



MAKING WAVES

A maritime news brief covering:

- MARITIME SECURITY
- MARITIME FORCES
- SHIPPING, PORTS AND OCEAN ECONOMY
- MARITIME ENVIRONMENT
- GEOPOLITICS

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MARITIME SECURITY

CHINA DEPLOYS THREE 'NAVIGATION' BEACONS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

China deployed three navigation beacons around the contested Spratly islands of the South China Sea, following similar marker placements by the Philippines earlier in the month of May, as both sides tried to fortify their claims to the area. China's Transport Ministry on 24th May 2023, said that its South China Sea maritime security center placed the three beacons close to Irving Reef, Whitson Reef, and Gaven Reef of the Spratly islands, which comprises of many islets, reef banks and shoals.

Source: [Here](#) 24 May 2023

LED MULTINATIONAL PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHES NEW TASK FORCE FOR MARITIME SECURITY TRAINING IN WEST ASIA

The US- led multinational partnership established a new task force on May 22, 2023. This new task force will train partner navies and improve operational capabilities to enhance maritime security in West Asia. During a ceremony at US 5th Fleet headquarters in Bahrain, leaders commissioned Combined Task Force (CTF) 154. The CTF 154 is CMF's fifth task force after standing up CTF 153 in April 2022 for maritime security in the Red Sea. CTF 154 will lead multinational maritime training at locations across West Asia, enabling more CMF partner-nations to participate in training opportunities without ships or aircraft, particularly during courses that are facilitated ashore.

Source: [Here](#) 23 May 2023

SOMALI MILITARY OFFICERS TRAIN TO IMPROVE MARITIME SECURITY

The joint initiative conducted by the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and the European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia (EUCAP Somalia) was aimed at helping Somalia secure the longest coastline in Africa ahead of the withdrawal of 2,000 ATMIS soldiers by June 30, the African Union mission said in a statement issued on 22 May. "This refresher training is in line with the goals espoused in the Somalia Transition Plan and ATMIS mandate, specifically with regard to mentorship and capacity building of Somali government institutions across all domains," said Peter Muteti, the ATMIS deputy force commander in charge of support and logistics. Somalia boasts the longest coastline in Africa, measuring about 3,300 km, rich in sea-based resources. The coastline has often been exploited by illegal fishing and smugglers, and a well-trained and equipped navy is needed to ensure that the country can fully benefit from the blue economy.

Source: [Here](#) 23 May 2023

AUSTRALIA TO EQUIP PHILIPPINE

COAST GUARD TO IMPROVE MARITIME SECURITY

Australia announced that it will provide a broad range of support and economic assistance to the Philippines while reaffirming its strong support for the 2016 ruling that affirmed the Philippines' sovereignty over the eastern parts of the South China Sea. Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Penny Wong, wrapped up a three-day visit to the country including touring the Philippine Coast Guard facilities and announcing a package of maritime cooperation initiatives that will supply equipment to the Coast Guard. Wrapping up the visit they issued a joint statement that recognized the two countries' long-standing partnership on issues including ongoing cooperation in the areas of defence, maritime, counterterrorism, peacebuilding, and disaster recovery. It was seen as a strong sign of support for the Philippines as it continues to address incursions by Chinese vessels both from the military and commercial fishing as part of China's claims to rights over the South China Sea.

Source: [Here](#) 18 May, 2023

VIETNAM, INDONESIA EXPRESS CONCERN OVER MARITIME SECURITY IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh has noted that Chinese Naval-Coast Guard-maritime militia activity in the South China Sea is a common concern for both Vietnam and Indonesia, and even non- ASEAN countries that promote maritime cooperation with the goal of increasing trust, friendship, and confidence can find themselves on the receiving end of Chinese activities. Chinh made the above remarks during the opening session of the 42nd ASEAN Summit in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia, on May 10, 2023.

Source: [Here](#) 18 May 2023

MARITIME FORCES

NAVEUR-NAVAF (UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES EUROPE AND AFRICA) LEADERS COMMEMORATE MEMORIAL DAY THROUGHOUT EUROPE

In cemeteries and landmarks throughout Europe, US Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) leadership attended US Memorial Day ceremonies, held throughout the May 26-29 weekend. In France, Adm. Stuart B. Munsch, commander of NAVEUR-NAVAF and Allied Joint Force Command Naples; Rear Adm. Oliver Lewis, Director of Maritime Operations for NAVEUR-NAVAF; and Rear Adm. Brad Collins, commander of Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central, attended ceremonies in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, Normandy American Cemetery and Somme American Cemetery, respectively.

Source: [Here](#) 31 May, 2023

UAE WITHDRAWS FROM US-LED MARITIME COALITION

The United Arab Emirates has withdrawn from a US-led maritime coalition tasked with securing tense Gulf waterways that are vital to the global oil trade. The UAE "withdrew its participation" in the 38-nation Combined Maritime Forces two months ago, a Foreign Ministry statement said, without giving reasons for the move. The Bahrain-headquartered CMF was established in 2001, initially as a partnership between 12 nations. It is active in crucial but troubled Gulf waters where tankers have been seized and attacked in recent months. Iran seized two tankers in a week in late April and early May, including one empty ship that was travelling between the UAE ports of Dubai and Fujairah. Iran was also accused of launching a drone attack against an Israeli-owned tanker in November 2022, stoking tensions with the United States. Earlier this month, the US said it was sending reinforcements to the Gulf, which carries at least a third of the world's sea-borne oil, after what it called increasing harassment by Iran. The commander of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, Vice-Admiral Brad Cooper, later transited through the Strait of Hormuz in a guided-missile destroyer along with British and French naval commanders. Iran responded by saying it can ensure the safety of Gulf waters in cooperation with neighbouring countries.

Source: [Here](#) 31 May 2023

FRENCH NAVY SUCCESSFULLY SEIZES \$108 MILLION DRUG SHIPMENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

A French warship reportedly made some significant strides in the fight against illegal drug trafficking, with the sudden seizure of illegal drugs valued at about \$108 million while operating in the Indian Ocean between April 19 and May 18, as part of the Combined Task Force (CTF) 150. The warship seized illegal drugs from four fishing ships, confiscating nearly 2,265kg of heroin and almost 242 kilograms of methamphetamine during the routine patrol of regional waters.

Source: [Here](#) 26 May 2023

COMBINED MARITIME FORCE INTRODUCES NEW GROUP TO TRAIN PARTNER NAVIES IN MIDDLE EAST

The 38-nation Combined Maritime Force (CMF) has established a new group to enhance maritime security training in the Middle East. Combined Task Force 154 (CTF 154) is the fifth CMF segment after CTF 153 was inducted for Red Sea maritime security in April 2022. The latest group was launched to facilitate military training for multinational CMF navies in the region. This approach allows partners to upskill without logistical inconvenience, especially during courses conducted ashore.

Source: [Here](#) 23 May 2023

US-LED MULTINATIONAL

PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHES NEW TASK FORCE FOR MARITIME SECURITY TRAINING IN MIDDLE EAST

The US-led multinational partnership, Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), established a new task force May 22 that will train partner navies and improve operational capabilities to enhance maritime security in the Middle East. During a ceremony at US 5th Fleet headquarters in Bahrain, leaders commissioned Combined Task Force (CTF) 154. The new staff is CMF's fifth task force after standing up CTF 153 in April 2022 for maritime security in the Red Sea. CTF 154 will lead multinational maritime training at locations across the Middle East, enabling more CMF partner-nations to participate in training opportunities without ships or aircraft, particularly during courses that are facilitated ashore.

Source: [Here](#) 22 May 2023

SHIPPING, PORTS AND OCEAN ECONOMY

UNION SHIPPING MINISTER ANNOUNCES FIVE INITIATIVES TO MAKE INDIA GLOBAL LEADER IN MARITIME SECTOR

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) Sarbananda Sonowal on 22 May, 2023, announced five major initiatives, focusing on green shipping and digitisation of the ports, by his Ministry to make India a global leader in the maritime sector. The five initiatives or 'Panch Karma Sankalp', as termed by the Minister, were announced after the conclusion of his Ministry's second Chintan Shivir held at Munnar. The 'Panch Karma Sankalp' include 30 per cent financial support from the Ministry for promoting green shipping, procuring two tugs each for the Jawaharlal Nehru, VO Chidambaranar, Paradip and Deendayal ports under the green tug transition programme and developing hydrogen hubs at some of these ports. Sonowal reiterated that "Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we affirm our commitment to make a solid attempt at green shipping and digitising operations for maximum efficiency with an aim to become world leader in the maritime sector.

Source: [Here](#) 22 May 2023

GLOBAL FREIGHT CYCLE MAY HAVE

REACHED LOWEST POINT

Global freight volumes show signs of having bottomed out in the first quarter, signalling the industrial cycle may be near its trough, which could provide some support to oil prices later in 2023. Global freight volumes fell 1.1% during the first three months of 2023 compared with a year earlier, according to the Netherlands Bureau of Economic Policy Analysis (“World trade monitor”, CPB, May 25). But volumes were up by 0.2% in March compared with the prior year, after declining 2.5% in February and 1.2% in January, providing tentative signs the cyclical trough may have been reached.

Source: [Here](#) 26 May 2023

SHIP BRIEFLY GROUNDED IN SUEZ CANAL IS REFLOATED

A ship was briefly stuck in the Suez Canal after running aground, before being successfully refloated after an hour and 16 minutes, a shipping agent said. The ship, which Leth Agencies identified early on Thursday as Xin Hai Tong 23, a 190-metre bulk carrier, was freed by tugboats from the Suez Canal authority. The Marine Traffic ship tracker and Refinitiv data had shown live updates of the ship, which sails under the Hong Kong flag, as “not under command” near the southern end of the canal, positioned at an angle next to the canal’s eastern side, surrounded by three Egyptian tugboats. In 2021 the 400-metre, 220,000 tonne container ship Ever Given became lodged in the Suez canal for nearly a week, disrupting trade on a global scale. The operation to free the Ever Given caused a backlog that delayed the journeys of hundreds of ships, forcing some to take a much longer route around the southern tip of Africa.

Source: [Here](#) 25 May 2023

SHREYAS SHIPPING TO DELIST FROM EXCHANGES. WILL RETAIL INVESTORS GET A FAIR EXIT?

The promoters of Shreyas Shipping and Logistics have proposed delisting the company from the exchanges by buying out the entire share lot from public shareholders. Shreyas Shipping is a leading player in the coastal shipping sector and is engaged in owning and operating container feeders. The company with a market capitalisation of Rs 686 crore falls into the microcap category. The floor price will be determined through the reverse book building mechanism stated in the delisting regulations. The board meeting happened on 24 May 2023.

Source: [Here](#) 22 May 2023

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

LARGE-SCALE, OFFSHORE, AND FULLY-PROTECTED MARINE AREAS (MPAS) PROTECT BIODIVERSITY WITHOUT NEGATIVELY IMPACTING FISHING AND FOOD SECURITY

A new study published in *Science Advances* today provides evidence that large-scale, offshore, and fully-protected marine areas (MPAs) protect biodiversity without negatively impacting fishing and food security. In the first-ever “before and after” assessment of the impact of establishing Mexico’s Revillagigedo National Park on the fishing industry, a team of US and Mexican researchers found that Mexico’s industrial fishing sector did not incur economic losses five years after the park’s creation despite a full ban on fishing activity within the MPA.

Source: [Here](#) 31 May 2023

CITIZEN SCIENTISTS DIVE INTO OCEAN CONSERVATION

Travellers from all corners of the world are attracted to the wonders of coral reefs and their colourful biodiversity. With tourists reaching even the most remote reef locations, they can be a valuable means of collecting data and information on coral reef ecosystems for the ongoing United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030). World Reef Day, observed on 1 June every year, aims to raise awareness of the importance of coral reefs to planetary health. A quarter of all known marine species live on coral reefs, and these ecosystems support more than 1 billion people. Coral reefs protect coastlines from increasing damage by buffering them against waves, storms, and floods, preventing loss of life, property damage and erosion. With record ocean temperatures ringing alarm bells among those involved in coral reef protection and restoration, the need for reliable data is more important than ever. A 70–90 per cent decrease in live coral on reefs by 2050 may occur without drastic action to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

Source: [Here](#) 30 May 2023

SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE ON

PLASTIC POLLUTION (INC-2)

The second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-2), will take place in Paris, France from 29 May to 2 June. The INC-2 is taking place as plastics waste and chemical pollution are driving the triple planetary crisis relating to biodiversity, climate, and pollution.

Source: [Here](#) 29 May 2023

GOAN-BUILT VESSEL TO HELP MALDIVES WITH MARITIME RESEARCH, ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

A 30-meter catamaran built by Vijai Marine Shipyard at Rassaim was handed over on 22 May, 2023, to the Maldives government to undertake marine research. Funded by the World Bank (WB), the vessel - Thimaaveshi - will help the Maldivian ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology to track the effects of climate change, impact on coral reefs and fisheries. IIT Kharagpur helped Vijai Marine with the design and vessel construction. Chief minister Pramod Sawant flagged off the vessel which was about to set sail for Maldives soon. This 30-meter catamaran ship has been built in Goa and this ship is a proud moment as it symbolizes 'Make in India' and 'Make in Goa' too.

Source: [Here](#) 22 May 2023

NEW UN 'ROADMAP' SHOWS HOW TO DRASTICALLY SLASH PLASTIC POLLUTION

Using a circular strategy that keeps plastics out of ecosystems, human bodies, and the economy, a new UN report titled ***"Turning off the Tap: How the world can end plastic pollution and create a circular economy"*** lays out a plan to significantly minimise the risks posed by plastics. This report outlines the magnitude and nature of the changes required to end plastic pollution and create a sustainable circular economy that is friendly to humans and the environment. The report proposes a system change achieved by accelerating **three key shifts – reuse, recycle, and reorient and diversify** – and actions to deal with the legacy of plastic pollution. Even with the measures above, 100 million metric tons of plastics from single use and short-lived products will still need to be safely dealt with annually by 2040, the report found.

Source: [Here](#) 16 May 2023

GEOPOLITICS

DECOUPLING IS ALREADY HAPPENING—UNDER THE SEA

Subsea cables carrying internet traffic connect the world by traveling through risky waters. That, as the world now knows, makes them vulnerable to geopolitically motivated harm. But the cables are a remnant of more peaceful times, when operators did not have to worry about geopolitics. Now it's no longer safe to build new cables connecting, say, the United States and China. We are entering the era of the undersea Iron Curtain. These days, the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the North Sea, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman, the South China Sea, and most of the world's other bodies of water are home to subsea cables that connect countries to the internet and one another. Indeed, today not being connected to a subsea cable means not being part of the world, as the residents of Taiwan's Matsu Islands—a popular tourist destination—discovered when Chinese vessels cut the islands' two cables in early February this year.

Source: [Here](#) 24 May 2023

APPRAISING INTEGRATED DETERRENCE CHALLENGES IN BANGLADESH'S INDO-PACIFIC OUTLOOK

Following other regional middle power states and the Quad countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh on April 24 announced its own outlook of the Indo-Pacific. Even within geopolitical maelstrom, Bangladesh as littoral state of the Bay of Bengal has developed an outlook on the Indo-Pacific. Undoubtedly, it drags considerable attention among European countries, the United States, and other Quad partners. China will also eye the Indo-Pacific outlook of Bangladesh with cautious note. No doubt, during the drafting of the outlook, Bangladesh takes into cognizance how China, the United States and the other Quad partners would appraise its engagement.

Source: [Here](#) 17 May 2023

US INKS SECURITY DEAL WITH PAPUA NEW GUINEA

US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken signed a landmark security and maritime cooperation agreement this week with Papua New Guinea (PNG)—the largest nation in the Pacific, directly north-east of Australia—in a deal that will allow US military access to PNG ports and territorial waters. The US also extended \$45 million to assist PNG's defence forces improve its response to humanitarian and natural disasters, as well as allowing joint maritime cooperation in countering transnational crime. It is the latest geopolitical move by US President Joe Biden's administration to counter China's influence in the South Pacific. While the US has historic ties to the country—PNG was the site of fierce fighting during World War Two between Japanese and Allied forces—China has poured billions of dollars in development aid into the country in the past decade. Indeed, China is PNG's third-largest trading partner and a major contributor to PNG's infrastructure development. That development is headlined by a \$4.1 billion highway—the Pacific's largest Chinese loan-funded project—under China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Source: [Here](#) 30 May 2023

BANGLADESH-US JOINT NAVAL EXERCISE BEGINS IN CHATTOGRAM

The Joint Bangladesh-US Naval drill Exercise ‘Tiger Shark 40’ started at BNS Nirvik in Chattogram on 21 May 2023. The objective of the exercise is to increase strategic capabilities of both the countries and to acquire mutual technical and procedural knowledge. It is being undertaken to improve the existing good relations between the armed forces of the two countries, said an official press release of the Bangladesh Inter Services Press Relations (ISPR) issued on 22 May 2023. Special Forces of Bangladesh Army and Navy and US Special Forces participated in this training exercise held under the management of Commodore Swords Command. Chattogram Naval Area Commander Rear Admiral Abdullah AL Mamun Chowdhury attended the event as the Chief Guest. Some of the representatives of the US Embassy in Bangladesh also participated in the event. Among others, the Armed Forces Department, Army, Navy and other officials of Chittagong Naval Region and invited guests were present in the exercise. The joint exercise will end on June 15, 2023.

Source: [Here](#) 22 May 2023

INS TARKASH AND INS SUBHADRA ARRIVE IN SAUDI ARABIA, KICKSTARTING AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023 NAVAL EXERCISE

Marking a significant milestone in the growing defense cooperation between India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the **INS TARKASH and INS SUBHADRA** have arrived at Port Al-Jubail to commence the second edition of the **naval exercise, ‘AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023.’** The visit of these Indian naval ships signifies the beginning of the harbour phase, highlighting the deepening defense ties and promoting regional stability in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf region.

Source: [Here](#) 22 May 2023

JOINT NAVAL EXERCISE SAMUDRA SHAKTI CONCLUDES IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

The fourth edition of the Indo-Indonesia bilateral Exercise Samudra Shakti-23 concluded in the South China Sea. The sea phase held from 17-19 May 2023 witnessed the participation of ASW corvette INS Kavaratti with an integral Chetak helicopter and a Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft. The Indonesian Navy assets included KRI Sultan Iskandar Muda with an integral helicopter Panther and a CN 235 Maritime Patrol Aircraft. A series of complex exercises including tactical manoeuvres, weapon firings, helicopter operations, Air defence and Anti-Submarine warfare exercises were undertaken that enhanced inter-operability between the two navies.

Source: [Here](#) 20 May 2023