



MAKING WAVES

A MARITIME NEWS BRIEF COVERING:

1. Maritime Security
2. Maritime Forces
3. Shipping Ports and Ocean Economy
4. Marine Environment
5. Geopolitics

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MARITIME SECURITY

RED SEA THREAT TO SHIPPING REMAINS DESPITE US AND HOUTHI CEASEFIRE

Despite a ceasefire between the US and the Houthis, the threat to shipping in the Red Sea remains high. The Houthis continue to warn vessels against calling at Israeli ports, and hence the security situation is still unstable. The ongoing risk affects global shipping routes, with many ships avoiding the Suez Canal and opting for longer journeys. This persistent danger continues to disrupt maritime trade and poses challenges for the industry, despite diplomatic efforts to ease tensions in the region.

Source: [Here](#) 16 April 2025

AUSTRALIA SEIZES AND DESTROYS TWO MORE INDONESIAN FISHING BOATS

In April 2025, Australia intercepted and destroyed two Indonesian fishing vessels caught illegally operating in its Exclusive Economic Zone. One vessel was seized near Cape Bougainville on April 3, and another near Holothuria Banks on April 15. Post the confiscation of over 400 kg of sea cucumber, the authorities detained 12 crew members, who are now under trial in Darwin. The operation attests Australia's strong stance against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Source: [Here](#) 17 April 2025

WEEKLY MARITIME INCIDENT SUMMARY 15- 21 APR 2025

Between April 15 and 21, 2025, Securewest International reported 26 global maritime incidents. Significant events included the seizure of over 17 tonnes of cannabis in Morocco and the US airstrikes on Yemen's Ras Isa and Hodeidah ports. According to the report, the Singapore Strait experienced two vessel boardings, while illegal fishing vessels were destroyed off western Australia. Multiple migrant interceptions occurred: over 700 in the English Channel, 18 off San Diego, and several off-Turkey's coast. Additionally, a Chinese research vessel approached near the Philippines, and Combined Task Force 151 initiated Operation SEA SPIRIT.

Source: [Here](#) 22 April 2025

CHINA AND INDONESIA AGREE TO BOOST MARITIME SECURITY COOPERATION IN SOUTH CHINA SEA DESPITE TENSIONS

Indonesia and China have agreed to enhance maritime security cooperation in the South China Sea, focusing on safety and joint security initiatives. The agreement was reached despite Indonesia's concerns over the Chinese activities near the Natuna Islands. The islands lie are within Indonesia's exclusive economic zone but fall within China's broader territorial claims. While the Natuna Islands were not explicitly mentioned, the MoU between the respective coast guards aims to bolster maritime security and promote peace and stability in the region.

Source: [Here](#) 21 April 2025

PH HOLDS MARITIME OPERATION ON SANDY CAY TO DISPEL CHINESE CLAIM

The Philippines conducted a maritime operation near Sandy Cay, a disputed reef in the South China Sea, to counter China's territorial claims. The operation involved the deployment of naval and coast guard personnel to assert the Philippine sovereignty and protect its maritime rights. This action follows growing concerns over China's expanding presence in the region, including its establishment of artificial islands and its claims over various features in the South China Sea. By conducting the operations, the Philippines aims to strengthen its position in the ongoing dispute with China.

Source: [Here](#) 28 April 2025

MARITIME FORCES

UK'S CARRIER STRIKE GROUP SETS SAIL FOR EIGHT-MONTH INDO-PACIFIC DEPLOYMENT

On 22 April 2025, the UK's Carrier Strike Group, led by *HMS Prince of Wales*, departed for an eight-month deployment to the Indo-Pacific. The mission, part of Operation Highmast, includes warships from Canada, Norway, and Australia, and will carry out exercises with partners like the US, India, and Japan. The strike group carries 24 F-35B jets—the largest air wing ever deployed on the CSG. The operation aims to reinforce freedom of navigation and deepen security ties across the Indo-Pacific.

Source: [Here](#) 23 April 2025

IOS SAGAR ARRIVES IN PORT LOUIS AFTER COMPLETING 1ST PHASE OF EEZ SURVEILLANCE

On April 26, 2025, the Indian naval ship IOS Sagar (*INS Sunayna*) arrived at Port Louis, Mauritius, after completing the first phase of joint Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) surveillance with the

Mauritius National Coast Guard. The mission, flagged off by India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on April 5, with a multinational crew on board from nine friendly nations, including Madagascar, Maldives, Comoros, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania. This deployment aims to enhance regional maritime security and international cooperation in the South Western Indian Ocean. The *INS Sunayna* is equipped to conduct anti-piracy operations, maritime surveillance, and humanitarian assistance missions.

Source: [Here](#) 27 April 2025

SIGNATURE OF THE RAFALE MARINE CONTRACT FOR INDIA: STRATEGIC & INDUSTRIAL IMPLICATIONS

On April 28, 2025, India and France signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) for the acquisition of 26 Rafale Marine fighter jets, valued at approximately ₹63,000 crore (\$7.5 billion). According to the agreement, India is the first international operator of the Rafale Marine variant. Enhancing the Indian Navy's carrier-based air combat capabilities, the deal includes provisions for technology transfer, which enables the integration of indigenous weapons systems, and the establishment of domestic production facilities for Rafale fuselages and Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) services for engines, sensors, and weapons. Deliveries are scheduled to commence in 2028, with the completion expected by 2030.

Source: [Here](#) 28 April 2025

ITALY'S LARGEST MARITIME DOMAIN EXERCISE MARE APERTO 25 WAS A SUCCESS

Italy's largest maritime domain exercise, Mare Aperto 25, concluded successfully on 18 April 2025, after a six-day operation in the central Tyrrhenian Sea. The exercise involved over 100 military assets and 6,000 personnel from eight NATO countries, with observers from 21 non-NATO nations. It featured a comprehensive Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) simulation, advanced amphibious operations, and multi-domain warfare scenarios. The exercise underscored Italy's strategic role in bolstering Mediterranean security and NATO's commitment to collective defence.

Source: [Here](#) 28 April 2025

INDIA HANDS OVER SHIP TO MALDIVES AFTER REFIT

On 30 April 2025, India handed over the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) ship, *CGS Huravee*, after completing a thorough refit at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai. The refurbishment, undertaken from December 2024 to April 2025, included upgrades to machinery, weapons, sensors, and living quarters. The vessel was delivered by *INS Kochi* and underwent harbour and sea trials before the formal handover in Malé. This initiative is part of India's broader effort to strengthen maritime security and defence cooperation with key Indian Ocean partners. The

strategic handover highlights India's proactive role in fostering regional maritime partnerships, reinforcing its position as a key security provider in the Indian Ocean Region.

Source: [Here](#) 30 April 2025

SHIPPING, PORTS AND OCEAN ECONOMY

CHINA CARGO BOOKINGS EXPECTED TO PLUNGE AS US TRADE WAR INTENSIFIES

Container throughput at China's main ports fell by 6.1%, due to the US-China trade war. As a consequence, cargo bookings for the following three weeks were projected to drop by 30–60% in China and 10–20% in the rest of Asia. The Labour Day holiday in China is expected to further dampen the demand, likely forcing carriers to cancel more sailings to avoid a collapse in cargo rates. Despite some tariff concessions, about 30–40% of transpacific container imports remain halted, with major carriers facing significant risk from the ongoing trade conflict.

Source: [Here](#) 18 April 2025

INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING HIGHLIGHTS STRATEGIC ROLE OF SUEZ CANAL AMID INDUSTRY'S SHIFT TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) emphasised the vital strategic role that the Suez Canal plays, as global shipping pivots toward sustainability. The ICS highlighted the Canal's resilience during the recent disruptions and Egypt's efforts to position itself as a green fuel hub for international shipping. With the industry under pressure to decarbonise, the Suez Canal is seen as crucial not only for global trade flows but also for supporting the transition to cleaner maritime fuels and sustainable shipping practices.

Source: [Here](#) 24 April 2025

VADHAVAN PORT SIGNS AGREEMENTS OF \$5.7 BN DEALS FOR EXPANSION IN MAHARASHTRA

Vadhavan Port in Maharashtra's Palghar district has signed agreements worth ₹57 billion for major expansion, including a dedicated terminal for chemical products and a specialised jetty for liquid cargo. Key deals feature a ₹42 billion investment with Gandhar Refineries for a large-scale cargo and liquid chemicals terminal, ₹10 billion with Saraf Group for a similar facility, and ₹5 billion with IMC Group for a liquid cargo jetty and storage tanks. Set to become India's 13th largest

container port, the project aims to triple national port capacity and propel India into featuring in the world's top 10 ports.

Source: [Here](#) 26 April 2025

BIMCO: JAPAN IS WORLD'S THIRD LARGEST SHIPPING NATION AS OWNERS CONTROL 12 PER CENT OF THE FLEET

According to the new BIMCO data, Japanese shipowners now control 12% of the world's total shipping fleet by deadweight tonnage (DWT), making Japan the third largest ship-owning country. Japan is one of only three nations with global fleet DWT over 10%. Tokyo and Imabari are major shipping hubs, with Tokyo-based companies dominating the gas tanker sector and Imabari being ranked the world's sixth largest shipping city. Despite its slow fleet growth over the past decade, Japan remains a critical force in global shipping. Japan's enduring strength in ship ownership highlights its strategic role in global shipping, even as trade shares shift and new regulatory challenges emerge.

Source: [Here](#) 29 April 2025

CHINA'S GUANGZHOU PORT STARTS SHIPPING ROUTE TO PERU

On 29 April 2025, Guangzhou Port, southern China's leading shipping hub, inaugurated a direct shipping route to Chancay Port, Peru. This new lane is expected to cut logistics costs by about 20% and reduce transit time to roughly 30 days, enhancing trade between China and Latin America. The route supports the growing export of Chinese appliances, electronics, and goods to Latin America, and expedites the import of Peruvian fruit, seafood, and wine shipments to China. The Chancay deep-water port, a \$1.4 billion COSCO investment, is central to China's Belt and Road Initiative, which aims to establish Chancay as a key Asia–South America maritime gateway.

Source: [Here](#) 29 April 2025

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

CONSERVATIONIST TALKS OF PROTECTING SEA OTTERS

Legendary conservationist Jane Goodall recently visited Monterey Bay, California, to champion sea otter conservation. After learning from local experts about the vulnerability of sea otters, Goodall joined the Wildlife Conservation Sea Otter Fund, which focuses on restoring otter population along the coast. She delivered a sold-out lecture and led eco-tours, emphasising the

vital ecological role of sea otters and encouraging small, positive actions for the environment. The Sea Otter Fund, as part of the Wildlife Conservation Network, directs 92% of donations to on-ground conservation efforts.

Source: [Here](#) 17 April 2025

MELTING ICE COULD BOOST NORTH-EAST GREENLAND MARINE ENVIRONMENT'S PRODUCTIVITY

A new study by University of Strathclyde uncovered that as the melting sea ice makes north-east Greenland seasonally ice-free, marine life in the region could increase by over 25%, due to the resultant increase in sunlight and a "trophic cascade." While this would benefit fish, seabirds, and whales, polar bears could decline by two-thirds, as their sea ice hunting grounds would shrink dramatically. The research highlights both new opportunities for ecosystem management and the urgent need for policies to balance increased productivity with conservation, especially as Arctic seas become more accessible to fisheries.

Source: [Here](#) 24 April 2025

TRUMP IS STRIPPING PROTECTIONS FROM MARINE PROTECTED AREAS — WHY THAT'S A PROBLEM FOR FISHING'S FUTURE, AND FOR WHALES, CORALS AND OTHER OCEAN LIFE

The Trump administration has removed key protections from the Pacific Island Heritage National Marine Monument, reopening vast marine protected areas to commercial fishing. This move threatens the unique habitat of endangered species like turtles, whales, and corals, and undermines decades of conservation. Scientific studies show that marine protected areas help fish stocks and ecosystems recover, benefitting both marine biodiversity and local economies. Experts warn that dismantling the protected areas might result in overfishing and habitat destruction, and risk the future health of both ocean life and the fishing industry.

Source: [Here](#) 25 April 2025

POPULARLY EATEN FISH AMONG KEY SEABED ENGINEERS, RESEARCH SHOWS

New research reveals that many commonly-eaten fish, such as Atlantic cod and European eel, play a crucial role as "ecosystem engineers" by churning and reworking seabed sediments—a process called bioturbation. This activity helps the ocean store organic carbon, which is vital for climate regulation. The study found that 185 fish species contribute to this process, but about 120 are targeted by commercial fishing. Overfishing threatens these species, potentially disrupting seabed ecosystems and reducing the ocean's capacity to absorb greenhouse gases, highlighting the need for sustainable fisheries management.

Source: [Here](#) 25 April 2025

DESPITE BILLIONS PLEDGED OVER LAST DECADE FOR PROTECTING OCEANS, MARINE BIODIVERSITY STILL AT STAKE: REPORT

A new report released at the Our Ocean Conference in Busan reveals that, despite over 2,600 commitments and billions of dollars pledged since 2014, marine biodiversity remains at risk. Only 43% of the pledges have been fulfilled, with many remaining stalled or unstarted, along with \$25 billion from the promised funds remaining unspent. Most commitments come from wealthy regions, while vulnerable areas lag behind. Marine Protected Areas receive far less funding than climate projects. The report calls for stronger laws, better accountability, and greater inclusion of indigenous peoples and local communities to truly protect ocean ecosystems.

Source: [Here](#) 29 April 2025

GEOPOLITICS

GEOPOLITICS MEET DIGITAL SECURITY IN ASEAN'S MARITIME DOMAIN

In April 2025, ASEAN highlighted growing maritime cybersecurity threats amid rising geopolitical tensions in Southeast Asia. Critical underwater infrastructure, including submarine cables and navigation systems, faces risks from state-backed cyberattacks and hybrid warfare, especially near key chokepoints like the Straits of Malacca. ASEAN nations are accelerating maritime digitalization but must strengthen defences and regional cooperation to counter these threats. Collaborative efforts focus on securing supply chains and enhancing resilience to maintain stability and strategic autonomy in the increasingly contested maritime domain.

Source: [Here](#) 16 April 2025

RUSSIAN OIL DRIVES OPEC SHARE IN INDIA'S IMPORTS TO RECORD LOW, DATA SHOWS

In the fiscal year ending March 2025, OPEC's share of India's oil imports fell to a record low as Indian refiners increasingly turned to discounted Russian crude, making Russia India's top oil supplier for the third year in a row. Russian oil imports rose by 7.3% to 1.76 million barrels per day (bpd), accounting for 36% of India's total imports, while OPEC's share dropped to 48.5%. Imports from Saudi Arabia and Iraq hit a multi-year low due to higher prices set by Saudi Aramco and shifting trade patterns owing to geopolitical tensions. The US became India's fourth-largest supplier.

Source: [Here](#) 22 April 2025

‘MOD ANGLE’: NARENDRA MODI’S TRIANGLE OF GEOPOLITICS, VIKSIT BHARAT, AND NET ZERO

The article introduces the concept of the “Mod Angle,” a balanced triangle representing Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s approach to harmonising three major priorities: geopolitics, Viksit Bharat (a developed India by 2047), and Net Zero (climate goals for 2070). Modi’s recent visits to the US and France have shifted India’s position from being pressured by global climate expectations to pursuing sustainable growth on its own terms. Strategic deals in energy, technology, and infrastructure supplement India’s efforts in achieving economic growth and advancing climate goals, transforming previously conflicting priorities into a balanced, mutually reinforcing strategy.

Source: [Here](#) 26 April 2025

TRUMP’S VOLATILITY IS PUSHING ASIA TOWARD BEIJING

Trump’s unpredictable tariffs and policies are driving US Indo-Pacific allies like Vietnam, Japan, and South Korea closer to China. Vietnam, hit by high US tariffs, welcomed Chinese President Xi Jinping, signalling stronger ties. Japan and South Korea resumed talks with China despite the existing mistrust. Pacific Island nations and India also hedged amid US uncertainty. While the US still holds goodwill, Trump’s volatility opens strategic space for China’s influence, though a complete regional pivot to Beijing remains unlikely without major shifts from both sides.

Source: [Here](#) 30 April 2025

TIME TO RAISE A GLASS

The MEPC 83 meeting resulted in a historic agreement for the shipping industry to impose penalties on companies that fail to adopt cleaner fuels, marking a major step toward environmental responsibility. Despite global challenges, the industry is committed to reducing emissions through consensus-driven regulations. As compared to the past regulatory milestones like SOLAS 74 and MARPOL, the legislative process was observed to be slow but effective. Industry leaders were praised for advancing sustainable shipping, with the achievement seen as a significant milestone on the path to net-zero emissions.

Source: [Here](#) 30 April 2025