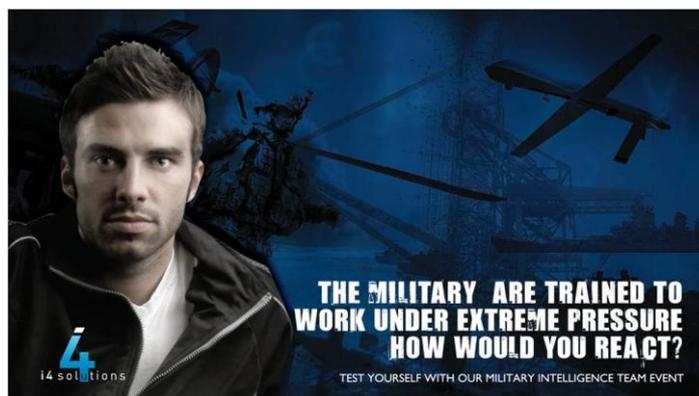


12 - 18 January 2013 (Vol. 2; No.3/13)

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Orna crew ordeal over; protests against pirates; USA recognises FGS - three Syrians and a Sri Lankan held after MV Orna was released in 2012 are freed without any ransom payment; son of former pirate kingpin, as part of the pardon for pirates assisted in the release. Residents in the Adado region where Orna crew were released, took to the streets to protest of pirate activities. US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, in a joint conference with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, declares official recognition of the Somali government for the first time in two decades. Somali pirate attacks on shipping plunged to lowest since 2007 in the \$1 trillion trade route, but the risk of attack off West Africa is growing. Japan joins the international club by beginning its first piracy trial of Somali pirates and the defence lawyers claim Japan has no jurisdiction due to unconstitutional law. After Somali ambassador states his country is ready to try nationals accused of piracy, Kenyan authorities will transfer pirates serving sentences in their jails. India's Supreme Court seeks directions from Government for anti-piracy guidelines for steps to ensure the release of Indian sailors held captive. The court also rules that the two Italian marines will be tried in a special court. In order to ensure the safety of its fishermen, India demands the 'rollback' of the HRA near to the West coast - the Contact Group agrees to take up the demand to de-list the waters. Daunting standards of criteria for PMSCs yet to be audited by a creditors not yet identified although rules for the use of force are soon to be released. Nigeria's efforts to make its waterways safer is hit by the killing of seafarers and the continued attacks on oil facilities. But the Spanish navy exempts Nigeria from being a pirate prone area as it is sea robbery that is the problem. Danish media criticised for overlooking reporting of MV Leopard

hostages nearing two years in captivity. Meanwhile, the ITF calls for Panama to help the recently released crew of MV Iceberg 1 in their recovery. New beginnings for an ex-Royal Navy pirate hunter and the changeover of EUNAVFOR's op Commander. Shipping flag state performance table released which should be regarded as positive indicators. Stolen seas documentary film continues to receive plaudits.

Contents:

[Regional Activity](#); [Released by Pirates](#); [Pirates in Court](#); [Private Security](#); [International Response](#); [Piracy Cost](#); [Seafarers' Plight](#); [And Finally...](#); [Piracy Incidents](#); [Situational Map](#)

REGIONAL ACTIVITY

East Africa

HUNDREDS of Adado residents today took to the streets in protest of piracy activities in the region, just days after the notorious Somali pirate kingpin Mohamed Abdi Hassan, who is also known as “Afweyne” announced his retirement - [Bar-Kulan](#).

The protest organised by area administration and civil society groups was also aimed at welcoming the more than 100 pirates who announced their retirement alongside with their leader Afweyne and to encourage others to quit piracy.

Area district commissioner Ahmed Salah Ibrahim said the protest signals the local community's commitment to see an immediate end to piracy in the region to safeguard the dignity of the Somali community at large.

On Wednesday last week, Afweyne and a group of other pirates announced they quit piracy, a business he has been involved for couple of years.

Afweyne who was mentioned in a UN report last year as “a pirate kingpin being protected by Somali authorities” has been centre of controversy after the report alleged that he was issued with a diplomatic passport authorized by top Somalia leader.

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THE JUBBALAND Diaspora Association urges the international community for now to facilitate more political dialogue among different Somali groups rather than to lift the arms embargo, which will be a recipe for disaster in Somalia currently, reports [Sacramento Bee](#).

The country is reeling with terrorism, piracy and human rights violation across the board, further more; the Somali national army is not unified and thus reflects as it is now clan composition given the reconciliation process in limbo.

The Jubbaland Diaspora Association appeals to the international community and US government to be careful not to ignite another deadly civil war in Somalia by arming a faction under the auspices of Federal government which is still in process. This will only put life back again into terrorist groups, and warlords now on the run and yet still active and deadly in Somalia.

Somalia is still in divisive political deadlock and current government is yet to take steps of reconciliation to narrow the gap in accordance of the federal constitution unanimously adopted by the parliament.

FOR THE first time in more than two decades, the United States has granted official recognition to the Somali government in Mogadishu - [CNN](#).

"There is still a long way to go and many challenges to confront, but we have seen a new foundation for that better future being laid," Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Thursday in a joint news conference with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who stood beaming at her side.

Clinton praised Somalia's actions in reducing the level of extremism since she took office in January 2009, when "Al Shabaab controlled most of Mogadishu and south and central Somalia, and looked like it would gain more territory."

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Video - 24mins duration

Secretary Clinton Delivers Remarks With President of Somalia Hassan Sheikh



★★★★★ 43 ratings

7,181 views

West Africa

THE SPANISH Navy Friday in Lagos, exempted Nigeria from one of the pirate prone regions in the African continent, clarifying that the only maritime challenge plaguing the country was sea robbery - [Vanguard Nigeria](#).

This assertion, has apparently disclaimed reports by the International Maritime Bureau which listed Nigeria and four other African countries along the continent's sea coast as areas prone to pirate attacks.

The Commanding Officer, Spanish Navy Ship MV RELAMPAGO, Lt Commander Tanago De La Lastra, made the clarification during a joint press briefing with the Nigerian Navy at the Naval Training Command, NAVTRAC, Apapa Lagos.

Lieutenant Commander Lastra whose country's ship arrived Lagos Thursday, disclosed that currently, only Somalia was experiencing piracy attacks, a worrisome development, he said.

He, however, expressed satisfaction over Nigerian Navy's (NN) effort to tackle maritime insecurity in the country as well as its overwhelming presence in the Gulf of Guinea, informing that during his ship's six months tour on six countries within the African continent, insecurity on the waterways was not as high as it was projected.

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WITH the Federal Government's amnesty programme in place and effective in the Niger Delta, hope had risen that the waterways would become safe and residents, including fishermen, would go about their legitimate businesses without fear - [The Guardian Nigeria](#).

But the recent killing of a boat captain, Patrick Abormegah by people suspected to be sea pirates, has dashed all hopes and prompted call by local fishermen in the Niger Delta region for President Goodluck Jonathan and security operatives to beam searchlight on the nation's waterways, which they describe as 'death zones.'

The slain Abormegah, who hailed from Badagry in Lagos State, was shot dead by a suspected group of sea pirates operating along the Andoni River, near Andoni village in Rivers State on December 20, 2012 at location 04:20.10N - 007:21.32E at about 18.00hours.

A boat captain, Joseph Kenebo, and the president of Nigeria Merchant Navy, Olakunle Ololade, who spoke to The Guardian in separate interviews, said the activities of sea pirates had become a major headache to the fishermen, especially in Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa and Rivers States.

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RELEASED BY PIRATES

A SRI LANKAN seaman who was on the vessel "MV Orna" owned by UAE company which was hijacked by Somali pirates on December 2, 2010 with 20 crew members on board, has been freed - [Daily Mirror \(Sri Lanka\)](#).

The Ministry of External Affairs, through the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Dubai and the High Commission of Sri Lanka in Nairobi, was in constant contact with the owner of the vessel with a view of securing the release of K.A.S. Soorasena while keeping his family briefed about the developments on a regular basis.

The External Affairs Ministry said that during a recent visit of President Mahinda Rajapaksa to Dubai to attend the World Energy Forum, the Minister of External Affairs, Prof. G.L. Peiris urged the shipping company to make early arrangements to secure the release of Soorasena and also had requested the UAE authorities to expedite the process.

The External Affairs Ministry said that it is now confirmed that Soorasena has been released and handed over to the Sri Lanka High Commission in Nairobi, which is making arrangements for his immediate repatriation to Sri Lanka.

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SOMALI pirates have released three Syrian hostages held in captivity since 2010 without payment of any ransom, government officials said on Saturday - [Daily Star \(Lebanon\)](#).

The three were part of the 19-strong crew of a Panama-flagged, United Arab Emirates-owned bulk cargo vessel captured in December 2010 some 400 miles northeast of the Seychelles. The ship was released in October 2012 after pirates said they received \$400,000, but detained six of the crew to get more money for them.



The pirates who had held the three were pardoned, Mohamed Aden Tiicey, president of the government of Adado region, told Reuters by phone.

"No ransom was paid. We had agreed with pirates to surrender, hand over weapons and release the hostages without ransom," Tiicey said.

Hostage Muayad Walio told Reuters he and his companions in captivity were in good health.

"I am very happy. We got our freedom after about two years and one month," hostage Muayad Walio told Reuters.

Tiicey and a former pirate, Abdiqadir, accompanied the three released hostages to Mogadishu.

"We have taken these three Syrian hostages from the pirates- the other crew had been previously released," Abdiqadir told Reuters.

Abdiqadir is the son of a former pirate kingpin known as Mohamed Abdi Hassan "Afweyne". He and his father now both work with the Addado region.

Image - via TradeWindNews

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PIRATES IN COURT

TWO MEN accused of the attempted hijacking of a tanker off the coast of Oman admitted their crimes in a court on Tuesday, reports said, in the first piracy prosecution in Japan - [OCEANUSLive](#).

The two are among four African men arrested in March 2011 over an attack on a Japanese-operated tanker in the Indian Ocean.

Men armed with submachine guns tried to seize the tanker, which was operated by Mitsui O.S.K. Lines and had 24 crew members aboard, reports said.

US Navy personnel captured the men and Japan's coastguard for the first time applied the nation's new anti-piracy law to transport them to Tokyo to face trial.

In a hearing at Tokyo District Court that used two sets of interpreters -- one from Japanese to English and another from English to Somali -- the two pleaded guilty to charges against them,

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LAWYERS for two Somali pirates on trial in Tokyo said Japan has no jurisdiction in their case because the country's anti-piracy law is unconstitutional - [UPI](#).

Pirates Mohamed Adeysey and Abdinur Ali are accused of attacking a Japanese-operated tanker in the Arabian Sea in March 2011 and threatening the ship's captain and 23 crewmembers, The Yomiuri Shimbun reported Wednesday.

The two defendants, along with two others believed to be juveniles, were apprehended by the U.S. Navy the following day and extradited to Japan a week later.

Japan's Antipiracy Law, passed by the Diet in 2009, covers acts of piracy against vessels in territorial waters or on the high seas regardless of whether they are Japanese or foreign-registered.

The maximum penalty upon conviction is life in prison.

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SOMALI ambassador to Kenya Mohamed Ali Nur on Sunday (January 13th) said Somalia's judiciary system is now ready to try Somali nationals accused of piracy, Kenya's The Standard reported - [Sabahi Online](#).

"It is time now the pirates being tried in Kenya be taken back to Somalia instead of giving Kenya the burden of looking after these people," Nur said.

Nur made the comment while addressing 64 suspected and 43 convicted pirates at Shimo La Tewa prison in Mombasa. He promised to lobby the Kenyan government to allow Somalis serving prison terms in Kenya to be transferred home to complete them.

The prisoners complained of court delays and asked the ambassador to help speed things up. The Kenyan judicial system has been plagued by delays due to understaffing.

Nur also thanked Kenya for its investment in restoring peace in Somalia.

KENYAN authorities will transfer Somali pirates who are serving their sentences in Kenyan jails to Somalia, according to Somali ambassador to Kenya, Mohamed Ali Ameriko who exclusively spoke to the media in Mogadishu - [Mareeq](#).

Ambassador Ameriko said that the plan of transfer came after Somali government requested Kenya to do so. Most of the Somali pirates detained in Kenya are serving their sentences in the coastal of Mombasa where the Somali ambassador visited and met most the detainees at the maximum security jail of Shimo la Tewa.

Most of these pirates were seized in the Somali sea by foreign forces who are fighting piracy in the Somali waters.

Image - Somali ambassador to Kenya, Mohamed Ali Ameriko



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THE SUPREME Court on Monday sought the Centre's response on a PIL seeking directions to frame "effective" anti-piracy guidelines and take immediate steps to ensure the release of Indian sailors who had been held captive by Somali pirates - [Deccan Herald](#).

A bench of Justices K S Radhakrishnan and Dipak Misra issued notice to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Shipping Ministry and Ministry of Home Affairs on the public interest litigation (PIL) filed by advocate Gaurav Kumar Bansal. "Let them come up with their response," it said.

The PIL contended that the present system to respond to piracy incidents was totally "unsatisfactory, unethical and unconstitutional". Besides being in total infringement of the principles laid down in Article 21 of the Constitution, the system showed "lack of criteria" in dealing with such emergent situations, it said.

The petition cited several instances, including the one in which six Indian seamen have been held hostage since March 2010.

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JUST as piracy is not a victimless crime then neither is the criminal gifted with impunity as the last month has seen a number of successful advances in piracy prosecution around the world -

[OCEANUSLive](#).

Italy successfully concluded two piracy trials, with the first trial relating to the prosecution of eight Somali pirates who attempted to pirate the Italian-flagged cargo ship, MV Montecristo, in 2011. The eight pirates were found guilty of attempted kidnapping for extortion and illegal possession of firearms. The convicted pirates were each sentenced to 16 years in jail, with the pirate thought to be the leader of the group sentenced to 19 years.



The second Italian piracy trial occurred in the following week with eleven Somali citizens being sentenced to three and a half years in prison for the attempted hijack of the Italian-flagged, MV Valdarno, 200nm off the coast of Oman on 17 January 2012. The reason for the lesser sentences in the second trial is likely due to the fact that the pirates involved in the MV Valdarno attempt used AK-47s rather than RPGs, never actually boarded the vessel and entered a guilty plea after negotiations with the prosecutors.

Image - File photo

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Italian Marines

INDIA'S Supreme Court ruled Thursday that two Italian marines accused of killing a pair of fishermen off the coast of India last year will be tried in a special court to be set up by the Indian government - [AP News](#).

Italy had argued that the shootings took place in international waters and the case should be handled in Italy. New Delhi said the killings happened on an Indian boat within India's territorial waters.

The court ruled that the trial should take place in India in a special court to be set up by the central government in consultation with the chief justice, according to the Press Trust of India. The order removed the case from the jurisdiction of the southern state of Kerala, near where the shooting happened last February.

Italian Consul-General Giampaolo Cutillo said his government was satisfied with at least that small victory.

"The Supreme Court confirmed that Kerala has no jurisdiction in this case, which is basically what we maintained from the very first day," he said.

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PRIVATE SECURITY

LAST month, the International Standards Organisation (ISO) published ISO 28007, the new target for aspirational PMSCs who are providing security "on board ships" - [Ince & Co](#). On the face of it, it does not extend to those providing security on fixed platforms. However, it includes a daunting 23 pages of criteria to be audited by duly accredited inspectors, who themselves have yet to be identified and approved. It sets the gold standard for PMSCs who want to show the international community that they and the men they supply are of the right calibre to guard commercial shipping on the high seas.



Those PMSCs who go down this path will be audited to within an inch of their lives, although not until August or September 2013, when the system is expected to be rolled out for those that are ready. We can then be sure that no untrained trigger-happy cowboys will get near a weapon on a laden vessel. Except, of course, that some nations such as the UK only allow weapons on board their vessels in very specific areas such as the High Risk Area off Somalia. This raises the question: what happens on the other side of the continent?

On the west coast of Africa a different and somewhat less wholesome picture emerges. There, the shipping industry seems less concerned about the provenance and capabilities of those on board. For PMSCs, West Africa remains a logistical and legal quagmire, where the cost of providing armed guards is prohibitive and in territorial waters illegal. This has meant calling on military personnel from countries like Togo and Benin, contracted through shadowy intermediaries who have arrangements with local military commanders. There is no way to check or vouch for the guards' suitability.

Image - via Ince & Co

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MARITIME Security Provider, GoAGT, announces the appointment of Gerry Northwood OBE as its Chief Operating Officer - [Sea Security](#). As an acknowledged expert in counter-piracy, Gerry has a wealth of maritime experience gained over 30 years of service in the Royal Navy. His outstanding contribution has included command of the destroyer HMS LIVERPOOL, command of UK counter-piracy operations off Somalia and spearheading the team that created Maritime Security Centre Horn of Africa (MSCHOA).



Commenting on Gerry's appointment, GoAGT's Chairman, Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks CB DSC, stated, "We are extremely pleased that Gerry Northwood has joined the senior management team of GoAGT as our Chief Operating Officer. He is a highly talented individual and brings a unique breadth of maritime experience to our rapidly growing company. I am certain that he will inspire considerable confidence in both our clients and our people."

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SOME 15% of vessels transiting the high-risk area are not compliant with best management practices, according to Gulf of Aden Transit Group's newly-appointed chief operating officer, Gerry Northwood, writes Liz McMahon of [Lloyd's List](#). With the risk-reward ratio still balanced in favour of piracy, it will only take on hijacking to excite a whole new stream of financial backers for such attacks.

Addressing an audience of industry figures on HMS President today, Mr Northwood said that despite a drop in activity and some well-publicised pull-outs, incidents were still being reported and conditions ashore still favoured piracy.

Mr Northwood has recently made the jump from significant anti-piracy military roles that included commanding counterpiracy operations off Somalia to the commercial maritime sector.

He questions whether naval task groups have been a success.

[Requires login]

IT APPEARS that a set of standardised rules for the use of force will soon be released, finally providing some clarity to the armed guards issue - [Shiptalk](#). According to the Security Association for the Maritime Industry (SAMI), the 100 Series rules for use of force will soon be published, providing an international framework for legal action and trial that offers all parties equal protection and scrutiny.

Privately contracted armed security personnel who use lethal force currently have no legal structure to rely on if their conduct is called into question. Many have felt that this leaves them in a vulnerable position, especially as each security firm has its own rules for use of force, but although these may be sent to flag states they are not generally acknowledged. There is understood to be extensive variation between such rules, some being professionally developed others being obvious cut and paste job of the service rules of engagement that the guys in the PMSCs would have used during their service career," he said.

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AS PIRATE attacks rose dramatically from 2005 to 2009, governments eschewed the thought of appearing permissive to an industry which was tangentially related to the private security companies operating in Iraq and Afghanistan; shipping companies likewise by and large rejected the need for armed guards or private escort vessels, suggesting that to employ them would only lead to an escalation in violence by pirates and, presumably, an increase in liability with regard to crew safety - [Piracy Daily](#).

In the past two years, however, more governments have authorized the use of armed guards just as the shipping industry and insurers reluctantly found value in having on-board private security. Other entities such as the International Maritime Organization and the International Chamber of Shipping also acknowledged private security's role. State navies operating in the region, both as various coalitions (Combined Task Force 151 and forces from both NATO and the EU) as well as non-aligned navies from Russia, China, India and elsewhere, have been a part of deterring, intercepting, and defeating pirates.

But with a limited number of platforms available on any given day, with millions of square miles where pirates hunted, even navies were limited in fully protecting commercial shipping from pirate attacks. To date, no ship with private armed guards or private escort vessel has been successfully taken by Somali pirates.

It's possible that Somali piracy will increase again - if naval presence subsides, if industry grows complacent, if pirates find a way of overwhelming protected ships, or if a new Somali government fails to restore some semblance of coastal order. But with the recognition that piracy is at least a hazard to legitimate commerce on the global maritime commons and a commitment of some resources to counter the problem, the role of armed guards or private security vessels has three broader, longer-range issues.

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INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

SOMALI pirates' attacks on shipping plunged last year to the lowest since at least 2007 as increased use of armed guards and naval intervention deterred incidents in an area handling about \$1 trillion in trade, writes Michelle Wiese Bockmann of [Bloomberg](#).

Attacks fell to 75 in 2012 from a record 237 in the prior year, the London-based International Maritime Bureau said in an e-mailed report today. While the number of hijacked ships fell by 50 percent to 14, the threat of vessel seizures remains as pirates wielding automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades are still seeking targets, the piracy observer said.

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PIRACY on the world's seas has reached a five-year low, with 297 ships attacked in 2012, compared with 439 in 2011, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) International Maritime Bureau (IMB) global piracy report revealed today - [ICC World Business Organisation](#). Worldwide figures were brought down by a huge reduction in Somali piracy, though East and West Africa remain the worst hit areas, with 150 attacks in 2012.

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INTERNATIONAL naval patrols off Somalia and armed private guards on board ships have driven pirate attacks to a five-year low in 2012, but the risk to shipping off west Africa is growing - [Swissinfo \(Reuters\)](#).

However, piracy is on the increase on the other side of Africa in the Gulf of Guinea, an increasingly important source of oil, cocoa and metals - and where international navies are not actively engaged in counter-piracy missions at present.

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THE INTERNATIONAL Maritime Organization, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), BIMCO, the Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF), the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO), the International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO), the International Parcel Tankers Association (IPTA), and the International Shipping Federation (ISF), welcome the recent decrease in the number of attempted and successful attacks against ships by Somalia-based pirates operating in the Gulf of Aden and the western Indian Ocean - [OCEANUSLive](#).

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"REDUCING THE Human Cost of Piracy" -- Hosted by the International Peace Institute as a side event to Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, and Chaired by Pottengal Mukundan, Director of the International Maritime Bureau. Manjeev Singh Puri, Ambassador of India to UN, Donna Hopkins, US Department of State Head of Counter Piracy and Jon Huggins of Oceans Beyond Piracy also feature. This meeting, held on 12 December, 2012, featured a range of piracy experts from the United Nations and stakeholder nations, as well as the shipping industry and associated organizations. It focused on decreasing the human cost of piracy with a view to devising a durable and inclusive solution to this threat.

The webcast (via Safety4Sea/YouTube) from the meeting follows, in two parts.

A Sustainable Solution to Somali Piracy, Panel I



no ratings yet

100 views

A Sustainable Solution to Somali Piracy, Panel II



no ratings yet

27 views

THE REPUBLIC of Somaliland's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Dr. Mohamed Abdillahi Omar, accompanied by the Minister of Presidency, Mr. Hersi Ali Hagi Hassan, arrived in Dubai yesterday evening as part of a diplomatic visit meant to deepen Somaliland's long-standing economic and security partnership with the United Arab Emirates - [Somaliland Sun](#).

While in Dubai, Foreign Minister Omar will meet with representatives from the government and private sector, including State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash, and intermediaries from the maritime terminal operating and developing company DP World.

The UAE and Somaliland have developed close cooperation in the areas of trade, investment, the fight against piracy and regional affairs. In June 2012, the UAE government showed its commitment to peace and stability in the Horn of Africa by bringing together the presidents of Somaliland and Somalia to ratify a framework for bilateral dialogue meant to clarify future relations between the two countries.

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THE EUROPEAN Parliament (EP) Tuesday adopted a resolution noting that Somalis will stop turning to piracy only if Somalia's failed state and poverty are tackled - [Kuwait News Agency](#).

The resolution, adopted with 570 votes to 56, on EU strategy for the Horn of Africa stressed that long-term viable stability of the Horn of Africa can only be built on strong and accountable democratic institutions, the rule of law and respect for human rights. It called for a comprehensive strategy to address the reasons that draws Somalis into piracy.

"It is estimated that 13 million people are now in need of emergency assistance in the entire Horn of Africa," said British MEP Charles Tannock, the author of the resolution.

He stressed on the "paramount importance for the global economy of a stable Horn of Africa and safe passage of ships at its coast".

RUSSIA'S Large Anti-Submarine ship, the Marshal Shaposhnikov, has started forming a convoy of civilian ships in the Gulf of Aden - [The Voice of Russia](#).

The Russian warship will escort the convoy of Greek and Panamanian ships along the “security corridor” towards the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb.

This is the eighth mission in the Gulf of Aden of the Russian squadron of The Marshal Shaposhnikov, a medium sea tanker and a rescue tug. The warships arrived in the Gulf of Aden in late December to keep the anti-piracy watch as part of an international naval force.



Image - via RIA Novosti

REAR Admiral Duncan Potts handed over operational command of the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) to Rear Admiral Robert Tarrant - [eunavfor](#).

Rear Admiral Potts has commanded EU NAVFOR, the European Union’s counter piracy mission off Somalia, since August 2011.

Admiral Potts leaves EU NAVFOR to take up a new role with the Royal Navy.



Prior to joining EU NAVFOR, Rear Admiral Tarrant commanded the Combined Task Force 150 – responsible for promoting maritime security in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean and Gulf of Oman.

Image - Courtesy of eunavfor.eu

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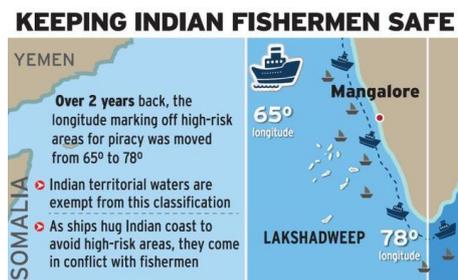
PIRACY COSTS

TO ENSURE the safety of its fishermen after incidents such as Enrica Lexie, India is demanding the rollback of an international guideline that was changed over two years back to designate seas close to its western coast as at a high risk of piracy - [The Hindu](#).

Following increasing cases of piracy near Somalia that occasionally extended as far as Lakshadweep, industry bodies working in tandem with International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) — constituted in 2009 following

a U.N. resolution with States and international bodies as members to work together to rid the seas of piracy — decided to move the longitude marking off the high-risk area in the Arabian Sea from 65 degrees to 78 east. The new classification extended the high-risk area much closer to the Indian coast barring the nation’s territorial waters of 12 nautical miles. The guidelines for ships advise them on evasive action against piracy.

Shipping experts say that the changed classification resulted in ships hugging the Indian coast and often cruising in Indian territorial waters — from Mangalore to Kanyakumari — while



transiting the Arabian Sea. Many of these merchant vessels have armed guards as allowed by IMO.

India's proposal that seas close to its western coast be removed from the list of High Risk Areas (HRA) for piracy has not been met with warmth by global agencies.

Image - Graphic: Satwik Gade

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THE WOODEN fishing boat navigating Nigeria's mangrove swamps is powered by a generator balanced above its volatile cargo - [Reuters](#).

Shimmering crude oil fills its hull, almost indistinguishable from the polluted water in the creek.

Here and there on the banks, people coated in oil wade through greasy mud in patches of landscape blackened and stripped of the thick vegetation that makes Nigeria's oil-producing delta so hard to police.

Plumes of grey or yellow smoke fill the air as men who will give only their first names go to work in an illegal industry that the government says lifts a fifth of Nigeria's output of two million barrels a day.

Oil 'bunkering' -- hacking into pipelines to steal crude then refining it or selling it abroad -- has become a major cost to Nigeria's treasury, which depends on oil for 80 percent of its earnings.

Image - Passenger speedboat churns up the water, while in the background an illegal oil refinery is left burning after a military chase had occurred earlier in a windy creek near river Nun in Nigeria's oil Credit:

REUTERS/Akintunde Akinleye



THE UN-affiliated Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) has agreed to take up India's demand to get the country's coastal waters de-listed from the high risk zone of piracy - [The Times of India](#).

Indian had raised this demand to prevent straying of foreign cargo vessels from international waters to its coastal areas. Foreign cargo vessels hugging the Indian coast have been cited as a major cause of conflict between them and fishing vessels. These vessels often cite the 'high risk zone' declaration as a pretext to come closer to Indian coastal areas.

"India's demand was discussed at the just-concluded meeting of the CGPCS in London. The next meeting of the working group III of the CGPCS, to be held in Korea next month, is likely to take a decision favourable to India," a DGS official told TOI.

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THE CENTRAL Naval Command yesterday transferred 12 foreign suspected oil thieves and their alleged Nigerian collaborators it arrested within its areas of responsibility to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) - [Legal Oil](#).

It was learnt that 10 Indians and two Ghanaians were among the suspects handed over to a team of EFCC operatives from the commission's zonal office in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The team was led by EFCC's Deputy Detective Superintendent, Mr. Macaulay Olayinka.

LEADERSHIP gathered that the suspects were arrested on board two vessels, MT EVE and MT ASHKAY, in Akasa and Sangana Rivers respectively.

The Flag Officer Commanding, Central Naval Command, Rear Admiral Johnson Olutoyin, explained that the suspects were apprehended when MT ASHKAY was intercepted by a naval ship, NNS Predator, off Sangana River with cargo suspected to be stolen crude oil.

Olutoyin who spoke in a brief ceremony at the command's headquarters, Yenagoa, said the vessel, which was formally christened Wine Trader, was owned by Krishna Shipping Inc. and operated by Veesham Shipping Inc.

"The product on board MT ASHKAY is suspected to be stolen crude of about 157,822 litres in her cargo tanks without papers to justify the cargo.

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SEAFARERS' PLIGHT

ON JANUARY 12, 2010, the MV Leopard was hijacked by Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean. The ship's two Danish and four Filipino crew members were soon transferred to land and have been held somewhere in Somalia ever since, reported the [Copenhagen Post](#) - [ScandAsia](#).

As the second anniversary of their capture looms, the plight of the seamen has been conspicuously absent from the Danish media, with the exception of tabloid Ekstra Bladet that started a campaign this summer entitled, "Will Søren and Eddy be left to rot in Somalia?"

The campaign, which refers to the names of the two Danish seamen, Søren Lyngbjørn and Eddy Lopez, was designed

to draw attention to the two men's plight, and their fears that they will be left to die in captivity.

The campaign also brought unwelcome attention to the ship's owners, Shipcraft. Their campaign portrayed its majority shareholder, John Arne Larsson, as living a lavish lifestyle while his employees languished in Somalia.

It is, of course, more complicated than that. The Copenhagen Post has on multiple occasions been contacted directly by the men's captors hoping to generate media coverage. At the advice of the Foreign Ministry, the decision was made not to report on the matter, based on the argument that coverage of the men's captivity could spoil negotiations to free them.

Other media outlets followed the ministry's recommendation. As late as Wednesday TV2 News reportedly cancelled a story on their popular evening news talk show 'Go' Aften Danmark' about the MV Leopard hostages.

Programme editor Jes Schrøder told Ekstra Bladet that the decision was based on concerns that the story would backfire.

Image - Captive seaman Søren Lyngbjørn appearing in a video posted by the pirates in April 2011 (Photo: YouTube)



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FAMILIES of 17 Indian sailors held hostage on board MV Royal Grace, a chemical tanker captured by Somali pirates in March last year, are pinning their hopes on Pakistani rights activist Ansar Burney to help free the men.

One of the captured crew is a Pakistani national and Burney has offered to help in his release, said Sushil Kumar, the brother of Saurabh Kumar, 23, one of the captured Indians sailors.

"We want the Pakistani rights activist Ansar Burney to help in release of the Indians on board MV Royal Grace.. He has indicated he will help," Sushil told IANS.

Sushil and the kin of the other Indian crew are very hopeful of Burney, who runs the Ansar Burney Trust, helping out after his success in getting the crew of MV Suez freed in June 2011 after 10 months in the captivity of Somali pirates.

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THE ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) is calling on Panama to join the effort to help the recently released crew of the Iceberg 1 to recover from their hostage ordeal - [Maritime Executive](#). The crew of the Panama-flagged vessel were held for nearly three years by Somali pirates – who subjected them to torture, starvation and even mutilation – before being released last month.

The 22 hostages, from seven nationalities (the chief officer is still missing and another seafarer committed suicide during his captivity), were helped home by the UNPOS and UNODC* Hostage Support Programme, with support from, among others, Interpol, the Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme (MPHRP), the seafarers' consulates (two countries sent aircraft to pick up their nationals) and the ITF. They are now in urgent need of psychological help to address the trauma they were deliberately subjected to, and assistance with rebuilding their lives. Many have medical problems and are looking for help.

The MPHRP is assessing the help that the seafarers need, and will then arrive at an estimate of how much it will cost.

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AND FINALLY...

STOLEN Seas (Somalia/Kenya/UK/Italy), directed by Thymaya Payne, received The John Schlesinger Award, which is presented to a first-time documentary filmmaker - [Palm Spring Film Festival](#). Stolen Seas presents the inside story of Somali piracy. The filmmakers spent three years in some of the world's most dangerous places, talking to pirates, hostages, hostages' relatives, and the shipping company executives caught up in this deadly culture clash. The jury stated, "Stolen Seas is a gripping and eye-opening film about Somali piracy that shows us that things are often not what they seem. Full of rich moral dilemmas, fresh perspectives, rigorous journalism and visually striking storytelling, Stolen Seas takes us on an emotional journey where we are forced to re-examine our prejudices about a misunderstood African reality." The winner receives the John Kennedy Statue ("The Entertainer").

THE INTERNATIONAL Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has launched its latest 'Shipping Industry Flag State Performance Table' which can be downloaded from the homepage of the ICS website - [International Chamber of Shipping](#).

ICS Director External Relations, Simon Bennett explained "Our table is intended to encourage shipowners to maintain a dialogue with their flag administrations to effect any improvements that might be necessary in the interests of safety, the environment and decent working conditions." This year's ICS table includes some new flag states which seem to be increasingly popular with some shipowners, such as Moldova and Sierra Leone, which join the ranks of flags such as Bolivia, Cambodia and Mongolia in being revealed by the table to have a somewhat patchy performance.

ICS stresses that the table includes what should be regarded only as potential positive indicators. There may be good reason why a flag is lacking one or two of these, especially if it has had too few port calls to gain a place on certain port state control 'white lists' or has not yet ratified one or two recently adopted international Conventions.

Mr Bennett remarked "The absence of a couple of positive indicators is probably not very important. But if a flag is lacking a large number of positive indicators then shipowners may want to ask serious questions."

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PIRACY INCIDENTS

Hijacks:

- NSTR.

Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies (All regions):

- SE Asia - V LATE Report | The master of Mongolia-flagged tanker, **Puteri**, spotted 10 masked men in two speed boats boarding the anchored tanker at 2330 LT in position 01:13.15N - 103:33.84E, South of Tanjung Pelapas, Malaysia. The crew was alerted immediately and took refuge in the engine room while the duty officer and master locked themselves in the bridge. The robbers, armed with knives and guns, tried to enter the engine room and the bridge but were unable to gain entry. The vessel sought assistance from tug boats that were in the vicinity. Three tug boats approached and surrounded the tanker but despite their presence, the robbers remained onboard the tanker. After failing to gain entry to the engine room and bridge, the robbers subsequently left in their speed boats with a few mobile phones and personal clothing. Reported (via ReCAAP) 7 Dec.
- SE Asia - LATE Report | A speedboat with five pirates wearing camouflage uniforms approached China-flagged tug, **De Hui**, at 1710 LT in position 01:11.50N - 103:37.80E, Singapore Straits. Two pirates boarded the tug and took hostage the duty Bosun and held him face down at knife point. Master raised the alarm and all crew mustered. Seeing the alert crew, the pirates left the tug without stealing anything. Reported 8 Jan
- SE Asia - LATE Report | About six robbers in a speed boat approached and boarded China-flagged barge, **Haiyangshiyou**, under tow at 23:20 LT in position 01:11.50N -

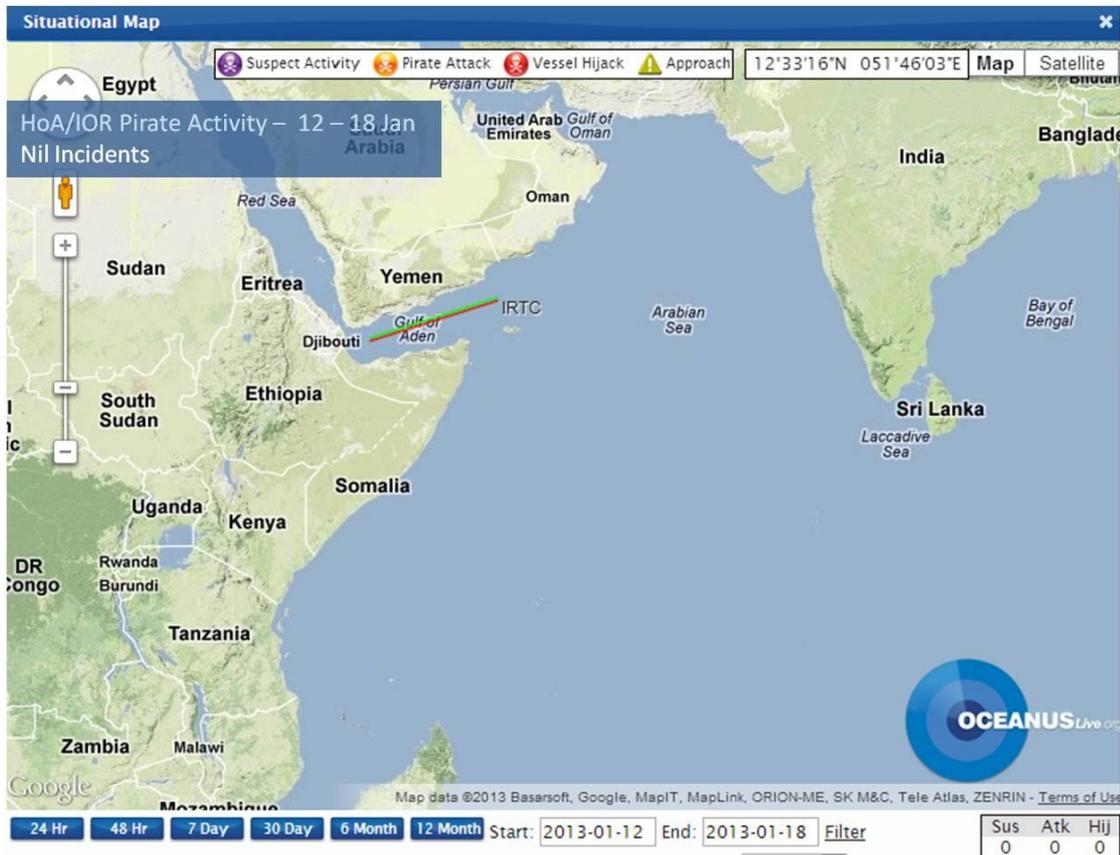
103:37.80E, Singapore Straits. The robbers stole barge property before escaping. Reported 8 Jan.

- SE Asia - Two robbers armed with long knives boarded anchored China-flagged bulk carrier, **Hua Heng 167**, via the anchor chain at 0105 LT in position 01:11.10S - 116:46.70E, Balikpapan anchorage, Indonesia. Duty crew noticed the robbers and raised the alarm. All crew mustered and rushed to the forecastle. On seeing the crew's alertness, the robbers escaped empty-handed in their speed boat. Reported 12 Jan.
- Gulf of Guinea - Liberia-flagged anchor handling vessel, **Armada Tuah 107**, reported attacked by 'water-borne robbers' in position 03:51.8N - 006:45.8E, approx 15nm west of Okwori field, Gulf of Guinea. Vessel locked down and crew, with 4 expats, secured in safe area. Vessel reportedly ransacked and crew belongings stolen. Reported 12 Jan.
- Gulf of Guinea - Three robbers armed with knives disguised as fishermen in a small boat approached and boarded an anchored Malta-flagged container ship, **Grand**, at 0030 LT in position 04:43.9S – 011:46.7E, Pointe Noire Anchorage, The Congo. Robbers spotted by Duty crew who raised the alarm. On hearing the alarm, the robbers jumped overboard and escaped empty handed in their boat. Port control contacted but received no response. Reported (via IMB) 15 Jan.
- Gulf of Guinea - Fishing vessel, **Star Shrimper**, reported attacked at 1230 LT in position 04:29N - 007:57E, approx 4nm from QIT. Captain and Chief Engineer were reportedly kidnapped. No information on attackers; awaiting further confirmation. Reported 15 Jan.
- SE Asia - Five robbers armed with long knives boarded an anchored Liberia-flagged bulk carrier, **Diana Bolten**, via the anchor chain during cargo ops at 0300 LT in position 22:17.05N - 091:43.35E, Chittagong Anchorage, Bangladesh. The 2nd Mate noticed the robbers and asked deck watchman to check. On approaching the forecastle, the deck watchman was threatened by three robbers. The Master ordered the crew to enter the accommodation and lock access. 2nd Mate directed the spotlight towards the robbers who escaped through the anchor chain. Upon inspection, it was found that ships' property was stolen. Port control and coast guard were informed and a navy/coast guard boat arrived on location and searched for the robbers. Reported (via IMB) 16 Jan.

VESSEL and hostage numbers -IMB - Vessels: 8 Hostages: 127. ([as at 16 Jan](#)). NATO & EUNAVFOR state Vessels: 4 and Hostages: 108.

SITUATIONAL MAP

An interactive version of this situational map is available through registration of verified access to [OCEANUSLive](http://OCEANUSLive.org)



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