



# MAKING WAVES

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### **UN Security Council Renews Mandate to Combat Piracy off Somalia: call for Sustained International Action**

On 09 November 2016, the United Nations (UN) Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2316 (2016), renewing authorisation for international naval forces to combat piracy off the Somali coast. The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) comes days after the announcement by the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR), on 04 November 2016, of a confirmed attack by six armed men on a chemical tanker, CPO Korea, 330 nautical miles off the east coast of Somali on 22 October 2016. The attack, the first in more than two and half years, was at a considerable distance from the Somali coast. The attack underscores the possibility of a resurgence of piracy. In another development, on 22 October 2016, it was announced that 26 surviving crew of the Omani-flagged vessel FV Naham 3, have been released after over four and half years in captivity.

Since its peak in 2010-11, when piracy had spread rapidly beyond the shores of Somalia, the crime has been effectively suppressed. This has been widely attributed to deployment of naval vessels and aircraft, compliance with Best Management Practices (BMP) adopted by the shipping industry in the piracy High Risk Area (HRA) and employment of Armed Security Teams (AST). As the root causes of piracy are ashore (fragile economy, lack of alternative livelihood and weak governance), efforts by the international community at addressing these causes, and capacity building have also contributed to the reduction in piracy. The prosecution (and incarceration) of pirates (the 'foot soldiers'), some in faraway lands, and the apprehension of piracy (and financial) kingpins have also, in their own ways, contributed towards reducing the attractiveness of piracy among coastal communities as a viable 'business model'.

The October 2016 report of the Secretary-General of the UN on the piracy situation off Somalia had noted that 'progress remains fragile and reversible' and that 'credible reports indicate that Somali pirates possess the intent and capability to resume attacks against large commercial ships, should the opportunity present itself'. Further, the report had also highlighted that the 'drivers which triggered piracy remain unchanged since 2005'.

The UN Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, inter alia renewed the call upon member States and regional organisations to take part in the fight against

piracy by deploying naval vessels, arms and military aircraft. The UNSCR also renewed authorisations, set forth earlier in 2015, to States and regional organisations cooperating with Somali authorities.

Amongst the deployed naval task forces, which include EUNAVFOR (Operation Atalanta), the Combined Maritime Forces and the NATO (Operation Ocean Shield), the termination of Operation Ocean Shield in December 2016 has already been announced earlier, and the existing mandate of Operation Atalanta, unless renewed, expires in December 2016. UN member States which have independently deployed naval ships and aircraft in the region in support of the international anti-piracy efforts include: China, India, Iran, Japan, South Korea and Russia.

The UNSCR noted with appreciation the efforts of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the shipping industry in the development of BMP, and also urged States, in collaboration with the shipping and insurance industries, and the IMO, to continue working towards developing best practices. The BMP, promulgated by the shipping industry, which also demarcated the piracy High Risk Area (HRA), recommends measures for self-protection of merchant vessels including reporting procedures to facilitate coordinated naval response. Self-protection essentially involves high speeds and evasive measures by merchant vessels and 'hardening' of ships using both active and passive defensive measures.

Steaming at speeds greater than economical speed, higher insurance premiums in the piracy HRA, additional expenditure for hardening (and security teams), all come with an economic cost to the shipping industry. This additional cost is however passed on to the end-consumers. A larger-than-necessary HRA, therefore, is not in the interest of global trade, and particularly developing countries. Reports suggest that with the decline in piracy (and revision of piracy HRA), BMP compliance is also on the decline, ostensibly to save costs.

Notwithstanding its continuing relevance, the BMP has firstly, in some ways, undermined the role of piracy reporting centres of coastal States within the HRA; and 3 secondly, perpetuated, without transparency, additional costs to the shipping industry (and end consumers). Therefore, based on the experience gained, the primacy of piracy reporting centres of coastal States needs to be reinstated, and a calibrated response based on cooperative consensus, as suggested by the UNSCR, needs to be evolved for establishing/ revising HRA. Considering the economic and security ramifications, the piracy HRA which was revised in 2015 after much controversy, on the request of affected coastal States,



needs to be reviewed at regular intervals (and progressively reduced). Perhaps, the IMO, a UN body, needs to more actively engage itself in the process of such delimitation.

The UNSCR also urges States to regulate activities of Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP) with applicable international law. Likewise, the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast off Somalia (CGPCS), at its 19th plenary meeting in June 2016, noted the challenges posed by floating armouries and decided to refer the issue to the IMO for further discussion. Earlier in April 2016, in a noteworthy development, the Security Association of the Maritime Industry (SAMI), an industry body of the private maritime industry, went into liquidation due to a fall in membership. The industry, therefore, is currently without an umbrella body for self-regulation, and fragmented. This is not a good portent for the future of the industry (and maritime security). The weaponisation of the maritime domain by private players, although driven by necessity, unless regulated, remains a potential risk as well.

Post the revision of the piracy HRA in 2015, in effect, of the three pillars of the international anti-piracy efforts, two pillars, the BMP and Armed Security appear to be weakening in view of economic considerations, and understandably so. In the foreseeable future, in the absence of any credible 'local' security arrangement in the Horn of Africa/ Gulf of Aden and the geo-economic/ geo-strategic relevance of the region, the onus of ensuring freedom of the seas in that region will continue to rest upon the international naval forces. Consequently, despite the scheduled exit of NATO, these forces are likely to remain deployed, with possibly marginal reduction in overall force levels.

Reports of hijacking of Iranian dhows, illegal fishing in Somali waters, seizures of arms, ammunition and drugs, and charcoal smuggling are indicative of continuing maritime threats in the region. The reported missile attacks on a UAE-operated ship and on US naval warships in October 2016, by Yemini rebels, also highlight the enhanced threats to maritime security from non-state actors.

From the Indian perspective, Indian naval warships have continued to be deployed as part of the international anti-piracy effort since 2008. Consequent to robust anti-piracy efforts, the last hijack in the east Arabian Sea was reported in March 2012. Considering India's increasing dependence on shipping, the continuing threats to maritime security in the region, the renewed UN mandate, and the expanding role of the Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean Region, it would serve India's interests for the Indian Navy to remain deployed in the region unless the security environment changes substantively. Considering the wide-ranging assistance required in Somalia, perhaps there is also a case for expanding

India's anti-piracy engagement. Notably, the Indian Maritime Security Strategy, published in December 2015, brings out the commitment of the Indian maritime forces to continue the counter-piracy efforts in 'coordination with international efforts and anti-piracy cooperative mechanisms'.

The UNSCR has also highlighted the need to adopt domestic legislation to facilitate prosecution of suspected pirates off the coast of Somalia. In September 2016, more than four years into the trials, the 119 Somali pirates apprehended by the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard, in four different incidents in 2011, pleaded guilty to offences against them. Hopefully, with this development, the trial which have been ongoing for several years will come to a close. The Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill under consideration also needs to be enacted sooner than later.

Piracy is perhaps one of the earliest forms of unlawful activity in the maritime domain. While piracy off Somalia has been effectively suppressed, it is yet to be eradicated. Meanwhile, piracy and armed robbery in Gulf of Guinea and South East Asia has also waxed and waned. In conclusion, despite the lull, there is work to be done, both nationally and internationally – the pirates have indeed gone home, but may possibly return.

Source: [www.maritimeindia.org](http://www.maritimeindia.org), 18 November 2016

### **EU Sister-Mission in Somalia strengthen ties and discuss Maritime Security in Bossasso**

EU sister-missions, EUCAP Nestor and EU Naval Force Somalia (EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta), recently held a series of meetings with state government officials and local leaders in Bossasso, in the Puntland state of Somalia. During the meetings, the maritime security situation off the Somali coast was discussed and the importance of keeping the number of pirate attacks suppressed.

Meeting with Puntland ministers and elders of Bossasso enabled Operation Atalanta and EUCAP Nestor staff to further develop relationships with Puntland state and provided an opportunity to coordinate future efforts to further strengthen maritime security for seafarers and to bolster the capacities of Somali maritime organisations, such as the Bossasso Port Police, who were also present.

EUCAP Nestor's representative commented, "The meetings have been very constructive and fruitful. We now have even better understanding of the situation in Puntland and where the support of EU Missions would be required the most. We are all in this together and these meetings are a great example of the good cooperation between the local leadership and the EU Missions."

Op Atalanta's Force Commander, Dutch Commodore Luyckx, was pleased with the discussions and the engagement with the local authorities. "Cooperation and coordination is crucial between the EU organisations, but also with key Somali officials and security agencies. It is only by working together that the threat of piracy might one day become a distant memory." he said.

Alongside the meetings, there was an opportunity for members of the Bossasso Port Police to train with Dutch sailors at sea off the northern Somali coast. Thirteen members of the Port Police were hosted onboard HNLMS Tromp and took part in exercises designed to teach and hone search skills of suspicious vessels. The Dutch sailors were pleased to work with the Port Police, who quickly picked up the techniques demonstrated.

Training events such as this are a vital part of Operation Atalanta's ongoing commitment to strengthen cooperation and capabilities of regional partners.

EUCAP Nestor is a civilian European Union mission aimed at enhancing maritime security capacities of Somalia. EU NAVFOR's role is to protect World Food Programme humanitarian aid vessels and to deter and disrupt acts of piracy.

Source: [eunavfor.eu](http://eunavfor.eu), 19 November 2016

### **Japan 'willing to play peace role in South China Sea disputes'**

-Supalak Ganjanakhund JAPAN is willing to take on more roles in maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea amid fractious territorial disputes between China and Asean members, government officials and scholars have said in Tokyo. Although Japan is not a claimant in the South China Sea, it is concerned about the safety of sea lanes and freedom of navigation in the area, said Yuki Tamura, deputy director of the Foreign Ministry's Regional Policy Division. "About 80 per cent of our imported crude oil as well as other shipments are transported through the South China Sea," said Tamura, who

oversees the issue. The South China Sea issue is directly connected to the peace and stability in the region and thus a matter of justifiable concern to the international community, including Japan, he said.

Japan has serious concerns over unilateral actions over territory including large-scale reclamation, the building of outposts and their use for military purposes, Tamura said. With the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruling in favour of the Philippines against China over its expansive territorial claims in July, Japan expected that the parties' compliance with the award would lead to peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea, he said.

While Japan wanted to see, a peaceful solution based on international laws, it encouraged and supported countries in the region to bolster their defence capacity for maritime security, said another official who declined to be named. In recent years, he said, Japan had provided help under the Official Development Assistance scheme in the field of maritime security to the Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia. Last week, Japan granted two patrol vessels belonging to the Japan Coast Guard to Malaysia. "This cooperation is also expected to help promote the 'rule of law' at sea and to further strengthen the relations between Japan and Malaysia," a Japanese Foreign Ministry statement said. Japanese scholars expected their government to do more to help countries in the South China Sea boost their maritime defence capacity.

"Another thing I think Japan and the US should do is to provide anti-ship and anti-air missiles [to these countries] because if the Philippines and Vietnam deployed such defence capabilities along their coastlines, that would actually deter China from setting up military bases in the South China Sea," said Tetsuo Kotani, a senior fellow at The Japan Institute of International Affairs. The military balance in the region was too much in favour of China, so building up base capacity of countries in the contentious sea was a good thing, he said. "I don't think that is stimulating an arms race between China and Asean but, on the other hand, certain capability such as submarines would be more of a deterrent to China," he said. "The introduction of submarines among Asean countries is very helpful for the regional military balance." In practice, Japan already changed its arms export policy two years ago, "so we can help build up military capability to countries in the region," he added.

Source: [www.nationmultimedia.com](http://www.nationmultimedia.com), 21 November 2016

## **Strengthening Coastal Security through Cooperative Federalism**

-Himadri Das

Tomorrow, 26 November 2016, the nation will observe the eight anniversaries of the '26/11' Mumbai terrorist attacks. Precisely two months back on 26 September 2016, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) tabled its 2015 report on the General and Social Sector (Government of Odisha) in the State Assembly. The report highlighted that the objective of securing the coastline of the State through establishment of the Marine Police Stations and that sea patrolling was not achieved, despite the financial assistance from the Government of India under the Coastal Security Scheme (CSS).

The 2001 report of the Group of Ministers (GoM), constituted after the 1999 Kargil Conflict, had recommended setting-up of a specialised marine police in all coastal States and island territories, operating from Coastal Police Stations (CPS). The police force was to be appropriately trained and equipped for the maritime role. The GoM had also recommended the creation of Department of Border Management in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

Subsequently, in January 2004, the Department of Border Management was created at MHA. The first phase of the CSS was launched in 2005 to strengthen coastal policing. Following the '26/11' incident, Phase II was implemented in April 2011. With a total financial outlay of Rs 2225.91 crore for all the 13 coastal States/ Union Territories (UTs), the two phases include setting-up of 204 Coastal Police Stations (CPS), 97 checkpoints, 58 outposts, 30 barracks, 60 jetties, 10 Operations Centres and procurement of 431 boats. For monitoring its implementation, a Steering Committee for Review of Coastal Security (SCRCS) has been set-up at MHA under the chairpersonship of Secretary (Border Management).

Post the '26/11' incident, the Indian Navy was designated as the agency responsible for 'overall maritime security' including coastal and offshore security, and the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) was given responsibility for 'coastal security in territorial waters including areas to be patrolled by the Coastal Police'. The Coastal Police is presently responsible for close-coast patrolling.

The Indian Maritime Security Strategy (2015), has envisaged an increasing role and operational responsibilities to be taken up by the ICG and other agencies (like the Coastal Police), in tandem with growth in their capabilities.

In February 2014, the 177th Report of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs on CSS had highlighted several issues relating to its implementation across all coastal States/ UTs. The CAG, in its report, based on test check of records of concerned offices and physical inspection of assets created, has highlighted inter alia the following: -

- Cumulatively, there was a significant shortfall in patrolling effort (almost 97 per cent), especially at night.
- Checks on fishing vessels were not being undertaken by the Coastal Police.
- There was an acute shortage of manpower; ‘persons in position’, in sample Police Stations, was 25.33 per cent of the sanction. Also, police personnel were not adequately trained for marine policing.
- There were delays in land acquisition, and support infrastructure, such as barracks and staff quarters, were yet to be constructed at several locations.
- Jetties under CSS were yet to be constructed and the Coastal Police were using fisheries jetties, some located more than 70 kilometres from the CPS.
- Only 31.07 per cent of total funds received under CSS Phase II, for establishing basic infrastructure, have been utilised.
- Lack of inspections of CPS and state-level monitoring mechanisms.

The Coastal Police, envisaged in 2000-01, is one of the integral and key constituents of the coastal security construct in India. However, as both reports indicate, despite the continuing efforts of central and state governments, there still remain significant challenges to the implementation of CSS, and thus the effectiveness of the Coastal Police itself. Considering the tenuous security environment in the immediate neighbourhood and global trends indicative of increasing capabilities (and threats) from terrorists, the lacunae highlighted in the report would need to be addressed.

On 16 June 2016, a coastal security meeting was held at Mumbai chaired by the Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh, and attended by the home ministers, chief secretaries and DGPs of all coastal States and UTs. During the meeting, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra Fadnavis, suggested that since marine policing was a 'specialised job', a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) may be raised for patrolling coastal waters and other related duties. The proposal was supported by some other coastal States/ Union Territories, and the Union Home Minister agreed to examine it. The February 2014 report on the CSS had also recommended the raising of a Marine India Reserve Battalion (MIRB).

In July 2016, the 11th meeting of the Inter-State Council (ISC) was held in New Delhi after a gap of over ten years. The meeting, perhaps for the first time, discussed issues related to internal security, intelligence-sharing among the States and central agencies, police modernisation and terrorism. During the meeting, the Union Home Minister emphasised the importance of 'cooperative federalism' and the commitment of the Government to 'ideal Centre-State cooperation'.

Meetings of the Eastern Zonal Council (27 June 2016), Western Zonal Council (21 October 2016) and the Standing Committee of the Southern Zonal Council (14 October 2016) also discussed issues related to fisheries, coastal security, terrorism and police modernisation. Furthermore, the SCRCs has been strengthened, and institutional mechanisms for coastal security coordination have also been implemented at the State and district levels.

Issues related to coastal security - such as shipping, fishing, ports, police, international maritime borders - transcend the Union, State and Concurrent lists necessitating close coordination between the Union and State Governments, as well as a large number of stakeholders. Hopefully, the recent initiatives to leverage the existing institutional mechanisms for 'cooperative federalism' to strengthen security mechanisms will provide complementary avenues for discussions, deliberations and action.

Source: [www.maritimeindia.org](http://www.maritimeindia.org), 25 November 2016

## **26/11 Mumbai terror attack-like incident can happen again in India: Maritime Security expert**

Eight years after the gruesome Mumbai terror attacks, the Indian coastal regions continue to be full of loopholes which can be potentially exploited by infiltrators, says Maritime Security expert Abhijit Singh.

Speaking to Newsnation in an exclusive interview, Singh, who is former naval officer and currently heads the Maritime Policy Initiative at a renowned international security research organisation, said that Indian coastal security has seen a significant upgrade since the Mumbai terror attacks, but several loopholes remain to be plugged.

The security gaps, he said, can be attributed to coastal states' unwillingness to contribute and upgrade security architecture. "While Tamil Nadu has done a commendable work in upgrading the security along its coasts, Mumbai and Odisha are still causes of concern," Singh said.

### *India's upgraded naval security infrastructure*

Explaining the steps taken to upgrade maritime and coastal security after the attacks, Abhijit Singh said that India has strengthened the three-tier coastal security architecture, introduced a coastal security scheme, set up a National Command Control Communication Intelligence (NC3I) network and founded an Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) in Gurugram.

### *Three tier coastal security architecture*

In place, much before Mumbai terror attacks in 2008, the three-tier system for Indian coastal security was strengthened at a war footing after the incident. It included reinforcing and adequately implementing the territories of Indian Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Police. While Indian Navy is over all in charge of India's maritime and coastal security, it is also exclusively responsible for the outer/deeper waters in the Indian waters. Marine Police guards the shallow waters near land and Coast Guard maintains security of the intermediary sea.



### *Coastal security scheme*

The scheme, originally introduced in 2005, was given cash influx by Centre and state government's after the unfortunate incident of Mumbai terror attacks. Singh says that funding for technical equipment, training and personal has strengthened the security architecture significantly. Within the scheme, Coast guard police has added surveillance infrastructure like radars and automatic identification systems to help track any enemy boats in the Indian waters.

### *National Command Control Communication Intelligence network and Information Management and Analysis Centre*

National Command Control Communication Intelligence (NC3I) network is India's state of the art naval intelligence network which tracks the ships in real time. The Information Management and Analysis Centre is the central hub of NC3I network, which can track 30,000-40,000 ships on a daily basis. Taking feeds and inputs from multiple sources ranging from coastal radars to satellites, the IMAC located in Gurugram fuses, correlates and analyses them to assess threats at sea.

### *Existing challenges to Indian coast security*

According to maritime security expert Abhijit, the challenges in security India's border are still plenty, namely:

# Sheer number of boats on Mumbai coasts is makes tracking and checking for infiltrators a humongous task

# Fishermen community largely avoids installation of AIS or small transponders in their boats, which can identify and send back the information of nearby vessels, because it opens them up to tracking and persecution in case of transgression outside Indian waters.

# Nature of threat is evolving very fast. According to Singh, while India is upgrading its system at a steady pace, the infiltrators are now very well equipped and trained in high maritime security architectural knowledge.

# Extensive support from Pakistan to militants or smugglers attempting to cross the borders from sea routes increases the challenges to Indian coastal security services

Owing to Pakistan's involvement, Sir Creek has become is the favourite cross over region for the smugglers, Singh revealed.

The number of abandoned boats found in the tidal estuary on the border of India and Pakistan are also indicative of the fact that smugglers might still be using the region to transfer contrabands in India through this region.

Thus, he said, it is crucial for states like Maharashtra to increase the engagement in improvisation of security on India's sea routes and coastal regions.

Source: [www.newsnation.in](http://www.newsnation.in), 27 November 2016

### **China calls for concerted efforts to strengthen Maritime Security**

COLOMBO, Nov. 28 (Xinhua) -- China on Monday called on countries to join hands in strengthening maritime security and overcoming the challenges and threats faced at sea. Rear Admiral Wang Dazhong, assistant to chief of staff of the People's Liberation Army Navy, said with maritime security issues becoming more diversified, complicated and comprehensive, navies should aim at shared responsibility, development and prosperity, and establish an effective and efficient emergency response mechanism to solve maritime security issues, control maritime security risks and avert conflict through fusion of interests.

Wang was speaking at the "Galle Dialogue 2016," the 7th International Maritime Conference held in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka. He said the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road proposed by China was designed to utilize the connectivity and convenience of the ocean to bring together various economy blocks along the South China Sea, the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean for economic growth and prosperity of the Ocean.

He added that countries needed to join hands in handling challenges at sea and become partners of mutual beneficial and win-win cooperation. The Galle Dialogue International Maritime Conference was inaugurated by the Sri Lanka Navy since 2010. The theme for this year's conference was "Fostering Strategic Maritime Partnerships."

Source: [news.xinhuanet.com](http://news.xinhuanet.com), 29 November 2016



### **Next Stop South China Sea? China's 1st Aircraft Carrier 'Ready for Combat'**

-Franz Stefan Gady

The People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) first aircraft carrier is ready for combat operations, Chinese state media claimed on November 15. According to the political commissar of the 60,000-ton *Liaoning*, a Soviet-era *Admiral Kuznetsov*-class multirole aircraft carrier, the ship "is constantly prepared for war," the state-owned *Global Times* reports.

"As a military force, we are always prepared for war and our combat capacity also needs to be tested by war," Li Dongyou, the political commissar aboard the *Liaoning*, said. "At this moment, we are doing our best to promote our strength and use it to prevent war, and are prepared for actual combat at any time." According to the *Global Times*, the aircraft carrier has formally been described as "having a real combat capacity."

The *Liaoning* was originally built as a "heavy aircraft-carrying cruiser" for the Soviet Navy, but construction of the carrier was left unfinished due to the collapse of the Soviet shipbuilding industry in the early 1990s. China purchased the unfinished hull of the *Admiral Kuznetsov*-class carrier from Ukraine in 1998. Once in China, the carrier underwent substantial modernization and was eventually commissioned in 2012. Ever since then, the carrier has officially been classified a training ship and continues to serve as a test platform for PLAN carrier-based naval aviation.

The *Liaoning* can accommodate an air wing of 24 Shenyang J-15 multirole fighter jets, a variant of fourth-generation Sukhoi Su-33 twin-engines air superiority fighters, and up to ten rotary wing aircraft including Changshe Z-18, Ka-31, and Harbin Z-9 helicopters. The PLAN certified its first air wing of domestically trained J-15 pilots in 2015. The U.S. Department of Defense estimated that the first air wing will deploy on the new carrier in 2016. It is likely that the political commissar was referring to this when declaring the ship ready for combat.

The carrier is fitted with an underpowered aircraft -launching system, a so-called ski-jump assisted Short Take-Off but Arrested Recovery (STOVAR) launch system, for fighter jets aboard the carrier. As a consequence, according to the U.S.

Department of Defense, Chinese J-15 fighter jets taking off from the *Liaoning* are “limited in range and armament when operating from the carrier, due to limits imposed by the ski-jump takeoff and arrested carrier landings.” (The carrier also runs with an inefficient power plant additionally imposing limits on the ship’s operations.)

According to the naval analyst Andrew Erickson, “analysts estimate that the maximum takeoff weight for a J-15 from the *Liaoning* would be limited to approximately 62,000 pounds. By comparison, the USS *Ronald Reagan* can launch an aircraft with a maximum takeoff weight of 100,000 pounds.” Given the STOBAR system, aircraft launched from the carrier will also have a more limited operational range due to the fact that they need to expend a considerable amount of fuel during take-off in comparison to aircraft launched with a catapult system as is the case in the U.S. Navy.

As of now, the ship is not assigned to any of the three major fleets of the PLAN. Despite the recent announcement, it is unlikely that the carrier will be ready for high-tempo combat operations anytime soon for a number of reasons (e.g., lack of adequate pilot training, lack of escort ships, lack of operational range etc.). Nevertheless, the ship could be deployed for regional missions including humanitarian aid and disaster relief operations, training exercises and more worrisome—operations in the South China Sea to assert China’s territorial claims there.

Source: [thediplomat.com](http://thediplomat.com), 16 November 2016

### **Kenya buys Sh3.5 billion vessels to defend Indian Ocean resources**

MOMBASA, KENYA: Kenya has bought a sh 3.5 billion third generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) at Sh3.5 billion from Bangladesh to protect its marine resources in the Indian Ocean. The vessel has been procured by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. Kenya's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Indian Ocean has the potential to produce 300,000 tonnes of fish annually valued at about Sh75 billion. Foreign trawlers and ships continue to operate along Kenya's 200 nautical miles Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) and it was time to drive them out. The illegal fishing robs the country Sh10 billion annually. Speaking at the Mombasa Serena Beach Resort and Spa, Principal Secretary department state department of Fisheries, and the Blue Economy, Prof Micheni Nthiba said that early next week, government officials will be carrying out a site inspection of the vessel currently under construction at a Bangladesh shipyard. The 54-metre long vessel will operate over a range of more than 1,500 nautical miles in the Indian Ocean off the

East African coast. "Our team on inspection shall include a newly recruited Fleet commander and marine engineer who shall be witnessing the achievement of the milestone of superstructure vessel," Prof Nthiba said. JGH Marine A/S has obtained contract for the design, construction and delivery of one Offshore Patrol Vessel for Kenyan Ministry of Fisheries, Livestock and Agriculture. The Offshore Patrol Vessel is being constructed at JGH partner yard in Bangladesh where it is currently under construction. The length of the vessel is 54.70 m, Length of hull: 50.90 m with a displacement: 350 tons the vessel engine propulsion system is a hybrid system of 2 controllable pitch propellers and 1 booster waterjet. She can cruise at maximum speed of speed of 35knots –while cruising at between 20 – 25 knots and has capacity to accommodate 35 personnel "The ship will ensure security at the maritime boundary of Kenyan Coastal boundary and will be fully manned by civilian crew who have already been recruited," Prof Nthiba who was flanked by CS Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mr Wily Bett and PS Shipping and Maritime Commerce, Nancy Karigithu said.

Source: [www.standardmedia.co.ke](http://www.standardmedia.co.ke), 24 November 2016

### **UK Leads U.S. Task Force 50 in Arabian Gulf for first time**

-Najlaa Habriri

London- An officer in the United Kingdom's navy has been assigned to lead the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command's "Task Force 50" for the first time. By this move, Royal Navy Commodore Andrew Burns, commander of Amphibious Task Group embarked on the UK's premier naval warship, HMS Ocean (L 12) and has become responsible for commanding eight ships and other destroyers in a historic step. This marks the first time a Royal Navy officer has led a U.S. task force in the Middle East and demonstrates a significant step in combined maritime operations. Burns said this assumption of command by the Royal Navy is a significant development in the U.S.-UK partnership. "Together we have had an enduring presence in this region that has contributed to stability, order on the high seas and freedom of navigation, and ensuring the free flow of commerce, so vital to the prosperity of our respective nations," said Burns. "Today marks the start of another chapter in this partnership as the Royal Navy takes on the privilege of leading a U.S. task force in the Middle East for the first time."

A helicopter carrier and amphibious assault ship, Ocean is the flagship of the Royal Navy and will be providing continued forward presence in the Arabian Gulf. Capable of delivering Sailors and Marines by helicopter or landing craft, this premier naval warship brings its own unique capability of ensuring free flow of commerce, freedom of navigation and regional security.

The Daily Mail reported that the huge aircraft carrier U.S.S. Eisenhower boasts 66 jets and helicopters – compared to two helicopters on HMS Ocean, which will focus on maritime activity rather than ISIS. There are 44 F-18 warplanes alone on the massive aircraft carrier, the site published. The choke points include the Straits of Hormuz off Iran, the Bab al-Mendeb off Somalia and the Suez Canal. HMS Ocean – an amphibious assault ship – currently has just over 500 crew on board, including 30 Royal Marines, to deal with any threat from the region. It is covering for the U.S. until another carrier, U.S.S. HW George Bush, arrives in February. It will be joined immediately by U.S.S. Monterey – a guided missile cruiser. The UK’s HMS Daring is on its way to help defend the region and up to five other ships could come under its control.

For his part, Adm. James Malloy, commander of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10, said the handover of the CTF 50 to the Royal Navy, “represents a wise investment in this region’s future.” “Hearing of his sterling reputation long before meeting him last month, I cannot think of a more capable officer and friend to continue the mission out here than Commodore Burns,” Malloy said. “Security and stability cannot be maintained by one nation alone. Working together with our UK and other coalition counterparts, I am confident in the success of our shared interest for security, stability and prosperity in this region.”

Source: [english.aawsat.com](http://english.aawsat.com), 26 November 2016

## **Norway To Buy 5 P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft**

-Megan Eckstein

Norway plans to buy five Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft to help monitor its extensive territorial waters amid a growing Russian submarine presence.

Norwegian Defence Minister Ine Eriksen Søreide said in a statement that the five P-8s will replace the nation's current six P-3 Orion and three DA-20 Jet Falcon surveillance planes.

“P-8A Poseidon is a formidable platform for monitoring our oceans, and will provide both Norwegian and allied civil and military authorities with a sound basis for decisions,” according to an English translation of the Norwegian press release. “To continue an MPA (maritime patrol aircraft) and ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) capability that can meet current and future challenges, the Government has submitted a proposal for acquiring five P-8A Poseidon for the Armed Forces. Beside the actual aircraft, the contract also includes modern sensors, surveillance systems, new anti submarine weapons and support systems.”

Norwegian Ministry of Defence spokesman Lars Gjemble told USNI News that the acquisition would need final approval from the Parliament, which is expected to vote in favor of the purchase in December. The press release notes that the P-8 acquisition falls in line with a Parliament-supported long-term defense plan.

Once lawmakers approve the sale and a contract is formalized, the planes would deliver around 2021 or 2022, according to the statement. The planes, plus additional intelligence equipment, would cost around 9.8 billion Crowns (\$1.15 billion).

Norway's long coastline includes the North Sea, Norwegian Sea and Barents Sea, with territorial waters being about seven times larger than the actual land area of the country, according to the statement. Though the Norwegian statement does not mention Russia specifically, former commander of U.S. 6th Fleet Vice Adm. James Foggo III wrote in *Proceedings* earlier this year that Russia had conducted “extensive and frequent submarine patrols throughout the North Atlantic and Norwegian Sea” as a part of a strategy to threaten nearly all of NATO's maritime forces.

The Norwegian Defence Ministry statement also notes the planes would be used for search and rescue and “maritime counter-terrorist operations.”

Source: [news.usni.org](http://news.usni.org), 28 November 2016



## **Senator Mushahid Hussain praises Navy for protecting Pakistan's maritime security**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate Defence Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed on Monday acclaimed the role of Pakistan Navy which successfully detected and chased out an Indian nuclear powered submarine while it was trying to enter Pakistan's territorial waters in the Arabian Sea.

Talking to media, Senator Mushahid informed that he also spoke on a point of public of importance in the Senate on this issue. "The Indian submarine, apparently on a spying mission, tried to sneak into Pakistan's territorial waters but it was successfully traced, monitored, pursued and then forced to flee without damaging Pakistan's national security," he said. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed during his meeting with the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Zakaullah as well as other naval commanders personally congratulated the Pakistan Navy for showing exemplary vigilance, operational preparedness and decisive leadership, which helped counter the enemy navy's designs.

Senator Mushahid Hussain said that, "The entire Pakistani nation is proud of Pakistan Navy, which has time and again not only protected Pakistan's maritime security but also promoted Pakistan's maritime economy by expanding Pakistan's continental shelf which will be a great boon for the economy." Senator Mushahid Hussain added that, "In the context of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the pivotal role of the Gwadar port, the Pakistan Navy's role will be truly significant in promoting CPEC through strengthening of the Gwadar Port."

Source: [nation.com.pk](http://nation.com.pk), 28 November 2016

## **China delivers Submarines to Bangladesh: Imperatives, Intentions and Implications**

-Gurpreet S Khurana

On 14 November 2016, Bangladesh Navy (BN) took delivery of two old refurbished Chinese Type 035G Ming-class diesel-electric submarines. As part of the US\$ 203 million



contract signed in 2013, the submarines were handed over to the BN crew during a ceremony at the Liao Nan Shipyard in China's Dalian city. The submarines are slated to be commissioned as Bangladesh Naval Ships (BNS) Nabajatra and Joyjatra and expected to arrive in early 2017 at the new Bangladeshi submarine base being constructed near Kutubdia Island.

This may be a rather seminal development with strong ramifications not only for the littoral countries of the Bay of Bengal, but also for the wider Indo-Pacific region. This essay seeks to undertake an assessment of the development in the context of the likely imperatives of Bangladesh, the intentions of China and its implications, with specific reference to the Indian context.

### *Imperatives for Bangladesh*

For any navy, the surface warships and their integral aircraft a capable of being used across the entire spectrum of conflict including for 'constabulary' and 'benign' missions ranging from counter-piracy to maritime search and rescue (M-SAR). In contrast, submarine forces – due to their inherent stealth characteristics – are optimised for sea-denial during war. Even in peace-time, these underwater platforms are used to undertake highly specialized missions against a military adversary like clandestine surveillance, intelligence-gathering and Special Forces operations. Hence, it is difficult to fathom why Bangladesh – which does not encounter any conventional maritime-military threat – has inducted submarines in its navy. The maritime disputes between Bangladesh and two of its only maritime neighbours – Myanmar and India – were resolved through international arbitration in 2012 and 2014<sup>2</sup> respectively. Neither Naypyidaw nor New Delhi has indicated any reservations to the verdict of the international tribunals, or have either any other major outstanding contention with Dhaka.

It is nonetheless well known that the BN has since long aspired for a three-dimensional navy through inclusion of underwater warfare platforms. After Dhaka succeeded in settling its maritime boundary through the highly favourable decisions of the international tribunals, the apex political leadership showered much attention upon the BN as the guardian of the country's new-found maritime interests. Notably, Bangladesh is seeking an increasing dependence upon sea-based resources for economic prosperity of its rather high density of population. The political nod to acquire submarines may therefore be seen as an incentive for the BN. Besides, it is a low-cost deal to reinforce strategic ties with China, including by taking forward Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's support to President Xi Jinping for its 'One Belt One Road' (OBOR) initiative. Hence, the development seems to

have been driven by symbolism for Bangladesh, rather than being a result of the navy's appreciation-based force-planning based on an objective assessment of the projected security environment.

### *China's Intentions*

As in case of other defence hardware exports, Beijing's overarching intent behind the sale of submarines would be to go beyond strengthening political ties with Dhaka, to bring about its 'strategic dependence' upon China. The long-term submarine training and maintenance needs of the BN would also enable China's military presence in the Bay of Bengal, and enable it to collate sensitive data for PLA Navy's submarine operations in the future. This area is becoming increasingly important as the transit route for China's strategic crude-oil and gas imports, and bears the origin of China's oil pipeline across Myanmar. Strategic presence in the area is also critically necessary for Beijing to supplement the strategic and geopolitical dimension of its Maritime Silk Road (MSR) plans.

Further, by selling the two old (though upgraded) Ming-class submarines – which were commissioned in early 1990s and presently at the end of their service life with the PLA Navy – Beijing has assiduously generated useful revenue out of hardware, which would have only 'scrap value' in a few years. As per an established practice in China, a significant proportion of the revenue would go to PLA Navy since the submarines were sourced from its inventory.

### *Implications*

The sale of Chinese submarines to Bangladesh bears significant ramifications for the IndoPacific region. Lately, apprehensions are being increasingly expressed over the rapidly increasing number of submarines being operated by the regional countries. An addition of a submarine-operating country would not only multiply the complexity of water-space management – particularly due to the confidentiality associated with the deployments of such stealth platforms – but could also lead other countries to follow suit. The development also strengthens the imperative for the Indian Ocean navies to institute a mechanism for de-conflicting unintended naval encounters at sea through the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), which ironically, is presently being chaired by Bangladesh.

The submarine sale to Bangladesh has come at a rather inopportune time for the countries of the Bay of Bengal. With the two-major maritime disputes having been resolved, the sub-region was looking forward to enhanced maritime cooperation in various sectors like trade connectivity, blue economy and maritime safety and security, including through the revitalisation of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). The BN's acquisition of submarines could lead to the littoral countries to reassess their maritime security strategies and adopting a cautious approach to maritime cooperation.

In the Indian context, New Delhi has little reason to be threatened by Dhaka's newlyacquired sea-denial capability. Nonetheless, Beijing's likely intent needs to be factored in its national security calculus, particularly considering the imminence of China's militarystrategic presence in close proximity to India's naval bases, including its nuclear submarine bastion. Evidently, India's foreign policy vis-à-vis Bangladesh needs to be recalibrated. At the national-strategic level, India possesses insufficient financial and defence-industrial wherewithal to offset China's overwhelming influence upon Bangladesh, but there is no dearth of other leverages. In such circumstances, New Delhi may need to graduate from its long-standing policy of 'appeasing' Dhaka to a 'carrot and stick' policy

Source: [www.maritimeindia.org](http://www.maritimeindia.org), 28 November 2016

### **Indian Navy to get 12 new Dornier Do-228 surveillance aircraft**

-Rahul Bedi

India's Cabinet Committee on Security approved the procurement of 12 upgraded Dornier Do-228 maritime surveillance aircraft for the Indian Navy on 23 November for INR25 billion (USD364 million). IN officials said the upgraded Do-228s will incorporate forward-looking infrared cameras, electronic support measures, satellite communication, and data secrecy equipment as well as traffic collision avoidance and enhanced ground proximity warning systems. The defence ministry had sanctioned the acquisition of the aircraft, which are set to be licence-built by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), in October 2014.

Source: [www.janes.com](http://www.janes.com), 29 November 2016

## **Hyundai Merchant Marine denies failure in joining 2M Alliance**

-Jung Min- hee

Hyundai Merchant Marine (HMM), the nation's only major shipping line, on November 20 denied a foreign news report that it failed to join the 2M Alliance, the world's largest alliance for shipping companies.

The Journal of Commerce (JOC), a U.S. shipping and marine magazine, reported on the 18th (local time), "The 2M – Maersk Line and Mediterranean Shipping Co. – have decided not to include HMM in the alliance. Instead, Maersk Line and Mediterranean Shipping will collaborate with HMM through a slot purchase agreement which would allow Maersk to take over Hyundai's chartered vessels and slots."

HMM, however, denied the report, saying that it turned out to be clearly false. The Korean shipping company said, "Maersk had confirmed the news report was not true and pledged to request a correction from the JOC."

It also added, "The company is still in negotiations over details of various types of cooperation in each region from the Americas and Europe to Latin America. After completing talks over the membership process with the 2M Alliance, the official membership contract will likely be wrapped up no later than early next month."

Source: [www.businesskorea.co.kr](http://www.businesskorea.co.kr), 21 November 2016

## **Crisis at shipping companies could impact local ports**

-Ruchel Uranga

The industry that made globalization possible – shipping – is sinking into crisis. This year, oceangoing shipping companies could lose, collectively, \$10 billion. Consumption of international goods never fully bounced back after the recession, creating a glut of

capacity with too many vessels bobbing at sea. To survive, shippers have been merging, signing swiftly assembled alliances and slashing costs.

The pain isn't felt on foreign shores alone. Los Angeles and Long Beach, home to the nation's busiest port complex, are fighting for an increasingly smaller piece of a shrinking shipping market. Adding to the woes is a new uncertainty: the election of Donald Trump, who campaigned on U.S. trade policy and is promising to rework key international agreements. At the same time, the ports face hundreds of millions of dollars a year in infrastructure projects to stay competitive.

"The industry is consolidating for survival," said Michele Grubbs, vice president of the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, a trade group. "They are losing so much money. They have to reduce their costs."

### *Uncertain Seas*

Recent shifts on the currently unsettled trade seascape are significant:

- Profits are plunging at the largest shipping company, A.P. Moller-Maersk A/S, which recently announced a 43 percent decline in third-quarter profits. It comes as Japan's biggest shipper, NYK Line, anticipates a near \$2 billion loss for the first half of the year.
- Just last month, Japan's three biggest sea carriers – confronting declining freight rates, sluggish demand and fleets with too many ships – merged to create the world's sixth-largest box carrier. China's largest carriers, China Ocean Shipping Co. and China Shipping Group, also are merging.
- Federal regulators recently approved Ocean Alliance, a partnership between some of the world's largest shipping companies – China's Cosco Group, Hong Kong's Orient Overseas Container Line, France's CMA CGM and Taipei-based Evergreen Marine.
- At least one other similar alliance is awaiting approval, and most of the world's goods shipped by sea will travel via one of three such alliances, which allow companies to share ships, trade routes and charter space.
- Struggling seaborne cargo movers are seeking ways to streamline. One approach is building bigger ships that can carry more goods and reduce the number of trips.

However, such cost-cutting isn't always foolproof: Too much capacity can drive down prices. It's a tumultuous new world for shippers. "It's a very big global change," Grubbs said. "I think you are going to see shifts everywhere."

### *In A Quandary*

The crisis poses a quandary for the ports in Los Angeles and Long Beach. The giant cargo hubs operate like landlords, wooing shippers to sign leases to unload goods at their massive terminals. The ports shell out hundreds of millions of dollars to stay current and competitive, building cranes, improving wharves and otherwise maintaining an aging infrastructure.

In turn, the ports ask their tenants to bring in a minimum amount of cargo each year or pay a fee on top of the lease. The rents also pay off bonds used to pay operating expenses and to build projects such as the Gerald Desmond Bridge. But a marketplace in disarray could challenge this economic model. Nearly 40 percent of the nation's trade with Asia runs through the twin ports and its 13 container terminals. But many of those terminals are subsidiaries of shipping lines, including the very ones struggling to stay afloat. What's more, the majority of leases at the ports were struck before the recent spate of alliances and mergers, creating a complex network of financial obligations. "What we don't know today," said Noel Hacegaba, chief operating officer of the Port of Long Beach, "is how will the volume by these new alliances be distributed across the terminals."

For example, Hanjin Shipping Co. has a majority stake in Long Beach's Total Terminal International. The seventh-largest carrier in the world collapsed this summer, sending import-dependent Southern California into a tailspin. The rest is owned by Mediterranean Shipping Co., the world's second-largest box carrier. Korea Line Corp. reportedly signed a deal this week to buy most of Hanjin's assets but not its stake in the terminal, which could further complicate the port scenario. Mediterranean Shipping Co. owns a stake in another terminal at Long Beach and is aligned with two more terminals in Los Angeles. It's uncertain whether MSC, if it absorbs Hanjin's streamlined assets, will be able to maintain the minimum shipping numbers required by their leases at each terminal.

### *Following Suit?*

Jock O'Connell, an international trade adviser at Beacon Economics, said as alliances reconfigure, the terminals may take a similar route to shippers, consolidating their

resources and cutting costs. Of the ports' long-term leases with terminal operators, more than half are up in the next 11 years. Analysts say there may be more terminals than are needed, especially as bigger ships result in fewer trips. Los Angeles' strong growth this year could mean that newly allied shippers have chosen their docks, O'Connell said. But those fortunes could change as the new order shakes out, he added.

Paul Bingham, who manages trade and logistics analysis for Economic Development Research Group in Boston, pointed to a potentially tougher view. Earlier this year, the Port of Oakland saw tenants of its second-largest terminal drop out of a 50-year lease. Outer Harbor Terminal LLC, a venture between Ports America and MSC-affiliated Terminal Investment Ltd., said it was bowing out to refocus on other properties in Southern California and Washington state. At the time the operator inked that lease in 2009, it promised to invest more than \$600 million in the Oakland port by 2020.

Outer Harbor, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in February, said it pulled out in part because Oakland, unlike Southern California, wasn't considered crucial to trade routes. But, Bingham noted, "the general lesson is an important one; things are not as stable in the port environment." "Things you could count on in the past are no longer the case," he said. That uncertainty prompted bond-ratings company Fitch to issue a report last month that raised questions about the risks U.S. ports face in the wake of shipping-industry consolidation. "It is something we are watching and we are definitely asking the ports about," said Emma Smith, director of global infrastructure and projects for the agency. "What does it mean for where the boxes are going? We still don't know. Shipping trade group executive Grubbs agreed. "There will be certain ports that will be winners and losers in this."

Source: [www.ocregister.com](http://www.ocregister.com), 22 November 2016

### **India far behind in port related development than China**

-Kang Kan Acharyya

India is far behind in all the key performance indicators related to port-led development than China, says a report recently published by the Ministry of Shipping. The report comes at a time when China in a bid to beat India in capturing wider space in the global economy has established linkage with Pakistan's Gwadar port even as India



prepares itself to access the Chabahar port in Iran. Underlining India's inability to optimize on its richly endowed maritime advantages in the last half a century, the report says that China leads India by a factor of seven times to 16 times on the measured parameters. The report says that between ports and power production stations, India requires linkages that would optimize the cost of fuel transportation, a lack of which has caused high energy production cost. Energy costs 19 cents per kilo watt hour in India whereas it costs 11 cents per kilowatt hour in China. Electricity production is also higher in China due to aggressive port-led development carried out by it in the recent past. When the neighboring nation produces 5,000 billion kilo watt hours of power, India generates only 1,000 billion kilowatt hours.

China fares seven times higher in number of petro-chemical crackers those have come up due to port-led development. The neighboring country has established as many as 46 petro-chemical crackers in comparison to only 7 in India. Cheaper raw materials made possible by port-led development has triggered 823 million ton of steel production in China. In India, raw materials travel long distances to production centres, which is time consuming, as a result of which the country produces only 87 million tons of steel.

For the same reason cement production is as high as 2,480 million ton per year in China due to port-led development and India lags behind at 280 million ton. The report further says that, despite having 7,500 kilometres of coastline, none among the 200 Indian ports figure in the list of global top 20. Lack of seamless connectivity high transportation costs in India in terms of both time and money. Export Import containers travel a distance of 700 to 1000 kilometres between production centre and ports in a stark contrast to 150 to 300 kilometres in China. A container travels around 7 to 17 days from the hinterland to vessel as compared to 6 days in china.

Moreover, Indian ports are generally small where vessels of the size of 5,000 TEUs can call at, whereas in China the average size is 12,000 TEUs. This has led to increase in transshipment cost for India. The report says that 25 percent of transshipment is carried in Singapore and Srilanka, resulting to a huge loss in business. Even as India coughs up 14 percent of its GDP in freight expenditure, only Yangtze river system in China equipped with as many as 92 ports and 13 waterways generates a whopping 20 percent of the country's GDP. This very study done by Ministry of Shipping underlines what it takes to be a economic power house that China is. The much talked about Sagarmala project initiated by the ministry of Shipping aims at plugging these lacunas in India's coastal and inland transport system by a multi-pronged approach.



Source: [www.firstpost.com](http://www.firstpost.com), 23 November 2016

## **Hanjin Shipping collapse may be the beginning of the end for profitable global trade**

-David Dodwell

Hanjin Sooho may mean nothing to you or I, but for perhaps thousands of Chinese exporters, the name is currently the source of despair, perhaps panic. As many of us talk abstractly about faltering global trade growth, Hanjin Sooho is the hard-distressing reality of the challenge facing global trade for many traders here or in China.

Hanjin Sooho is under arrest in Shanghai port – one of 20 or more vessels trapped by the collapse in August of South Korea’s Hanjin Shipping, at least 10 of them in China alone. Hanjin was the world’s seventh largest shipping line, and the first shipping collapse in 30 years. As Hanjin fell into bankruptcy, so its ships – and the cargos in them – have been frozen wherever they sat. As one expert shipper noted: “Ships have been seized. Some are staying out of port to avoid being seized. Some are just puttering around, loaded or unloaded.”

Industry experts say more than 500,000 containers are trapped on these ships, with cargos on board worth more than US\$14 billion. Since any one container can hold consignments from dozens of exporters, the dreadful reality is that thousands of the region’s companies have had goods helplessly trapped for almost three months, with no prospect of early release.

Among extreme casualties are likely to be Samsung – which used Hanjin to transport 40 per cent of its exports – and LG with 20 per cent. Even DHL is understood to have 500 containers-worth of consignments stuck on Hanjin ships in different places across the world. Samsung is supposed to be hastily air freighting replacement smartphones to key export markets in efforts to avoid missing the critically important Christmas shopping season. Thousands of smaller exporters must be doing the same, at huge cost, and with little chance of compensation.

Many in the shipping industry have been warning of such a disaster since the global financial market crash in 2008. As global trade growth, has faltered (growth is spluttering

at about 2 per cent a year, compared with double digit growth for the previous three decades), so the shipping giants like Maersk have been adding massively to capacity, and introducing larger and larger vessels. As capacity growth, has continued at around 6 per cent a year, with the global container fleet four times larger today than it was in 2000, so it is estimated that we today have a 30 per cent surplus capacity on the world's main shipping routes.

The combination of extra capacity and stagnant cargo growth has led to a ruthless price war that has meant wonderfully cheap freight rates for exporters, but has stripped the shipping lines of all profit. Freight rates today are around half what they were two years ago, on many of the main shipping routes worldwide. Even Maersk, the world's biggest shipping line with perhaps 15 per cent of global capacity, lost US\$116 million in the third quarter of this year, and predicts an overall loss for the year. In China, Cosco reported losses of US\$1.1 billion in the first quarter of this year. When Hanjin went belly up in August, it had debts of more than US\$5 billion and was reported to be losing US\$2 million a day.

Analysts are predicting more mergers, consolidation and bankruptcies ahead. The lines most at risk are said to be Hamburg Sud, Hong Kong's OOCL, Israel's Zim, and HMM, Korea's second largest shipping line after Hanjin. To stave off immediate crisis, Japan's three leading container shipping lines merged last month. The Taiwan government has just agreed a US\$2 billion relief package for its shipping lines – mainly Evergreen and Yang Ming – to provide some breathing space.

But absent a big surge in international trade, no-one expects any improvement any time soon. In fact, life is expected to get significantly worse. As ship orders, have fallen this year to a record low of just over 50 (against 260 last year and a peak of 1,157 in 1997), so shipbuilders will between now and the end of 2017 put another 114 ships into the market. Giants like Maersk, with new super-large 10,000 TEU container ships coming on line, are spilling these onto routes that have historically only generated enough cargo for smaller vessels, aggravating capacity surpluses and ruining freight rates. As one shipping expert noted: "Maersk is crushing everyone – including itself." Industry experts have inclined to call Hanjin's collapse a "black swan" event, but given the very real likelihood of further collapses in the near future, this swan looks very much more white than black.

And the crisis cascades into the massive ship-building industries of China and Korea (Hyundai Heavy Industries laid off 10 per cent of its ship-building workforce earlier this month), and into the viability of leading ports. China, as home to seven of the world's top

10 ports, faces a massive challenge, with an overcapacity estimated at more than 50 million TEUs.

Hanjin's collapse has also presented a grave warning to companies that rely on complex international just-in-time supply chains. Lucrative export orders to the US or Europe suddenly look much less lucrative if consignments get trapped for months in a container on board an arrested container ship. They can suddenly become loss making if replacements have to be rushed by air to make up for the consignments trapped somewhere at sea. A Samsung might have the financial strength to bear such a loss, but many of the smaller exporters with trapped consignments do not. Companies are now talking of building more "buffer inventory" to protect against such dangers, but these can add significantly to costs.

While this might all be music to the ears of Donald Trump, who is calling on US companies to abandon their long global supply chains, and bring production home, for most multinationals and so many of the companies in Hong Kong and China that rely for their livelihoods on boisterous global trade, the picture emerging from the Hanjin crash could hardly be bleaker. Our shipping lines may be at the hard end of the challenge facing globally-distributed manufacturing and trade, but in a city like Hong Kong many thousands in our trading economy face lean times.

Source: [www.scmp.com](http://www.scmp.com), 27 November 2016

## **Shipping Giant Hamburg Sud Could Be Up for Sale**

-Andy Szal

A German conglomerate is reportedly debating whether to put its massive ocean freight business up for sale as the global shipping industry continues to struggle. *The Wall Street Journal*, citing sources familiar with the matter, reported that the family-owned Oetker Group could initiate the process of selling Hamburg Sud, the world's seventh largest container shipper, before the end of the year. No final decision about a sale has been made, the paper noted. The world's largest container shippers continue to endure a protracted slump amid sluggish global trade and an excess of capacity.

The *Journal* said that the top 12 operators in the industry were pushed into the red over the past two years and that most of the top 20 partnered with rivals in efforts to weather the problems. South Korea's Hanjin, formerly the world's seventh-largest shipper, declared bankruptcy this summer. Hamburg Sud and Zim Integrated Shipping Services, based in Israel, are the only remaining independent shipping giants, the paper noted, but both could soon be on the block. Maersk Line, Hapag-Lloyd and Cosco Group are considered possible suitors for Hamburg Sud, while Zim denied a *Journal* report in early November that it was looking to offload most of its global shipping operations.

Source: [www.manufacturing.net](http://www.manufacturing.net), 29 November 2016



### **The Plastic Polluting the Oceans Smells Like Lunch to Marine Life**

Think all birds find dinner using their eagle-eye vision? Not so for many seafaring bird species, which rely on an acute sense of smell to locate swarms of tiny krill and fish swirling in currents on the ocean surface. “They’re like bloodhounds,” said Gabrielle Nevitt, professor of animal behavior and biological sciences at the University of California, Davis. “A lot of seabirds actually have limited vision, and they really rely on a good sense of smell, rivaling that of dogs, if not better.” Such birds, including petrels and albatrosses, are the species commonly found with bellies full of tiny bits of plastic. The plastic originates from the 12 million tons of trash bags, cups, straws, and microbeads that are dumped into the ocean every year. If these birds have such a keen sense of smell, why do they tend to ingest plastic at a rate higher than other birds and marine animals? Is it a case of being bird-brained?

Not according to a study published this week in the journal *Science Advances*. Nevitt, UC Davis graduate student Matthew Savoca, and other researchers found that the scent ocean plastics emit mimics the smells the birds have relied on for thousands of years to find food. “Why do these birds mistake plastic for food?” asked Savoca. “It might not be a mistake; it might be that we’ve altered the environment so much that we’ve messed up their ability to make decisions.” The problem for seabirds starts at the chemical level. Petrels, shearwaters, and albatrosses spend most of their lives gliding above the ocean, sniffing out a sulfur compound called dimethyl sulfide, or DMS. When krill and small fish munch on algae, DMS is released—acting as a sort of scent alarm for the birds. The smell triggers their instinct to forage on ocean animals near the surface. What the researchers found was that DMS-emitting algae grows on the bits of plastic debris, and through the course of natural wave movements, it is emitting and mimicking the scent birds seek out to identify food. Attracted by the smell, they eat the plastic.

In the study, the team tested three types of plastic commonly found in ocean gyres—high-density polyethylene, low-density polyethylene, and polypropylene. They put sample beads in Monterey Bay and Bodega Bay in California, sealing the beads in mesh bags that let ocean water pass through. After three weeks, the team retrieved the plastic beads, now coated in algae, and sent them to be chemically analyzed at UC Davis’ Robert Mondavi Institute for Wine and Food Science.

The samples were run through chemical-analyzing machines that vintners and brewers use to dissect flavor compounds in wines and beers. “It was funny, because people didn’t really give us strange looks when we were in the bay actually placing plastic into the ocean, but we definitely got the side-eye when I told the food chemists in the wine and food lab we were going to put plastic garbage in their analyzers,” Savoca said. The results were no joke. The analysis showed that after three weeks at sea, all three types of plastic were emitting the scent associated with DMS at levels even the scientists could smell. “Sometimes you get samples or studies like this, and you can detect chemicals but not at really significant levels,” Savoca said. “But by analyzing them, we were able to show the concentrations were definitely significant.”

The findings could be important for a number of ocean-dwelling animals that rely on scent triggers like DMS to find food, including baleen whales that feed on krill, sea turtles, and some fish species. “These animals are using their adaptive ability to find food that is vital to their existence,” Nevitt said. “When we see a food additive we know is unhealthy, we can read the label and make a choice. But for these animals, it’s a sensory trap—they’re using their senses to find food, and it’s leading to plastic. It’s not just passively or accidentally ingesting plastic; they’re targeting it.” For Savoca, the study shows the importance of keeping plastics from reaching the ocean. “Animals interact with introduced substances in ways we often don’t fully understand, and that’s becoming more evident the more we look at these types of human-influenced issues,” he said.

Source: [www.takepart.com](http://www.takepart.com), 16 November 2016

## **Harnessing Bacteria to fight Ocean Pollution**

-Adam Zewe

More than five trillion tiny pieces of plastic are floating on the surface of the world’s oceans, threatening marine life and posing health hazards to humans. Bacteria could help researchers detect and clean up these plastic fragments, according to research conducted by a group of Harvard undergraduates. The students, members of the International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) team at the John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), used synthetic biology to tackle the problem of marine micro-plastic pollution. Their solution, Plastiback, won a gold medal at the annual iGEM competition, which included more than 300 student teams from dozens of nations.

It was also nominated for best environmental project in the undergraduate category. “Ocean researchers don’t currently have a very good way of quantifying or detecting where these tiny pieces of plastic may be in the ocean,” said team member Lorena Lyon, A.B. ’18, a human development and regenerative biology concentrator. “Current methods typically involve trawling the ocean, which means researchers go out with a net and physically count the pieces of plastic they pick up. That is not very efficient.”

Plastiback is a floating ocean bioreactor containing genetically modified *E. coli* bacteria, which is used to identify and degrade a type of micro-plastic called polyethylene terephthalate (PET). PET is commonly used in many products that end up as ocean pollution, from disposable water bottles to commercial fishing equipment. The students genetically engineered this *E. coli* to secrete an enzyme that breaks down PET into terephthalic acid and ethylene glycol. A fluorescent protein glows green when the PET-degrading enzyme is expressed, so researchers who use the device can easily see whether the system is working correctly.

“Degrading plastic in the ocean leads to less plastic, which is a great thing up to that point, but the byproducts of plastic are harmful, so we added another step to our project to extend that idea of environmental remediation,” said Kevin Shani, S.B. ’18, a bioengineering concentrator. During the next step, the terephthalic acid produced during degradation flows into a microbial fuel cell located in another chamber of the floating bioreactor. A second type of bacteria, *D. tsuruhatensis sp. nov.*, metabolizes the acid, producing electrons that are used to generate a small amount of voltage. Researchers could measure the voltage to quantify how much PET was broken down by Plastiback. Not only would Plastiback help degrade harmful plastic in the oceans, but its detection system could also enable researchers to create an ocean map pinpointing “hot spots” where large concentrations of micro-plastic exist, Lyon explained.

“These micro-plastics are so dangerous because they can absorb toxins, like DDT, and then be consumed by fish,” said Yasmeen Fakhro, A.B. ’18, a chemistry and physics concentrator. “If those fish are eaten by humans, that poses a huge risk to public health.” A recent study published in *Nature* found that more than 25 percent of fish for sale in public markets contained micro-plastic. Identifying large collections of micro-plastic could help fishermen and food regulators recognize public health dangers that may be present in each catch. As part of the iGEM competition, the students submitted the *E. coli* genetic constructs they developed to the Registry of Standard Biological Parts, making it possible for researchers around the world to access the data and apply it to their own research.

While certain parts of the project had a steep learning curve, such as retrofitting a microbial fuel cell, working as a team to tackle an important environmental issue was rewarding, said Daniel Um, A.B. '19, an integrative biology concentrator pursuing a secondary in computer science. "This field has been growing exponentially over the past decade," he said. "It is exciting to be part of this wave of synthetic biology research. I'm proud of what we were able to accomplish."

The team, which began working on their project over the summer, also included students Gabriela Berner, Will Cho, Rebekah Chun, and Mofeyifoluwa Edun. They were mentored by Neel Joshi, Associate Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering, and graduate students Pichet Praveschotinunt, David Lips, Kevin Hof, and Anita Chandrahas. "The team deserves a lot of credit for designing, planning, executing, and presenting a project that they conceived primarily on their own, with some help from the mentoring team," said Joshi. "I hope that the success of this year's team can continue to attract more undergraduates to participate in the team and in the student group started by last year's team."

Source: [www.seas.harvard.edu](http://www.seas.harvard.edu), 17 November 2016

### **New Project uses Drones to Monitor Ship Emissions**

-Michelle Howard

Global maritime technology innovator Martek Marine said it has been included on a framework contract by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) for remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS) services in the maritime environment. EMSA was established for the purpose of ensuring a high, uniform and effective level of maritime safety and prevention of pollution by ships. Due to the recent entering into force of the new limits for sulphur content of marine fuels since January 1, 2015, Directive (EU) 2015/253 of February 16, 2015 laying down the rules concerning the sampling and reporting under Council Directive 1999/32/EC as regards the sulphur content of marine fuels, SO<sub>x</sub> emissions from ships need to be monitored. The enforcement by Member States under Directive 1999/32/EC (as amended) will require monitoring of the emissions and information exchange between the responsible administrations.



To improve environmental surveillance capabilities, data from new sensors, in particular from RPAS, are to be incorporated to provide information to Member States. EMSA will organize and provide, as an institutional service provider, pilot RPAS service operations in support of Member States focusing on marine pollution detection and monitoring and emissions monitoring. However, this technology has a multipurpose character and could in an emergency be used for other purposes, if necessary or requested by Member States, the European Commission and other EU agencies.

Martek Marine has been awarded one of several framework contracts launched by EMSA which deals with “Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) services in the maritime environment”. The contract won by Martek is specifically for ship engine emission monitoring by RPAS. This new requirement requires an RPAS (drone) to sample gases from a vessel’s emissions plume by using a sophisticated payload of electro optical, infra-red imaging, gas emission and AIS detection sensors. The RPAS can be flown over 50 km from the ground station with instant and continuous video being streamed back to the ground station and Member States. An on-board gas analyzer draws samples of air and monitors SO<sub>x</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub> levels to determine possible breaches in EU law on the sulphur content of a ship’s fuel.

Martek Marine has developed a team of technical experts, experienced pilots and a bespoke maritime unmanned helicopter specifically adapted to suit this application. The RPAS can operate over 50 kilometers away from the ground station, beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS). Development is also underway to incorporate satellite command and control and payload data streaming, so the RPAS can operate in what is known as BRLOS (beyond radio line of sight) over 100 kilometers away. In order to operate effectively in the harsh maritime environment, the RPAS can withstand storm force wind and heavy rain, snow and salt spray.

Source: [www.marinelink.com](http://www.marinelink.com), 21 November 2016

### **IMO to assess impacts of Mining waste on Marine Environment, Promotes Sustainable Ship Recycling**

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has established a working group to assess the environmental impacts of wastes from mining operations and held a series of events to increase implementation of the International Convention for the Control and Management

of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention) and other Conventions. IMO has also worked to raise awareness among countries in West and Central Africa on ship recycling and launched a kid-friendly website on its marine and atmosphere protection work.

The Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) established a working group to assess the environmental impacts of wastes from mining operations in the marine environment. GESAMP, a UN advisory body, formed the working group at its 43rd annual session in Nairobi, Kenya, in response to a request from the Parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972, known as the London Convention. GESAMP also addressed, *inter alia*: studies on the sources and effects of microplastics in the marine environment; trends in global pollution of coastal and marine environments; an evaluation of harmful substances carried by ships; applications for active substances to be used in ballast water management (BWM) systems; and the Group's contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As part of efforts to implement the BWM Convention that aims to reduce the transfer of potentially harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens in ships' ballast water, which will enter into force on 8 September 2017, IMO's GloBallast hosted two events in Croatia in November. The first was a risk assessment seminar in Zagreb where marine biologists, maritime authorities and port state control officers from Croatia, Egypt, Ghana, Jordan and Nigeria learned about conducting 'Port Biological Baseline Surveys,' which inventory marine life in and around commercial ports, and discussed strategies for ensuring compliance with monitoring and enforcement. The second event outlined the implementation status of the BWM Convention for a wide range of stakeholders, including IMO member States, BWM system manufacturers and testing organizations and ship owners.

On ship recycling, also in November, Cabo Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe and Sierra Leone agreed to work towards ratifying IMO's ship recycling treaty, the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships (the Hong Kong Convention), at an IMO Workshop in Accra, Ghana. The Hong Kong Convention aims to ensure that ship recycling does not threaten the environment, human health or safety. The Convention was adopted 15 May 2009 and will enter into force 24 months after ratification by 15 States representing 40% of global merchant shipping by gross tonnage, with a combined maximum annual ship recycling volume not less than 3% of their combined

tonnage. IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) released a calculation of recycling capacity for meeting the Hong Kong Convention's entry into force requirements in 2014 that shows at least 15 states whose combined merchant fleets constitute a gross tonnage of at least 449,059,784 need to ratify the Convention. Norway, the Republic of Congo and France have ratified or acceded to the Convention. IMO is currently working on a set of guidelines to support the Convention's implementation.

To support education and awareness raising, IMO launched a kid-friendly website that illustrates how it protects the marine environment and the atmosphere by minimizing pollution from ships and by developing international regulations and standards to increase shipping safety globally. Users can click on various links to learn about ensuring clean oceans and addressing marine litter and waste, tackling invasive species, protecting marine life from noise pollution, and protecting the atmosphere, among other topics. The Global Partnership for Marine Litter (GPML) provided financial support for the website as part of its collaboration with IMO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO).

IMO's recent work has also addressed, inter alia, safety at sea, fuel consumption data collection requirements for ships, energy efficiency on ships and oil spill response. IMO's Maritime Safety Committee is meeting to discuss a proposed new Code to ensure the safe transfer of individuals at sea and requirements for working in Polar Waters. The Committee is meeting from 21-25 November. Also on maritime safety, IMO Secretary General Kitack Lim opened the Maritime Safety Research Centre (MSRC) at the University of Strathclyde in the UK. It aims to improve safety at sea through collaboration between academia and industry. In an address, Lim highlighted the Centre's potential to promote risk-informed legislation and goal-based standards on maritime safety.

Source: [sdg.iisd.org](http://sdg.iisd.org), 22 November 2016

## **Marine oil spill exercise at the cut tomorrow**

GISBORNE District Council's marine oil spill team will conduct an equipment deployment exercise tomorrow at The Cut at Waikanae and a visiting expert will evaluate it. The exercise will start at 8am.

“Mark Cavanagh from Marine Pollution Response Services (MPRS) in Auckland will assess our skills and revalidate some members of our team,” said council emergency manager Louise Bennett. “He will also undertake the annual service of the marine oil spill equipment we have stored in Bank Street.” The council team is required to hold two exercises a year. “They are funded by the Oil Pollution Fund as part of response training,” Mrs Bennett said. “It is great training for our environmental teams because the experience gained is also relevant for spills into creeks and rivers. The public are welcome to come down and watch.” The exercise will involve deploying oil spill booms, skimmers and other equipment.

Source: [gisborneherald.co.nz](http://gisborneherald.co.nz), 23 November 2016



### **China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): The Maritime-Strategic Dimension**

-Adarsh vijay

The much-awaited China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been officially flagged off with the first consignment from China setting sail from Gwadar to the African and West Asian markets on 13 November 2016. The Corridor's newly built western route was chosen for the transit of the trucks all the way from Kashgar in China to Pakistan's South-Western port city of Gwadar. The successful transit has largely thwarted the fears on Pakistan's mainland security, to which the corridor is exposed. However, the maritime-strategic template, in and around the deep-sea port at Gwadar, is yet to receive a complete security cover from the significant threats in the area. Apart from the concerns such as piracy and terrorism, the proximity of the United States' and Indian presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) poses the most challenging security quagmire for the partner-states of CPEC.

The US\$ 46 billion project invites a greater payoff for Beijing with a reduced dependence on the Straits of Malacca to reach out to its markets beyond the Indian Ocean. An easy access to the Gwadar port and Strait of Hormuz through inland road and rail networks enhances the Chinese presence in the region. The viability of the port was demonstrated in the mid October 2016 with the docking of the first cargo vessel – Zhen Xing Sung. The Pakistan Navy (PN) has repeatedly acknowledged that the safety of the CPEC, Gwadar port in particular, is its top priority. The Third Marine Battalion (TMB) of the PN is in charge of the all-round security of the port. The PN's commitment to the CPEC was also palpable with the assignment of a naval and air convoy for guarding the cargo ships – MV Al Hussein and MV Cosco Wellington – till they entered international waters. The days ahead are expected to see a quantum leap in the maritime traffic through Hormuz, towards which the PN is tightening its grip.

Nevertheless, the Indian preference of geopolitics over geo-economics continues to be a concern for Sino-Pak strategic cooperation. The inclusion of Pakistan occupied Kashmir

(PoK) as part of the corridor is the major factor which ignited a strategic dilemma in India. 2 Moreover, the US has been cautious about the growing proximity between Islamabad and Beijing. Washington appears to be worried over the emergence of Beijing as an alternative strategic partner for Islamabad in place of the former. Despite this concern, the US has indicated support for the CPEC collaboration between the two “all-weather friends.” However, the recently concluded Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) with New Delhi – which seeks to ensure essential logistic supplies for US armed forces at Indian ports and airport facilities – is indicative of the US intent to contain the Chinese expansion into the Indian Ocean. A combined push for Indo-Pacific strategy assures reciprocal benefits for India, while also containing Chinese influence in the Pacific sphere.

The US presence in West Asia in terms of its wider naval basing network would pose a major threat to the CPEC. Washington’s West Asian naval diplomacy is an important component in countering the galloping Chinese advents into the sub-region. Jebel Ali in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – the most-visited US naval facility – lies close to the Strait of Hormuz. Oman also finds a place under the maritime-strategic connotation owing to a large number of US Air Force bases. The US Fifth Fleet with its headquarters in Bahrain and a forward deployment base of the Central Command (CENTCOM) in Qatar also comes under perceived maritime threats for the CPEC ships that transit to the West Asian markets. Besides, the Chabahar port – a trilateral maritime venture among India, Iran, and Afghanistan – is conceived to be a major competitor and challenger to the Gwadar in geoeconomic terms. It offers an easy access for New Delhi to reach Afghanistan and Central Asia by-passing the mainland Pakistan.

An early forecast of this strategic quandary was responded with a series of defence pacts between Beijing and Islamabad. Both countries have embraced stability and maritime security as the primary goals in this direction. The delivery of a Chinese patrol vessel Basol to the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA), the inductions of Chinese Fast Attack Craft (FAC) into the PN and other such measures are indicative of force restructuring for an effective response to the threats to the CPEC/ Gwadar. Notably, in 2015, Pakistan’s Ministry of Defence Production (MoDP) inked a deal with China under a Public-Sector Development Programme (PSDP) to build seven patrol ships. The two countries also conducted a combined naval exercise in November 2016, which involved Special Operations Forces (SOF), and was optimised for port and littoral defence. In cognizance of the volatile environments with regard to the CPEC/ Gwadar, one could expect substantial collaboration between the PN and the PLA Navy, including in terms of doctrinal changes and maritime strategy reorientations.

Being a project conceived and implemented in a tenuous and dynamic security environment, China and Pakistan are likely to be seized of unforeseen and uncertain geostrategic outcomes with regard to the CPEC. The only certainty is that the project would usher significant changes in the regional naval balance.

Source: [www.maritimeindia.org](http://www.maritimeindia.org), 23 November 2016

## **China delivers Submarines to Bangladesh: Imperatives, Intentions and Implications**

-Vivek Raghuvanshi

NEW DELHI — Ever since Bangladesh took delivery of Chinese submarines on Nov. 14, analysts in India have expressed increasing concern over a deepening of China's footprint in India's friendly neighbor. The arrival of the submarines comes as Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar prepares to visit Dhaka on Nov. 30 to upgrade defense ties between the neighboring countries. Bangladesh took delivery of the first of the two submarines purchased from China at a cost of \$203 million. The Type 035G diesel-electric submarines, armed with torpedoes and mines, are capable of attacking enemy ships and submarines. Analysts say the sale of the subs is part of a strategy meant to encircle India. "Given Bangladesh's economic situation and the fact that it is surrounded on three sides by India, the acquisition of submarines is not only illogical but actually an act of provocation as far as India is concerned. Submarines are offensive weapons of sea denial and their only use would be to pose a threat in being for India and to complicate the latter's maritime security paradigm," said Arun Prakash, a retired Indian Navy admiral and former service chief. "Obviously, this transfer is a step further in China's strategy of encircling India with its client states," Prakash added.

However, Bharat Karnad, a research professor at the India-based think tank Centre for Policy Research, disagreed. "No, it is just a good, economical deal Dhaka could not pass up," Karnad said. "But the Modi government will have to ensure it does not fetch Beijing strategic benefits." "It is difficult to fathom why Bangladesh, which does not encounter any conventional maritime-military threat, has inducted submarines in its navy. The maritime disputes between Bangladesh and two of its only maritime neighbors — Myanmar and India — were resolved through international arbitration in 2012 and 2014, respectively," said Gurpreet Khurana, an Indian Navy captain and executive director of the



National Maritime Foundation. Swaran Singh, a professor for diplomacy and disarmament at Jawaharlal Nehru University in India, said: "Bangladesh Navy has always been [the] beneficiary of Chinese transfers, but [the] transfer of submarine means major upgradation of their defense cooperation and would contribute to South Asia becoming a far more contested space infested with new weapon systems." During Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Bangladesh in October 2016, Bangladesh and China agreed to elevate their relationship from a "comprehensive partnership of cooperation" to a "strategic partnership," which "raises concern here," said an Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) official. Diplomats of the Bangladesh High Commission here were unavailable for comments.

China has emerged as a major supplier of arms for the Bangladesh Army but also a destination for its officers to receive training. Bangladesh is modernizing its armed forces and procuring weapons from overseas. "The delivery of the first Chinese submarine will make the country (Bangladesh) dependent for more arms from China," a senior Indian Army official said. India is also boosting its defense ties. Parrikar, during his two-day visit to Bangladesh next week, is likely to "upgrade its bilateral defense cooperation," the MoD official said. India is contemplating supplying offshore patrol vehicles with an easy financial package to Bangladesh as part of the defense cooperation, the official added.

"Bangladesh is our neighbor, and its strategic importance cannot be understated in any way. Such events as the purchase of submarines by Bangladesh greatly enhances the mistrust between the countries and steps must be taken to reduce this gap and prevent Bangladesh from playing the China card repeatedly," said Probal Ghosh, a senior fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, an organization dedicated to leading political and policy discussions in India. Though India and Bangladesh have very cordial relations under the ruling dispensation in Dhaka, the two countries have yet to settle on a water-sharing treaty, which has proven to be a major irritant in Indo-Bangladesh ties.

Source: [www.defensenews.com](http://www.defensenews.com), 23 November 2016



## **‘Provocation’: Bangladesh buys Chinese Weapons to irritate India, Experts say**

India's eastern neighbor Bangladesh acquired two diesel-electric submarines from China on November 14. After they enter service in 2017, they will become the first and only submarines in the Bangladeshi navy. The move has raised questions, since Bangladesh is surrounded by Indian territories on three sides, sharing only a fraction of its border with Myanmar on the East. Defense News has interviewed experts on this issue.

Bangladesh currently has no territorial or maritime claims, after all such disputes with India and Myanmar were settled in 2012 and 2014, respectively. The diesel-electric submarines, capable of carrying torpedoes and mines, are believed to be strictly offensive weaponry, but with a navy so small, Bangladesh is far from capable of withstanding any serious naval conflict with India. According to Indian experts, one possible explanation is an act of provocation against Indian maritime security.

Prakash also believes that the sale is a step in a long-standing Chinese policy of encircling India with client states who are dependent on China. Both India and China are significant weapon manufacturers, with India seeking to become one of the world's largest arms exporters, according to Bloomberg. Snatching regional markets from India is a logical act of competition. The Bangladesh Navy has a long history of purchasing naval weaponry from China. But the procurement of the submarines is likely to raise tensions in the region, said Swaran Singh, a professor for diplomacy and disarmament at Jawaharlal Nehru University in India. "[The] transfer of submarines means major upgradation of [Bangladesh and China] defense cooperation and would contribute to South Asia becoming a far more contested space infested with new weapon systems," he said.

New Delhi must make attempts to secure the Bangladeshi market for domestic weapons manufacturers, according to Defense News. Indian Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar is currently visiting Bangladesh to "upgrade bilateral defense cooperation." Despite that the two countries have no territorial dispute, they are yet to sign a water-sharing agreement, a significant stumbling block for New Delhi. If suggestions about provocations and "sea denial" functions of the submarines are correct, negotiations are about to become tougher.

"Bangladesh is our neighbor, and its strategic importance cannot be understated in any way. Such events as the purchase of submarines by Bangladesh greatly enhances the mistrust between the countries and steps must be taken to reduce this gap and prevent Bangladesh from playing the China card repeatedly," said Probal Ghosh, a senior fellow

at the Observer Research Foundation, an organization dedicated to leading political and policy discussions in India.

Source: [sputniknews.com](http://sputniknews.com), 24 November 2016

### **Chinese Maritime Overtures to Bangladesh makes India Wary**

NEW DELHI (Sputnik) — Manohar Parrikar, accompanied by vice chiefs of all the three services, will visit Dhaka to participate in Bangladesh's Liberation Anniversary celebrations. But analysts sense a palpable nervousness in the Indian establishment since October when visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping offered a \$24 billion credit line to Bangladesh. Indian unease deepened after a month when Bangladesh announced that it will receive two Chinese submarines by early next year.

India may also further sweeten its defense cooperation with Bangladesh by offering to supply offshore naval vessels on credit. But, experts do not believe such a piecemeal approach is sufficient to tackle Chinese "aggression". "Evidently, India's foreign policy vis-à-vis Bangladesh needs to be recalibrated. At the national-strategic level, India possesses insufficient financial and defense-industrial wherewithal to offset China's overwhelming influence upon Bangladesh. New Delhi may need to graduate from its long-standing policy of 'appeasing' Dhaka to a 'carrot and stick' policy," Captain Khurana added. India has long considered Bangladesh part of its area of influence and its armed forces helped it secede from Pakistan in 1971. India shares cordial political and security ties with the current regime and last year gave a \$2 billion grant to Bangladesh.

Source: [sputniknews.com](http://sputniknews.com), 25 November 2016

### **Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba in Sri Lanka to boost Maritime Security Ties**

Navy chief admiral Sunil Lanba arrived in Colombo on Sunday on a five-day visit aimed at consolidating and enhancing the bilateral maritime security relations between India and Sri Lanka. During his visit, he will hold bilateral discussions with President Maithripala Sirisena, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and senior dignitaries including the Chief of Defence Staff and the three Service Chiefs, an official statement said. The Admiral will

also attend the 'Galle Dialogue' which is being held at Colombo. The Galle Dialogue is an annual conference hosted by Sri Lanka on the issues of Maritime Security and Cooperation between international navies. Representatives from 39 countries and 13 international organisations are likely to participate in the event. He will be delivering key-note address on 'India's perspective on the benefits of Strategic Maritime Partnerships', during the event.

There exists a robust Naval cooperation between India and Sri Lanka encompassing a wide span which includes operational interactions through bilateral exercises, coordinated patrolling along the common maritime border, training, port calls, capacity building and capacity augmentation initiatives, the statement said. The Admiral will also lay a wreath at the Indian Peace Keeping Force memorial, which has been built by Sri Lanka to honour Indian Martyrs, during his visit. Lanba's visit also comes days after India and Sri Lanka held their fourth Annual Defence Dialogue (ADD) on November 3.

Defence secretary G Mohan Kumar and the Sri Lankan defence secretary Karunasena Hettiarachchi co-chaired the meeting along with their delegations, comprising officers from the defence ministries, foreign affairs ministries and the armed forces of both the countries. During the ADD, various ongoing defence cooperation initiatives were jointly reviewed and new avenues for cooperation identified. The regional security situation and issues of maritime security were also discussed at the meeting.

Source: [www.hindustantimes.com](http://www.hindustantimes.com), 27 November 2016

### **Chinese Naval Ships in Pakistan's Gwadar port call for a rethink of India's regional policy**

-MK BhadraKumar

The transformation of Gwadar port on the Pakistan coast as a base for Chinese Navy ships was long expected, but when media reports actually appeared on Friday to that effect, it was startling news. The reports quoted Pakistani officials saying that China proposes to deploy its naval ships in coordination with the Pakistan Navy to safeguard Gwadar port, which is the gateway to the \$46-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. India would have had some intelligence tip-off, which probably explains the mysterious episode on November 14 of an Indian submarine lurking in the vicinity of Pakistani

territorial waters. It was brusquely shooed away by the Pakistani Navy. Of course, the corridor was operationalised a fortnight ago with Chinese ships docking at Gwadar to carry the first containers brought by a Chinese trade convoy from Xinjiang for despatch to the world market. Viewed from many perspectives, the month of November becomes a defining moment in the geopolitics of our region. But the strangest bit of news would be that earlier this month, Gwadar also received Russia's Federal Security Services chief Alexander Bogdanov. It was a hush-hush inspection tour aimed at assessing the efficacy of Russian ships using the port during their long voyages, to assert Moscow's return to the global stage.

Equally, this is the first visit by a Russian spy chief to Pakistan in over two decades and it took place just as America elected a new president, Donald Trump. Maybe the timing is coincidental, but more likely, it is not. The Russian diplomacy invariably moves in lockstep. Bogdanov's visit was scheduled just a few weeks before the planned trilateral strategic dialogue between Russia, China and Pakistan, ostensibly regarding the Afghan situation, in Moscow next month. Bogdanov reportedly sought a formal Russian-Pakistani collaborative tie-up over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Moscow wouldn't have made such a move without coordinating with China first. At a meeting in Moscow with his Chinese counterpart, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu was quoted as saying that China-Russia military cooperation is "at an all-time high and it will contribute to peace and stability on the Eurasian continent and beyond".

### *China's regional play*

Meanwhile, Chinese regional diplomacy, too, is moving in tandem. The Chinese Defence Minister Chang Wangquan (who is also vice-chairman of China's Military Commission, which is headed by President Xi Jinping) paid a three-day visit to Iran last week. Chang's visit held considerable geopolitical significance for the region and he described his meetings as signifying a turning point in the China-Iran strategic partnership. It is useful to recall that during Xi's visit to Iran in January; the two countries had signed a 25-year strategic cooperation agreement that included a call for much closer defence and intelligence ties.

The Iranian Navy has not hidden its desire to become a major blue water power (one capable of sustained operations across open oceans) in the Indian Ocean, and China can help meet that goal by offering intelligence and training in the short term, and modern vessels and weapons systems down the road. Several existing Chinese systems would suit Iran's need for a flexible navy capable of operating in both littoral (on shore) and blue

waters – such as destroyers, corvettes, frigates, the much-vaunted Type-022 stealth fast-attack missile catamarans (described as carrier killers) and submarines. These cost-effective warships could enable Iran to perform more effective patrol missions at longer ranges for longer periods of time.

Simply put, there is much background to Iran's desire to become part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which was reportedly conveyed to Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at their meeting in New York in September on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session.

Connecting all these dots, in geopolitical terms, what we are witnessing is a historic shift in regional alignments, which is bringing together China, Pakistan, Russia and Iran on the template of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. From the Indian perspective, these developments hold profound implications, especially against the backdrop of the unravelling of the United States' pivot strategy in the Asia-Pacific. Some hard conclusions need to be made. Difficult decisions lie ahead for the Indian establishment.

### *India's challenge*

Quite obviously, India has been tilting at the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor windmills in vain, fancying its capacity to block the flagship of China's One Belt One Road appearing in our north-western neighbourhood. As an open, inclusive and international cooperative initiative, the corridor merits a rethink on our part. The point is, China still regards India to be one of the key countries along the Belt and Road, although the Silk Road initiatives have already stimulated regional connectivity in the South Asian region, involving Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in one way or another.

Two, the rebuff at the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) summit in Goa in October apart, the growing regional convergence over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor once again highlights the futility of our diplomatic efforts to isolate Pakistan as a state sponsoring terrorism. New thinking is needed to bring pressure on Pakistan to jettison its sponsorship of terrorist groups.

The foreign policy establishment should explore how membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation – a six-nation Eurasian bloc led by China and Russia to promote political, economic and cultural cooperation in the region – can be optimally utilised to (re)engage Pakistan. If China could effectively utilise this organisation to clear

the huge backlog of Soviet-era regional animosities, India too can create similar synergy between its regional diplomacy and the bilateral ties with Pakistan.

Three, the manifest China-Pakistan-Russia-Iran regional convergence highlights the geopolitical realities of the emergent world order. Put differently, our fracas with China over membership to the Nuclear Suppliers Group and efforts to declare Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar a terrorist have been, in reality, the symptom of a deeper malaise insofar as Indian strategists are still entrapped in their “unipolar predicament”.

Thus, the muscular diplomacy of the Narendra Modi government erred in its overestimation of India’s South China Sea leverage. India lacked traditional influence in that region and it is not even a claimant to the territorial disputes there. Today, therefore, our Look East policy is in shambles and a US retrenchment in Asia threatens to make it archaic. When Singapore snubs our overture to create new waves in the South China Sea, a nadir has been reached. However, India seems to opt for a repackaging of the Look East policy. It is getting embroiled in China-Japan tensions. Such naivety can turn out to be dangerous.

The recent developments concerning Gwadar underscore the crucial importance of addressing the distrust between India and China on the one hand and India and Pakistan on the other. Or else, serious contradictions are bound to arise in India’s relations with a host of other Asian countries as well – our time-tested friend Russia included.

Source: [scroll.in](http://scroll.in), 27 November 2016

### **Diego Garcia & camp thunder cove: The UK’s Dark Secret**

-Madeleine Janes

You may know about the island on which, a couple of years ago, one conspiracy theory believed the missing Malaysian airlines flight MH370 to have landed. But I’m not here to talk about that. Diego Garcia is the biggest island in the Chagos Archipelago, a collection of small islands in the centre of the Indian Ocean. It was formerly occupied by the British and French during a time when slavery still existed. The inhabitants of the island are numbered at roughly 2,000. That is until 1967 when the UK, who still technically owned the island, decided to force the indigenous population to leave so that the USA could build

a military base there. People don't often realise that during the slavery era, the Caribbean Islands were not the only places to which European colonisers took those from African countries. They were also taken to islands in the Indian Ocean to work on plantations.

As far as historians can tell, many Indian Ocean islands were uninhabited before European colonisers decided to make use of them. European powers took people from their colonies, including India, East Africa and even China, to work on the Indian Ocean islands, hence why countries in this region are now so ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse. The Chagos Islands are a key example of this. When slavery ended and the population continued living there, they made a happy home. Elsewhere, many of the islands were actually submerged, meaning that Diego Garcia had the highest land mass and was therefore the most populous of them all.

Since the early 18th century, Diego Garcia was a territory of nearby Mauritius where it was governed from. However, Mauritius was not independent from Britain until 1968, so Britain had always technically owned Diego Garcia. One condition of Mauritian independence was that the British gained full control over Diego Garcia, a move which led to the Chagos Islands becoming part of the British Indian Ocean Territory. This was when things started to get tactical. There was a reason European colonisers chose to colonise many of the Indian Ocean islands. They were strategic gems. Located with direct access to southern Asia, eastern Africa, Australasia and the Middle East, this gave the colonisers reliable control over their colonies. By the time the British had full control over Diego Garcia, the Middle East was their key target in mind. The UK leased Diego Garcia to the US, who needed a military base that was close (but not too close) to the Middle East. A remote location was perfect. Just one problem: the people who lived on the island. The answer? Simple – remove them.

UK and US officials removed all Chagossian people using brute force. It's clear that the British government still saw the Chagos people as colonial subjects. The remote location was chosen deliberately. They knew no one would notice or care.

As a privileged Westerner, one cannot even begin to imagine the horrific ordeal the Chagossian people, and those living on the surrounding Chagos islands, had to endure. Western authorities forced them onto ships, similar to those used to transport slaves hundreds of years ago, like cattle to take them to slums in either Mauritius or the Seychelles. Before boarding the ships, pets were gassed to death in front of their owners. The Chagossian people were simply left on the shores of foreign islands with no money and no help from anyone.



The Mauritian government has never seemed to care for the Chagossians either. Compensation of £650,000 was given to the Mauritian government in 1972 to be distributed amongst the Chagossians. It wasn't given until five years later, and that amount of money across 2,000 people is hardly enough to start life in a brand-new country against one's own will. Regardless of how much money the Chagossians were given, nothing could erase their trauma.

So, what has the US military been up to on the island since the military base was built? According to the website Commander, Navy Installations Command, the mission on Diego Garcia is "to provide logistic support to operational forces forward deployed to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf AORs [areas of responsibility] in support of national policy objectives".

The base is known as Camp Thunder Cove (formerly Camp Justice) and has become a reportedly multi-billion-dollar Navy and Air Force base for the Middle East and its supplies. It has been essential to the US's role in the Gulf War, the Iraq and Afghan Wars, and intervention in Libya and Syria. According to Global Security, as of May 2016, the island has 1,700 military personnel and 1,500 civilian contractors. Most are American, with a handful from Britain. Numerous reports from publications such as *Time Magazine*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph* and many other less-established media sites have gained evidence indicating that the island has been used for torturing terror suspects as part of the USA's "Global War on Terror".

Unlike other torturing sites (such as Guantanamo Bay), the media can get nowhere near it. It is strictly off-limits to any non-military personnel. However, in recent years, many images have been in public circulation, due the rise of the internet.

After decades of tireless campaigning by the Chagossian people, last week the British government announced yet again, unsurprisingly, that it would not allow the islanders to return to their home. The only way they could do is if the USA and UK decided that they no longer needed the military base and, realistically, this won't happen any time soon. Though, on a more positive note, it was announced that £40 million would be given in compensation. The sad truth is that, for the Chagossian people, compensation will never rectify the damage already done. Speaking about the compensation, Allen Vincatassin, president of the provisional government of the Chagos Islands, told the BBC: "We will need to discuss further [with the UK] how this money will be spent to change the lives of our people. This should have been given to us years ago, but in no way, will we be accepting this as an exchange of our right to return."



The British government maintains that it did not act illegally by forcibly removing the Chagossian people. But since when did something being legal automatically make it right? If dragging people from their homes and forcing them into slums is legal, then perhaps it is the British government's moral standing that we should be calling into question. Intergenerational grief from the trauma still hangs over all Chagossian people. Their fight is nowhere near over. Approximately 4,000 Chagossians have been born into exile. When Chagossians talk of their family members dying, though it may be in medical terms (often due to the poverty of living in slums), they often add that they died of "sadness". It is a little too early to fully know or understand the magnitude of President-elect Trump's foreign policy. However, if his cabinet is anything to go by, the USA's stance on the Middle East isn't likely to soften. We tend to think of colonisation as something of a time gone by, given that slavery was abolished well over 150 years ago, but what happened to the people of the Chagos Islands is clear evidence that Western powers are still trying to exercise their colonial rule.

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