



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

INDIA, KENYA FOR DEEPER COOPERATION IN MARITIME SECURITY OF INDIAN OCEAN REGION

On Tuesday, August 29, 2023, Goa Shipyard Limited and Kenya Shipyard Limited entered a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This milestone agreement focuses on enhancing capacity and fostering collaboration in the realms of ship design and construction. The occasion was marked by discussions between India's Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh, and the visiting Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for Defence, Aden Bare Duale, during which they explored avenues for capacity building and cooperation within the defence industry. This MoU symbolizes a strategic partnership between two nations, India, and Kenya, with the shared goal of strengthening their capabilities in the maritime sector. By combining their expertise and resources, both countries aim to bolster their shipbuilding and design capabilities, ultimately contributing to the defence and security of their respective regions.

Editorial Comment: The partnership between Goa Shipyard Limited and Kenya Shipyard Limited is anticipated to bring about technological advancements, the exchange of knowledge, and enhanced economic collaboration. Moreover, it reflects a dedication to strengthening the relationship between India and Kenya, extending beyond defence to encompass various shared interests. This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) emphasizes international collaboration in confronting present-day security complexities and propelling the shipbuilding sector on a worldwide level.

Source: [Here](#) 29 August 2023

INDIAN COAST GUARD IG TAKES STOCK OF FORCE'S PREPAREDNESS TO HANDLE CURRENT MARITIME SECURITY SCENARIO

Inspector General AP Badola, Commander (East) of the Indian Coast Guard, recently conducted a comprehensive assessment of the force's assets and operational readiness in the context of the current maritime security landscape. This evaluation also involved a thorough review of the Coast Guard's capability to respond to emerging challenges within its Area of Responsibilities (AoR). The maritime law enforcement agency made this announcement on a Friday. During this assessment, IG Badola presided over the District Commanders and Works conference, a pivotal annual event held on August 24 and 25. Notably, this conference saw the participation of District Commanders from four vital Indian Coast Guard Districts located in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, namely Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Puducherry, and Tuticorin, as per an official press release. The conference's significance lies in its role as a platform for top-level strategic discussions within the Indian Coast Guard. IG Badola's leadership and guidance in this conference reflect the organization's commitment to continuously evaluating and enhancing its operational capabilities. Given the evolving nature of maritime security threats, this assessment is essential for ensuring the Coast Guard's readiness to address

emerging challenges effectively. Moreover, the involvement of District Commanders from key coastal regions underscores the Coast Guard's collaborative and region-specific approach to safeguarding India's maritime interests. The strategic locations of Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Puducherry, and Tuticorin are of utmost importance in securing India's vast coastline and maritime assets. This conference serves as a platform for these commanders to share insights, discuss best practices, and coordinate efforts to maintain a robust maritime security posture in their respective regions.

Editorial Comment: IG Badola's assessment of the Indian Coast Guard's assets and operational preparedness, along with the convening of the District Commanders and Works conference, demonstrates the organization's commitment to adapt and strengthen its capabilities in response to the ever-evolving maritime security challenges in the region. It emphasizes the significance of regional cooperation and readiness in securing India's maritime interests along the eastern coast.

Source: [Here](#) 25 August 2023

INDIAN NAVY CHIEF ADMIRAL HARI KUMAR, PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD SIGN STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE TO ENHANCE MARITIME SECURITY

Chief of the Naval Staff, India, Admiral R Hari Kumar, and Commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard CG Admiral Artemio M Abu signed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on August 23, 2023, in New Delhi, marking a significant development in maritime security cooperation between India and the Philippines. The SOP establishes a structured framework for joint efforts to enhance maritime security, encompassing the protection of territorial waters, crucial sea routes, and the prevention of illicit activities like piracy and smuggling. This collaboration signifies a commitment to peace and stability in the maritime domain, with provisions for technology and information sharing, addressing various maritime challenges such as search and rescue operations and disaster response.

Editorial Comment: The initiative carries regional implications, contributing to the safety of international waters in the Indo-Pacific region and strengthening diplomatic relations, ultimately fostering economic benefits by ensuring a secure environment for trade and resource exploration.

Source: [Here](#) 23 August 2023

MARITIME SECURITY IN THE BLACK SEA IS AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM

The imperative for Western involvement in the Black Sea, whether the US Navy is part of the equation, has become increasingly urgent. This engagement is crucial for several critical reasons: Firstly, it's essential to break the maritime blockade that is severely restricting humanitarian shipping, making it difficult to combat the looming global famine crisis. Secondly, it serves as a vital step in upholding the fundamental principle of universal Freedom of Navigation in international waters.

NATO has issued a warning regarding the heightened risks of intensifying following Moscow's withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative. This withdrawal has exacerbated an already volatile situation. Disturbingly, there are reports from the White House indicating that Russia has laid additional sea mines in the approaches to Ukrainian

ports. The Black Sea Fleet (BSF) has been strategically deployed to intercept civilian shipping destined for Ukraine. Furthermore, Russia has initiated a relentless series of attacks against Ukrainian ports, marked by extensive missile and UAV strikes. Over the past 10 days alone, these attacks have inflicted severe damage on more than 26 Ukrainian port infrastructure facilities and have targeted five civilian vessels.

It is important to note that the termination of the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI) has not introduced a new security situation; instead, it has regressed to the situation as they stood a year ago.

Editorial Comment: This reversion highlights the fragile state of regional stability and emphasizes the urgent need for collaborative international efforts to ease tensions, ensure humanitarian access, and safeguard the principles of Freedom of Navigation in the Black Sea region.

Source: [Here](#) 17 August, 2023

IMPORTANCE OF MARITIME SECURITY IS KNOWN TO NATIONAL LEADERSHIP: NAVY CHIEF ADMIRAL HARI KUMAR

The acknowledgment of the importance of maritime security by national leadership, as conveyed by Navy Chief Admiral Hari Kumar, underscores its critical role in a nation's geopolitical interests, economic prosperity, resource protection, and national sovereignty. This recognition extends to addressing security threats, upholding global responsibilities, responding to humanitarian concerns, and protecting the environment.

Editorial Comment: It emphasizes the need for comprehensive maritime policies, investments in naval capabilities, and international cooperation to address evolving challenges, ensuring the safety and stability of maritime domains on a global scale.

Source: [Here](#) 17 August 2023

MARITIME FORCES

ROYAL SAUDI NAVY ASSUMES COMMAND OF COMBINED TASK FORCE 152

In a significant ceremony held on August 27th, the Royal Saudi Navy assumed command of a vital multinational naval task force dedicated to maritime security in the Arabian Gulf. Captain Assem Alamri took the reins from Captain Mohamed Almeer of the Royal Bahrain Naval Force, thereby becoming the new commander of Combined Task Force 152 (CTF 152). Under Captain Almeer's capable leadership, the multinational team successfully conducted a range of exercises, including a joint sail with Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States. Additionally, his team oversaw the Falcon Warrior exercise, collaborating closely with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to enhance their skills for conducting vessel boardings.

Reflecting on his tenure, Captain Almeer expressed his gratitude, stating, "It has been an honor and a privilege to command CTF 152. I was fortunate to have such a diverse team

from multiple nations working together to support our mission."

Captain Alamri, the incoming commander, brings with him a wealth of experience in coalition and combined operations. He previously served as a planning director for Coalition Task Force Sentinel, which is a part of the International Maritime Security Construct—a noteworthy 11-nation international naval partnership headquartered in Bahrain.

Editorial Comment: This transition of command resonates the continued commitment of nations in the region to collaborate closely on maritime security, ensuring the safety and stability of the Arabian Gulf. It exemplifies the importance of international cooperation in addressing complex security challenges in vital maritime domains.

Source: [Here](#) 27 August 2023

REPUBLIC OF PHILIPPINE NAVY ASSUMES COMMAND OF MULTINATIONAL COUNTER-PIRACY TASK FORCE

In a significant transition of command, the Republic of Philippine Navy officially assumed leadership of Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151) during a change-of-command ceremony held on August 21 at a U.S. Navy base. Rear Admiral Ko Seung-bum of the Republic of Korea Navy formally handed over control of CTF 151 to Captain Mateo Carido of the Republic of Philippine Navy. CTF 151, an integral part of Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a coalition comprising 38 nations, has a primary mission of countering piracy across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, including crucial shipping routes. Notably, during Rear Admiral Ko Seung-bum's tenure, CTF 151 conducted joint operations with Task Force 465, a multinational naval unit from European Union Naval Forces (EUNF), furthering their collaborative efforts to combat piracy through combined patrols and joint training exercises. This alliance underscores the global commitment to enhancing security, stability, and prosperity in vital maritime regions.

Editorial Comment: This seamless transition of leadership within Combined Task Force 151 emphasises the commitment of nations to safeguard international waters and ensure the uninterrupted flow of global trade. The collaborative efforts between CMF and EUNF task forces stand as a testament to the shared determination to combat piracy and maintain security across these vital maritime territories.

Source: [Here](#) 21 August 2023

SHIPPING, PORTS AND OCEAN ECONOMY

INDIA TO BECOME THE GLOBAL EPICENTRE OF BLUE ECONOMY: UNION MINISTER SARBANANDA SONOWAL

In a momentous development for India's advancement in the realm of the blue economy, Sarbananda Sonowal, the Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), underscored the nation's pivotal role in shaping the forthcoming chapter of maritime history in South Asia. He affirmed that India is positioned as the primary catalyst propelling the transformation of South Asia into the epicenter of the global blue economy. India's strategic focus on harnessing the potential of its vast coastline and maritime resources signifies a relevant leap forward in fostering economic growth, sustainability, and technological innovation. With its ambitious plans and visionary policies, India is laying the foundation for a vibrant blue economy ecosystem, encompassing sectors like fisheries, shipping, coastal tourism, and renewable energy.

As the nation forges ahead with its blue economy initiatives, it is poised to unlock immense opportunities for economic prosperity, employment generation, and environmental stewardship. India's commitment to this transformative journey underscores its determination to not only meet its own developmental aspirations but also contribute substantially to regional and global maritime prosperity.

Editorial Commitment: India's emergence as a driving force in the blue economy is emblematic of its unwavering dedication to shaping a brighter and more sustainable future for itself and the entire South Asian region. As the nation continues this trajectory, it stands ready to make an indelible mark on the world stage as a global epicenter of the blue economy.

Source: [Here](#) 23 August 2023

ADANI HAZIRA PORT SETS EXTRA COSTS ON CONTAINER FREIGHT STATION FOR IMPORT BOX NOMINATION

Stating that it was an "arbitrary charge" being imposed by Hazira port, the Container Shipping Lines Association (CSLA) strongly voiced its opposition to the recent fee increase proposed by the port authorities. The decision to implement this charge, referred to as the "Hazira Port Navigation and Ancillary Charges" (HPNAC), has sparked controversy within the shipping industry. The CSLA argues that the fee hike lacks transparency and justification, as it significantly increases the financial burden on shipping companies operating at Hazira port. The proposed charges, which cover a range of navigation and

ancillary services, include pilotage, towing, and berth-related expenses, among others. Shipping companies are contending that these charges have surged to unsustainable levels, impacting their operational costs, and ultimately affecting the pricing of goods and services for consumers. The CSLA maintains that such arbitrary increases without proper consultation with stakeholders could deter investment and trade through the Hazira port, potentially affecting the region's economic stability.

In response to the CSLA's objections, the Hazira port authorities have expressed their willingness to engage in discussions with stakeholders to address their concerns. They emphasize the importance of maintaining a balance between operational costs and infrastructure development at the port to ensure its long-term sustainability. The controversy surrounding the proposed fee increase at Hazira port highlights the broader challenges faced by the shipping industry, particularly in terms of cost management and regulatory transparency. Stakeholders are hopeful that constructive dialogue and collaboration will prevail, enabling a resolution that benefits both the port's development and the interests of shipping companies.

Editorial Comment: The ongoing dispute over the arbitrary charge increase at Hazira port reflects the need for open communication and cooperation between port authorities and industry players. Finding a fair and balanced solution to these challenges is crucial to maintaining the port's competitiveness and supporting the broader trade and economic interests of the region.

Source: [Here](#) 28 August 2023

SEAPORT TERMINAL OPERATORS' ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (STOAN) VOWS FULL BACKING FOR MINISTER OF MARINE AND BLUE ECONOMY

STOAN, the Seaport Terminal Operators Association of Nigeria, has made a resolute commitment to throw its full weight behind Mr. Adegboyega Oyetola, the newly appointed Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, in his quest to unlock the immense potential of Nigeria's maritime sector. In a statement released by the association, Princess Vicky Haastrup, the Chairperson of STOAN, not only extended her hearty congratulations to the former Osun State Governor on his appointment but also commended his stellar track record in both the private sector and public service, asserting that it positions him as an ideal leader for the vital task of harnessing Nigeria's blue economy.

Princess Haastrup expressed profound satisfaction with the selection of Mr. Adegboyega Oyetola, emphasizing that his governance prowess, indefatigable work ethic, and unwavering dedication to excellence will undoubtedly steer the Nigerian maritime industry towards peak performance and prosperity. Additionally, she underscored the astronomical potential within the maritime sector, suggesting that it could annually yield more than a trillion dollars for Nigeria. Such an economic transformation has the dual advantage of significantly advancing the Federal Government's economic diversification agenda and creating a multitude of employment opportunities for the Nigerian populace. The creation of the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy signifies a pivotal development, as it now oversees all economic activities related to oceans, seas, and other bodies of water. Its mandate extends to regulating environmental and ecological sustainability, as well as harnessing Nigeria's ocean resources for economic growth, livelihood enhancement, job creation, and ecosystem preservation. The Ministry encompasses a broad spectrum of industries, including shipping/maritime transport, port operations, coastal tourism, fishing, aquaculture, renewable energy, water desalination, undersea cabling, seabed

extractive industries, deep-sea mining, marine genetic resources, and biotechnology, making it a powerhouse of opportunities.

In this context, Princess Haastrup acknowledged President Bola Tinubu for heeding the appeals of maritime operators and responding with the creation of a dedicated Ministry. She further expressed gratitude for President Tinubu's choice of Mr. Adegboyega Oyetola, which instils confidence that accelerated development of the sector is a top priority. In alignment with the President's vision, STOAN pledged unwavering support and wholehearted commitment to the Federal Government and the Honourable Minister. Terminal operators are aligned with the government's goals to fast-track sector development, ultimately contributing significantly to the nation's economic landscape.

Editorial Comment: STOAN's steadfast commitment signals a united front in the pursuit of unlocking the vast potential of Nigeria's marine and blue economy. The partnership between the government and industry stakeholders promises a transformative journey towards economic prosperity and sustainable growth for the nation.

Source: [Here](#) 28 August 2023

NIGERIA'S STRATEGIC LEAP INTO THE BLUE ECONOMY: A VISIONARY MOVE BY PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU

Dr. Bashir Jamoh, the Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), has lauded President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's visionary decision to establish the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy, along with the appointment of Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo to lead it. Jamoh expressed his appreciation for the creation of this "long-overdue ministry," emphasizing the positive impact it will have on the President's plans and initiatives. He went on to commend President Tinubu for recognizing the untapped potential and new opportunities presented by the blue economy. This concept encompasses the sustainable utilization of ocean resources to drive economic growth, enhance livelihoods, and create jobs while preserving the health of the marine ecosystem. The blue economy encompasses diverse sectors such as maritime shipping, fisheries, coastal tourism, renewable energy, and marine technology, all of which hold immense promise for Nigeria's economic diversification and development. Efficient management and sustainable exploitation of our marine resources in the seas and oceans represent a powerful tool for economic expansion, reflecting Nigeria's commitment to embracing innovation and sustainability.

Editorial Comment: The establishment of the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy highlights Nigeria's commitment to harnessing the extensive potential of its maritime resources for economic growth and environmental preservation. With this strategic decision, Nigeria is well-prepared to navigate a sustainable and prosperous path in the ever-changing realm of the blue economy.

Source: [Here](#) 18 August 2023

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

GEOLOGIST FINDS MARINE FOSSILS AT ICY HEIGHTS IN LADAKH

A significant geological discovery has recently come to light in the high-altitude region of Ladakh, as a geologist unearthed a remarkable collection of marine fossils at an astonishing elevation of 16,000 feet above sea level. This finding provides further compelling evidence supporting the theory that the mighty Himalayan Mountain range emerged because of continental plates thrusting upwards from the depths of the ancient Tethys Sea approximately 40 million years ago.

Ritesh Arya, the distinguished founder of the Tethys Fossil Museum, made this groundbreaking discovery during his extensive groundwater exploration activities in the rugged and challenging terrains of Burtse in eastern Ladakh. Arya's efforts yielded a treasure trove of marine fossils, including well-preserved gastropods (snail-like mollusks), bivalves (shellfish), and foraminifera (mostly microscopic organisms). These exceptionally preserved fossils not only provide valuable insights into a flourishing ancient marine ecosystem but also mark a significant milestone as the first reported findings from this geological formation. Arya's statement regarding this discovery emphasizes that these fossils serve as a unique window into the past, enabling scientists to reconstruct the paleoenvironment of the region. Furthermore, they enhance our understanding of the geological forces and intricate interactions that shaped our planet, particularly shedding light on the dramatic birth of the Himalayas.

Editorial Comment: The unearthing of these marine fossils at such a lofty altitude unveils a captivating chapter of Earth's history and contributes substantially to our comprehension of the Himalayan formation. This discovery showcases the enduring value of scientific exploration and reinforces the notion that the natural world continues to hold remarkable secrets waiting to be revealed.

Source: [Here](#) 30 August 2023

STUDY FINDS HOW OCEANS RELEASE MICROPLASTICS INTO ATMOSPHERE

Microplastic pollution is now a global concern, extending its reach to remote regions, including the Arctic. Research led by Dr. Barbara Scholz-Bottcher from the University of Oldenburg reveals that these minute plastic particles not only originate on land but are also transported into the atmosphere by the sea, eventually settling in far-flung locations around the world. The study, recently published in the academic journal *Nature Communications*, sheds light on the mass presence of various plastic types in the marine atmosphere, marking a significant step in our understanding of this environmental issue. Isabel Goßmann, a doctoral candidate at the University of Oldenburg's Institute for Chemistry and Biology of the Marine Environment (ICBM), and the lead author of the study, explains the groundbreaking nature of their research. Their expedition in 2021, conducted aboard the Research Vessel Heincke, covered various points along the Norwegian coast, with Bear Island, the southernmost island of the Svalbard archipelago, as the northernmost destination. During this expedition, the team employed two distinct devices to collect air samples, actively pumping them from a height of twelve meters on the bow of the research vessel.

This research underscores the alarming global presence of microplastics, revealing the interconnectedness of marine and atmospheric systems. It highlights the pressing need for comprehensive strategies to combat plastic pollution, even in the most remote corners of our planet. As we continue to uncover the extent of this issue, it becomes increasingly clear that concerted global efforts are essential to protect our environment from the pervasive threat of microplastics.

Editorial Comment: This study serves as a wake-up call, demonstrating the far-reaching impact of microplastic pollution on even the most pristine environments. It reiterates the urgency of adopting sustainable practices and policies to mitigate this environmental challenge and preserve the integrity of our planet's ecosystems.

Source: [Here](#) 20 August 2023

INDIA'S VITAL ROLE IN COMBATING MARINE LITTER AND PROTECTING OUR OCEANS

The waste that eludes our formal waste management systems often finds its way into our natural waterways – from stormwater drains to sewer canals, flowing into rivers and eventually reaching the vast ocean. In essence, the world's oceans have been turned into a global dumping ground, jeopardizing one of our most critical ecosystems. To protect our marine environment, it's imperative that we comprehend the scale and sources of marine litter.

India, with its extensive coastline spanning over 7,500 kilometres across nine states, is home to a staggering 250 million people. Its geographical position is strategically vital, acting as a bridge between the Strait of Hormuz, a critical maritime chokepoint, and the Strait of Malacca, key shipping routes connecting oceans. India witnesses approximately 200,000 ship movements annually, underscoring its pivotal role in global maritime trade. A staggering 5.6 million tonnes of garbage infiltrate South Asian seas each year, making a significant contribution to the increasing marine litter crisis. India, boasting around four million fishermen, faces the pressing challenge of dealing with ghost nets, a perilous fishing gear responsible for ensnaring not only fish but also causing significant harm to marine life. India, as the world's second-largest fish producer, holds a crucial responsibility in mitigating this issue. In 2021 alone, the Indian fishing community managed to recover around 58,000 kilograms of ghost nets.

Among the most vulnerable victims of this marine pollution are sea turtles, enduring dire consequences due to our negligence. Shockingly, for every kilometre of coastline, one metric tonne of waste settles on the ocean bed, presenting a grave ecological threat. These figures underscore the urgent need for us to address this burgeoning global crisis promptly. Ignoring this issue could lead to catastrophic consequences soon. However, it is essential to note that India, with its immense coastline and strategic location, has the capacity and responsibility to play a pivotal role in tackling marine litter and safeguarding our oceans for generations to come.

Editorial Comment: India's unique position and the scale of its coastline and fishing industry grant it a significant role in combating marine litter. By taking proactive measures and fostering international cooperation, India can serve as a beacon of environmental stewardship, leading the charge in preserving our oceans and mitigating the dire consequences of marine pollution.

Source: [Here](#) 18 August 2023

SEARING SEAS: UNPRECEDENTED OCEAN HEAT AND THE DUAL FACTORS DRIVING IT

In March and April of 2023, a concerning trend emerged as earth scientists began noting that average sea surface temperatures had exceeded the highest levels ever recorded in a crucial dataset maintained by NOAA. Fast forward several months, and these temperatures persist at record-breaking levels. In July, global sea surface temperatures were a staggering 0.99°C (1.78°F) above the long-term average, marking the fourth consecutive month of record-high temperatures. Scientists from NASA have delved into the factors driving this alarming phenomenon. According to Josh Willis, an oceanographer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), two main factors stand out. Firstly, there is the emergence of an El Niño event in the Pacific Ocean, which is known to have significant impacts on global weather patterns. Secondly, the relentless march of long-term global warming, a consequence of human activities, has been steadily elevating ocean temperatures for nearly a century.

The map dated August 21, 2023, vividly illustrates this unsettling trend, with sea surface temperature anomalies of over 3°C (5.4°F) warmer than the norm in many regions. Notably, the equatorial Pacific displayed significant warming, characteristic of an impending El Niño event. Moreover, large expanses of warm water were evident in the Northwest Pacific near Japan and the Northeast Pacific near California and Oregon. Additional areas, such as portions of the Indian, Southern, and Arctic Oceans, also exhibited unusual warmth.

Editorial Comment: The persistent and rising sea surface temperatures highlights the complex interplay of natural climate phenomena and human-induced global warming. This alarming trend serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for concerted global efforts to address climate change and mitigate its far-reaching consequences on our planet's delicate ecosystems and weather patterns.

Source: [Here](#) 21 August 2023

JAPAN TO RELEASE TREATED WATER FROM FUKUSHIMA NUCLEAR PLANT FROM AUGUST 24

Starting August 24, 2023, Japan will commence the discharge of treated, radioactively contaminated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean. This move has triggered opposition from neighbouring countries and raised significant concerns within the fishing industry regarding potential impacts on marine life. The Fukushima disaster in 2011, stemming from an earthquake and devastating tsunami, ranks among the world's worst nuclear accidents, second only to the Chernobyl incident in 1986. Over the past 12 years, more than 1.3 million tonnes of radionuclide-contaminated water have been stored on-site in tanks, with available space dwindling. Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), the Fukushima plant operator, received approval from the Japanese Government and the International Atomic Energy Agency in July 2023 to proceed with the release. TEPCO is utilizing Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) technology to treat the water, effectively removing most radioactive materials except tritium—a rare radioactive hydrogen isotope. The treated water will be

further diluted with seawater to meet established standards. While this decision aligns with international standards, it remains a contentious issue due to concerns over its environmental impact. The Pacific Ocean, as the world's largest and deepest ocean basin, is entrusted with more than half of the Earth's free water.

Editorial Comment: The decision to release treated radioactive water into the Pacific Ocean underscores the complex and challenging considerations surrounding nuclear waste management. It is a matter that demands rigorous monitoring, transparency, and international cooperation to minimize potential risks to the marine ecosystem and neighbouring nations.

Source: [Here](#) 22 August 2023

GEOPOLITICS

MARITIME CHESSBOARD: THE GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

The South China Sea stands at the crossroads of complex geopolitics and escalating rivalries. Renowned for its abundant fishery resources, accounting for roughly 12% of the world's total fish catch, it sustains the livelihoods of millions in the region. Furthermore, its substantial untapped reserves of oil and natural gas, estimated at 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, hold the key to economic prosperity for neighbouring nations.

This strategic body of water is not just an economic asset; it serves as a vital artery for global trade, facilitating over one-third of the world's maritime traffic, valued at more than \$3 trillion annually. Connecting major economies across Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas, the South China Sea takes centre stage in territorial disputes and overlapping maritime claims, underscoring its pivotal role in the global economy. Historical complexities have woven a tapestry of disputes among regional powers like China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan, each vying for sovereignty over islands and reefs. These disputes, steeped in historical interpretations and national pride, have evolved into a multifaceted challenge, further complicated by the involvement of global powers like the United States.

A recent incident, where a Chinese coast guard vessel deployed a water cannon against a Philippine ship in a contested South China Sea area, serves as a troubling illustration. This incident is not isolated but emblematic of the underlying tensions and volatility in the region. It underscores the intricate web connecting the Chinese military and suspected maritime militia, shedding light on China's strategic stance, and heightening maritime risks.

Editorial Comment: The South China Sea's intricate dynamics pose a real and escalating danger, particularly in China-Philippines interactions. The region's significance transcends economic interests, encompassing broader geopolitical implications, making it essential for all stakeholders to prioritize peaceful resolutions and constructive dialogue to ensure stability and security in this vital maritime theatre.

Source: [Here](#) 24 August 2023

27TH EDITION OF JOINT NAVAL EXERCISE MALABAR CONCLUDES IN AUSTRALIA

The 27th edition of the prestigious joint Naval Exercise MALABAR has drawn to a triumphant close on the shores of Australia, reaffirming the unwavering commitment of participating nations to maritime cooperation and regional security. This remarkable exercise brought together the naval forces of India, the United States, Japan, and Australia in a dazzling display of naval prowess and seamless collaboration within the Indo-Pacific region. Throughout the course of this extensive exercise, these naval powerhouses engaged in a series of highly sophisticated maritime drills. These included anti-submarine warfare, air defence operations, and surface warfare exercises, serving as a testament to their exceptional operational capabilities and the exceptional level of interoperability achieved. Such exercises not only bolster the readiness and combat effectiveness of these naval forces but also stand as a powerful symbol of their collective dedication to enhancing regional stability and security.

The strategic importance of the MALABAR exercise cannot be overstated. It underscores the shared commitment of these nations to the principles of a free and open Indo-Pacific. This vast expanse of ocean serves as a critical artery for global trade and security, making collaborative efforts essential for safeguarding its stability.

Editorial Comment: The successful conclusion of the 27th edition of the Naval Exercise MALABAR in Australia is reflective of the fact that the enduring resolve of participating nations to strengthen maritime cooperation and uphold the values of a free and open Indo-Pacific. This joint endeavor serves as a beacon of stability and security in a region of paramount importance, forging a path towards a safer and more prosperous future.

Source: [Here](#) 21 August 2023

RUSSIA AND CHINA FORGE NAVAL PARTNERSHIP IN THE PACIFIC: SHAPING THE INDO-PACIFIC GEOPOLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Russian and Chinese naval forces have joined hands in conducting joint maritime patrols in the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean. Their collaborative efforts encompass a series of naval exercises aimed at countering air strikes, as reported by Russia's defence ministry on August 18. In a statement delivered through the Telegram messaging app, the ministry detailed the operations of a fleet comprising Russian Navy and Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy vessels in the East China Sea. These patrols have covered a remarkable distance, spanning over 6,400 nautical miles since their initiation.

Footage released by Russian state news agency TASS provides a striking visual of nine substantial vessels sailing in a coordinated diamond formation, with crew members standing in salute on deck. This display of naval cooperation between Russia and China marks a significant development in the global geopolitical landscape, underlining the growing strategic partnership between the two nations. The joint maritime patrols not only bolster their military capabilities but also send a clear message about their shared

interests and collaborative efforts in safeguarding regional and global security.

Editorial Comment: The joint naval patrols by Russia and China in the Pacific Ocean symbolize a new chapter in their evolving partnership. As they navigate these vast waters together, their combined presence serves as a powerful indicator of their shared commitment to regional stability and their determination to shape the geopolitical future of the Indo-Pacific region.

Source: [Here](#) 18 August 2023

INDIAN NAVY STRENGTHENS MARITIME TIES THROUGH EXERCISE WITH UAE NAVY

The Indian Navy has initiated a collaborative maritime partnership exercise with the UAE Navy, marking a significant stride in enhancing interoperability and cooperation between the two nations. This joint effort aims to address a range of everyday challenges, including piracy, smuggling, and humanitarian relief operations. In a vivid display of bilateral naval cooperation, two Indian Naval Ships, INS Visakhapatnam and INS Trikand, made their presence felt at Port Rashid, Dubai, to engage in a meticulously planned bilateral Naval Maritime Partnership Exercise alongside the UAE Navy. The exercise was conducted under the leadership of Rear Admiral Vineet McCarty, the Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet, emphasizing the commitment to strengthening the synergy and professionalism of both naval forces.

Following two days of meticulous planning, the exercise focused on enhancing tactical, technical, and procedural cross-training between the Indian and UAE naval forces. This collaborative venture aims to solidify the foundation of mutual understanding and cooperation, paving the way for the development of shared strategies and tactics. Ultimately, it seeks to nurture stronger professional bonds, contributing significantly to bolstering regional maritime security.

Editorial Comment: The collaborative maritime partnership exercise between the Indian Navy and the UAE Navy resonates the growing importance of regional cooperation in addressing contemporary maritime challenges. This joint effort reflects a commitment to fostering peace, stability, and security in the maritime domain, setting a positive precedent for future collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region.

Source: [Here](#) 18 August 2023

INS VISAKHAPATNAM, INS DEEPAK REACH BAHRAIN FOR JOINT NAVAL EXERCISE

On Monday, that is 21st August, 2023, INS Visakhapatnam and INS Deepak arrived in Bahrain, Iran, for a series of professional interactions with the Royal Bahrain Naval Force (RBNF). These interactions encompass various domains, including maritime operations and joint exercises, with the aim of fostering cooperation and strengthening ties between the two navies. India and Iran share a rich history of relations spanning millennia, characterized by significant interactions. The establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Iran on March 15, 1950, has paved the way for ongoing collaboration. India maintains diplomatic missions in Tehran and two consulates in Bandar Abbas and Zahedan, as outlined by the External Affairs Ministry.

In a separate endeavor, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Trikand received a warm and hospitable welcome upon its arrival at Bandar Abbas, Iran's prominent port city, on Sunday. This visit is part of the Indian Navy's operational deployment strategy, focused on cooperative maritime engagement with regional nations. INS Trikand's presence in Bandar Abbas reflects the commitment to bolstering maritime cooperation in the region, an effort highlighted by the warm reception extended by the commander of the 1st district of the Iranian Navy (IRIN).

Editorial Comment: These naval interactions and visits reflects India's commitment to fostering cooperative maritime engagement and strengthening diplomatic ties with regional partners. Such engagements not only enhance maritime security but also contribute to the broader objective of maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Source: [Here](#) 21 August 2023