFP.

The department, which said it has "strengthened" ship inspections after the disaster, has proposed improvement measures including a requirement for large passenger ships to carry better tracking and communication equipment. Meanwhile, those who spend every day on Hong Kong's frenetic waterways say vigilance is the key to survival. "Of course I am worried about accidents, I am always afraid," a 72-year-old ferry captain surnamed Lai said. "Sea traffic is busier now... just like crossing a busy road, you have to pay extra attention."

Source: [NDTV](#), 6th July, 2014

The End of the Era of Heavy Fuel Oil in Maritime Shipping

Since the 1960s, heavy fuel oil (HFO) has been the king of marine fuels. Viscous, dirty, yet inexpensive and widely available, HFO propelled a long period of robust growth in international shipping, which carries over 90% of intercontinental trade by volume each year. For many, it is the lifeblood of the maritime shipping industry.

But HFO's low price does not reflect its impacts on the environment and human health. The sulfur content of HFO can be up to 35,000 parts per million. It is the reason that maritime shipping accounts for 8% of global emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂), making the industry an important source for acid rain as well as respiratory diseases. In some populous port cities, such as Hong Kong, shipping is the largest single source of SO₂ emissions as well as emissions of particulate matter (PM), which are directly tied to the sulfur content of fuel. By one estimate, PM emissions from maritime shipping led to 87,000 premature deaths worldwide in 2012.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), the governing body of international shipping, has made a decisive effort to diversify the industry away from HFO into cleaner fuels with less harmful effects on the environment and human health. Effective in 2015, ships operated within the Emission Control Areas (ECAs) covering the Economic Exclusive Zone of North America, the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, and the English Channel will begin to use Marine Gas Oil (MGO) with allowable sulfur content up to 1,000 ppm. Starting from 2020, ships sailing outside ECAs will switch to Marine Diesel Oil (MDO) with permitted sulfur content up to 5,000 ppm.*

That tectonic shift also creates openings for a variety of new fuels. Liquefied nature gas (LNG), newly abundant and relatively affordable, is attracting the attention of many shipping companies. Although the lack of infrastructure and the uncertainty of future prices have slowed the "dash to gas," many expect LNG to establish itself as one of major alternatives to HFO in the future. Lloyds Registry, a shipping classification society, expects LNG to take 11% of the market share in 2030. Meanwhile, Stena Teknik, a Swedish company, is testing methanol, another natural gas product, but one that requires less storage space in a ship and is relatively easier to handle. While natural gas-based fuels may sometimes offer questionable climate benefits, due to methane leakage concerns, the IMO's low-sulfur regulation may create needed openings for other zero-sulfur, low-carbon marine fuels. Tests using fuel cells on the *Viking Lady*, an offshore supply ship, demonstrated promising results. Wind kites and solar panels have already been installed on numerous ships to supplement marine diesel engines. Even HFO will not completely disappear from the menu of marine fuels. Combined with scrubbers that capture more than 99% of the sulfur from the exhaust gas, HFO will continue to play an important role. Lloyds Registry reckons that HFO will represent about 40% of fuel use by 2030.

The shift to cleaner but pricier low-sulfur fuels is likely to heighten interest in the “fifth fuel”: energy efficiency. Historically, the maritime shipping industry, where energy often accounts for over half of operating costs, has responded to escalating fuel prices with innovative energy-saving strategies. To cite a recent example: in 2008, as fuel prices went through the roof, shipping lines cut their operating speeds by as much as 50%, helping many companies stay afloat amid one of the worst downturns in history. In an analysis of satellite data on ship operations, we’ve estimated that the industry can further slash 100 million ton of fuel use by 2030 through wider implementation of energy-saving measures that were adopted by industry leaders in 2011. This is in addition to savings of 90 million tons of fuel because of the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI), a mandatory program that will require new ships to achieve certain efficiency targets beginning in 2015.

The continued diversification of marine fuels and improvements in energy efficiency has important implications. First and foremost, they may alleviate concerns about the availability of low-sulfur fuels. Second, the new fuels are on a collision course with IMO safety regulations concerning flashpoint, the temperature at which a fuel can vaporize to form an ignitable mixture in air. The IMO currently requires marine fuels to have a minimum flashpoint of 60°C. But low-sulfur fuels have a lower flashpoint (50° to 55°C), meaning that they are “off-spec” and cannot be used under the IMO rule. The flashpoint requirement, which went into effect in 1976, was meant to provide a large margin of error to ensure the temperature of the engine room (normally below 45°C) does not exceed the flashpoint in any circumstance.

But according to industry heavyweights such as Maersk and BIMCO, modern technologies such as advanced ventilation systems provide an adequate safety margin, and they argue that keeping the flashpoint requirement will cause the industry to miss the opportunity represented by the increased availability of low-sulfur, low-flashpoint fuels. Industry and member states such as the U.S. are urging the IMO to accelerate its consideration of an amendment to the flashpoint requirement.

Source: [ICCT](#), 9th July, 2014

Union Budget India: Sixteen New Port Projects to Come Up

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has proposed to award the development of 16 new port projects in the current fiscal year.

Presenting the Union Budget 2014-15 in the Lok Sabha, Jaitley said, "A policy for encouraging the growth of Indian controlled tonnage will be formulated to ensure increase in employment of the Indian seafarers. Development of ports is also critical

for boosting trade." The minister also proposed to allocate an amount of Rs.11,635 crore for the development of the first phase of the outer harbour project in Tuticorin.

According to the minister, SEZs (special economic zones) will also be developed in Kandla and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust at Navi Mumbai. "A comprehensive policy will also be announced to promote Indian ship-building industry in the current financial year," the minister said, IANS adds.

For the development of inland waterways, the minister proposed an allocation of Rs.4,200 crore to be utilised under a new project called Jal Marg Vikas (national waterways-I) on the Ganga river. The project is expected to come up between Allahabad and Haldia to cover a distance of 1,620 km over a period of six years.

Source: [India Today](#), 10th July, 2014

Coming soon: Maritime hub in Andhra Pradesh

The Andhra Pradesh government is preparing plans to develop its nearly 900 km-long coastline into an international maritime centre (IMC) by developing a string of ports starting from Krishnapatnam in Nellore to Kalingapatnam in Srikakulam by roping in the Union government. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will soon come out with a detailed plan on the steps the government is planning to initiate to develop AP's coastline into an IMC. He is also expected to visit New Delhi after the budget session of Parliament to present the plan to the Centre.

"The idea behind the plan is to make Andhra Pradesh a leading maritime hub in the East that would rival Singapore which is in the commanding heights of eastern sea trade," said Parakala Prabhakar, noted economist and communications advisor to the AP government. A maritime hub in the eastern coast would boost the country's trade and economic links with the east and far-east, Parakala said adding that this would become a major attraction for the centre to participate in the project in a big way.

In the eastern coast, with its long coastline, Andhra Pradesh alone has the potential to become an international maritime centre and this is the reason why many eastern countries such as Thailand and Singapore want AP to become their investment destination, Prabhakar added. Stating that the government is fully engaged in the preparation of the plans, the AP government's advisor said: "Since the centre has decided to convert the Vizag-Chennai belt into an industrial corridor and with Vizag poised to emerge as a major IT investment region, the state government is expecting the Centre's full scale participation in the massive project," he said.

As part of this, the state will revive the 422-km-long Buckingham Canal, which runs between Kakinada and Puducherry and develop this into an important inland waterway. "Reviving the canal will provide cheaper transport facility for the industrial corridor and petro-chemical corridors. It will also promote tourism. The state is keen on the project and details of the project will be unveiled soon," said Parakala. Andhra Pradesh is buoyed by the response it is getting from the eastern countries, especially Singapore, to invest in the state. "Our efforts to promote trade with the eastern countries are yielding fruits. A major trade delegation is visiting AP to have high-level talks with the chief minister in the second week of August," he added. According to Prabhakar, the visit of the delegation is the result of the talks the Singapore Foreign Affairs and Law Minister K Shanmugam had with chief minister Naidu in Hyderabad in the first week of July.

The outcome of the Singapore delegation's visit to the state is expected to set a trend in the investment flow into Andhra Pradesh, he said.

Source: [TOI](#), 13th July, 2014

Melting Arctic Opens New Routes for Energy Shipping

Rising global temperatures are melting Arctic sea ice, so much so that some companies are now viewing the Arctic Ocean as a major shipping route for energy supplies. The Wall Street Journal published an article on July 9 that detailed a joint venture between two major Asian companies seeking to ship liquefied natural gas (LNG) through the Arctic Ocean. Mitsui OSK of Japan and China Shipping Development Company announced a combined investment of \$932 million on three LNG carriers that could handle the rough icy waters of the far north.

China and Japan promise to be huge buyers of LNG in the coming years. China, with its cities suffocating from air pollution, is seeking to replace much of its coal fleet with cleaner burning natural gas. And Japan – which has long been the world's largest importer of LNG – is still heavily dependent on LNG imports with its 48 nuclear reactors still offline.

China and Japan continue to scour the world for new LNG supplies, and melting sea ice has opened up the option of the Arctic Ocean. The three LNG ships ordered by Mitsui and China Shipping Development will be equipped with ice breaking capability in order to plough through chunks of ice. The objective is to export natural gas from the Yamal LNG project that Russia is building in the Arctic Circle, ship it via the Northern Sea Route (NSR) along Russia's northern coastline, and on to China and Japan.

The route between Russia and Asia via the Arctic would theoretically cut down on shipping times, and thus cost. “The shorter distance would be good for buyers, by cutting shipping costs and reducing other risks,” Yu Nagatomi, an economist at the Institute of Energy Economics, told the Wall Street Journal.

But there are several reasons to think that the role of the Arctic in shipping could be vastly overblown. First, even with ice breaking capability, LNG carriers would only be able to transit the Arctic Ocean in summer months, a fact that even Mitsui OSK conceded. (Related Article: China, Russia and East Siberian Natural Gas) And according to Malte Humpert, Executive Director of The Arctic Institute, the economic savings of shipping LNG via the Arctic are questionable. “There are a number of factors: seasonality, geography, and market conditions, being the most important, which will prevent the route from becoming a major transit route let alone reshape global LNG trade,” he said in an email. Humpert says that much of the LNG is destined for Chinese ports, where distance savings over the traditional route via the Suez Canal will be less significant in comparison with Japanese or South Korean ports. In other words, by traveling the NSR, ships can achieve a 40 percent savings in distance if they are destined for Japan or Korea, but only cut down on 20 percent of the distance if heading for Chinese ports. And after factoring in the additional cost of ice breaking technology, and the narrow window of time in the summer when ice retreats, the benefits of the NSR becomes less certain, he argues.

Moreover, shipping in the Arctic Ocean is still dangerous, and oil and gas companies don’t have solid response plans for dealing with an oil spill or other emergency. Shipping in summer months does not mean the route is entirely ice-free. Softer first-year ice – ice that only formed the previous winter – melts in summer months. But harder multi-year ice, which represents the greatest danger to shipping, remains. That means that traveling on top of the ice is not possible in the summer, but emergency response ships would face challenges navigating through broken up sea ice at the same time.

To be sure, LNG shipping via the Arctic Ocean will likely grow. Only four ships traveled the NSR in 2010; that number jumped to 71 ships last year. Once the Yamal LNG project is completed, shipments will surely rise. The project will have the capacity to ship 16.5 million tons of LNG per year.

But the route through the Arctic Ocean will remain limited to seasonal shipments, and only to ports that can significantly save on costs relative to traditional routes like the Suez Canal. “Apart from these niche opportunities,” Humpert writes in a 2013 report on Arctic trade, “Arctic shipping routes will be unable to compete with the world’s existing major trade routes.”

Source: [CS Monitor](#), 14th July, 2014



Tracking Environmental Lead Levels with Coral

Scientists have reconstructed the history of heavy metal lead (Pb) level in Singapore waters and the Indian Ocean.

While lead concentrations decreased in the North Atlantic Ocean by almost 10-fold after 1970's with the regional phasing out of leaded gasoline consumption, the opposite has occurred in the surface of Indian Ocean. They have found that lead concentrations in the Indian Ocean and the Straits of Singapore rose from the mid-1970's until early 2000's. This lead concentration has declined since, but the current concentrations are now three times higher than that in the North Atlantic and North Pacific Oceans.

Monitoring lead in marine environments remains an analytically challenging task. High-fidelity data is produced from a only few inter-calibrated labs such as the one led by Professor Edward Boyle at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) who contributed to the study.

In analysing their samples, the researchers were puzzled by an odd measurement: In samples taken off the coast of Singapore (Jong Island), they found an imprint of lead that they did not expect to find in this region of the world. While most countries around the Indian Ocean used leaded gasoline produced in Europe and the Middle East, the lead found near Singapore matches the kind once used in North American gasoline.

Prof. Boyle said, "It's almost as if Singapore had gone off and imported a whole lot of lead from the United States. It doesn't make any sense why they would do that, because there are more local sources that presumably would be cheaper, more economical."

Dr. Intan Suci Nurhati from Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) added, "We try to make sense of this mystery by regularly monitoring lead in seawater and aerosol. Lead in the air seems to be consistent with what we expect to find in the region, but our seawater sampling data lends support to the unexpected lead value that we see in coral.

"In this recently published paper, we conclude that leaded gasoline may not be the primary driver of lead deposited in Singapore waters; there are other sources to consider such as coal as well as complex sources and processes in the Straits of Singapore. Ultimately, we hope this data would help Singapore and stakeholders in our region in monitoring heavy metal pollution level and sources in our nearby oceans with respect to existing environmental regulations."

The research team began collecting coral and water samples in Singapore in 2010, as well as gathering corals from the Indian Ocean through their collaborators. Upon bringing the coral samples back to the lab, the researchers analysed the corals for trace amounts of lead as well as lead isotopes which is a tool to pinpoint the source of lead. This is because lead ores from different mining sites have different lead isotope signatures.

Akin to trees, corals form annual layers that lock in information on lead in seawater during the formation of the layers, this process goes on throughout the lifetime of the corals which could live for decades. By ascertaining how much lead and what signature of lead isotope was deposited in a given annual layer, the researchers were able to reconstruct a history of lead level and sources in Singapore and the Indian Ocean over the past 60 years, which is the time when there was no monitoring data.

They found that lead levels began to increase in the mid-1970s, peaking in 2002 and 2003 before declining, a timeline consistent with the region's pattern of industrialization and leaded gasoline use.

Source: [Asian Scientist](#), 3rd July, 2014

China, India Formalise Brahmaputra Agreement

The governments of India and China have signed the implementation plan under which China will provide water flow data of the trans-boundary Brahmaputra river to India during the monsoon months. Separately, the two governments have signed an agreement under which their officials will visit each other's countries for training.

This is being interpreted by some officials in India as agreement that they can send hydrologists to Tibet to monitor water flow in the Brahmaputra, but there is no official confirmation of that from either government. As things stand now, the Chinese government does not allow Indians into Tibet, and the Indian government does not allow Chinese into Arunachal Pradesh.

The implementation plan that has just been signed during Indian vice president Hamid Ansari's visit to China is a follow-up to the agreement signed last October at a meeting between Chinese premier Li Keqiang and the then Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh. Even then, many Chinese official and non-official observers had said broader cooperation on the Brahmaputra would be difficult without a resolution to the border dispute between the two countries. Given that background, some observers in New Delhi have described recent media reports about Indian officials being allowed into Tibet as wishful thinking, especially since there are further

unconfirmed reports that India will have to pay for water flow monitoring stations that China will set up under the agreement.

Be that as it may, the data provided by China will prove useful in flood control, and China wants to know exactly how India will use it. The implementation plan agreement – which is between India's Central Water Commission and China's Bureau of Hydrology and Water Resources – states that the "Chinese side will provide hydrological information of Yarlung Zangbu / Brahmaputra River in flood season to the Indian side, and the Indian side will provide the Chinese side information regarding data utilisation in flood forecasting and mitigation and the information of the related hydrological stations."

The other agreement whose signing has created some excitement in India is a memorandum of understanding between India's Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration and the China Executive Leadership Academy Pudong to enhance understanding and friendship by promoting exchange and cooperation in the area of capacity building of public officials.

Source: [Third Pole](#), 5th July, 2014

Dark snow: From the Arctic to the Himalayas, the Phenomenon that is Accelerating Glacier Melting

When American geologist Ulyana Horodyskyj set up a mini weather station at 5,800m on Mount Himlung, on the Nepal-Tibet border, she looked east towards Everest and was shocked. The world's highest glacier, Khumbu, was turning visibly darker as particles of fine dust, blown by fierce winds, settled on the bright, fresh snow. "One-week-old snow was turning black and brown before my eyes," she said.

The problem was even worse on the nearby Ngozumpa glacier, which snakes down from Cho Oyu – the world's sixth highest mountain. There, Horodyskyj found that so much dust had been blown on to the surface that the ability of the ice to reflect sunlight, a process known as albedo, dropped 20% in a single month. The dust that was darkening the brilliant whiteness of the snow was heating up in the strong sun and melting the snow and ice, she said.

The phenomenon of "dark snow" is being recorded from the Himalayas to the Arctic as increasing amounts of dust from bare soil, soot from fires and ultra-fine particles of "black carbon" from industry and diesel engines are being whipped up and deposited sometimes thousands of miles away. The result, say scientists, is a significant dimming of the brightness of the world's snow and icefields, leading to a

longer melt season, which in turn creates feedback where more solar heat is absorbed and the melting accelerates.

In a paper in the journal *Nature Geoscience*, a team of French government meteorologists has reported that the Arctic ice cap, which is thought to have lost an average of 12.9 bn tonnes of ice a year between 1992 and 2010 due to general warming, may be losing an extra 27 bn tonnes a year just because of dust, potentially adding several centimeters of sea-level rise by 2100. Satellite measurements, say the authors, show that in the last 10 years the surface of Greenland's ice sheet has considerably darkened during the melt season, which in some areas is now between six and 11 days longer per decade than it was 40 years ago. As glaciers retreat and the snow cover disappears earlier in the year, so larger areas of bare soil are uncovered, which increases the dust erosion, scientists suggest.

Research indicates that the Arctic's albedo may be declining much faster than was estimated only a few years ago. Earlier this year a paper in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* reported that declining Arctic albedo between 1979 and 2011 constituted 25% of the heating effect from carbon dioxide over the same time.

According to Danish glaciologist Jason Box, who heads the Dark Snow project to measure the effect of dust and other darkening agents on Greenland's ice sheet, Arctic ice sheet reflectivity has been at a near record low for much of 2014. Even minor decreases in the brightness of the ice sheet can double the average yearly rate of ice loss, seen from 1992 to 2010.

"Low reflectivity heats the snow more than normal. A dark snow cover will thus melt earlier and more intensely. A positive feedback exists for snow in which, once melting begins, the surface gets yet darker due to increased water content," says Box on his blog. Both human-created and natural air pollutants are darkening the ice, say other scientists.

Nearly invisible particles of "black carbon" resulting from incomplete combustion of fossil fuels from diesel engines are being swept thousands of miles from industrial centres in the US, Europe and south-east Asia, as is dust from Africa and the Middle East, where dust storms are becoming bigger as the land dries out, with increasingly long and deep droughts. Earlier this year dust from the Sahara was swept north for several thousand miles, smothered Britain and reached Norway.

According to Kaitlin Keegan, a researcher at Dartmouth College in the US state of New Hampshire, the record melting in 2012 of Greenland's northeastern ice-sheet was largely a result of forest fires in Siberia and the US.

Any reduction in albedo is a disaster, says Peter Wadhams, head of the Polar Oceans Physics Group at Cambridge University. He said: "Replacing an ice-covered surface, where the albedo may be 70% in summer, by an open-water surface with albedo less than 10%, causes more radiation to be absorbed by the Earth, causing an acceleration of warming. "I have calculated that the albedo change from the disappearance of the last of the summer ice in 2012 was the equivalent to the effect of all the extra carbon dioxide that we have added to the atmosphere in the last 25 years," he says.

Ulyana Horodyskyj, who is planning to return to the Himalayas to continue monitoring dust pollution at altitude, said she had been surprised by how bad it was. "This is mostly manmade pollution," she said. "Governments must act, and people must become more aware of what is happening. It needs to be looked at properly."

Source: [Guardian](#), 5th July, 2014

India Has First Indigenously Built Research Ship

The first indigenously built Research Vessel *Sindhu Sadhana* acquired recently by CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO) was dedicated to India by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Vice President, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and Honorable Minister of State for Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Earth Sciences (Independent charge), PMO, Personnel Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, in the presence of Dr. P.S. Ahuja, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and Dr. S.W.A. Naqvi, Director CSIR-NIO, at the Marmugao harbor on 12 July 2014.

This multi-disciplinary research vessel, which is 80 meters long and 17.6 m wide, *Sindhu* can accommodate 57 personnel including 29 Scientists and 28 crew members. She is designed for a cruising speed of 13.5 knots and an endurance of 45 days. The research vessel has 10 laboratories that are fitted with state-of-the art equipment facilitating high precision data and sample acquisition. The ship is equipped with a number of laboratories for online data collection and data processing from single beam and multi beam echo sounders, Parasound water column and sub-bottom profiler, gravimeter, magnetometer, Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler, conductivity-temperature-depth profiler, autonomous weather station, air quality monitors, etc. The sampling gear consists of an A-frame, Gamma frame, CTD and deep sea winches with supporting cranes. The vessel is equipped with dynamic positioning system that allows holding the vessel at a point for sampling including 24 meter long sediment cores. It also facilitates precise deployment of instrumented moorings, towing of Remotely Operated Vehicles and Autonomous Underwater Vehicles.

The CSIR-NIO is planning to carry out several observational campaigns onboard *RV Sindhu Sadhana*, which will improve the present understanding of the process in the seas around India and provide additional inputs for forecasting the variations in marine environment. The seafloor information resulting from high resolution mapping and sampling will help in identifying suitable areas for offshore developments and mineral prospecting including petroleum hydrocarbons. Also planned are studies to understand the importance of sedimentary processes in the burial of organic matter and sequestering of atmospheric carbon dioxide in marine sediments which play a significant role in global carbon budget.

The Indian oceanographic community takes pride to have the first indigenously built multidisciplinary vessel joining the fleet of research vessels of India. *RV Sindhu Sadhana* is expected to serve as platform to launch oceanographic research programs of global importance and translate this knowledge to the benefit of the nation.

Source: [Maritime Executive](#), 14th July, 2014

Arctic's Huge Store of Methane Gas: 'Ticking Time-Bomb?'

Some climate change proponents are saying the huge amounts of methane gas, stored under the Arctic ice is a potential "ticking time bomb." They claim that we must stop extracting fossil fuels that put more CO₂ into our atmosphere or face disaster.

Methane is only one of a number of gases called greenhouse gases (GHG) that can absorb and emit infrared radiation, or in other words, this means they can trap and absorb heat. The most abundant GHG is water vapor, followed by carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone and CFCs. By measuring atmospheric infrared radiation, climatologists are able to detect trends in the Earth's climate.

Although methane is not the most abundant GHG, it is one of the strongest, being 80-times more potent than carbon dioxide. Methane is actually 21 times more efficient in absorbing infrared radiation than CO₂, even though it only hangs around 10 years in the atmosphere. Knowing these well documented facts about methane brings us to the latest predictions and warning.

Source: [Digital Journal](#), 14th July, 2014