Inside this Brief

- **Maritime Editorial** ............p.4
- **Maritime Security** .............p.20
- **Shipping News** ...............p.41
- **Maritime Environment** ......p.50

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Chinese Submarines Taste Indian Ocean
Maritime Terrorism: Karachi as a Staging Point
NATO's Maritime Future
From 'Looking' East to 'Acting' East: India's Own Pivot to Asia
South China Sea Dispute Could Lead to China-Indonesia Conflict
Coast Guard in the Arctic - Trouble Ahead?
Terrorist Threats From the Maritime Domain: Singapore’s Response
It's Time for a Little Heterodoxy in Naval Strategy

Obama, Modi Pledge to Intensify Maritime Security
Indian, Indonesian Navies Conclude Joint Patrol
Navy Projects Blue Water Muscle with Long Range Deployment in Indian Ocean Region
‘Chinese Aegis’ Leads A2/AD Drill in South China Sea
Singapore, Australian Navies End Joint Exercise in South China Sea
China Considers a Naval Stealth Fighter Based On Chengdu J-20
U.S. Naval Ship Visits Maldives to Foster Friendship
From India to Oman with Naval Goodwill
Coast Guard Getting Boost
Piracy feared as Vietnamese Oil Tanker Vanishes off Singapore
Russia sends Submarine in Mediterranean Drill
Rear Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh is Eastern Fleet Commander
No Role for a Third Party in Resolving South China Sea Dispute: China Tells India, US
Piracy to Increase in Gulf of Guinea Ahead of Nigeria's Elections
Four SA Navy Platforms Allocated to Tri-Nation Naval Exercise
60% of US Navy, Air Force to be Deployed in Asia Pacific by 2020
Armed Cargo Ships along India’s Coast Pose Security Threat
Japan, ASEAN Agree to Strengthen Maritime Security Cooperation
President to be First Indian Leader to cross Arctic Circle
- US Joins Southeast Asia's War on Piracy
- Military exercise with China Shifted from near the Border to Pune
- 11th Hovercraft for Indian Coast Guard Inducted into Service
- Norway Backs India's Arctic Efforts
- Hudhud: Warships, Nuclear Submarines at Vizag Naval Base Safe
- France Extends Help to Expedite 'Maitri'
- Ebola at Sea? US Coast Guard Began Monitoring Threat
- Indian Naval Ships Dock at Dubai port
- Navy Ready with Coastal Security Hub
- Indian Coast Guard Ship Visits Da Nang for Joint Exercise

**SHIPPING**

- Chinese Manufacturing Expansion Affects Shipping Demand
- India-Myanmar Container Shipping Service Launched
- Krishnapatnam Port Expects 50% Growth This Year
- India’s Seaborne Trade May Cross 830 million ton by 2016-17
- Canada "ill-placed" to Ensure Arctic Shipping Safety
- Goa Shipyard Supplies Naval Equipment to Myanmar, Mauritius
- North America Maritime Security Market is expected to reach $4.76 billion in 2019
- SCI Launches Direct Shipping Service with Myanmar
- India's First Indigenous Aircraft Carrier Taking Shape at Cochin Shipyard Limited
- Wärtsilä Chosen for World's Largest Ethane Carriers

**MARITIME ENVIRONMENT**

- A New Approach to Saving the Whales
- India to Receive Tsunami Warning System Next Year
- Is the El Nino Dead?
- Climate Change Threatens Arctic Food Security and Culture
- Oceans Experiencing Largest Sea Rise in 6,000 years
Chinese Submarines Taste Indian Ocean

Vijay Sakhuja

A Chinese military website, ostensibly sponsored by the People’s Liberation Army, quoting Sri Lanka media has reported that a Chinese Type 039 diesel-electric Song-class submarine along with Changxing Dao, a submarine support ship from the North Sea Fleet was sighted berthed alongside at the Colombo International Container Terminal. Although the pictures of the submarine and the support vessel together in the port have not been published either by the Sri Lankan or the Chinese media, it is believed that the submarine arrived in early September just before the Chinese President Xi Jinping’s visit to Sri Lanka. The report also states that the submarine was on a routine deployment and had stopped over for replenishment. Further, a Chinese naval flotilla would call at a Sri Lankan port later in October and November.

In the past, reports about the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean have been announced in the media. For instance, the Indian media reported that a type-093 attack nuclear submarine was on deployment (December 2013 to February 2014) in the Indian Ocean and that the Chinese Ministry of National Defense (Foreign Affairs Office) had informed the Indian military attaché in Beijing of the submarine deployment to show ‘respect for India’. Apparently, the information of the deployment was also shared with the United States, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan and Russia.

A few issues relating to the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean merit attention. First, the Chinese submarine visited Sri Lanka and not Pakistan, a trusted ally of China whose relationship has been labeled as ‘all weather’. The reason for the choice of Sri Lanka could be driven by concerns about Pakistan domestic political instability, which had prompted Xi Jinping to cancel his visit to Islamabad during his South Asia tour last month. Further, the high security risks in Karachi harbour and Gwadar port add to Chinese discomfort.

In the past, there have been a number of terrorist attacks on the naval establishments in Karachi. In 2002, 14 workers of the French marine engineering company Direction des Constructions Navales (DCN) were killed and in 2011, attack on PNS Mehran left three P3C-Orion damaged. The recent report about an attempt to hijack a Chinese-built Pakistani frigate by a terrorist group linked to the Al Qaeda has only reinforced these apprehensions. The Gwadar port is perhaps not yet ready to take on submarines; besides, in the past, three Chinese engineers working in the Gwadar port project were killed in a car bombing and two Chinese engineers working on a hydroelectric dam project in South Waziristan were abducted.

The second issue that warrants attention is that the deployment of the Song-class submarine in the Indian Ocean would be the first ever by a Chinese conventional submarine. This could be a familiarization visit, keeping in mind that the Chinese do not have sufficient oceanographic data about the Indian Ocean. After all, submarine
operations are a function of rich knowledge about salinity, temperature and other underwater data. It is plausible that the Pakistan Navy, which has a rich experience of operating in the Arabian Sea, may have shared oceanographic data for submarine operation with the Chinese Navy. Further, the submarine would also get an opportunity to operate far from home and it is for this reason that it was escorted by a submarine tender. It will be useful to recall that China had deployed a number of ships, aircraft and satellite in the southern Indian Ocean in its attempt to locate the debris of MH 370. These factors may have encouraged the Chinese Navy to dispatch the submarine to the Indian Ocean.

Third, if the Chinese are to be believed that they informed Singapore and Indonesia about the deployment of type-093 attack nuclear submarine in the Indian Ocean earlier this year, then the purpose for that was to address the issue of the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) also referred to as the Bangkok Treaty signed on December 15, 1995, during the fifth Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit. The nuclear submarine would have entered the Indian Ocean through any of the three straits i.e. Straits of Malacca, Sunda Strait and the Lombok Strait and transited through the SEANWFZ.

The ASEAN countries have been urging the five nuclear weapon states (NWS) – China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States – who operate nuclear powered submarines / warships carrying nuclear weapons, to sign various protocols of the SEANWFZ but have expressed reservations partly driven by the fact that the SEANWFZ curtails the movement of nuclear propelled platforms such as submarines. Indonesia has been at the forefront to encourage the convening of consultations between ASEAN Member States and NWS with a view to the signing of the relevant instruments that enable NWS ratifying the Protocol of SEANWFZ'.

If the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean is true, it is fair to suggest that Chinese forays have graduated from diplomatic port calls, training cruises, anti-piracy operations, search and rescue missions, to underwater operations. Further, the choice of platforms deployed in the Indian Ocean has qualitatively advanced from multipurpose frigates to destroyers, amphibious landing ships and now to submarines. The Indian strategic community had long predicted that China would someday deploy its submarines in the Indian Ocean and challenge Indian naval supremacy in its backyard; these concerns have proven right. The Indian Navy has so far followed closely the Chinese surface ships deployments in the Indian Ocean but would now have to contend with the submarines which would necessitate focused development of specialist platforms with strong ASW (anti-submarine warfare) capability.

Source: CIMSEC, 1st October, 2014
Maritime Terrorism: Karachi as a Staging Point

Vijay Sakhuja

The recent attempt by the Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), the new wing of the Al Qaeda, to take control of PNS Zulfiqar, a Pakistan Navy frigate berthed in Karachi harbour and use it to attack US Navy warships has showcased the continued vulnerability of naval platforms to terrorists. The purported plan was to take control of the frigate and use other militants who would embark the ship by boat and stay onboard as ‘stowaways’ and sail out. When on the high seas, the ship would ‘get close to the U.S. ships…..and then turn the shipboard weapon systems on the Americans.’

The unsuccessful AQIS raid left 10 terrorist dead including a former Pakistan Navy officer Awais Jakhrani, who is reported to have had links with Jihadi elements. Further interrogations have led to the arrest of three other Pakistan Navy personnel in Quetta in Baluchistan who were attempting to escape to Afghanistan.

The attack exposed chinks in Pakistan’s naval defences particularly strategic infrastructure which host millions of dollars worth of naval hardware such as ships, submarines and dockyards. It is important to mention that this is not the first time that terrorist groups have managed to penetrate Pakistan’s naval defences. In the past there have been at least two other attacks on highly sensitive naval platforms and on foreign naval personnel. In 2002, 14 persons including 11 French naval engineers working on the submarine project were killed and 23 others were injured when an unidentified man blew himself up with his car after ramming it into a 46-seater Pakistan Navy bus outside the Karachi Sheraton Hotel.

The second attack was on Pakistan’s naval air base Mehran and was the handiwork of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a coalition of militant groups based in the tribal areas of northwestern Pakistan. As many as 15 attackers from the ‘Brigade 313’ of the Al Qaeda-Harakat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami group led by Ilyas Kashmiri, took part in the operation which left 18 naval personnel killed, 16 wounded and two US built P-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft destroyed. Significantly, the attackers had good knowledge of the naval base including security arrangements, exit and entry points, and the details of the hangers and aircraft.

These attacks showcase that Karachi is a staging point for maritime terrorism particularly for those groups who have taken a liking for naval targets. In fact, Karachi has been labeled as the ‘terror capital’ and is a paradise for terrorists, gunrunners, and drug smugglers. The city is rife with ethnic strife and home to crime syndicates particularly Dawood Ibrahim who is wanted in India for a number of crimes including the 1993 Mumbai blasts. The city is also known for the ‘point of departure’ for the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks by the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) who sailed from Karachi on three boats and later hijacked the Kuber an Indian fishing off Porbandar, on the Gujarat coast and landed on unsecured waterfronts in south Mumbai.

Perhaps the most discomforting issue of the attacks is that Jihadi groups have dared the Pakistan Navy and caused enormous damage to its reputation, morale and...
material. They have penetrated the rank and file of the Pakistan Navy and the attacks on PNS Mehran and PNS Zulfiqar were planned and executed with the help of naval personnel. Referring to the PNS Zulfiqar attack, Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif made a statement in the Parliament that the attack could not have taken place “Without assistance from inside, these people could not have breached security.” The entry of Jihadi elements is sure to cause suspicion among the other multinational partners with whom the Pakistan Navy works closely, particularly the United States. It is believed that some elements in the Pakistan Navy were upset with the US its raid deep into Pakistan which led to the killing of Osama bin Laden.

The above attacks also have a bearing on the safety and security of Pakistan’s nuclear installations. In the absence of a nuclear submarine, the Pakistan Navy has drawn plans to build a rudimentary sea-leg of the nuclear triad with ships and conventional AIP-submarines fitted with nuclear weapons. Any attempt to attack or hijack these platforms and use them as ‘bargain chip’ for any Jihadi agenda would cause grave damage to global security.

However, it is fair to say that the Pakistan Navy is a responsible force and has taken part in a number of multinational operations in the Arabian Sea-Gulf of Aden fighting pirates and terrorists under the US led multinational coalition force TF-151. It has also been the force commander of the coalition forces during these operations and its professionalism has received accolades. The Pakistan naval authorities would have to sanitize the force and rebuild its image of a highly professional fighting force free of radical elements and jihadi thought with a strong commitment to serve national interests and Pakistan’s international commitments to ensure order at sea.

Source: IPCS, 6th October, 2014

**NATO's Maritime Future**

- LCdr Mark Lawrence, USN

The Trans-Atlantic Alliance successfully navigated some rough seas in 2014. A year that began without any allied consensus on NATO’s proper direction in the world looks set to conclude with unanimity in the face of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s foray into Ukraine. Last month’s NATO summit in Wales especially seemed to prove that Europe still can give a good account of itself when necessary. Yet the hard work of follow-through on all the political commitments made there remains to be done, and the fundamental question raised by Russia’s belligerence — whether NATO will endure as a viable military entity — warrants close scrutiny in 2015. In no case more so than NATO’s maritime domain, where the Ukraine crisis prompted only slight adjustments at the same time it highlighted the need for a major course change.

As is the case with successful NATO summits, there was something for everyone to like in the one completed a month ago amid the backdrop of fevered U.S. diplomacy to forge a new coalition for action in Iraq and Syria. Allies demonstrated resolve against Russian aggression, which was not a given as recently as late August until France finally halted its planned sale of amphibious assault ships to Moscow. Allied
policymakers will advertise the heads of state and government pledge to arrest the decline in NATO member defense spending, and rightly so when one considers how dire the trends in Europe looked to be on track for the foreseeable future. Finally, NATO approved a ‘Readiness Action Plan’ by which the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) can expect more responsive tools at his disposal the next time allies require strategic assurance or crisis response.

Crucially, this action plan will not merely improve the quick-reaction capability of the existing NATO Response Force. It will also codify a fundamental and much-needed maritime reform effort that has meandered over recent years, and which only came into the frame for this summit’s agenda as our allies grappled with the fallout from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Much more than just a response to Europe’s immediate challenge to the east, however, the reform effort now under way holds broader potential to advance U.S. interests in more equitable burden-sharing for today’s dynamic security environment. It should interest U.S. planners looking for viable options to offset risk through partnerships at sea.

When it comes to the maritime domain, it is more accurate to say the new action plan garnered high-level political will to implement an Alliance Maritime Strategy already agreed to by NATO members in 2011. (As is also often the case with NATO, commitments made there frequently require great expense of political capital by one or more allies, or an external shock to the system, to bear fruit.) So while NATO’s maritime strategy—which envisioned four allied naval force roles that are generally aligned with U.S. naval strategic thought—would be validated by NATO’s part in Libya that same year, the document was never likely to improve allied force contributions to NATO absent other factors. Two more years would pass until the depth of U.S. defense cuts began to demonstrate to our European allies that the Navy faced more global force management trade-offs in the future. Indeed, it would take Russia’s rapid seizure of military installations in Crimea this past winter for some allies to recall NATO’s keen interest in ready access to the eastern Mediterranean, Baltic, and Black seas.

Unfortunately, the challenges facing NATO in the maritime domain only worsened since 2011. While the Alliance Maritime Strategy agreed that NATO’s naval forces should be ready, interoperable, and prepared to contribute to allied deterrence, crisis management, cooperative security, and maritime security, in truth the alliance’s standing naval force formations remained chronically undersubscribed since the strategy was conceived. These ‘Standing NATO Maritime Groups’ — ostensibly allies’ maritime contribution to the high-readiness NATO Response Force - routinely operated below the identified requirement, and were used primarily to cover shortfalls in ongoing allied maritime counterterrorism and counter-piracy operations.

If it was ever satisfactory to allow allies to perpetuate those maritime security operations without resourcing them, and to allow the exercise regime for what was intended as a fuller-spectrum naval response capability to atrophy as a result, SACEUR’s paucity of maritime options this year in the wake of Ukraine showed clearly this was no longer the case. Allied Maritime Command, the sole remaining NATO headquarters charged with maritime operations and fast-approaching “full operational capability” without a solution for the dearth of naval assets available to it, was understandably concerned over the possibility of events pulling NATO up short.
A confluence of regularly scheduled NATO operations reviews and summit-driven policy discussions on allied maritime training after a decade of counterinsurgency managed to shift some attention to the burgeoning naval capability gap. Russia’s “little green men”—who as one of their first acts scuttled an old Soviet hull in Sevastopol harbor to keep Ukraine’s navy pier-side—did the rest.

The difficulties NATO encountered this spring as it scrambled to implement immediate assurance measures unquestionably reflected a lack of political will among some allies to stand up to Russia’s Vladimir Putin militarily. But the episode also laid bare how risky it was to allow the standing naval forces (which should be the alliance’s most inherently flexible response option) to be double-booked patrolling off the Horn of Africa, tethered in port awaiting counterterrorism surveillance tasking or, in the case of NATO’s mine countermeasures groups, temporarily deactivated. Worse still, the weeks of intense scrutiny over what small contributions allies might make to the strategic reassurance effort highlighted how limited NATO’s aspirations for its maritime forces in reality had become. (In the end, NATO sent only one mine countermeasures group—to the Baltic Sea—as part of the immediate assurance effort).

Considering that recent history, it is encouraging to see all allies emerge from Wales with an agreement to source ongoing maritime operations separately, and to revitalize NATO’s standing naval formations with training that attracts more national contributions. Yet, if this agreement is to build interoperability across the envisioned range of missions, we and our allies must act upon it.

Emerging Opportunities for the U.S. Navy

If the U.S. Navy is as interested in deepening partnerships as higher guidance dictates and the agenda of the recent International Seapower Symposium indicates, we would do well to jump on the opportunity Wales presents to reform NATO’s maritime approach. We could use the alliance’s belated enactment of its maritime strategy to bring more capable and willing allies up the combat effectiveness curve from de-confliction towards greater integration on higher-end mission areas. As we know from experience, the change will be ours to lead. Some capable allies are skeptical of U.S. influence in NATO and would prefer to pursue interdependence as a European Union (EU) project; some probably believe they preserved this imperative given the summit declaration’s refrain of “complementarity” with EU efforts. Even those allies keen to expand their operational profile at sea under NATO reiterate when given an opportunity that only the United States can set the bar for international maritime cooperation. Thankfully, the NATO context gives us access to the capable partners we need to prioritize for enhanced interoperability, while limiting our overhead costs by allowing us to rely on the combined force allocation process that already exists within the alliance.

Sustained budget pressure and unchecked operational demand certainly make this a tough time for the United States to revive and lead maritime initiatives in Europe. However, even though our formal contributions to NATO standing naval forces are modest and likely to remain so in this environment, we maintained a rather high maritime profile in European waters this year. From BMD ships on rotational deployment out of Norfolk, to our new forward-deployed naval forces out of Rota,
Spain, to transiting amphibious ready groups and strike groups, the U.S. Navy kept a considerable—if episodic—baseline presence in and around the Mediterranean. The application of some of those passing assets toward strategic reassurance and multilateral exercises in the Black Sea, combined with our first NATO standing naval group command assignment in several years, places us in good standing to press our allies for more, higher-quality force contributions towards our common goals.

SACEUR uses two watchwords when talking about the implementation of NATO’s newly agreed action plan: affordability and sustainability. We should keep those in mind and consider how long we will be able to keep this window of opportunity open through the force of our maritime example alone. While under U.S. command, Standing NATO Maritime Group Two has engaged in more advanced exercises than is typical for NATO formations, though the United States is not likely to increase our formal contribution toward standing allied naval formations more generally. If there are any funds forthcoming in response to President Barack Obama’s FY15 supplemental budget request, known as the ‘European Reassurance Initiative’, they might not yield any uptick of U.S. naval presence in Europe given other force management priorities and increasingly limited fleet supply.

Accordingly, now is the time for a determined push by U.S. leadership to get greater contributions at sea out of NATO. We can do this in the near term by putting high-level attention on how NATO structures a training and exercise plan to improve high-end interoperability with key allies, and in so doing lock in a mutual commitment to prepare together for a broader set of contingencies. We can go farther still to shape the debate underway in NATO military channels on what assets other than surface combatants and mine countermeasures ships allied navies should make available to SACEUR, and under what circumstances. This entails senior leader bandwidth in venues such as the semi-annual NATO chiefs of defense conference recently held in Vilnius, Lithuania, and going beyond our current ad hoc approach, which with very narrow exceptions relegates us to taking what we can get through partnerships as opposed to building what we really need in our allies. It involves a concerted effort to set the agenda within NATO’s Military Committee on maritime plans and policy. And it may even require us to reconsider how and when the U.S. Navy makes forces available to NATO in support of a more formidable exercise program.

Rather unexpectedly, old-style Russian aggression on the Eurasian landmass managed to build rapid consensus around the need to close a yawning gap in NATO’s level of maritime ambition. Yet summit meetings come and go, and too many of the enterprises fuelled at them fail to launch for the United States to wait and see how this one fares. By taking credit for what we’re already doing at sea unilaterally in European waters today (often quite literally on behalf of European interests), and by attempting through NATO channels to solidify deeper partnerships with our most like-minded allies, the United States can offset the risks associated with our shifting focus to the Asia-Pacific, and with the interminable pull on our attentions of the broader Middle East.

Source: Maritime Executive, 7th October, 2014
The United States has long urged India to play a more active strategic role in world affairs—a role commensurate with the image India likes to project of itself as a powerful democracy, and with its leaders’ proclamations of their country as a “natural partner” of the United States.

By and large, New Delhi has resisted this American request on the grounds that its interests are better served by non-alignment, non-interference, and, when it comes down to it, close relations with U.S. adversaries such as Iran and Russia.

And yet for Washington, urging India to play a more active global role may actually amount to a proverbial case of kicking in an open door.

Indeed, there are increasing signs that India is in fact beginning to play a bigger role in the world—or at least in Asia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is spearheading a substantive shift in India’s approach to strategic affairs—one that the U.S. media has failed to highlight, including during Modi’s recent trip to the United States. And yet the conversion of the previous Indian administration’s “Look East” policy to Modi’s “Act East” mantra may ultimately prove to be a major boon for the U.S.-India strategic relationship.

It now appears that India is prepared to take a far more activist role in East Asia than it has in the past. In effect, it is launching a “pivot” to accompany the Obama administration’s own pivot, or rebalance, to the broader Asia-Pacific (the U.S. pivot, after several years of uncertainty, appears to have new momentum, with Obama having made a long trip to Asia earlier this year and an additional one planned in the coming weeks). In a move that caught Beijing’s attention, India and the United States issued a joint statement during Modi’s visit to Washington that designates the South China Sea as an area of importance for safeguarding maritime security and ensuring freedom of navigation.

This designation is linked explicitly with concerns about rising tensions over maritime territorial disputes, where China plays a prominent role. Driving home this Indian pivot is Modi’s expression of support, during his trip to Washington, for the reinvigoration and upgrading of the Malabar joint naval exercises (which have taken place in East Asia and typically includes the participation of Indian and American fleets), a 10-year extension of the George W. Bush-era U.S.-India framework agreement for defence cooperation, and for the U.S.-India-Japan strategic dialogue (or “trilateral”)—including a possible upgrade to the ministerial level.

One of the chief drivers of India’s increasing engagement with East Asia is energy and, more specifically, oil. With India’s oil imports approaching 80 percent of its consumption, it’s clear that New Delhi is increasingly concerned about maritime security. the It is also clear that India is looking to the South China Sea as a source of its energy needs. Just prior to Modi’s trip to United States, Indian President Pranab Mukherjee was in Hanoi signing an offshore oil exploration
agreement with Vietnam. The overseas investment subsidiary of India’s state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, which is called ONGC Videsh, had already been exploring for oil and gas in two blocks off the Vietnam coast. It will now take on new territories for exploration.

The joint statement in Washington also addressed the issue of North Korea’s nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. In a move sure to please Modi’s friend, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, India and the United States urged North Korea to take concrete action on denuclearization and to meet its obligations under UN resolutions and the six-party talks.

The most hopeful sign that India’s “looking” has turned to “acting” may be that Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval stayed behind in Washington after Modi’s departure. Doval had substantive talks with Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, and Secretary of State John Kerry. The readouts from these meetings were all positive. Notably, Doval’s conversation with Rice included discussion of cooperation on maritime security.

Too often in the past, Indian policy pronouncements have been just that—pronouncements with no follow-up leading to action. Modi appears intent on implementation—leading to the conclusion that his policy of “Act East” may actually be a sea change, or a South China Sea change to be exact.

If so, then the recent Modi-Obama summit represents a key step toward the consummation of a strategic Asian pivot for both India and the United States.

Source: Diplomat, 10th October, 2014

South China Sea Dispute Could Lead to China-Indonesia Conflict

- PK Ghosh

At the heart of increasing tension and strategic turbulence in the South China Sea (SCS) region is the sovereignty disputes over “rocks and islands.” In such an atmosphere of mutual mistrust, Indonesia, a regional power, revels in its role as a “mediator,” “go-between,” and a stabilizing force. Having chosen to play the role of an “honest broker” in the South China Sea disputes, as a leading member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), it has officially denied having any territorial dispute with China.

To prove its credentials it has been closely monitoring the regional situation by supporting the formation of a legally binding Code of Conduct (CoC) with a series of successful sponsored workshops on the issue. However, this posturing may alter significantly if it joins the list of claimants in the SCS, placing it at direct odds with the Chinese and its infamous claim of the “nine-dash line” covering a sovereign area of nearly 80% of the entire SCS. This line was originally drafted in 1914 and harnessed by the Chinese Nationalist government in 1947; the Republic of China (Taiwan) still uses it, but as a perimeter to its own claims.
While Indonesia is still debating the future plan of action, there is no doubt that aggressiveness displayed by the Chinese in reiterating its varied claims in the region are taking its toll on the Indonesian resolve. In May and June 2010, an Indonesian ship was threatened at gunpoint by Chinese vessels off the Natuna islands, for having arrested Chinese trawlers. This led to a submission of a diplomatic note verbale to UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, contesting the validity and legality of China’s “nine-dash line.”

While some feel that Jakarta’s official denials may actually bolster Chinese sovereign claims in the dispute, it has also led to a quixotic situation in which Indonesia officially denies having any territorial dispute with China even though Beijing has given broad hints at a possible dispute over Natunas currently under the control of Jakarta.

The Anambas and the Natuna Islands group consist of about 70 small islands spread over an area of about 120 miles east-west by 70 miles north-south. Most islands are hilly with major human populations established in two small towns named Tarempa in Jemeja Island, Anambas and Ranai in Natuna Besar Island, Natuna.

Geographically located about 400 miles northeast of Sumatra, the Natunas have been a subject of dispute since 1993, when Beijing published a map showing Chinese “historic claims” on a gas field northeast of the islands. China does not lay claim to the Natuna Islands themselves, but the Chinese maps of the region include the waters and the seabed just north of the Natunas that are part of Indonesian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The rationale is that it falls partly within the boundaries of China’s so-called nine-dash line in the SCS.

Interestingly, the seabed around the Natuna Islands is gas-rich and these waters cover part of the world’s largest offshore gas fields with an estimated 1.27 trillion cubic metres of recoverable gas, representing 40% of Indonesia’s gas reserves. Apart from energy, the seas off the Natunas are rich in fish, feeding the well-being of the local economy. Hence, the stakes of the claim are quite high.

To reiterate its posture and reassure Indonesia that it does not lay claim to Natunas, nor all the waters of the SCS, in 1995, China renounced all its claims on the Natunas islands themselves, but left out the gas field which was the basic point of contention. Subsequent attempts have yielded little as Beijing has simply refused to clarify further or even respond despite Jakarta’s repeated requests and Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa clarification further on March 19, 2014: “We have to be absolutely clear about this? There are three seemingly related but separate issues. Firstly, there is no territorial dispute between Indonesia and China, especially about the Natunas. In fact, we are cooperating with China in possibly bringing about foreign direct investment plans in the Natunas. Second, we are not a claimant state in the South China Sea. Third, on the nine-dash line, it is true that we do not accept that. This is why we have asked for a formal explanation from China regarding their claims’ legal basis and background.” For clarity on the issue there has been little response from the Chinese.

It is well-known that China is energy dependent and needs vast resources to fuel its developmental ascendencies. Forecasts in the 2013 IEA World Energy Outlook
reveal that the Chinese demand will account for 31% of global net energy demand growth between 2011 and 2035. Its energy demand in 2035 will be double that of the United States (US) and triple that of the European Union. Such a growing appetite for energy resources will be increasingly backed by its growing naval power which would mean that it would have considerable implications for the strategic envelope in the SCS and its future energy security calculus.

In the background of the current debate on the EEZ around Natunas lie the troubled Beijing-Jakarta relations over the years. Both countries suspended diplomatic relations for twenty-three years after Suharto’s ascent to power. Their resumption in 1990 did not prevent another crisis in the relationship, in 1994, over the treatment of Chinese Indonesians in North Sumatra. In 1998, during the height of the Asian Financial Crisis and Jakarta riots, Chinese Indonesians were again targeted, resulting in thousands fleeing abroad.

If Indonesia were to openly declare its claimant status and become party to SCS disputes, this would have tremendous repercussions on the region’s geopolitics. First, the situation would be a strategic disadvantage to the Chinese as it would have turned a useful intermediary and a country with considerable influence over the other ASEAN member contestants of the SCS dispute into a major adversary.

Second, given that the Chinese are slowly enhancing their aggressive posturing in the SCS with a gradual enhancement of maritime capabilities, the risk of potential miscalculation and conflict escalation may well increase. Third, this could prompt ASEAN countries to seek an enhanced US presence in the region, to check China’s rising hegemonistic ambitions.

Fourth, an increased cohesion among ASEAN claimant states against China could increase the pressure on Beijing to seek legal recourse or international arbitration to sort this vexed problem. Fifth, Jakarta and Beijing have been collaborating extensively on matters of defence such as, joint naval missile development and production. Beijing has offered to build a coastal surveillance system worth $158 million to supplement the existing US build system worth $57 million. Proposals are also there to Indonesia-China Centre for Ocean and Climate (ICCOC) for weather research with one station being proposed in Natuna. All these projects may well get into a limbo if Indonesia proclaims itself as a claimant.

Finally, Indonesia’s entitlement to its EEZ is consistent with UNCLOS and any claim to the contrary would invariably weaken the Chinese claim of its “nine-dash line” and the imprecise “historical rights” from which it has ostensibly originated.

Indonesia’s diplomacy has been quite successful so far in carving for itself a niche status of go-between and a role model for parties to the disputes in the SCS. However, as the pressure on the new government in Jakarta increases to overtly declare its status against the Chinese in the SCS – it also risks falling into the ‘extended coercive diplomacy’ strategy of the Chinese which focuses on the coercion of an adversary aligned with a great power, i.e. US allies such as the Philippines and Japan. Yet, after two major US strategic blunders over Syria and the Crimea, Washington can’t afford to up the ante in the SCS and not follow through this, leaving the allies to the mercy of the Chinese.
Hence, it’s a Hobson’s choice for the Indonesians — while its military assets are being significantly bolstered at the Ranai airbase on the Natuna Islands with additional ships, Sukhoi fighters and even American Apache helicopters, its diplomatic overdrive of sending TNI chief General Moeldoko travelled to China to meet with his counterpart has yielded mixed results and few details about his meetings were announced openly. It seems that it is inevitable that Indonesia will have to come upfront and declare that they have serious issues with the China’s position in the SCS.

Source: Eurasia Review, 9th October, 2014

Coast Guards in the Arctic - Trouble Ahead?

- Andreas Østhagen

Coast guards are the maritime workhorses of coastal states, intent on protecting their sovereign rights to fisheries and petroleum resources, while also safeguarding lives and the environment. In an Arctic Klondike (rush on resources), this institution – which often operates in the shadow of national navies – does the heavy lifting. Yet, striking the right balance on fleet structure, investments, and Arctic presence in times of budget austerity is no easy task for Arctic coastal states. Maritime activity levels in the Arctic are increasing compared to lower levels throughout the 1990s and early 2000s.

Maritime activity levels in the Arctic are increasing compared to low levels throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. It is not the number of trans-arctic voyages, but the number of ships with a destination in the Arctic itself that has predominately increased. This comes as a result of an increase in the transport of goods to and from the Arctic, and from an increase in cruise ship tourism offering “Arctic Cruises”. Similarly, exploratory drilling in Greenlandic, Alaskan or North Norwegian waters, and record yielding fish stocks in the Barents Sea and North Sea, contribute to this trend.

As activity increases, the need for an active management of the maritime domain increases as well. When fisheries grow in volume, so does the need for fisheries inspections and research to determine the sustainable yield of the stocks. When more vessels operate further north, search and rescue incidents grow in numbers, and as the number of exploratory drillings rises, the potential for accidents related to oil exploration similarly increases. The pressure on coast guards to provide aid to navigation is also increasing, sometimes demanding an ice breaking capacity that requires relatively costly investments in icebreakers.

Consequently, this large relative growth in activity spurs demand for a number of coast guard tasks in the Arctic, as depicted below.

The coast guard institutional structure in one Arctic state is very different from the next, ranging from a civilian model without a law enforcing mandate (Canada), to military structures separated from (USA, Russia), or part of (Norway, Denmark),
national navies. Yet, as the amount of tasks in northern waters increases, all of the various Arctic coast guards find themselves in a similar position, weighing priorities and resources. In particular, they encounter challenges concerning budget restraints, aging equipment and large areas of operation.

Investments in coast guards, on the other hand, in particular in the North American side of the Arctic, are pending. This is mainly a consequence of limited public investments in an area where the return rate of such investments – at least in according to strict economic calculations – can be questioned. In the context of low temperatures and remote operating areas, however, the consequences of a cruise ship accident or an oil spill is likely to become more fatal in the Arctic, than in more densely populated areas further south.

In 2011, Arctic states responded to this challenge by creating a legally binding search and rescue agreement under the auspices of the Arctic Council, dividing the Arctic into areas of responsibility (see map). In 2013, another agreement was signed on oil pollution, preparedness and response, implementing the same mechanisms for oil spill response. Forming alliances and initiating collaboration across borders with partners in similar situations provides a practical solution to a fiscal challenge. It is also an easier and less expensive remedy than building up domestic assets in isolation.

However, agreeing on zones of responsibility does not inherently enhance maritime capabilities in the Arctic, which ultimately fall under the prerogatives of the various national coast guards. Operational collaboration across borders is also not necessarily an adequate response to new maritime challenges in the Arctic. The share distance between the Arctic maritime zones and the differences in coast guard structures provide barriers to effective collaboration. Additionally, coast guard tasks are often closely linked to the protection of sovereign rights and enforcing national law. Such tasks are not easily transferred or outsourced.

Working across Arctic maritime borders with your neighbor is undoubtedly beneficial, if not crucial, to jointly manage natural resources and protect the environment. The establishment of an Arctic Coast Guard Forum – building off the already well-functioning North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum – is one such measure.

Such collaboration will not, however, disband the need for national and local investments in future Arctic capabilities. The processes of coast guard procurement and capacity building are additionally costly and lengthy. Showcasing this challenge, the US Coast Guard has been calling out for more investment in District 17 (Alaska) for almost a decade, while in Canada the acquisition of a much-needed new Coast Guard icebreaker is delayed.

Littoral states in the Arctic have to carefully contemplate future investments and needs to avoid finding themselves in a situation where the former and the latter do not match. Arriving in 2030 in a direr state than today will be detrimental to any Arctic development. Preventing disaster is of interest to all littoral states as they determine the future potential of their Arctic maritime areas.

Source: Maritime Executive, 9th October, 2014
Terrorist Threats From the Maritime Domain: Singapore’s Response

- Joseph Franco and Romain Quivooij

The Islamic State’s successes in Iraq and Syria appear to have inspired resurgence among other jihadist groups. Al Qaeda Central sought to reassert its authority with the ‘Organisation of The Base of Jihad in the Indian Sub-Continent’ (AQIS) made public by Ayman al-Zawahiri on 3 September 2014. The genesis of AQIS, while a competitive response to the rise of IS in the global jihadist movement, is also an outgrowth of Al Qaeda’s long-term ambitions for expansion in South Asia since the early 2000s.

Al-Zawahiri’s pronouncement was followed three days later by a failed attack on a Pakistani naval frigate in Karachi for which the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the recently formed AQIS both claimed responsibility. The attack involved AQIS fighters who were former Pakistani naval officers, who sought to hijack the Pakistani frigate PNS Zulfiqar to launch missiles at US Navy vessels in the Indian Ocean. Local media reported that the attackers had pre-positioned their weapons in lockers on the dock, and these were used to take control of Zulfiqar. Looking beyond the AQIS tactics, the Karachi attack also demonstrated how maritime assets can be an attractive target for groups seeking to demonstrate their resolve.

Southeast Asian states are no strangers to terrorism-related incidents either emanating from or exploiting the maritime domain. The innate predisposition to use the seas as an attack vector has long been significant among terrorist groups based in Southeast Asia, quite apart from the influence of extra-regional attack tactics. For example, the coast of Eastern Sabah, Malaysia, has been recently experiencing a spike in kidnappings attributed to the Mindanao-based Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

Violence in the maritime region bracketed by Mindanao, Borneo, and Sulawesi existed long before Islamist militants. The cross-border raids result from the combination of various dysfunctions such as loose border controls and illicit small arms proliferation in Mindanao.

The recent arrests of 19 IS-associated militants in Peninsular Malaysia further underscore the salience of the maritime domain for attack planning. One Sri Lankan suspect who was arrested reportedly had experience in human trafficking. He was believed to have been involved in a plot to transport two militants from the Maldives via small boat to the coastal state of Kerala in southern India to attack the US and Israel consulates further inland in Chennai and Bangalore.

Singapore’s Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, in response to a recent question in Parliament on how Singapore enhances its maritime security, explained that the country’s maritime security agencies have adopted a “co-ordinated and multi-layered security regime”. Terrorist threats to maritime security, including those that straddle both land and maritime domains, illumine the rationale for the setting up of agencies like the Singapore Maritime Crisis Centre (SMCC).

Recently, the SMCC through its National Maritime Sense-making Group (NMSG) detected an individual who was listed as a crew member on two different vessels
intending to enter Singapore on the same day. In light of the alleged plot by the IS-associated Sri Lankan, this crew anomaly could well have been a precursor to a terrorist-related attack, or an attempt to infiltrate Singapore’s territorial waters. NMSG immediately shared this information with the appropriate maritime security agency, which went on to undertake regulatory actions against the shipping agent involved.

This incident highlights the importance of a proactive stance of agencies like the SMCC to detect threats as early and as far away from Singapore as possible, and to coordinate operational responses to deter and prevent an attack from occurring. This critical task cannot be overstated, given the importance of sea-borne trade to Singapore.

SMCC, established in 2011 as a whole-of-government (WOG) entity, draws upon the expertise of its national maritime security partner agencies. The SMCC makes possible through its sense-making systems a national maritime common operating picture that is shared by the five maritime security partners and related national security agencies. This allows threat assessments to be harmonised across agencies and operational responses to be coordinated.

SMCC’s WOG activities fit in well with the broader effort by the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) to enhance inter-service and inter-agency collaboration and interoperability. The ninth instalment of Exercise APEX will be held next month and involve more than 1,000 personnel from across the national maritime security agencies. These agencies, along with their maritime assets and vessels, will exercise multiple scenarios related to the terrorist threat.

In sum, efforts by both WOG and community (i.e. shipping agencies) to deter and prevent the maritime terrorist threat demonstrates the necessity for Singapore to harness the power of all relevant stakeholders to deny terrorists the operating space to launch attacks against or through the maritime domain. Given the borderless, networked nature of the threat, a co-ordinated networked response is fully warranted.

Source: Eurasia Review, 10th October, 2014

It's Time for a Little Heterodoxy in Naval Strategy

-Robert Farley

Last week, the Center for International Maritime Security (CIMSEC), an online think tank on maritime affairs, published a series of articles on forgotten naval strategists. Posts thus far have included discussion of the Athenian statesman Themistocles, Soviet Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, and Portuguese priest Fernando Oliveira. While no one should take this as an excuse to stop reading Alfred Thayer Mahan or Julian Corbett, it’s well past time to inject different voices into the seapower conversation.

While organized naval warfare has been around for nearly as long as land warfare, it has historically been under-theorized relative to its grounded cousin. A theory of
seapower requires, at a minimum, an appreciation that seapower represents a clear and distinct component of national (or imperial) power, analytically separate from general military strength. Thucydides, for example, does not seem to have developed an explicit, separate theory of naval power, apart his appreciation that Sparta and Athens each enjoyed strengths particular to a medium (land in the case of Sparta, sea in the case of Athens).

Part of the problem undoubtedly stems from the practical demands of ship management over the centuries, which has led practitioners to focus more on tacit, tactical issues than grand strategic considerations. On the other hand, naval warfare has always demanded a sustained industrial strategy, in which ships can be constructed, procured, and maintained over extended periods of time. On this point the work of Oliveira is particularly interesting, as his 16th century treatise appears to have synthesized the tactical and strategic issues.

In any case, much of our naval conversation remains dominated by Corbett and Mahan. Both remain vital, but extending the conversation to others is surely a valuable contribution. This is particularly the case given the hegemonic perspective from which Corbett and Mahan are approaching seapower. Both center maritime strategy around big, powerful navies with multiple 19th century-style colonial commitments. For the same reasons that the canon of land power would be incomplete without the works of Lawrence and Giap, the effort to broaden the library of seapower beyond the strategists of empire is long overdue.

All of this may sound distant to modern seafaring concerns in East Asia, but consider; both Gorshkov and Themistocles achieved prominence by building world class navies, virtually from scratch. In Themistocles’ case, this force dominated its maritime world for nearly a century. In Gorshkov’s, the navy disappeared nearly as quickly as it had come together. Consequently, it’s easy to imagine lessons for both American and Chinese authorities. The Japanese, of course, also have some experience with brief, shining moments of maritime prominence. Hopefully, the CIMSEC series will help spur a broadening of the seapower canon.

Source: Diplomat, 11th October, 2014
Obama, Modi Pledge to Intensify Maritime Security

US President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have pledged to intensify cooperation in maritime security to ensure freedom of navigation in comments that came against the backdrop of China’s expanding maritime ambitions. A US-India Joint statement issued at the end of summit talks between Obama and Modi at the White House said the two sides also considered enhancing technology partnerships for India’s Navy including assessing possible areas of technology cooperation. "The leaders agreed to intensify cooperation in maritime security to ensure freedom of navigation and unimpeded movement of lawful shipping and commercial activity, in accordance with the accepted principles of international law."

To achieve this objective the two sides considered enhancing technology partnerships for India’s Navy including assessing possible areas of technology cooperation, the statement said while dealing with issues relating to Defence and Homeland Security cooperation. The two sides also agreed to upgrade their existing bilateral exercise MALABAR. The annual MALABAR exercise includes diverse activities, ranging from fighter combat operations to aircraft carriers, through Maritime Interdiction Operations Exercises. Modi and Obama while expressing concern over rising tensions over maritime territorial disputes reaffirmed their shared interest in preserving regional peace and stability, which are critical to the Asia Pacific region's continued prosperity.

Though the statement did not name China which has maritime disputes with its neighbours like Vietnam and the Philippines, the reference was apparent when it said that Modi and Obama called on all parties to avoid the use or threat of use of force in advancing their claims. The two leaders urged the parties concerned to pursue resolution of their territorial and maritime disputes through all peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the UN convention on the Law of the Sea.

They stressed the importance of safeguarding maritime security and ensuring freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region especially in the South China Sea.

Source: Zee, 1st October, 2014

Indian, Indonesian Navies Conclude Joint Patrol

The 24th edition of Indian-Indonesian Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) has concluded, an official statement said Wednesday, adding the defence relations between the two countries is growing. "The close defence relations between Indian and Indonesia have been growing steadily with regular joint activities and exchanges of personnel between the armed forces of the two countries," a statement.
The exercise, which started Sep 9 concluded. CORPAT is a joint patrolling exercise held twice a year by the two countries. Indonesian Navy (Tentara National Indonesia Angkatan Laut) and the Indian Navy have been carrying out coordinated patrolling twice a year since 2002 near the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) to keep this vital part of the Indian Ocean region safe and secure for commercial shipping and international trade. "The aim of the coordinated exercise is to enhance mutual understanding and inter-operability between the navies, prosecute vessels engaged in unlawful activities, conduct SAR and take measures against sea pollution," the statement said. In the exercise, naval ship KRI Pattimura and maritime patrol aircraft CN 235 represented the Indonesian Navy while INS Kesari (with Chetak integral helicopter) and one IN Dornier participated from the Indian Navy.

First Admiral Harjo Susmoro, Commander Sea Task Force, Western Fleet Command headed the Indonesian delegation. Pattimura entered Port Blair along with INS Kesari Sep 27 to attend Closing Ceremony on completion of sea phase of joint exercise. CN 235 aircraft with senior officer embarked arrived at Port Blair Sep 28. The Indonesian delegation called on Vice Admiral P.K. Chatterjee, Commander-in-Chief Andaman and Nicobar Command during their visit.

Source: Daiji News, 1st October, 2014

Navy Projects Blue Water Muscle with Long Range Deployment in Indian Ocean Region

Four Indian warships set sail from Mumbai on a long overseas deployment to East Africa and beyond to build "maritime bridges" with countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The first port of call for the warships -- guided-missile destroyer INS Mumbai, stealth frigates INS Talwar and INS Teg, and tanker INS Deepak - will be Antisiranana in Madagascar during the 50-day deployment. "INS Teg will then separately head for the international waters off Simon's town, the main base of the South African Navy near Cape Town, for the IBSAMAR exercise among India, Brazil and South Africa from October 20 to November 7," said an officer.

"Such long-range deployments, covering the IOR and beyond, bear testimony to the Navy's blue-water capabilities. The four warships will be under the command of Western Fleet chief Rear Admiral R Hari Kumar," he added. The IBSA forum was established in June 2003 to promote south-south dialogue, cooperation and the adoption of common positions on issues of international importance. Under it, the first IBSAMAR exercise was held in May 2008 as a unique trilateral strategic initiative involving three democracies from three different continents.

Indian warships usually undertake long-range deployments, both to project power as well as "build bridges of friendship", but the IBSAMAR wargames are nevertheless considered a challenging endeavour since the distance from India to South Africa, as also from Brazil to South Africa, is some 4,000 nautical miles.

Source: TOI, 2nd October, 2014
‘Chinese Aegis’ Leads A2/AD Drill in South China Sea

China has deployed its most advanced guided-missile destroyer to the disputed South China Sea to participate in a large naval exercise, according to Taiwanese media.

The Want Daily and its English-language sister site, Want China Times, reported that China deployed the Kunming, the first of its new Type 052D guided-missile destroyers (DDG), to the South China Sea last month. The purpose of the deployment was to hold a military drill in the disputed wars simulating an Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) attack. The Type 052D guided missile destroyer was joined by some of two of its earlier variants, a Type 052C and a Type 052A destroyer, which also participated in the drill.

The English-language report did not specify the source for the story, nor did it detail the exact dates the exercise was held. It did say that the Kunming had left China for the drill sometime in the later part of September.

As Diplomat previously reported, China officially commissioned the Kunming back in March amid much fanfare in the Chinese media. The Type-052D is by far China’s most advanced destroyer and is regularly compared to the United States’ Aegis Arleigh Burke-class DDG. As a result, the Type 052D is often referred to as the Chinese Aegis. China is expected to ultimately launch six vessels for this class.

The Type 052D has a number of significant improvements over its early variants. Displacing between 6,000-7,000 pounds, the Type 052D has a new 130 mm main gun and, building on the prototype Type 052C, it also has Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA). Its vertical launch cells (VLC) are also greatly improved. As James Holmes and his Toshi Yoshihara noted when China first launched the Kunming in 2012, the new VLS “allows for quick firing of anti-air, anti-ship, or land-attack missiles without the bother, delay, and technical headaches associated with uploading munitions onto launchers from magazines deep within the ship.” They added that “the PLAN may have found its premier surface combatant” with the Type 052D DDG.

The Type 052D DDGs would be an important asset in most of the conceivable naval showdowns China could find itself in over the South China Sea, East China Sea or Taiwan. Having more and higher quality sea-based air defense is also a crucial step for becoming a global navy — that is, one that is able to operate far beyond one’s border and out of the reach of land-based air defense systems.

However, it is no coincidence that the Type 052D drill is taking place in the South China Sea as this may be where it most quickly demonstrates its value. China is currently taking steps to bolster its ability to more actively patrol more distant parts of its expansive claims of sovereignty over the South China Sea. In the air, this means acquiring new hardware like the Su-35. On the other hand, for the sea this means that China is able to both sustain long-range patrols and protect these assets from potential adversaries. By building up logistical bases in reefs near the Philippines,
China is actively trying to achieve this former objective. The Type 052D DDG will help it achieve the latter.

Source: Diplomat, 3rd October, 2014

**Singapore, Australian Navies End Joint Exercise in South China Sea**

The Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) ended a five-day exercise on Friday which saw the two navies take part in manoeuvres including air defence and anti-submarine warfare.

Exercise Singaroo, the 17th in the series since 1995, started on Sept 29 and was conducted in the South China Sea. This year’s exercise was hosted by Singapore, the Ministry of Defence said in a statement. It comprised three-dimensional warfare serials such as an air defence exercise, a combined helicopter anti-submarine warfare exercise and gunnery firing.

The RSN participated with RSS Tenacious, a Formidable-class stealth frigate, with an embarked S-70B Seahawk naval helicopter, while the RAN deployed HMAS Stuart, an ANZAC-class frigate, with an embarked S-70B-2 multirole naval helicopter.

Source: Straits Time, 4th October, 2014

**China Considers a Naval Stealth Fighter Based On Chengdu J-20**

China is likely to complete the construction of its second and third aircraft carriers with the ability to carry J-20 fifth-generation stealth fighters, although a carrier-friendly model may need to be designed first.

China’s domestic aircraft carriers currently designated ‘Type 001A’ will look very similar to the Liaoning, the country’s first aircraft carrier bought from Ukraine and refitted. They are most likely to be equipped with a ski-jump ramp. The displacement of each vessel is expected to be around 70,000 tons, similar to the Liaoning’s maximum displacement of 67,000 tons. China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation has already received contracts for the construction of two Type 001A carriers, at a projected cost of 50 billion Yuan (about US$9 billion.) Work on the second aircraft carrier has already started at the Dalian shipyard. This carrier, the first to be designed and built in China, is expected to be commissioned by 2020.

The PLA Navy is planning to form two composite air hangar decks, with 50 fighters for each carrier (compared to the Liaoning’s single deck hanger storing 30 J-15 fighter jets). However, the design of the Chengdu J-20 is currently too large to be deployed aboard the Liaoning, according to the report. Domestic carrier versions will have to be larger to accommodate them, putting them at an estimated 80,000 tons. Furthermore, they may use a steam catapult or electromagnetic aircraft launch system.
The current J-20 prototype is not designed for carrier operations, and is not suited to take off or land on a carrier. The length of the first domestically built aircraft carrier may be longer than the Liaoning by an estimated 20 meters but a new version of the J-20 will have to be redesigned into a more compact size, similar to the current J-15.

Eventually, China’s future carrier air wing may come equipped with 25 stealthy, 5th generation fighters such as the navalized J-20s, which will become the carriers’ first line strike fighter, capable of attacking denied or contested enemy airspace or naval forces, along with 25 J-15B 4th generation fighters, which will provide second line attack, self defense, electronic attack and refuelling support.

Once completed, further carriers will greatly increase China’s force projection capability into the Western Pacific and Indian oceans.

Source: Defence Update, 6th October, 2014

U.S. Naval Ship Visits Maldives to Foster Friendship

The USS Rodney M. Davis, an Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided-missile frigate with the U.S. 7th Fleet, will visit the Maldives in mid-October as part of a routine patrol of the Indian Ocean.

The officers and crew of the Rodney M. Davis will work with the Maldives National Defence Forces, including the Coast Guard, to improve regional security through close communication, coordination and information exchanges, while supporting at-sea and ashore training opportunities. These activities foster trust and friendship between the United States and the Maldives. “It will be tremendously beneficial to build on our excellent relationships with the maritime nations of the Indian Ocean,” said Vice Admiral Robert Thomas, Commander U.S. 7th Fleet. “The area is critical to regional security, and the partnerships we build with this training will go a long way to creating a more professional and stable maritime environment.”

Commander Todd Whalen, commanding officer of the Rodney M. Davis, expressed gratitude to the Maldivian Government for the opportunity to visit the Maldives. "My crew and I are excited to visit the Maldives," said Cmdr. Whalen. "We are grateful for the chance to make new friends and work with our counterparts in the Maldivian National Defense Forces.” The port visit will also allow the sailors to experience the ecologically unique beauty of the Maldives.

Prior to visiting the Maldives, the Rodney M. Davis joined a formation of over 50 ships from Indonesia, Singapore, and Australia during Sail Raja Ampat, a part of a series of international maritime events hosted by the government of Indonesia in West Papua, Indonesia. The Rodney M. Davis has a long history in the U.S. 7th Fleet, being forward-deployed to Yokosuka, Japan for many years and participating in numerous training exercises with Indo-Asia-Pacific partner nations.

Based out of Everett, Wash., the Rodney M. Davis is on patrol in the 7th Fleet area of responsibility supporting security and stability in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.
U.S. Navy vessel is named for Marine Sergeant Rodney M. Davis, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism in the Vietnam War.

Source: Asian Tribune, 6th October, 2014

From India to Oman with Naval Goodwill

The arrival of three ships of the Indian Navy's Training Squadron in Muscat will boost bilateral ties between two countries, said J. S. Mukul, Indian ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. The three ships docked at Port Sultan Qaboos for a four-day goodwill visit that will end on October 9.

This is the first such visit by as many as three vessels of the Training Squadron to the Sultanate of Oman. The Indian Navy's Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief South, Vice Admiral SPS Cheema, will also be in Muscat during this period. "India and Oman enjoy a long-lasting cooperation in the field of maritime activities, which is strengthened by regular port visits of Indian Navy ships," said J. S. Mukul on board INS Tarangini, Indian Navy's first Sail Training Ship (STS) was built at Goa Shipyard and was commissioned on 11 November 1997. To boost ties, the ambassador said that a delegation of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) will be also visiting Oman in October. The port call by the ships at Muscat by frontline elements of the training squadron of the Indian Navy aims to underline the historical maritime links of the region with India as well as send a message of India's continued commitment to the stability and security of this vital region.

"All the three ships have been designed and built in India and are a potent symbol of India's growing indigenous shipbuilding capability. Currently, the Indian Navy has over 40 state-of-the-art warships under construction at shipyards across India," said a senior official of Indian Navy visiting Muscat. He also said that the Indian Navy (IN) is working closely with all regional navies to promote maritime security through cooperation and joint operations. Over 3,000 ships have been escorted by the Indian Navy, 40 piracy attempts foiled and more than 120 pirates arrested. Bilateral cooperation between the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) and the IN is the cornerstone of the Indian Navy's regional anti-piracy efforts," said a statement from the Indian Embassy.

Officers and sailors of the RNO have also benefited from training courses in India, with over 100 personnel having attended training in India over the past year alone.

Source: Times of Oman, 7th October, 2014

Coast Guard Getting Boost

With the arrival of the second hovercraft H 198, the Mangalore Coast Guard has become a formidable power, said Commander of the Coast Guard, Karnataka, Rajmani Sharma.
“We have three offshore vessels CG Savitribai Phule, Rajdoot and Kasturba Gandhi and two hovercrafts. All of them can be equipped with weapons for combat situations and ready for interception, search and rescue operations,” Sharma who is an official of the rank of Deputy Inspector General, said.

Sharma told reporters that the Coast Guard will be getting an Advanced Offshore Patrol Vessel (AOPV) entitled Samarth, which can carry a Chetak helicopter. But that will be only after the construction of an exclusive jetty for the Coast Guard, he said.

Another offshore vessel Amarthya is expected to join the Coast Guard fleet by mid October, he added. “We were also expecting a dornier aircraft and a Chetak helicopter to join the force by the end of the year. This will enable the Coast Guard to effectively guard and patrol the 500 km of coast in three states - North Kerala, Karnataka and Goa,” he said.

When Express asked Sharma about the Coast Guard coming across illegal fishing bull trawlers in Indian EEZ, he said: “We take up routine checks on these trawlers. But since the liberalisation they have been given licence to fish in our waters. However there are no Somali pirates seen on these waters. The Coast Guard also has the capability to clean up oil spills upto 700 tonnes, but our capabilities will improve when we get the Chetak helicopter which will be equipped to lower chemicals to dissolve oil slicks and prevent the oil from reaching the coastline.”

The Coast Guard is also planning to hold a function to launch its new acquisitions once Amartya, the off shore patrol vessel arrives.

Source: Indian Express, 7th October, 2014

**Piracy feared as Vietnamese Oil Tanker Vanishes off Singapore**

Vietnamese authorities are searching for an oil tanker feared to have been taken by pirates just 40 minutes after it departed Singapore for Vietnam almost one week ago. The Sunrise 689 was carrying 18 crew and 5,200 tonnes of oil when it left Singapore's Horizon port on October 2, according to the Vietnamese News Service (VNS).

The ship's owner, the Hai Phong Seafood Shipbuilding Join Stock Company, reported that it lost contact with the ship within an hour of its departure, VNS said.

VNS reported that Vietnam's Foreign Ministry had sent "diplomatic notes" to the embassies of Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia in Hanoi, asking for assistance in finding the missing ship. Southeast Asia has become a prime target for pirates who have staged a number "serious attacks" on tankers in the region, according to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB). According to a report released in July, there had been at least six known hijackings since April, when small coastal tankers were targeted for their cargo of diesel or gas oil. “The recent increase in the number of successful hijackings is a cause for concern,” IMB director Pottengal
Mukundanm said at the time. Until this year, most attacks had been petty thefts perpetrated on boats anchored at harbor, the IMB said.

The missing ship, Sunrise 689, was last detected in the middle of a busy shipping zone in the Singapore Strait. According to warnings issued by the IMB, vessels in the Singapore Strait are advised to "remain vigilant and to continue maintaining adequate anti-piracy / robbery watch and measures. Pirates / robbers attack ships while underway or while at anchor especially during the night."

Sunrise 689 had been expected to arrive at Con Son Island in southern Vietnam on Sunday, October 5, VNS said.

Source: CNN, 7th October, 2014

**Russia sends Submarine in Mediterranean Drill**

Northern Fleet submarine chaser-destroyer Vice-Admiral Kulakov is bound for simulated action against attack by weapons of mass destruction in the eastern Mediterranean. The vessel has left Limassol port in Cyprus for a series of naval drills in air- and anti-submarine defense, fleet spokesman Vadim Serga said. The ship voyaged more than 14,000 nautical miles from April. From May to August, Kulakov was flagship of the Russian Mediterranean Task Force

Source: Tass, 7th October, 2014

**Rear Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh is Eastern Fleet Commander**

Rear Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh took over as the commander of the Indian Navy’s Eastern Fleet, an official statement said. He was handed over the charge by Rear Admiral Atul Kumar Jain onboard the flag ship INS Jalashwa.

Rear Admiral Singh is a specialist in navigation and aircraft direction and a graduate of the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla, and the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington.

Also holding a Master’s degree from Britain’s Cranfield University, he has commanded Indian Naval Ships Veer (missle vessel), Vindhyagiri and Trishul (both frigates), and Viraat (aircraft carrier). He also has held various prestigious staff and operational appointments and was awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal in 2011.

The Eastern Fleet comprises of 30 ships. These include amphibious platform Jalashwa, destroyers, stealth frigates, anti-submarine warfare corvette Kamorta, missile corvettes, landing ship tanks, offshore patrol vessels, missile boats and tankers.
Rear Admiral Jain will take over as the chief of staff of the Southern Naval Command at Kochi.

Source: Prepsure, 8th October, 2014

**No Role for a Third Party in Resolving South China Sea Dispute: China Tells India, US**

China today sharply reacted to India and the US expressing concern over the South China Sea dispute during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Washington, asserting that the maritime row should be resolved directly by parties concerned and no third party should meddle in it.

"Our position is that the dispute in the South China Sea should be resolved by countries directly concerned through negotiations and consultations. Any third party should not be involved in this," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hong Lei told a media briefing. He was reacting to the Indo-US joint statement issued at the end of Modi’s meeting with President Barack Obama on September 30 which for the first time made a direct reference to the South China Sea dispute. The reaction came late as Chinese Foreign Ministry formally reopened today after a week-long National Day holiday starting from October 1.

In his cautious comment on the issue, Hong merely reiterated China's long standing position on the outside intervention on the maritime dispute involving Beijing and several other countries in the region including Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei besides Taiwan. Though the joint statement did not make direct reference to China, it came as a surprise here as South China Sea dispute directly figured for the first time in India-US discourse in the backdrop of New Delhi and Washington expanding their sphere of influence in the Southeast Asia region. The Indo-US joint statement had said, "The leaders expressed concern about rising tensions over maritime territorial disputes, and affirmed the importance of safeguarding maritime security and ensuring freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region, especially in the South China Sea."

Earlier, China also struck a firm stand on India-Vietnam agreement to enable ONGC Videsh to explore two more oil wells in South China Sea signed during the recent visit of President Pranab Mukherjee to Hanoi, saying it will not back such a deal if it falls in the area administered by it.

Source: ET, 8th October, 2014

**Piracy to Increase in Gulf of Guinea Ahead of Nigeria’s Elections**

Intelligence experts told a shipping conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, that hijacking of tankers of crude oil and petroleum products or holding crew for ransom
by pirates would increase in the oil-rich Gulf of Guinea, which is also a major commodity route, as Nigeria prepares for next year’s general election.

The experts alleged that pirates use ransom money from ocean-going vessels to finance elections campaign, fueling concern that Nigerian politicians are behind piracy, crude oil theft and other maritime crimes.

The Managing Director of Risk Intelligence, Hans Tino Hansen, was quoted by Reuters as saying at a special session on “Maritime Crime and the Effects on Growth and Development in Africa Region” that “ahead of general election, kidnap-for-ransom and attacks on offshore targets increase.” “The ‘principal’ (protection money) system in Nigeria secures funding to political candidates, and because of that, we see an increase in offshore attacks,” he said.

Source: This Day, 8th October, 2014

Four SA Navy Platforms Allocated to Tri-Nation Naval Exercise

The business part of the tri-nation naval exercise IBSAMAR IV is set to start on October 27 when the fleet moves into the sea phase. Prior to this, ships from the Brazilian, Indian and South African navies will be alongside in Simon’s Town preparing for the two sea phases and an operation that makes up the interoperability and mutual understanding aspects of the exercise.

As host, the SA Navy will have the Valour Class frigate SAS Spioenkop, the Heroine Class submarine SAS Manthatisi, the mine countermeasures vessel SAS Umhloti and an as yet unnamed offshore patrol vessel taking part. Spioenkop will also have a Super Lynx 300 operated by 22 Squadron aboard for the sea phases of IBSAMAR. Drills and manoeuvres expected to form part of Ibsamar include anti-submarine warfare; visit, board, search and seizure and replenishment at sea (RAS). Other SA Air Force (SAAF) elements assigned to IBSAMAR are a pair of 22 Squadron Oryx, a 28 Squadron C-130BZ, a 35 Squadron C-47TP, a PC-7 from Central Flying School at AFB Langebaanweg and “two fighter aircraft” from AFB Makhado. The Navy has not yet specified whether they will be Gripens or Hawks.

The Navy’s Maritime Reaction Squadron (MRS) will also be involved as will elements of the Special Forces. The Indian Navy guided missile frigate INS Teg will deploy to South Africa for IBSAMAR after being part of a flotilla visiting “friendly nations in east Africa,” according to The Asian Age.

Other Indian Navy vessels on this month-long deployment are the destroyer INS Mumbai, fleet replenishment tanker INS Deepak and a second guided missile frigate INS Talwar. Countries on the Indian Navy flotilla’s visiting list are Madagascar, Kenya, Tanzanian, Reunion, Mauritius and Mozambique, with South Africa being the extra stop for Teg. The Indian contingent for IBSAMAR will number around 250 and
will include, apart from the ship’s company, a Special Forces team and a maritime helicopter with the necessary aircrew and support personnel.

The Brazilian component is expected to be around 200 strong on a frigate platform with a maritime helicopter and Special Forces detachment. The Indian and Brazilian ships are expected to port in Simon’s town on October 20 with post exercise demobilisation set for November 10 to 14.

Source: Defence Web, 9th October, 2014

60% of US Navy, Air Force to be Deployed in Asia Pacific by 2020

The United States is positioning the bulk of its Air Force and Navy forces as well as its "best and most advanced equipment" in the Asia-Pacific region in six years despite budget constraints, US Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work said. In a Pentagon report over the weekend, Work told a Washington-based think tank that a "geographically dispersed, operationally resilient [and] politically sustainable" posture is being sought.

"We may not have as many forces as we would like, but 60 percent of the forces will be in the Asia-Pacific region," he said.

The Department of Defense faces doubts on its commitment to President Obama’s foreign policy of rebalancing to the region. Work lamented budgetary pressures, but insisted that the so-called pivot remains a "real part of a broader re-examination of our global posture." “Regardless of the level of our budget, that will go forward," he added. "The Asia Pacific rebalance continues apace."

Key players in the region including US allies, the Philippines and Japan, have been embroiled for years in potentially dangerous maritime disputes over the East and South China seas as China stakes its sweeping claims through the use of civilian vessels, economic activities as well as reclamation projects. Citing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, Work said the US' alliances remain the backbone of its posture in the region. "It is the revitalization of all those alliances and partnerships that is a signature part of our Asia-Pacific rebalance and our entire global posture," he said.

Work said that the repositioning of forces aims to maintain peace and prosperity "in one of the most important regions in the world." "Pacific air forces as going to have our most advanced weapons, to include stealthy, long-range attack missiles and longer-range air defense missiles," Work said.

The Navy, meanwhile, will have "long-range anti-ship missile that will allow it to engage ships at standoff ranges." Besides the involvement of US navy and air force, the US army will have "more than 100,000 soldiers when all is said and done in the Asia-Pacific region," the defense official said.
Army units rotating through Afghanistan the past years, moreover, are returning along with their equipment, attack aviation assets such as Apache helicopters to the US Pacific Command. The region will also see a "more lethal" Army, particularly in Korea, with new investments in electronic warfare.

Work said that the Marines are also distributing four "powerful" air-ground task forces around the Pacific. In terms of equipment, Work said the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter will go first to the Pacific, while the "very stealthy and highly capable Zumwalt destroyer" will be based in the region by 2018 as well, he added.

The defense agency is similarly moving terminal high-altitude defense, or THAAD, and Patriot batteries to key locations, while the area of Japan will be reinforced with Aegis ballistic missile defense ships.

Source: Phil Star, 9th October, 2014

**Armed Cargo Ships along India's Coast Pose Security Threat**

Commercial ships with armed men on board, which navigate along India's territorial waters, pose a threat to the country's security, a senior Coast Guard official said. "Major challenge in the recent times is the large number of commercial ships that have armed men on board for security of these vessels (which) pose a threat to our coastal regions and the national security, as they do not declare the weaponry on board, if they are not calling on Indian ports," Inspector General Satya Prakash Sharma, Regional Commander, Coast Guard (East) said.

Interacting with journalists on the sidelines of a CII-organised seminar 'Approach to Integrated Maritime Systems', Sharma said that though these ships carry arms for their safety while cruising through waters infested with sea pirates, they pose a threat to India, since there is no check on them, when they move towards the country's coastal line. "So there are chances of pilferage and that can pose a serious threat to the national security," he explained.

Asked what steps could be taken to check this threat, he said it was the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), which encouraged commercial ships to have armed men on board to tackle the menace of piracy.

"But it does not apply to all. It should be country specific. It may apply to a country like Canada but not to India. Unchecked traffic of weapons very close to the country's coastal line is certainly a big challenge," he added, referring to the incidents involving two foreign ships -- one Italian vessel Enrica Lexie and another US vessel Seaman Guard Ohio in the past two years.

While two Indian fishermen were shot dead by Italian marines on board Enrica Lexie off Kerala coast, the crew of Seaman Guard Ohio was arrested after the ship with arms entered Indian territorial waters near Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu.

Source: Zee, 9th October, 2014
Japan, ASEAN Agree to Strengthen Maritime Security Cooperation

Senior defense officials from Japan and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed to strengthen cooperation on maritime security as they met in the city of Yokohama near Tokyo to promote freedom of navigation at sea.

The officials at the Vice-Ministerial level shared the view that Japan and ASEAN need to pursue defense technology cooperation, according to a statement issued after the meeting of the sixth Japan-ASEAN Defense Vice-Ministerial Forum.

Japan has been trying to bolster security ties with ASEAN amid China's assertiveness in the East and South China seas. Some ASEAN member states, such as Vietnam and the Philippines, are embroiled in territorial disputes with China. Potential areas of coordinated action include the sharing of information and rules related to maritime affairs, defense exercises, disaster relief and antipiracy measures.

In his message read at the forum, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stressed the importance of resolving disputes in a peaceful manner and observing the rule of law. Abe also called Japan and the 10-member regional bloc "natural partners in the sea of Asia." At the gathering, Akira Sato, senior Vice Defense Minister, said there had been unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force and intimidation, without naming any country, making his case for further coordination among the participating nations.

The officials also discussed the importance of defense talks among ASEAN and its eight partners such as the United States and China, according to the statement.

Source: Global Post, 10th October, 2014

President to be First Indian Leader to cross Arctic Circle

President Pranab Mukherjee, during his upcoming trip to the Scandinavian countries of Norway and Finland, will become the first Indian President to cross the Arctic Circle. "President Mukherjee is scheduled to visit the town Rovaniemi in Finland and by doing so, will become the first Indian President to cross the Arctic Circle," said Navtej Sarna, Secretary (West) of the Ministry of External Affairs, while interacting with the media.

Discussing the President's itinerary, Sarna first talked of the first leg of President Mukherjee's trip. He said, "President Mukherjee will leave for Norway on October 12 and he will be given a ceremonial welcome at the Royal Palace in Oslo the next day. He will visit the Akershus Fortress in the city and then is scheduled to visit the Norwegian parliament, where he will meet the president of the parliament." "During his trip to Norway, President Mukherjee will also speak to scientists who are posted in Himadri Station in Spitsbergen, India's permanent research base in the Arctic. The President will also speak to several Indian companies that are present in Norway.
and will look to attract Norwegian investors to India. He will also meet members of the Indian community in Norway," Sarna added.

Next, speaking of President Mukherjee’s visit of Finland, Sarna said, "The President will leave for Finland on October 14 at night and will be in that country till October 16. The mayor of Finland’s capital, Helsinki, will host a lunch for President Mukherjee. He will also meet with a business delegation and the Indian community present there." "Later, President Mukherjee will visit Finland’s parliament and will be meeting the Speaker of the Parliament." Sarna added.

India and Norway enjoy a cordial and friendly relationship. The two countries respect each other for their commonly shared values such as democracy, human rights and rule of law. In recent years, both countries have been increasingly tapping their bilateral economic and technical complementarities. Indo-Norwegian bilateral ties are marked by regular exchanges of high level visits between the two countries. Finland and India have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations. Finland sees in India a large market for its products and a favourable investment destination for its high technology industries whereas India views Finland as an important member of the EU and a repository of modern technology.

Source: ANI, 10th October, 2014

**US Joins Southeast Asia’s War on Piracy**

In a little-noticed move, the United States joined the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) in late September. The move is consistent with the strategic thinking driving the United States’ “pivot” to Asia. The move also comes amid reports that piracy in the South China Sea is increasing. A third of the world’s shipping traffic moves through the strategically important Strait of Malacca and Singapore Strait which have become hotspots for maritime piracy. This traffic includes almost the entirety of the crude oil that East Asian states import from the Middle East.

“U.S. membership in ReCAAP will enable us to support multilateral cooperation in addressing the common threat of piracy and robbery against ships in the region’s critical sea lanes and waters,” said a U.S. State Department official. According to *IHS Jane’s 360*, the “Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy of the US Coast Guard, Rear Admiral Paul F Thomas has been appointed as the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) governor for the United States.” The United States first stated its intention to join ReCAAP in 2012.

By joining ReCAAP, the United States could bring a wealth of know-how and capacity to fighting piracy in Southeast Asia. The United States and its European allies have been remarkably successful in their fight against piracy off the Horn of Africa.

ReCAAP, as *The Diplomat* explained last year, is a low-profile Asian multilateral institution focused on maritime security and preserving the security of vital sea lanes.
from piracy. It isn’t a military organization or a competitor with other regional organizations like ASEAN, the SCO, or SAARC — it is simply a grouping of states with a narrow mandate on anti-piracy and maritime security.

ReCAAP’s founding was made necessary in part by a surge in maritime piracy following the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. As per the ReCAAP agreement, which was concluded in November 2004. ReCAAP was formally launched in 2006 and its current members include China, India, Japan, South Korea and Australia among others. Notably, Indonesia and Malaysia are not members of ReCAAP, despite their geographic proximity to pirate incidents in Southeast Asia. Countries outside the Asia-Pacific are also participants in the organization, including the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway. The United States is now the 20th member of ReCAAP.

Source: Diplomat, 10th October, 2014

**Military exercise with China Shifted from near the Border to Pune**

India has shifted its joint "Hand-in-Hand" (HiH) counter-terrorism exercise with China far away from the earlier planned location at Bathinda, which was close to its western front with Pakistan. Defence ministry officials said the fourth HiH exercise with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) would now be held at Pune in mid-November. Though officials maintained the decision was taken because Pune had better "infrastructure and weather" than Bathinda, the move comes in the backdrop of recent border troubles with both Pakistan and China.

First, it was the troop face-off at Chumar and Demchok in eastern Ladakh, which coincided with President Xi Jinping's visit to India last month. Then, it was the cross-border mortar duels along the International Border and Line of Control with Pakistan since the beginning of this month. China, in particular, has been testing India's resolve both on the land boundaries as well as in the Indian Ocean Region with its Maritime Silk Route plan.

Source: TOI, 11th October, 2014

**11th Hovercraft for Indian Coast Guard Inducted into Service**

Stepping up efforts to enhance surveillance, search and rescue operations, the 11th hovercraft for the Indian Coast Guard was formally inducted into service.

Madras High Court Chief Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul formally commissioned the Hovercraft, also called the Air Cushion vehicle, in the presence of Inspector General, Commander Coast Guard Region (East), Satya Prakash Sharma.

Sharma said the Hovercraft H-197 is 11th in the series of Griffon 8000TD(M), designed and built by UK-based Griffon Hoverworks Ltd. The 200-metre hovercraft
displaces 30 tonnes and can hit a maximum speed of 45 knots. It is fully amphibious and powered by two industrial water cooled diesel engines.

Fitted with compact high performance inertially stabilised day and night optronic system, it is specially configured for use on hovercraft for night navigation, he said. As part of commissioning of the vessel, the Commissioning Pennant was broken while a plaque was unveiled by Kaul on the occasion. The commissioning of the hovercraft in the South Tamil Nadu coast would strengthen the surveillance, search and rescue operations.

It would initially be based at Chennai and later shifted to Mandapam near Tuticorin. It would be commanded by Commandant John Manoj, two officers and 11 other rank officials. This would be the fifth Hovercraft to come under the Coast Guard Eastern region, an official said.

Source: Zee, 11th October, 2014

**Norway Backs India’s Arctic Efforts**

India’s investment in polar research might seem strange to some but not to Norway’s King Harald V. “That is where we see the changes most quickly as far as climate change is concerned. [In the Arctic] it is very very obvious what is happening,” the King told The Hindu in an interview.

The King shared hopes of reaching a strong deal at the U.N. climate change conference in Paris in 2015. Climate change is a top priority for Norway and it has established links in the field with India, which has a base in the Arctic at Ny-Ålesund in Svalbard. It will also be a running theme during the visit by President Pranab Mukherjee on October 13 and 14.

Source: Hindu, 11th October, 2014

**Hudhud: Warships, Nuclear Submarines at Vizag Naval Base Safe**

Cyclone Hudhud caused some devastation at the naval base here but the two nuclear submarines and all the warships berthed there are safe, navy sources said. The Indian Navy is assessing and repairing its base here, the headquarters of the Eastern Naval Command, damaged by cyclonic storm.

Sources said the nuclear-powered INS Chakra and the soon-to-be-ready nuclear-missile submarine INS Arihant are safe. The warships and other important vessels at the base have also not received any major damage, according to the sources. An official said nearly 60 per cent of the trees at the base have been uprooted and almost all roads are blocked. "The officers and men of the naval base at Vishakhapatnam are working to get the base back to its operational status at the earliest," the official said. "Damage in the naval dockyard was minimized by the
proactive and preventive measures undertaken by all concerned," he added. The airfield at naval air station INS Dega was flooded and damage has been reported to almost all the buildings.

"With sustained efforts, both runways have been made fit for flying operations," the official added. Power supply at the base has been disrupted due to damage in transmission lines and communications have been severely affected. Meanwhile, sources from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) also said that "all key facilities in and around Vishakhapatnam is safe". "There has been some damage to buildings due to strong winds. But standard operating procedures were followed and the key facilities are safe," a DRDO official said.

DRDO officials also said they will go ahead with test firing of nuclear-capable 'Nirbhay' missile from Balasore, which is nearly 640km north of Vishakhapatnam along the eastern coast.

Source: TOI, 13th October, 2014

**France Extends Help to Expedite 'Maitri'**

Concerned over the prolonged delay of Indo-French joint venture to develop short-range surface-to-air missile (SRSAM) system, French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian has written to his Indian counterpart Arun Jaitley, expressing his government’s readiness to share high-end missile technology with India.

The SRSAM defence missile project is part of “Make in India” programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In an official communication, Drian said the project would help India achieve maximum autonomy in the area of strategic missile system in a few years and create numerous highly skilled jobs.

Titled Maitri, the project, a joint development and production between India’s DRDO and MBDA of France, was initiated in 2007 and after six years of negotiations, a memorandum of understanding to co-develop the SRSAM was signed during French President Francois Hollande’s India visit in February 2013. In fact, in a joint statement it was then said that “steps are being taken for early finalisation of Maitri project”.

The Indian Navy and the Air Force project a requirement of at least 100 Maitri systems each. The Rs 30,000-crore project was aimed to fill the capability gap of air defence with the IAF and Navy. “As a matter of fact, the project foresees that three years after signing of the contract, Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) will have an independent production capacity in Hyderabad and it will be able to deliver the first missile a year later,” Drian said in his letter to Jaitley.

Under the SRSAM programme, France would carry out a substantial transfer of technology to BDL, which will be the prime contract for production.
France has made it clear that technology sharing would take place exclusively in India and it would meet domestic requirements as well as future export market. Recently, the IAF had made some reservations over the project and recommended to replace it with domestic Akash missile. However, the South Block, which houses Ministry of Defence (MoD), has not taken a view on the IAF’s remarks.

“When the project involves two countries, we need to look at various aspects, especially when we have already signed an MoU. The IAF has made some reservations about the project, but the ministry has not taken any decision on it,” said a senior MoD official.

Contradicting the IAF claims, another MoD official said, “As far as I understand, there is no match between two missile systems. While the range of SRSAM will be of 40 km, Akash’s range is only 25 km. Moreover, the SRSAM will be much cheaper than Akash, if produced in India.”

Source: Indian Express, 13th October, 2014

Ebola at Sea? US Coast Guard Began Monitoring Threat

Ebola at sea is a frightening prospect, and one the U.S. Coast Guard began considering as early as August, long before the federal government proposed new airport screening measures.

An Aug. 7 Coast Guard bulletin obtained by FoxNews.com warned the maritime industry to be on the lookout for sailors from West African nations who showed signs of being infected with the deadly virus. And although there have been no known cases of crew members aboard the thriving ocean trade from the region having Ebola, protocols for dealing with it aboard ships and at ports have been put in place.

These efforts were re-emphasized in a Maritime Security Bulletin released from the USCG’s Captain of the Long Island Sound port zone—a regional maritime area that includes the East River in New York City. In the notice addressed to “All Stakeholders of the Maritime Domain,” Capt. Edward Cubanski urged industry members to keep an eye out for warning signs and to report anything they find in a timely manner.

After an airline passenger from Liberia was diagnosed and later died in Texas this week, Ebola fears have risen for those traveling by air and sea.

Coast Guard officials say no cases or incidents have yet been reported. “There is no specific threat within the maritime realm at this time,” Chad Saylor, spokesman for the Coast Guard said in a statement to FoxNews.com. “The heightened level of awareness is based on the whole-of-government effort to prepare for and prevent potential Ebola scenarios. “The Coast Guard is working daily with CDC, CBP, and other federal, state and local port partners to ensure the safe and secure arrival of passengers and crews into U.S. ports,” he added.
Taking extra precautions this week, the Coast Guard has formed an “Ebola Crisis Action Team” operating out of their headquarters and tasked to conduct a review of current policy. Milstein said there are already enough fail safes put in place that would make it unlikely that there would be any case of Ebola discovered at any of the ports. “The USCG reviews all electronic notice of arrivals in order to determine if a vessel has visited a country impacted by the Ebola virus outbreak within its last five ports of call,” Millstein said. “If USCG determines that one of the last five foreign ports of call is one that is impacted by Ebola, then the vessel will be required to answer several questions regarding the health of the crew and potential contact they may have had while in a given infected region.”

He added that it would be unlikely that anyone on land would be infected if a ship passenger or crew member was discovered to have Ebola. “The Captain of the Port issues an order that will ultimately state that the vessel must be boarded and inspected prior to permission being granted for the vessels arrival inside the port.”

U.S. ports are not alone in keeping an eye out for warning signs. Brazil and Argentina have tightened their port entry procedures for ships originating from West Africa. Santos, a top commodities port in Brazil, took precautions one step further and said that ships from the affected countries like Liberia or Sierra Leone must wait for 10 full days before docking and only if there are no health problems among their crew.

Source: Fox News, 13th October, 2014

**Indian Naval Ships Dock at Dubai port**

Three Indian Naval ships have docked in Dubai as part of its ongoing mission to impart training to Naval and Coast Guard sea trainees and foster maritime goodwill with the Arab nations.

The ships — INS Tarangini, INS Sujata and INS Tir — belong to the Southern Naval Command (SNC), the Training Command of the Indian Navy where basic to advanced training for officers and sailors, including from friendly foreign countries, is conducted.

INS Tir is the first dedicated Officers Training Ship designed by the Indian Navy and constructed at Mazagon Dock Ltd, Mumbai.

INS Tarangini, Indian Navy’s first Sail Training Ship (STS) was built at Goa Shipyard and was commissioned on 11 Nov 97. INS Sujata is the last of the four Offshore Patrol Vessels, indigenously built at Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam.

SNC is headed by Flag Officer Commanding—in—Chief South, Vice Admiral SPS Cheema, who met Major General Ibrahim Salem Al Musharrafah, Commander of the UAE Naval Forces, on Sunday.
During the meeting, which was attended by a number of Navy officers and the Vice Admiral’s accompanying delegation, the two sides discussed a number of matters of common concern, particularly in the areas of maritime cooperation between the two friendly countries, state-run news agency Wam reported.

The Indian Navy has been providing training to international personnel for more than four decades, wherein more than 11,000 personnel from over 40 countries have been trained. Onboard sea trainees are trained in seamanship, navigation, ship handling, boat work, engineering and they are also exposed to the rigours of life at sea.

The ships of the First Training Squadron are the only ships of Indian Navy and Coast Guard where intensive practical sea training of 24 weeks is conducted for trainee officers. On completion of shore based training, Sea Trainees from the Indian Naval Academy join the First Training Squadron to earn their ‘sealegs’.

Source: Hindu Business Line, 13th October, 2014

**Navy Ready with Coastal Security Hub**

Six years after the Mumbai terror attack, Indian Navy has readied a national hub to tackle all aspects of coastal security to prevent another 26/11. The maritime force, however, will have to overcome several challenges to information flow to make the security net foolproof. Located at Gurgaon, the national command, control, communication and intelligence centre (NC3I) now receives real time information from 51 naval stations, including 46 Doppler radar units along the coast and maritime operational centres of all commands, sources told Deccan Herald.

Inputs from 40 odd Indian Coast Guard stations too would soon be fed into the NC3I centre and analysed to decide the threat to brown waters (inland, coastal waterways). After 26/11, Indian Navy was made the lead agency for coastal security. Operationalisation of the NC3I hub and subsequent challenges to foolproof coastal security were discussed at the ongoing naval commander’s conference, attended by close to 40 top officers. Information flow from central and state agencies involved in coastal security poses the biggest challenge to a fully functional hub for coastal security. For instance, there is still no mechanism to monitor thousands of small fishing boats that go out to sea every day. While Indian Coast Guard keep an eye on all boats measuring more than 20 mt in length as these vessels have automated identification system (AIS) on-board, smaller vessels like the one used by Ajmal Kasab and his mates to enter Mumbai, pose the real problem as they lack AIS. “Smaller boats have been registered by the state governments. We plan to install radio-frequency identification tags on those boats. A prototype has been made and a card reader to examine those tags is also being developed under the supervision of Home Ministry,” said a source. There are close to 2 lakh fishing boats in India, out of which 60,000-70,000 go out to sea every day. “Boat owners are now asking for money to install these systems on-board,” said an officer. Though the Cabinet
Secretary reviews monthly progress, there are still many obstacles as close to a dozen agencies from fisheries and customs to Navy and Coast Guard are involved.

Source: Deccan Herald, 14th October, 2014

**Indian Coast Guard Ship Visits Da Nang for Joint Exercise**

The Indian Coast Guard ship Samudra Paheredar arrived in the central Vietnamese city of Da Nang on 14th October for a three-day visit that will include a joint search and rescue exercise with Vietnamese forces.

The ship, coded # 202, docked at Tien Sa Port with 122 crew members on board. Upon arrival, the ship’s representatives paid courtesy visits to the Da Nang People’s Committee, the Command of Vietnam Coast Guard (VCG) in Zone 2, the Command of Military Zone 5, and the Da Nang City Military Headquarters.

The Indian officers also showed representatives of the municipal government and the VCG around the ship. The Samudra Paheredar is also scheduled to take part in a search and rescue exercise with Vietnamese forces, during which crewmembers will use special equipment to control onboard pollution.

This is the third time that an Indian Coast Guard ship has visited Vietnam. The visit is aimed at strengthening the friendship and mutual understanding and trust between Vietnam and India, contributing to promoting the strategic partnership between the two countries.

Belonging to the Eastern Indian Fleet, which is headed by Rear Admiral Ajit Kumar, the ships included the Stealth Frigate INS Satpura (F48), Fleet Tanker INS Shakti (A57), Rajput Class Destroyer INS Ranvijay (D55), and Kora Class Corvette INS Kirch (P62).

Source: Tuoitrenews, 15th October, 2014
Chinese Manufacturing Expansion Affects Shipping Demand

The expansion of the Chinese Manufacturing Industry continued in September at unchanged pace as compared to the month before, BIMCO reports. The manufacturing industry accounts for around 1/3 of the Chinese economy and is a relevant indicator to watch out for in the shipping industry. What goes on in the manufacturing sector affects demand for container shipping and dry bulk shipping primarily. China Manufacturing PMI is a leading indicator for economic activity and development in GDP. The two measurements of Purchasing Manager Indexes (PMI) of Manufacturing both came in unchanged from the month before – unprecedented in itself, and only somewhat encouraging for the industries depending on continued expansion of the manufacturing sector.

The official PMI, compiled by Fung Group, lean towards the larger and state-owned enterprises revealed a positive image of the situation by highlighting expansion of output, new orders and new export orders. PMI remained at 51.1 in September.

The second measurement of Chinese PMI, compiled by Markit and HSBC, lean towards the private sector and the small and medium sizes enterprises revealed that production continued to increase albeit at slowest pace in four months. However, job shedding across the sector continued in spite of a strong rise in new export work. PMI remained at 50.2 in September. Chief Shipping Analyst at BIMCO, Peter Sand, said: “The PMI numbers are first and foremost positive. Any PMI number above the standstill threshold at 50 is good news and tells us that expansion is ongoing. Expansion of the manufacturing sector points towards increased demand for shipping. “For container shipping the increase in new export orders are very welcome as larger exports volumes on the high-capacity trading lanes from China towards Europe and the US are needed.”2014 has so far been a year with increased uncertainty around the level of GDP growth in China. A solid activity level in the manufacturing sector contributes positively to support a continued strong economy in China. New data on key indicators sheds light on present, near-term and future shipping market. This news piece follow up on BIMCO market reports and comments to commercial developments for the three main shipping segments.

Source: Marine Link, 1st October, 2014

India-Myanmar Container Shipping Service Launched

The Look East Policy of the Central Government got a boost with the launch of India-Myanmar container shipping service at Chennai port. The service, run by the State-owned Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), was launched by Shipping Secretary Vishwapati Trivedi.

This was a joint effort of three Ministries — Shipping, External Affairs and Commerce. While the feasibility report said that the service was not commercially
viable, the service was launched looking at the strategic partnership between the two countries that has a bilateral trade of nearly ₹1,000 crore.

“SCI has the wherewithal to sustain the service in the long run. We cannot expect to make profits from day one. However, in a year’s time, we expect the service will be well received by the trade,” Trivedi said at the launch function.

The Government is looking at starting a similar service to countries such as Thailand and Vietnam as part of the Look East policy, he said at the launch function at the DP World Chennai container terminal. The dedicated service was started with a commercial consideration but also as a friendly consideration to strengthen bilateral relationship between the two countries.

To begin with, the service will be every 15 days with plans to make it a weekly in future. From India, the export cargo includes cement while in the return direction it is mainly pulses. Once the service is successful, more private operators can chip in the sector, he said.

The service rotation will be Chennai, Krishnapatnam, Yangoon, Colombo and Chennai. Trivedi said the Government wants to use northern Myanmar to reach in to Mizoram and other North-Eastern States using the Sittwe port. Located in the capital of Rakhine State in Myanmar, on the Bay of Bengal, Sittwe is at the mouth of the Kaladan River.

India has financed to build the deepwater Sittwe port as part of the Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project — a collaboration between the two countries to develop transport infrastructure in south-western Myanmar and north-eastern India. Trivedi said as part of the Look East Policy, the Government will help the shipping industry in Bangladesh.

The industry there is very small but has lot of potential due to the vast coastline. Ships from the Eastern port of India can run regular shuttle service to Chittagong, he said. Like the European Union, which has a strong network of ports, the Government will take steps to have a similar arrangement with neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh and Myanmar, he said.

Source: Hindu Business Line, 4th October, 2014

Krishnapatnam Port Expects 50% Growth This Year

Krishnapatnam Port Company Ltd (KPCL) expects revenue to grow at least 50 per cent this fiscal, mainly driven by the zooming container business. The company, which runs Krishnapatnam deepwater port in the Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh, had reported revenue of ₹1,200 crore in 2013-14, up from ₹650 crore in the previous year.

KPCL’s container business, which completed one year of operation, is expected to nearly double this year, while the cargo business is also set to see new heights with
more items being added to the port list. After taking journalists for a tour of the port, the top management outlined the company’s new initiatives recently.

The trip coincided with the flagging off of a direct container ship, INS Kamal of Shipping Corporation of India, from Krishnapatnam Port to Yangon in Myanmar. The ship has added to two-way trade volumes and fits into the country’s Look East policy. “The ability of the port to handle very large bulk carriers and the huge port infrastructure created, including a railway line, have made a big difference to the cargo business in the eastern India,” Chitta Sasidhar, Managing Director of KPCL, said.

The company, part of the diversified CVR Group, handled about 35 million tonnes (mt) of cargo during 2014-15, up from 21 mt in the year before. The container terminal has handled 58,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in its first year of operation. The port also contributes about ₹1,600 crore to the customs and excise and ₹1,500 crore to the Railways last year.

There is no immediate funding requirement for the port, but the company may yet consider an initial public offering next year, depending on market conditions, Sasidhar said. Spread over 6,500 acres, the port has container capacity to handle about 1.2 million TEUs. The company invested over ₹1,200 crore in the phase one of the port and about ₹4,800 crore in the phase II, which is now nearing completion. There is huge capacity for growth both in handling the cargo and containers.

Coal and iron ore have been two of the major imports from the port so far. With the port close to at least six major thermal power projects, several of them fully dependent on imported coal, the coal imports are likely to go up, Sasidhar said.

Lately, some South Indian cement makers have begun exports. Sasidhar said the Group is the single largest port development contractor associated with several ports. “We are awaiting land allotment to take up the Machilipatnam port project. This would become another important port once completed as it would be located close to the proposed capital city of Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh.”

Source: Hindu Business Line, 5th October, 2014

India’s Seaborne Trade May Cross 830 million tons by 2016-17

Growing at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of over eight per cent, the seaborne trade in India may cross the 830 million ton (mt) mark by 2016-17, apex industry body ASSOCHAM said. “This would require massive investment to the tune of over Rs. 17,000 crore as there is a need to augment the port capacity by over 140 mt from the current level of about 690 mt,” according to a study titled ‘Shipping Industry: Today & Tomorrow,’ conducted by The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).
“The private sector participation is imperative for such huge investments in the shipping sector,” said D.S. Rawat, national secretary general of ASSOCHAM, while releasing the study.

Lack of level-playing field for private operators, hinterland connectivity, especially lack of co-ordination between road, rail and port authorities and proper risk allocation are certain key issues affecting port development in India, he said. The government needs to act as a facilitator to create opportunities for attracting fresh investments in the shipping sector, more so as about 41 per cent of India’s fleet of ships belong to the 20-year-plus age group indicating a slow rate of new fleet addition.

This augurs well for the Rs. 7,300 crore worth of India’s shipbuilding and ship-repair industry as 20-years-plus older ships require more frequent and extensive repair and maintenance. “However, this makes the Indian fleet less competitive as mostly young vessels below 15 years old are often preferred in international trade.”

Drastic decline in share of Indian ships in carriage of overseas trade over the years is a significant concern. Indian shipping carriage dropped from about 36 per cent to just about eight per cent between 1990-91 and 2009-10. “This is causing a drain on precious foreign exchange in terms of payment of freight charges and this could instead be used for other high priority imports and scaling up infrastructure facilities.”

India can save up to Rs. 26,000 crore by 2016-17 if we can increase the share of coastal shipping in total traffic carriage thereby reducing the burden on other modes of transport. There is a need to encourage coastal shipping as a viable mode of bulk freight transportation as it has just about three per cent of share in carrying regional traffic.

Source: Hindu Business Line, 6th October, 2014

Canada "ill-placed" to Ensure Arctic Shipping Safety

Canada will have trouble ensuring marine safety in the Arctic as climate change melts the sea ice and shipping increases, Parliament's environmental watchdog said. Canada, said Environment Commissioner Julie Gelfand, had "no long-term national vision" to cope with more shipping in the region, where firms are trying to exploit reserves of oil, gold, diamonds, iron ore, zinc and other commodities. Gelfand said many high-risk areas in the Arctic had been inadequately surveyed. She also found the Coast Guard had done little to improve aids to navigation and was cutting back its ice-breaking services as demand grows.

The Canadian Arctic is particularly challenging, since it comprises a series of large islands separated by often narrow channels that are clogged with ice for much of the year. "We found that many higher-risk areas in the Canadian Arctic are inadequately surveyed and charted ... many charts available to mariners may not be current or reliable," Gelfand. Only 1 percent of Arctic waters have been surveyed to modern standards.
The sheer remoteness of the region, combined with an almost total lack of infrastructure, means that an accident could have calamitous consequences. Gelfand cited experts suggesting that "due to future sea ice retreat, it is likely there will be even greater marine access and longer seasons of navigation across the Arctic". There were around 350 marine voyages in the Canadian Arctic in 2013 and the Coast Guard estimates that number could almost double by 2020 as new mining projects start.

Canada's Conservative government says the Arctic is a priority, in particular the need for safe shipping. One way to help ensure this is by installing marine aids such as beacons, buoys and fog horns to help ships avoid danger. But Gelfand said the Coast Guard had done little to meet increased demands for help. "Despite repeated requests by the shipping industry for new or modified aids to navigation in 30 locations in the Arctic, reviews of only two of these locations were conducted by the Canadian Coast Guard," said the audit.

It also found the Coast Guard had cut the number of days it offered ice-breaking services at a time when the shipping season is growing. The Coast Guard says its ice breakers are reaching the end of their operational lives and need more maintenance. The Canadian Arctic is also home to the famed Northwest Passage, which cuts the distance between Europe and the Far East to just 7,900 nautical miles (14,630 km), from 12,600 nautical miles through the Panama Canal.

Commercial shipping firms have so far largely avoided using the passage, citing the unpredictable nature of Arctic ice, the relatively shallow waters and increased insurance costs.

Source: Maritime Executive, 7th October, 2014

**Goa Shipyard Supplies Naval Equipment to Myanmar, Mauritius**

In line with the new government's policy to promote export of defence hardware, Goa Shipyard Limited today said it has supplied naval equipment to countries such as Myanmar and Mauritius and is pursuing orders from other friendly foreign nations.

"Contracts for two Fast Patrol Vessels for Mauritius Coast Guard have been signed along with a contract with its Government for supply of 11 Fast Interceptor Boats for their Coast Guard. Further, contract for construction of Damage Control Simulator for Myanmar Navy has become effective from April 10, 2014," a GSL release said. "All the projects have been regularly reviewed by the customers and have got excellent reviews. The Company is pursuing more export orders for its proven and much acclaimed products," GSL Chairman Rear Admiral Shekhar Mital said. He was addressing the Annual General Meeting of the state-owned shipyard, which has registered a jump of Rs 271 crore in its sales figures from last financial year. The company said it recorded its highest sales of Rs 1165 crore against Rs 844 crore in the previous year and "this reflects the execution capabilities of the shipyard."
The firm said it has delivered two 105-m Naval Offshore Patrol Vessels, five glass reinforced plastic (GRP) survey motor boats to Indian Navy and One Fishing Research Vessel to Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute.

"During the year, GSL also successfully executed 'Shore Based Test Facility' at INS, Hansa, Goa for naval aircraft meant to land at aircraft carriers such as the INS Vikramaditya at sea. It is a unique state-of-the-art facility, which only three countries in the world presently possess," it said.

Source: *ET*, 7th October, 2014

**North America Maritime Security Market is expected to reach $4.76 billion in 2019**

Marine threats from human or natural agents such as terrorists, environmental destruction, sea-borne illegal immigration, and international criminal and piracy threats have created more demand for regulated and standard maritime security systems. North America Maritime Security Market is estimated to grow at a CAGR of 4.40% from 2014 to 2019.

Due to this the worldwide revenue of the maritime market has crossed $13.93 billion in 2014 and is expected to reach $20.87 billion in 2019. The global maritime security market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 8.40%. Key players in the North America Maritime Security Market are Eads, Safran, Finmeccanica Spa, Thales Group, Elbit Systems, Kongsberg Maritime, The Raytheon, Honeywell International & others.

The United States government has enhanced security measures after the 9/11 attack. The country has also improved its maritime security since then. Companies like Maersk, EADS, Safran, and Finmeccanica Spa are enabling secure international trade by water. Thus, the maritime security market is worth $3.84 billion in North America and is expected to reach $4.76 billion in 2019. The calculated CAGR for this period is 4.40%.

Source: *WhaTech*, 8th October, 2014

**SCI Launches Direct Shipping Service with Myanmar**

The Indian government-owned Shipping Corporation of India Ltd (SCI) has begun a “direct shipping service” to boost trade between Myanmar and India. The inaugural vessel named the SCI Kamal was flagged off at the container terminal of Chennai Port, India on October 3 and arrived at Lanpyi Terminal, Bo Aung Kyaw Port in Yangon on October 8, according to a press release. “The direct liner service will operate as a fortnightly service and will connect the ports of Chennai-Krishnapatnam-Yangon-Colombo,” the release says.
"It will enable goods to reach these destinations quicker and at a reduced cost, generating immense opportunities for the business community," it adds.

"It is a conscious attempt by the Government of India to enhance friendly relations as part of its Look East policy and goes beyond mere economic interests."

SCI Senior Vice President Capt. R.K. Tandon said that the inaugural vessel carried 270 containers, speaking to Mizzima at a celebration held in the compound of the Bo Aung Kyaw Port on October 9. In the past, cargo has typically transited through Malaysia and Singapore. "It will increase in the peak season," Capt. Tandon said, noting that this was currently the low season. "There is a good potential growth between the two countries, India and Myanmar, with this service. Volume will grow. There aren't many challenges. Minor challenges are always there, not major challenges," Capt. Tandon said.

India-based logistics company Gati Ship Pvt. Ltd also hopes to benefit from the seaborne trade. The company has been providing support for seaborne cargo shipments between Chennai and Yangon since 2005.

Gati Ship Pvt. Ltd Marketing Manager Daw Thet Htar Oo in Yangon told Mizzima in a telephone interview October 10 that two vessels, “Gati Pride” and “Gati Majestic” are being renovated in India and the company hopes the ships will begin operating between India and Myanmar from mid-November onwards, subject to market conditions.

Source: Mizzima, 10th October, 2014

India’s First Indigenous Aircraft Carrier Taking Shape at Cochin Shipyards Limited

India's first indigenous aircraft carrier was taking shape in the Cochin Shipyard Limited at Kochi, one of the nine Defence PSUs in the country, where 85 per cent of the work relating to its hull are complete, a senior official said here. "Around 85 per cent of the hull is complete and 90 per cent of the fabrication is over. 85 per cent of the erection has been over,"

Commodore K Subramaniam (Retd), CSL Chairman and Managing Director told reporters on the sidelines of a function organised by the CII. Interacting with journalists in the sidelines of a CII-organised conference on ‘Approach to Integrated Maritime Systems’ here, he said many elements of innovations were being incorporated in the building of the aircraft carrier. "For instance, the Navy wanted a 14 degree ski-jump in the foxle of the ship for easy taking off of fighter planes, for which a big piece of iron had to be welded, which was also trimming down the ship to the front.

"We have employed a big piece of iron in the hull area, which will function as a buoyant, which has made the keel of the hull float horizontally. Likewise, we have made many innovations in the building."
Replying to a query, he said the degree of indigenous equipment in the aircraft carrier was very high, barring the aviation, for which the county was dependent on Russia. "We can say around 80 per cent of the ship is indigenous."

Elaborating on the localisation, he said that the metal sheets used for the building of the ship were designed by the Hyderabad-based Defence Research Development Laboratory and production was being done by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).

CSL was looking to focus on ship repair industry, Subramaniam said. "We are also focusing on ship repair, which is a $12 billion or Rs 60,000 crore industry across the globe. But in India it is a less than Rs 1,000 crore. We are investing in 40 acre land of the port in Kochi with an investment of Rs 480 crore," he said.

Commenting on the growth of the ship building in India, he said that there were many obstacles including the taxing, which posed major challenges to the industry.

"Right now, it would be easy for the Shipping Corporation of India to buy ships from abroad than get it from us, since it would involve a lot of taxes. These challenges have to be overcome with a comprehensive maritime shipping policy, which would provide the blue print for all the challenges facing the industry," Subramaniam added.

Source: ET, 9th October, 2014

**Wärtsilä Chosen for World's Largest Ethane Carriers**

Six new 87,000 cubic meters capacity very large ethane carriers (VLECs), being built at the Samsung Heavy Industries yard in South Korea, will feature Wärtsilä gas handling systems. Wärtsilä is the market leader in cargo handling technology for gas carriers and has an extensive reference base. The contract was signed in September. There is an option for additional vessels within this series. Deliveries of the Wärtsilä solutions will commence in 2016.

These vessels will be the biggest ethane carriers ever built, and represent a new generation of such vessels mainly transporting ethane as feed stock to the petrochemical industry. The transportation of ethane is a rapidly growing segment of the marine gas carrying business and it is anticipated that the global VLEC fleet will increase significantly during the coming years. Wärtsilä's leading position in gas handling systems is notably enhanced by this trend.

The VLECs are being built for the Reliance Group, India's largest private sector enterprise. The group has businesses in the energy and materials value chain, including petrochemicals. The new vessels will carry ethane from American shale gas to India to be processed for making plastic. Delivery of the ships will commence at the end of 2016 and is scheduled to be completed in early 2017.
Wärtsilä’s scope of supply represents a complete cargo handling package for each ship. This includes the process and arrangement engineering; the deck tank; all equipment related to the cargo handling; and a purpose-built reliquefaction plant to handle the C-ethane from the American shale gas.

“This is a valuable order and one that again emphasises Wärtsilä’s competences and experience in gas handling systems. These state-of-the-art ethane carriers require state-of-the-art gas handling systems. Our technology and know-how in this field uniquely positions us to offer the most appropriate solutions for VLEC’s, which is an application that is rapidly expanding,” says Timo Koponen, Vice President, Flow and Gas Solutions, Wärtsilä Ship Power.

Wärtsilä is currently the only company able to offer solutions throughout the entire gas handling chain and to cater for all types of carriers, from the smallest size LPG carriers for coastal transport to the largest LNG carriers with the capacity to carry more than 220,000 cubic metres of cargo. Wärtsilä’s cargo handling solutions cover everything from loading the gas at the terminal to keeping it safe during freight and unloading it at the final destination. When the cargo is gas, it is of the utmost importance to keep it under stable conditions at a certain temperature and pressure. Thus, efficient processing is an essential element of the company’s offering. Wärtsilä’s products all comply with the IMO’s recommendations and regulations.

Source: Maritime Executive, 13th October, 2014
A New Approach to Saving the Whales

There was a time when our oceans were teeming with whales; they were once the foundation of the oceans worldwide. In the 1600s there were enough right whales in Cape Cod Bay off the east coast of the U.S. that you could walk across their backs from one end of the bay to the next. Today there are only about 400 of these whales left, and they are endangered.

The Save the Whales movement of the '70s was instrumental in halting commercial whaling. Environmental and animal rights organisations worked hard to expose the cruelty inflicted on whales and fought for the sake of biodiversity. Their success was reflected in the global moratorium on commercial whaling that was put in place in the early '80s. Over the last two decades most whale populations around the world have struggled to recover their numbers. While some countries still indulge in whaling in violation of the moratorium or in the name of science, this is not the main reason population numbers are low.

While walking in my local downtown area of Santa Cruz, California, I am often accosted by young activists asking for money to “save the whales.” Given that my biggest mission in life is encompassed by that very phrase, I ask, “why?”

It turns out that the compelling story of whales being slaughtered for their meat still tugs at heartstrings and is a means by which these advocacy groups raise funds. It turns out many believe the whales should be saved because they are charismatic mega fauna. Answers of this nature are a complete disservice to these magnificent ocean giants. The presence of whales in our oceans is actually critical for ocean resiliency because whales are not just pretty faces—they are ecosystem engineers. They maintain the health and stability of the oceans and provide services to human society.

The recent WWF Living Planet report tells us we have done the unthinkable by reducing population sizes of vertebrate species by half in less than two human generations. It makes one wonder, what can we do? I believe that we are selling charismatic mega fauna short by not contextualizing our conservation messages. As conservationists, we should be creating awareness about the true ecosystem value of these species so people understand the importance of protecting these giants; because of their ecosystem functions rather than their acrobatics and grace. Saving whales should not be focused on whaling, because that is only part of the problem and there are more pressing modern problems faced by whale populations.

Since 90 percent of everything is shipped, we are all guilty of killing whales. The container ships that transport our food and clothes from one part of the globe to the other are inadvertently ploughing through and killing these very whales while they are in their feeding areas. Our fishing nets are drowning whales, our search for oil and gas is driving them out of areas that are most important to their survival. Using outdated campaigns does more damage than good because the true causes of
death go unheard of and unnoticed. It enables people to point fingers at others rather than forcing them to take responsibility for their own part in the destruction.

Source: National Geography, 7th October. 2014

**India to Receive Tsunami Warning System Next Year**

In a few more months, residents of India will be able to receive tsunami warnings via SMS messages that will also provide them with guidance and information before disaster strikes. UK-based RegPoint, a health-services company focused on bringing wireless technology to the global healthcare community, is behind the technology, developed in conjunction with the Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services.

The two organisations are scheduled to launch the tsunami warning system in the first quarter of 2015. The tsunami warning system is based in Hyderabad. Its technology has been designed to provide residents with accurate and rapid location-specific information on the size, scale and expected time of the disaster, as well as advice on how best to stay safe.

The tsunami of 26 December, 2004 killed 230,000 people in 14 countries around the Indian Ocean. No warning system had been in place.

Sophia Salenius, chief executive of RegPoint, said even in a technologically advanced 21st century, we remain dangerously exposed to the worst Mother Nature has to offer. “When the final technological development is completed early next year, we will have the capability to utilise a wealth of information and state-of-the-art scientific analysis to significantly improve survival rates when disasters hit,” Salenius said.

Source: siliconrepublic, 7th October, 2014

**Is the El Nino Dead?**

Australia’s Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) says, in its latest update published today (7 October 2014), that tropical Pacific Ocean indicators “remain within the neutral range, having failed to maintain sustained values typical of El Nino”.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said in its weekly update published yesterday (6 October 2014) that equatorial Pacific upper-ocean heat anomalies are near zero and that this together with the temperature gradient in the ocean “reflect ENSO-neutral conditions”.

Both agencies suggest the chances of an El Nino taking place are above average. BoM states that computer models indicate a 50 per cent chance of an El Nino in coming months – this is twice the usual probability. NOAA continues to predict that
the chance of an El Nino is at 60-65 per cent during the Northern Hemisphere fall and winter – although this may change with its next monthly discussion (known as the ENSO Diagnostics Discussion) due out soon.

The evidence suggests that the Pacific Ocean is drifting away from El Nino conditions. BoM says that sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies (the variation to the long term average) have cooled in the central tropical Pacific over the past two weeks with some warming in the eastern tropical Pacific although positive anomalies are present along most of the equatorial Pacific. The equatorial Pacific has cooled in the east and warmed in the central region when compared to the preceding month. Sub-surface temperatures across most of the equatorial Pacific are near average, although slightly warmer than average in the eastern equatorial Pacific.

The southern oscillation index (SOI) – a key measure used by El Nino watchers – which compares the air pressure difference between Tahiti and Darwin in Australia has also moved away from the El Nino threshold. The 30-day SOI value to 5 October is −6.3. Sustained negative values below −8 may indicate an El Niño event. Values of between about +8 and −8 generally indicate neutral conditions.

Tropical Pacific Ocean ENSO indicators remain within the neutral range, having failed to maintain sustained values typical of El Niño. However, given the persistent warmth in the tropical Pacific Ocean, models continue to suggest an El Niño remains possible during the last quarter of 2014.

Atmospheric indicators of El Niño have remained neutral over recent months. Tropical cloud patterns and trade winds have only had brief periods with El Niño-like values since May. Despite a recent drop into El Niño territory, the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) has returned to neutral values over the past fortnight.

Model outlooks and current observations mean the Bureau’s El Niño WATCH remains in place, indicating double the normal chance (50%) of an El Niño over the coming months.

While still falling short of El Niño thresholds, the tropical Pacific Ocean remains warmer than average. When combined with recent cool water to the north of Australia, conditions favour below-average rainfall over much of Australia for the remainder of 2014.

The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) has returned to neutral recently after being consistently negative since June. Climate models surveyed by the Bureau indicate neutral conditions are very likely to remain during the last quarter of 2014.

Sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies have cooled in the central tropical Pacific over the past two weeks with some warming in the eastern tropical Pacific. Positive anomalies are present along most of the equatorial Pacific (see SST anomaly map for the week ending 5 October). Warm anomalies are also present across large areas of Indian Ocean and across most of the northern Pacific Basin. Weak cool anomalies have returned to areas to the north of Australia around the Torres Strait and Timor Sea over the past fortnight.
The SST anomaly map for September shows the equatorial Pacific cooled in the east and warmed in the central region when compared to the preceding month. September SSTs were above average across nearly the entire equatorial Pacific as well as across much of the northern Pacific and extending into the Indian Ocean.

The sub-surface temperature map for the 5 days ending 5 October shows temperatures across most of the equatorial Pacific sub-surface are near average, to slightly warmer than average in the eastern equatorial Pacific. As substantial areas of the central and eastern Pacific have low data coverage, as indicated by point observations (cross markings) on the image below, other sources of sub-surface data have also been considered.

The four-month sequence of sub-surface temperature anomalies (to September) shows warm anomalies are present in parts of the sub-surface profile: below 150 m depth in the western Pacific and across the shallow sub-surface from west of the Date Line to around 120°W. The sub-surface plot also shows areas of cool anomalies in the sub-surface of the far western and shallow eastern equatorial Pacific.

The Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) has risen over the past fortnight. The latest 30-day SOI value to 5 October is −6.3. Sustained positive values of the SOI above +8 may indicate a La Niña event, while sustained negative values below −8 may indicate an El Niño event. Values of between about +8 and −8 generally indicate neutral conditions.

Trade winds are weaker than average over the far western tropical Pacific and near-average over the remainder of the tropical Pacific (see anomaly map for the 5 days ending 5 October). During La Niña events, there is a sustained strengthening of the trade winds across much of the tropical Pacific, while during El Niño events there is a sustained weakening of the trade winds.

Cloudiness near the Date Line has been slightly above average over the past two weeks. Cloudiness along the equator, near the Date Line, is an important indicator of ENSO conditions, as it typically increases (negative OLR anomalies) near and to the east of the Date Line during El Niño and decreases (positive OLR anomalies) during La Niña.

Six of the eight international climate models surveyed by the Bureau indicate the possibility of ocean conditions nearing El Niño thresholds by early summer, with the remainder favouring persistence of neutral conditions. For those models which indicate a possible El Niño, the forecast peak central equatorial Pacific SSTs range from borderline to moderate El Niño levels. This suggests any event is likely to be relatively weak.

The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) index has continued to rise over the past two weeks. The latest weekly index value to 5 October is +0.3 °C. Climate models surveyed in the model outlooks favour a continuation of neutral IOD values over the remainder of spring.

Source: Climate Science, 7th October, 2014
Climate Change Threatens Arctic Food Security and Culture

It’s increasingly difficult to find food using traditional hunting methods in the Arctic, and at the same time, provisions sold at stores are “unaffordable” for many, jeopardizing food security and cultural life in the region, Arctic experts and residents said, responding to a United Nations report released that highlights the impact of climate change on Arctic communities.

Everything from ice-dependent algae to marine mammals to humans relying on sea ice for food and economic opportunities are affected, according to the "Global Biodiversity Outlook 4" report, which assesses the global body’s progress toward achieving its decade-long biodiversity goals. The knowledge of these environments that the indigenous and local people have is being tested by the rapid climate changes occurring in the region, according to the report. “We’re not allowed to have food like we used to,” Gary Harrison, traditional chief of Chickaloon village in Alaska, told Al Jazeera, referring to lifestyle changes forced on the region by climate change and increasing commercial interests.

Harrison, 57, said of the total number of salmon taken from the streams, indigenous people pull only about 2 percent; the “lion’s share” goes to commercial fisheries and sport fishermen. “We hear them fighting over their spot in the river,” said Harrison. “They used to be indigenous people’s spots in the first place.”

Rapid warming in the Arctic “is already leading to increased human activities including shipping, commercial fishing, mining and oil and gas development,” according to the annual Living Planet Report released by the World Wildlife Fund last week. Disappearing sea ice and rapid industrialization are causing permanent changes to indigenous Arctic communities, according to Whit Sheard, director of the international Arctic program at Ocean Conservancy. “The challenges facing traditional Arctic indigenous communities are enormous,” said Sheard.

As the ice melts, Sheard said some communities are reburying their elders because cemeteries are becoming exposed. Many of these groups can also no longer store food in the traditional way — in ice cellars — because of the thawing permafrost. Many indigenous people are struggling to adjust to unpredictable hunting seasons, according to the U.N. report, because of the impact of declining sea ice on wildlife.

“These communities, which continue to engage in the subsistence way of life and practice traditions millennia in the making, are quickly being placed at risk of irreversible change because of the inability or unwillingness of population great distances away to restrain our excesses and modify our behavior,” Sheard said.

Indigenous people of the Arctic now have to travel further into the ocean to fish than ever before, making the trips more dangerous and expensive, said John Farrell, executive director for the United States Arctic Research Commission. “Many of the coastal communities are not wealthy areas,” Farrell told Al Jazeera. “The price of fuel is double in Alaska than the lower 48 states. Price of food to be brought in by plane or ship [to the region] is very expensive.”

Harrison, from Alaska’s Chickaloon village, attested to the changes firsthand. He has watched glaciers retreat during his lifetime. It’s now harder, he said, to predict
weather and animal migrations. Plus, the melting permafrost has altered the landscape, reshaping the trails he used to follow. “When the character of the land changes, it changes where they [animals] feed. It changes where we go to get food,” said Harrison.

But not all indigenous groups are struggling to cope, said Markku Heikkilä, head of science communications at the Arctic Centre, an institution at the University of Lapland that studies Arctic issues. “Some communities adapt better than others to environmental and economic changes,” he said.

The Nenets, indigenous people of Russia, for example, have adapted well, he explained: “They’ve kept their nomadic reindeer herding culture and language in the middle of climate change and industrialization of the region.” An Arctic Centre report, however, warned that indigenous people have an "especially strong bond with nature" and climate change would endanger the "survival of many groups as distinctive people."

Source: Aljazeera, 8th October, 2014

### Oceans Experiencing Largest Sea Rise in 6,000 years

There are two main forces that can drive sea levels higher. One is something called thermal expansion, which involves the expansion of ocean water as it warms. The other is an influx of additional water, ushered into the sea by melting ice sheets and glaciers. Scientists have long concluded that sea levels are rising. Just look at Miami or Maldives. They've also discerned that major ice sheets are melting at a faster clip than previously understood.

What has been less clear, however, is whether the development is recent or not. Over the last several thousands of years, has the ocean risen and fallen and risen again? A new study, just published in PNAS, suggests that the ocean has been surprisingly static since 4,000 B.C..

But that changed 150 years ago. Reconstructing 35,000 years of sea fluctuations, the study, which researchers say is the most comprehensive of its kind, found that the oceans are experiencing greater sea rise than at any time over the last 6,000 years. “What we see in the tide gauges, we don’t see in the past record, so there’s something going on today that’s wasn’t going on before,” lead author Kurt Lambeck, a professor at Australian National University, told the Australia Broadcasting Corporation. “I think that is clearly the impact of rising temperatures.”

How much has the sea risen over the past century and a half? A lot. And it's surging faster than ever. “There is robust evidence that sea levels have risen as a result of climate change,” Australian government research has found. “Over the last century, global average sea level rose by 1.7 mm [0.067 inches] per year, in recent years (between 1993 and 2010), this rate has increased to 3.2 mm [0.126 inches] per year.” In all, the sea has risen roughly 20 centimeters since the start of the 20th
century. “The rate of sea level rise over the last century is unusually high in the context of the last 2,000 years,” the Australian report added.

But it’s not just the last 2,000 years. It’s the last 6,000 years, according to this recent study. And now, the rising sea levels over the last 100 years, is “beyond dispute,” Lambeck told the Guardian.

Using data drawn from 1,000 ancient sediment samples from the shores of Australia and Asia and from islands in the Pacific and Indian oceans, the researchers pieced together the history of the seas by studying indicators of an era’s sea level, like tree roots or mollusks. They found a large ice melt 16,000 years ago, which leveled off 8,000 years ago. Then over the last 6,000 years, little changed.

Until now. “We know from the last interglacial period that when temperatures were several degrees warmer than today there was a lot more water in the oceans, with levels around 4 to 5 meters [13 to 16.4 feet] higher than today,” Lambeck told the Guardian. “The question is how fast that change occurs when you increase temperatures.” He added: “It’s like if you leave a block of ice on the table, it doesn’t melt instantaneously, there’s always a delay in the system.”

But once it hits, it’s hard to reverse he said. You can't put the toothpaste back in the tube.

“All the studies show that you can't just switch off this process,” he continued. “Sea levels will continue to rise for some centuries to come if we keep carbon emissions at present day levels. What level that will get to, we are less sure about. But it’s clear we can’t just reverse the process overnight.”

Source: Washington Post, 14th October, 2014