

Covering period 31 Jan - 6 Feb 2015

Nothing Significant To Report



Nothing?

Well maybe there is. We took a sabbatical to review the continuation of the newsletter. Support & sponsorship are always needed.



Top Story This Week...

Gunmen attacked a Greek-owned tanker, Kalamos, while it was waiting to load off Nigeria, killing its Greek deputy captain and taking hostage three other crew.

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West Africa

Gunmen attacked a Greek-owned tanker while it was waiting to load off Nigeria late on Tuesday, killing its Greek deputy captain and taking hostage three other crew, Greece's coastguard said on Wednesday - [Reuters](#).

The attack on the vessel Kalamos, which had a crew of 23 and was sailing under a Maltese flag, took place at Qua Iboe, a sea area between Cameroon and Nigeria, the coastguard said. "The foreign and shipping ministries have taken the necessary actions for the rescue of the hostages," Greece's Deputy Shipping Minister Thodoris Dritsas said in a statement.

The ship had sailed from China to Nigeria to load. Greece's shipping ministry said the rest of the ship's crew was safe.



The Togolese Navy, on Sunday 1 Feb, rescued 24 Ghanaian and Chinese sailors whose boat was attacked by pirates in international waters, said the Togolese maritime prefecture -



[OCEANUSLive](#).

At the request of the Ghanaian authorities, Togolese Navy patrol boat chased a fishing vessel, the Lung Rong Lu Young 917 [Lu Rong Yuan Yu 917], with a crew of 28 sailors, attacked a few hours earlier off Takoradi in Ghana.

The patrol fired several warning shots in the attempt to stop the ship, but the pirates refused to comply. Twenty-four crew members managed to leave the boat by jumping into the water; they were immediately recovered by the Togolese Navy. One Ghanaian sailor was wounded with a knife by the attackers. Other reports claim one crew member died.

The Lu Rong Yuan Yu 917 was chased by the Benin navy, without success as it transited through regional waters.

In the management of this incident, the Navy has proven its ability to secure the waters under the jurisdiction of Togo, and from there, to intervene in international waters. This crisis was also an opportunity to highlight the collaboration and sharing of information at international level in the fight against maritime piracy.

The fishing vessel headed towards Nigerian waters where the 8 pirates onboard managed to

depart the vessel 8nm off the Nigerian coast. The master of the vessel was reported to be in control of the vessel and heading into a safe port on 3 Feb.

Armed men, suspected to be pirates, opened fire on a police patrol team, killing one of the officers at new Ogbia-Nembe Road in Bayelsa State, Monday. Two of the hoodlums were reportedly killed - [Vanguard Nigeria](#).

The incident, it was learned, occurred at about 4.10pm, close to Obioma Bridge on Ogbia stretch of the road in Ogbia Local Government Area.

While the deceased policeman was identified as a sergeant, the identity of the dead hoodlums could not be immediately ascertained as their bodies were reportedly taken away by their gang members.

An account had it about 10 armed men came from the river and laid siege to Obioma Bridge, dispossessing commuters of valuables and cash, when the police patrol team, Operation Doo Akpo, responded to a distress call.

THE [Nigeria] Federal Government has said that it will not hesitate to detain any vessel entering the country territorial and coastal waters with security escorts on board, whether armed or unarmed - [Vanguard Nigeria](#)

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, NIMASA, gave this warning when the agency detained three vessels, LILAC VICTORIA, UACC EAGLE and MORGANE, because they sailed into Nigeria with individuals linked to private security firms overseas offering training on the use of weapons.

The NIMASA Director of Shipping Development, Captain Warredi Enisuoh, said the agency was uncomfortable that vessels with high probability of entering Nigeria with disposable arms or ammunition were beginning to sail in shortly after the agency and other sisterly agencies had cleansed the Nigerian waters of scourges such as piracy.

Describing it as “a new threat” that now “looms over the horizon with possible far-reaching consequences,” Enisuoh warned ship operators, cargo owners, ship agents, among others that resultant interventions and delays may lead to possible forfeiture of their ships and cargo to the Federal Government.

“Private registered security firms in collusion with unscrupulous officials have embarked on unconstitutional MoUs and partnerships that threaten our national security.

At least one person has been killed and several others injured as some of Somali pirates clashed themselves in a town located in south-central Somalia, witnesses said - [Horseed Media](#).

The gunfight broke out in the Southern part of Galkayo town controlled by the Galmudug local administration on Sunday night.

One local resident told reporters that both gunmen clashed over a checkpoint which is controlled by another local militia.

Both the dead and injured are believed to be pirates and were involved in the clash.

Officials from Galmudug administration intervened the situation later on but have not given further details regarding the battle. [Read More](#)

Iranian Navy warships rescued 2 oil tankers in the Gulf of Aden after fierce battles with pirates - [FARS News Agency](#).

The timely presence and action of the Iranian Navy's 33rd Flotilla thwarted the attack by pirate speed boats, equipped with various weapons, on an Iranian oil tanker in the waters of the Gulf of Aden three days ago, forcing the pirates to flee the scene.

The pirates came back with 5 speed boats to attack another Iranian oil tanker, but they fled the scene after the Iranian warships approached the oil tanker. [Read More](#)

Republic Of Korea Navy Seals Assault Somali Pirates During Raid On Hijacked Container Vessel.

This is a rare video that shows Republic Of Korea Navy Commandos in action against Somali Pirates during Operation Dawn of Gulf of Aden in 2011. These Commandos are also often referred as Republic Of Korea Navy Seals but that is an unofficial nickname. The footage you see was just released for public by the ROK Ministry of National Defense and is the first time footage taken by ROK soldiers onboard a hijacked ship was released.

Operation Dawn of Gulf of Aden was a naval operation by the Republic of Korea Navy against Somali pirates in the Arabian Sea. The operation was spurred by the pirates' seizure of the South Korean chemical tanker Samho Jewelry. In response, the South Korean government sent a destroyer and 30 naval commandos to retake the ship and rescue its crew. After trailing the tanker for several days and fighting a preliminary engagement that neutralized four of the pirates, the South Korean forces retook the ship by force on January 21, 2011 in a successful boarding action that resulted in the death of eight and the capture of five out of thirteen pirates.

Footage by ROK Ministry of National Defense

The European Union's Maritime Capacity Building Mission in the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean (EUCAP Nestor) will set up a base in Puntland. The move comes after between Puntland President, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, and the EU Civilian Operations Commander for all Civilian Common Security Defense Policy Missions, Mr. Kenneth Dean in Garowe on Wednesday (January 27) - [AllAfrica](#)

Permanent deployment of EUCAP in Puntland marks a shift of its activities in Somalia and the

major aim will be to train Puntland forces to fight against piracy and terrorism. It will also strengthen the existing legal and law enforcement frameworks related to anti-piracy and maritime security capacity. [Read More](#)

Despite growing concerns by Puntland, Somaliland's separatist administration has put seized weapons shipment on public display, [Garowe Online](#) reports.

During a parade-like event that attracted dozens of journalists, Somaliland said the arms seized on MV Shakir, a Sudanese-registered ship included heavy weapons such as tanks, artillery pieces and modern combat vehicles.

On Thursday, authorities denied experts from United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea entry into Berbera seaport where offloading was underway.

The following day, Somaliland's neighbor to the east, Puntland expressed great concern over the fate of the seized weapons shipment, saying it could fall into the hands of terrorists operating in the rugged terrain of Galgala.

Somaliland's Minister for Security called allegations leveled against the breakaway region 'unfounded and fabricated'. [Read More](#)



Following a lengthy phone conversation between Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir and Somaliland leader, the separatist region has sent back huge arms consignment, [Garowe Online](#) reports.

Multiple independent sources in Berbera Port City confirmed the move to Garowe Online.

Cranes reloaded MV Shakir with the seized weapons shipment including battle tanks, artillery pieces and modern combat vehicles late on Monday night, two days after public display.

Sudan's Al Bashir is said to have disclosed that the heavy weaponry was bought from a market in United Arab Emirates to Somaliland President Ahmed Mohamed Mohamud (Siilaanyo). [Read More](#)

A Spanish court on Wednesday convicted six Somalis for piracy and sentenced them each to 16 and a half years in jail for attacking a Spanish tuna trawler off the coast of Somalia in 2012 - [Dunya News](#).



The six men have been held in a Spanish jail since November 2012 since being caught by Dutch sailors after they ambushed the Izurdia off the Horn of Africa using AK-47 assault rifles.

Spain's National Court, the country's top criminal court, convicted the six of piracy and membership of a criminal group.

In its ruling the court said the six men formed "an assault cell or organised pirate group with material to board and kidnap commercial boats that sailed in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Somalia."

The court said they were part of an organisation, based in Zimbabwe capital Harare, dedicated to enriching itself from assaulting and kidnapping boats in the Horn of Africa.

The court said the six armed men approached the Izurdia on a skiff on October 10, 2012 about 300 nautical miles off the Somali coast.

They aborted their attempted ambush after private security guards on board the Spanish trawler fired shots at them.

A Dutch navy ship taking part in the European Union's anti-piracy operation Atalanta detained them the following day and handed the six men over to Spanish authorities. [Read More](#)

The widow of a Taiwanese man whose fishing vessel was sunk in the effort to rid it of pirates cannot seek damages, the 4th Circuit ruled.

Wu Lai-Yu was the master and owner of the ship, Jin Chun Tsai 68, which pirates hijacked in 2010 - [Courthouse News](#).

He and two crew members were still aboard the JCT 68 as hostages on May 10, 2011, when the USS Stephen W. Groves followed orders from a NATO task force commander to engage the ship and forced its surrender.

Three of the nearly two dozen pirates were killed in the engagement, and a special team also found Wu in his sleeping quarters, "with the crown of his head shot off," the master's widow, Wu Tien Li-Shou, claimed in a federal complaint against the United States.

Wu's crew members were rescued safely, and the USS Groves intentionally sunk the JCT 68 the next day, with Wu's body on board, pursuant to the NATO commander's orders. Though Wu's widow claimed that the counter-piracy raid under Operation Ocean Shield was conducted negligently, violating the rules of engagement, a federal judge in Baltimore dismissed the action after finding that it raised a "nonjusticiable political question." Noting that the United States sent Wu's family money already, a three-judge panel for the 4th Circuit affirmed dismissal of the civil action on Jan. 23. Ultimately, "this case presents a textbook example of a situation in which courts should not interfere," Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson wrote for the court. "Resolving this dispute would oblige the district court to wade into sensitive and particularized military matters," he added. The 22-page opinion notes that Wu's case implicates very "precise details of the military engagement: what kind of warnings were given, the type of ordnance used, the sort of weapons deployed, the range of fire selected, and the pattern, timing, and escalation of the firing." "Discovery easily could draw the court and the parties into the technicalities of battle," and tie the hands of NATO and American commanders leading anti-piracy initiatives, Wilkinson added. [Read More](#)

IT IS not the sort of image you expect to find in a UN report: a man in a blue uniform lies hogtied on the ground, his hands and feet secured behind his back, his face covered in ash and bruises - [Rand Daily Mail](#).

The 2013 report, on the breaking of an arms embargo in Somalia, detailed the activities of private military companies in that lawless country. The photograph in question was taken at a training camp run by one such firm. The report tells of another trainee bound and beaten to death with rocks.



These and other incidents — physical abuse, arms trafficking, coup plots — point to a murky underworld where private armies operate with little or no accountability, mainly because few international laws regulate the use and behaviour of mercenaries.

Thousands of soldiers of fortune, usually under contract to private military and security companies, are paid to fight proxy wars for governments and to protect companies and NGOs. But do they end conflicts or fuel them? Is this a modern corporate manifestation of the mercenary phenomenon that plagued Africa after its colonisation?

As apartheid ended South Africa began to reduce its armed forces. Between 1995 and 2000, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) declined significantly from 120 000 personnel to about 82 000, according to Kingma. Many of the newly demobilised soldiers found jobs working for private security firms, including the US-based DynCorp, Military Professional Resources, Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE), and Protection Strategies — all of which were involved in African conflicts.

Several professional army firms found work in Somalia after its government collapsed in 1991. The president of Puntland, a semi-autonomous region in the country's north-east, hired Saracen International, then a Pretoria-based firm (now Sterling Corporate Services based in the United Arab Emirates) to provide the Puntland Maritime Police Force with military training and equipment to fight maritime piracy. Harsh corporal punishment characterised Saracen's training camps during May 2010 and February 2011. This included the breaking of hands, the binding and beating of police apprentices, and one death, according to the aforementioned UN report.

The UN is also increasingly contracting its support services, such as intelligence gathering and civilian policing, to these firms because it does not have the requisite expertise itself, according to Østensen.

These companies are here to stay. The international community and national governments need to mitigate the inherent threats they pose by adopting strong laws that monitor and regulate and by punishing them when these laws are broken. [Read More](#)

The sharp drop in piracy in the Somali Basin is puzzling security experts, who have been surprised by recent developments. While they are not heralding "mission accomplished," they are asking what factors have led to the recent sharp demise in piracy off the Somali coast - [DefenceWeb](#).

The High Risk Area off the Somali coast has seen over 700 attacks by pirates since 2009, but last year there were only 11 pirate incidents and no ship hijackings. No ships have been hijacked in the area since the start of January 2013. Toward the end of 2011, seven ships were being hijacked a month.

Security experts can point to no one reason for the quiet in the Somali Basin, but suggest several factors have combined to reduce the threat over the past year. Among these are the presence of three international naval task forces in the area, the extensive use by ship owners of armed private

security guards, and improved best security practices for sailing through high risk waters off east Africa.

The High Risk Area in the Indian Ocean extends from the southern approaches to the Suez Canal and Strait of Hormuz in the north to 10 degrees south, which cuts across the northern tip of Madagascar, and 78 degrees east, upon which the southernmost tip of India lies.

Speaking at the Counter-Terrorism Summit, Robert Missen, the Head of the European Commission's Land and Maritime Security Unit said the key factor in the sharp drop in incidents was the greater presence of armed guards. "Armed guards is the tipping point" in the fight against piracy, said Missen.

The growth of the Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel has been unregulated, "but their use has proven to be effective," said Missen.

Members of security companies say that industry standards allowing more aggressive rules of engagement for armed guards in face-offs with pirates have acted as a powerful deterrent to piracy. [Read More](#)

Remember how just a few years ago one of the most pressing issue to world peace and security seemed to be the sundry band of pirates off the coast of Somalia that was wreaking havoc across the Gulf of Aden by pillaging and plundering trade lanes? - [Digital Journal](#)

Newspapers were racing to warn readers about the billions lost to the world economy by piracy while pundits debated whether the agitators could blockade the Suez Canal, predicting a globalization of piracy and a return to the bygone age of buccaneers. Luckily, such threats are now moot, and it's largely the merit of the European Union.

Alas, rarely does Brussels get the credit it deserves. But thanks to its ambitious naval operation Atalanta, named after a Greek virgin hunter, pirate attacks have fallen by a whopping 90 percent since 2010. It has been more than two years since a ship was successfully boarded. Deployed in 2008 at the request of the UN Security Council, Atalanta was the first maritime military mission launched by the EU and quickly became one of Brussels' rare success stories. Initially scheduled to last one year, it has been extended multiple times, most recently on November 21 until December 2016.

Back in 2008, few thought piracy could be stymied in Africa. Attacks were occurring on an almost daily basis in an area close to twice the size of mainland Europe, stretching in an arc from Yemen's coast to the Seychelles islands in the south and skirting Pakistan's territorial waters in the east. As early as 2006, the International Maritime Organization had outlined in the Gulf of Aden a recommended corridor 200 miles away from the coast of Somalia, hoping to curtail attacks.

Versatile as ever, Somali pirates reacted by multiplying and constantly improving their board-and-hijack techniques, with some attacks lasting as short as 20 minutes. [Read More](#)

Turkish Parliament has approved a government-sponsored motion to extend the presence of Turkish navy in the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea and the coastal waters off Somalia for one year - [Today's Zaman](#).

The motion, first approved in 2009, extends for another year the Turkish Naval Forces' mandate to participate in NATO's international anti-piracy mission Operation Ocean Shield to prevent pirates from hijacking foreign ships in the Gulf of Aden and off the Somali coast, where commercial vessels are often taken over by pirates. The motion will expire on Feb. 10, 2016.

While the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) extended their support for the motion, the lawmakers leveled criticisms against the government for its what they said "misguided" foreign policy.

MHP Ankara deputy Özcan Yeniçeri, who spoke on behalf of this party, said they attach importance to the navy's role in important regions. Yeniçeri, however, described the government's foreign policy as "strategic blindness," referring to Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's book on foreign policy conduct, Strategic Depth. Yeniçeri said the current situation on the foreign policy front is a cause for concern and that policies that don't fit in the realities of history and geography has no future. [Read More](#)



An eight-day training exercise for Horn of Africa naval forces concluded Wednesday (February 4th) in Djibouti, Somalia's Radio Danan reported - [AllAfrica](#)

"Exercise Cutlass Express 2015" focused on improving regional co-operation and information-sharing practices among East African and Indian Ocean nations to counter sea-based illicit activity, including the detection and disruption of the delivery of materials used to build and develop weapons of mass destruction, according to the US Africa Command, which co-ordinated the exercise.

Participating nations included Australia, Canada, Comoros, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Seychelles, Tanzania and Turkey. Commander of the Djiboutian Navy Colonel Abdourahman Aden Cher presided over the closing ceremony, where he praised the opportunity the exercise presented for Djiboutian troops to gain expertise in maritime defence, the Djiboutian Information Agency reported. [Read More](#)

SE Asia

An Indonesian-flagged chemical tanker Rehobot is missing after being hijacked by pirates, but all the crew are safe - [Seatrade Global](#)

ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre quoted an alert from the Information Fusion Centre in Singapore that the vessel was boarded by pirates near Lembah Island, North Sulawesi in Indonesia, at 2330hrs local time on 28 January.

The eight masked pirates armed with long knives boarded the vessel from a small wooden motorboat and took over the Rehobot. The tanker was carrying a cargo of 1,100 tonnes of diesel. The crew 14 Indonesian crew of the vessel were found adrift in the tanker's liferafts near to Lembah Island on 31 January.

As of 1 February the vessel remained missing. [Read More](#)

Four boats that were conducting illegal fishing around Indonesia have entered Taiwan territorial waters in their attempts to evade capture, said the Indonesian government - [The China Post](#)

The four ships are Dofior 160, Fu Yuan Yu 209, Garuda Jaya 111 and one unnamed ship, which are all registered in Indonesia.

"We want to announce internationally so that ships in foreign waters can also be captured," Indonesia fisheries head Susi Pudjiastuti said, adding that the four ships had poached fish in Indonesian territory.

Pudjiastuti stressed that her government has the right to detain those ships despite the fact they are located in foreign waters.

Only ships with permits may operate in Indonesia territorial sea. Pudjiastuti believes the four ships must have been fishing illegally; otherwise, they wouldn't need to hide in Taiwan's waters.

Pudjiastuti said she learned about the four ships' whereabouts through the vessel monitoring system. [Read More](#)

In the latest annual report for 2014 by ReCAAP ISC, it is stated that there has been an increase in the number of piracy and armed robbery against ships incidents in Asia in 2014 compared to the past four years (2010-2013) - [OCEANUSLive](#). A total of 183 incidents comprising 168 actual incidents and 15 attempted incidents were reported. On a year-on-year comparison, this represents an increase of 22% in the total number of incidents in 2014 compared to 2013. Of the 183 incidents, 13 (7%) were Category 1 (very significant) incidents, 41 (23%) were Category 2 (moderately significant) incidents and 114 (62%) were Category 3 (less significant) and petty theft (minimum significant) incidents.

Of the 13 Category 1 incidents, 11 incidents were siphoning of ship fuel/oil by perpetrators who boarded the ship to siphon the ship manifest of fuel/oil. Most of these incidents were Category 1 in nature because the perpetrators were armed with guns and knives; involved larger group of men who took control of the ship; threatened, ed and locked the crew in the cabin; siphoned the fuel/oil onboard the ship to another tanker/barge that came alongside; and before escaping, destroyed the ship's communication and navigational equipment and took the crew's cash and personal belongings.

In 2014, there has also been an increase in number of incidents in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) and the South China Sea (SCS). Most were Category 3 and petty theft incidents occurred onboard ships while underway in SOMS and onboard ships while anchored/berthed in the SCS. These incidents involved perpetrators who were opportunistic in nature, did not harm or treat the crew with violence; and entailed little or no economic loss as the perpetrators escaped immediately when the crew was alerted. Incidents resulted in the perpetrators escaped empty-handed occurred in 55% of the incidents in SOMS and 65% of

incidents in the SCS. [Read More](#)

The Institute for International Policy Studies, headed by former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, has called for the establishment of an organization to deal with maritime security issues at a symposium held in Tokyo - [The Japan News](#)

"In East Asia, there is no regional organization capable of overseeing maritime security issues, which is an urgent task," institute president Ken Sato said Friday at the symposium, which was supported by The Yomiuri Shimbun. Sato, a former administrative vice minister of defense, suggested that "an organization for maritime security cooperation in Asia" be newly created. The envisaged organization would be aimed at preventing maritime conflicts and establishing order. Its main tasks would include monitoring disputed sea areas from a neutral position; confidence-building efforts among parties concerned, including diplomatic and maritime safety authorities and naval forces of member nations; and technical support for maritime safety organs of member nations.

Experts from the United States, Australia and Southeast Asia exchanged views on the institute's proposal during the symposium, which explored the idea of a new maritime security structure in East Asia. [Read More](#)

Malaysian Navy Chief Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Jaafar (Abdul Aziz) Wednesday said a regional joint patrol would soon be launched to tackle piracy in and around the Johor Strait, local media reports. - [Ship & Bunker](#)

The joint patrol is understood to be a collaboration between Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand.

The Malaysian Navy has already earmarked a vessel, KD Pahang, for the operations, said Abdul Aziz.

"We are also working closely with the Marine Department and Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA)," he added.

The joint patrol is likely to be launched during the 2015 biannual Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition in March. [Read More](#)



The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for political and military affairs, Puneet Talwar, confirmed on February 4 that Washington had handed the ships over to Vietnam as part of the commitment made by Secretary of State John Kerry during his 2013 visit, Vietnamplus said on Friday, citing the Voice of America (VOA) - [Tuoi Tre News](#)

The provision of five boats and US\$18 million was first announced by Kerry during that visit, VOA said.

Talwar also said the U.S. will continue giving support to strengthen the Vietnam Coast Guard.

In an interview with the VOA Vietnamese service on Wednesday following his visit to Hanoi, where he attended a defense dialogue between the two countries focusing on various issues, Talwar said, "We have been doing a lot of cooperation in terms of supporting the development of Vietnam's Coast Guard." [Read More](#)

Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and his Japanese counterpart, Defense Minister General Nakatani, renewed vows to strengthen cooperation maritime security at a time when China's reclamation in the South China Sea (West Philippine Sea) raises concern among ASEAN countries - [Rappler](#).

"The two ministers particularly briefed each other on and acknowledged the current situation of South China Sea and East China Sea," read a joint statement released on Friday, January 30.

"Both Ministers shared the view that any dispute should be settled peacefully, without use of force or coercion, in accordance with basic principles of international law," the statement added. [Read More](#)

A Chinese commercial fishing company is seeking to operate 30 vessels in Guyana over opposition from fishermen in the South American country - [Yahoo News](#)

Fuzhou Hongdong Pelagic Fishery Co. has submitted a proposal for permits to operate the 120-foot trawlers and drift netters, along with up to two auxiliary boats and storage and processing facilities on land. They are also requesting unspecified tax breaks for what they say would be an investment estimated at \$70 million that would boost exports, according to a copy of the document obtained by The Associated Press.

Fisheries Minister Leslie Ramsammy said Monday that the government has requested additional information from the company and has not yet made a decision.

Guyana cut back its commercial fleet in 2012 to fewer than 100 vessels because of overfishing. The government said last year that revenue generated by the sector declined 6.5 percent over the previous 12 months after it stopped issuing commercial licenses. [Read More](#)

Other Maritime Matters

Mersin is a large port city on Turkey's Mediterranean coast and one of the main hubs for trafficking refugees. An old long cargo ship is waiting to take off with about 1000 new refugees heading for the coasts of Italy and Greece. - DailyMotion See [video report](#):

At least 35 people are missing after a boat carrying migrants capsized in bad weather off the coast of Yemen - [Al Jazeera](#).

Officials said they had rescued 13 African migrants near the Bab el-Mandeb strait on Monday after a boat was overturned by strong currents and high waves.

Eight Ethiopians and five Somalis, including a woman, have been saved, while the body of a Somali had been retrieved, General Saleh al-Sabbari told the official Saba news agency.

The boat was carrying 49 people, Sabbari added.

In December, Yemen said 70 migrants had died when their vessel capsized in bad weather near the same strait as Monday's sinking.

On May 31 last year, 60 migrants from Ethiopia and Somalia along with two Yemeni crew members drowned, according to the UN refugee agency. [Read More](#)

There has been little progress toward justice for the drowning deaths of 15 migrants in waters off a Spanish enclave in North Africa on February 6, 2014, Human Rights Watch said today - [Human Rights Watch](#)

The Spanish Guardia Civil fired rubber bullets and teargas at the water while the migrants attempted to swim to Ceuta, one of Spain's two North African enclaves, from Morocco.

"These were horrific deaths, and very serious allegations of wrongdoing by the Guardia Civil," said Judith Sunderland, senior Western Europe researcher at Human Rights Watch. "The survivors and families of the victims deserve to know the truth and see justice done." [Read More](#)



HMAS Success has displayed the ongoing co-operation necessary amongst the nations of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), conducting a boarding operation in the Middle East Region with the help Arleigh-Burke class destroyer USS Dewey - [Dept of Defence Australia](#)

On 17 January, Success identified a suspicious vessel through its embarked Seahawk helicopter and subsequently tasked a Boarding Team to verify the Dhow's nationality.

With further suspicious characteristics identified, a more thorough search for possible illicit substances was determined and USS Dewey was sent to assist Success by providing Naval



Criminal Investigation Service (NCIS) support to the boarding operation. The NCIS agent, who has previously worked with other RAN ships in the region, praised Success' boarding team on effectively evaluating the evidence and following the correct techniques. Success' Boarding Officer, Sub-Lieutenant Thomas Matthews said he was grateful for the opportunity to work with and learn from someone with such significant experience.

"The NCIS agent validated our current procedures and provided insightful feedback about interdiction operations that our Boarding Team really valued," he said.

"Once the search had been completed, the combined team returned to their respective ships after over 9 hours onboard the Dhow."

Commanding Officer of Success, Captain Justin Jones said the Royal Australian Navy, US Navy and US Coast Guard have always maintained a strong working relationship in the operational environment.

"The strong relationship we have was highlighted today with the boarding operation, but also yesterday when Success' helicopter assisted USCGC Maui in identifying a vessel they were investigating," CAPT Jones said.

"This exemplifies the international cooperation integral to CMF's role of maritime security and stability in the Middle East Region." [Read More](#)

It is only after some time following traumatic events that mental health complications may surface. Assessment immediately after such events would most probably show signs of the common and perfectly normal after effects of extraordinary life events - [MPHRP](#).

While research is scant, all indications are that seafarers respond to trauma as we all do. We are usually quite resilient. We recover over time. Only very few of us experience ongoing symptoms and need some form of mental health care. And even then, we are assured by mental health professionals, post trauma stress is treatable.

As persistent symptoms are key, the need for intervention would show itself only after four weeks, at the earliest.

The Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme offers ongoing support to piracy survivors. MPHRP is therefore well placed to identify the risk and the need for mental health interventions.

To alert MPHRP personnel of possible mental health complications after piracy, our consultants attended a Trauma Risk Management course presented by March on Stress. The course helps to signpost the possible risk of mental health symptoms that seafarers might experience after piracy, by measuring, over time, the prevalence of those symptoms. Awareness of symptoms that do not abate over 28 days, enables us to refer seafarers to our network of mental health professionals. [Read More](#)



Doubts have surfaced as to whether the Suez Canal is financially strong enough to improve the quality of life for the Egyptian population - [Port Technology](#)

Professor Andrew Lambert, Naval History teacher in the Department of War Studies at King's College in London, says the canal may not facilitate enough economic recovery to improve the

current security situation. Also, the canal may not create enough jobs.

Lambert said: “Economically it may be quite attractive for some customers, but I think the cost is going to be the key.

“Is global shipping sufficiently dynamic to make this a paying return? And the canal itself took some time to pay [for] itself, the original canal, the cost of the project was far higher than it was estimated.”

Carool Kersten, Senior Lecturer on Islam at King’s College said: “In terms of employment or making a contribution to Egypt’s GDP, in terms of expanding the volume of trade that passes through Egypt, that will then have only a secondary effect, I think, on people’s living standards.

“So, this is a long-term thing. Not something that will turn around Egypt in the next five to 10 years.” [Read More](#)

Egypt:

BIMCO has come out with a statement saying the Suez Canal has provided the shipping industry with a brief respite, after declaring that there will be no increase in the tolls - [Marine Trader](#)

On 4 February 2015, the Suez Canal Authority published its Transit Dues for the year 2015, and stated that there will be no increase of tolls in 2015. The only exception being that there will be an increase of 10 percent for LNG ships as the standing 35 percent reduction in tolls changes from May 1 2015 to a 25 percent reduction.

Speaking about the Suez Canal Authority announcement, chief shipping analyst at BIMCO, Peter Sand said: “As the global economics do not provide any respite, this announcement is welcome. “Dry bulk shipping industry is particularly hard hit at the moment, with the BDI hitting a three-decade low level.

"Any offsetting of the cost escalation of daily operations is useful. Bunker prices are down 60 percent from seven months ago and now unchanged tolls are well received.

“Realising that now is not the time for price hikes shows that the Authority is aware of the serious condition of global shipping.” [Read More](#)

Egypt would intervene militarily if the Bab al-Mandeb strait were closed by the Houthis of Yemen, said the Suez Canal Authority (SCA) Mohab Mamish Wednesday - [The Cairo Post](#)

“Egypt will not accept the closure of the strait in any way, and would intervene militarily if needed... this action affects Egyptian national security, and has a direct impact on the Suez Canal,” he added in a news conference.

Media reports claimed that some Houthis militants of Yemen were heading to control the strait located between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula, and Djibouti and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa.

Sana’a witnessed clashes Jan. 19 between the U.S.-backed government army and Shiite Houthis near the presidential palace; Yemeni President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi resigned Thursday.

Mamish added that the closure of Baba el Mandeb, which connects the Red Sea with Gulf of Aden, would stop international navigation movement.

Yemeni newspapers reported Tuesday that Iran warned the Houthis group against reaching the strait to avoid any possible problems with Egypt. [Read More](#)

Libya

Benghazi’s downtown and port areas as well as some other parts of the city continued to be hit by random missiles today - [Libya Herald](#)

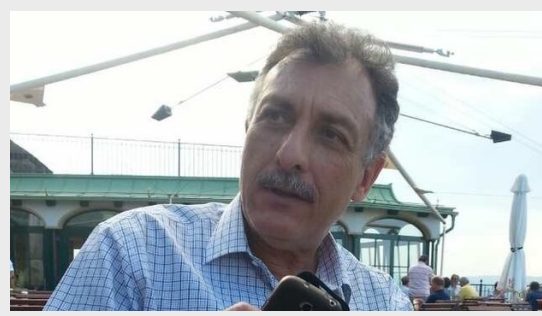
An army officer based next to the Islamic Call Society building in central Benghazi who did not want to be named told the Libya Herald that rockets had been landing nearby. He claimed that they had been fired from Garyounis and Gamfouda and accused Ansar Al-Sharia of being responsible. Other missiles are reported to have fallen in Beloun district. The new power plant next to the Hawari Hospital and designed to power it, was also hit by a random shell.

The Libyan representative to the oil producers' organisation Opec has been released, more than two weeks after being kidnapped - [BBC News](#)

Samir Salem Kamal had been seized after leaving work in the Libyan capital, Tripoli, on 15 January.

His family said he was in good health considering the situation, but shaken up by his ordeal. They said the identities of his kidnappers - and their motives - remained unclear.

Mr Kamal has been Libya's representative to Opec - a 12-member organisation of oil-producing nations - for two years, and was also a senior manager at the planning and training department in Libya's Ministry of Oil.



The fate of the Italian-flagged ship levoli Star, and its cargo of acid, has become a complicated matter. The ship, a chemical tanker in the Neapolitan shipowner levoli's fleet, which was carrying a cargo of acid, arrived on Wednesday evening at the port of Marsa El Brega, the Libyan port that specialises in liquid bulk - [The Medi Telegraph](#)

A few hours after the beginning of the unloading operation, the captain received a call from the General Headquarters of the Harbour Masters' Offices in Rome instructing him to suspend all commercial operations in order to rescue an Italian-flagged fishing boat that was in trouble off of Marsa el Brega, quite close to the Libyan coast.

So the ship suspended operations and went to the rescue, but the Italian authorities then prevented the unit from returning to the Libyan port because of excessive danger, instructing it to wait at sea for the arrival of Italian military vessels for the rescue: "In my long career this is the first time that I have seen a case like this," Ennio Palmesino, the broker for the levoli Star explained, "because now the ship cannot unload in Libya because of orders from Italy, causing a major embarrassment because the unloading operations still have to be completed."

Everyone out. Right away. The message by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) at the end of January didn't leave any room for interpretation: The situation in Libya is tense. Reason for that security warning was the recent attack on the Corinthia Hotel in Tripolis where gunmen killed nine people - five of them were Britons - [DW](#)

Terror organization "Islamic State" (IS) has claimed responsibility for the attack. IS as well as other terror groups such as Ansar-al-Sharia are likely to carry out attacks on foreigners again, the FCO statement said.

In addition to the risk of being kidnapped, foreigners could also be caught in indiscriminate gunfire or shelling.

The German Foreign Office also advises German citizens not to travel to Libya. Citizens from Western countries run the risk of being kidnapped at all times, the agency states.

The terror organizations also target citizens from other regions. At the beginning of January, Christian foreign workers from Egypt were kidnapped. A few days later, Copts in the port city of Sirte were taken. Their whereabouts are still not known.

Libya's national army and its allies claim to have seized control of Benghazi's port area from jihadist group Ansar al-Sharia after heavy fighting was reported in the city on Thursday - [Newsweek](#)

The Libya Herald reported that the army also claims to have taken control of part of the Suq al-Hout district and has engaged in fighting in nearby Sabri and Laithi as it tries to take back those districts from the group. Ansar al-Sharia is an offshoot of Al-Qaeda in Libya and dominated Benghazi last year, but it has been rapidly losing ground.

The army now controls around 90 percent of Benghazi, and late last year it started taking back bases, the national bank, the airport and other key real estate, including neighbourhoods, said Wayne White, a scholar with the Middle East Institute and former deputy director of the State Department's Middle East intelligence office. The port was the only place of value left in the group's hands, he said. [Read More](#).

Piracy/Robbery at Sea (including Attempts/Suspicious Activity)

Hijack:

- **Gulf of Guinea** - Ghana-flagged fishing trawler, **Lu Rong Yuan Yu 917**, underway reported attacked by pirates armed with AK-47s at 0500 LT in position 04:26N - 001:43W, around 27nm South of Takoradi, Ghana. Pirates hijacked the vessel. Togo navy spotted the vessel and opened fire; 21 crewmembers jumped overboard and 20 were rescued by Togolese navy, one died. Vessel reportedly sailed out to open sea and is suspected up to seven crewmembers remain on board. Togo and Benin navy vessels attempted to intercept without success. Reported 30 Jan. Update: Hijacked fishing vessel underway last seen at 1017 LT in position 04:16.25N - 003:49.56E heading 085 deg at 8.8kts, approx 332nm East of hijack position. Reported 2 Feb. UPDATE 2: Owner of the hijacked FV has reported that pirates have left the vessel at 0410 UTC in position 05:03N - 005:15E, around 8nm off Nigeria. Master is in control and sailing the vessel back to a safe port. Reported 3 Feb

- **SE Asia** - Indonesian-flagged chemical tanker **Rehobot** was reported hijacked at 2230 Lembeh Island, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. Eight masked pirates armed with long knives and using small wooden boat boarded the underway tanker. 14 crew were lowered to lifeboat and left behind. All were found several hours later by local fishermen and rescued. The tanker is still missing. Reported 28 Jan.

Attack/Robbery Attempt:

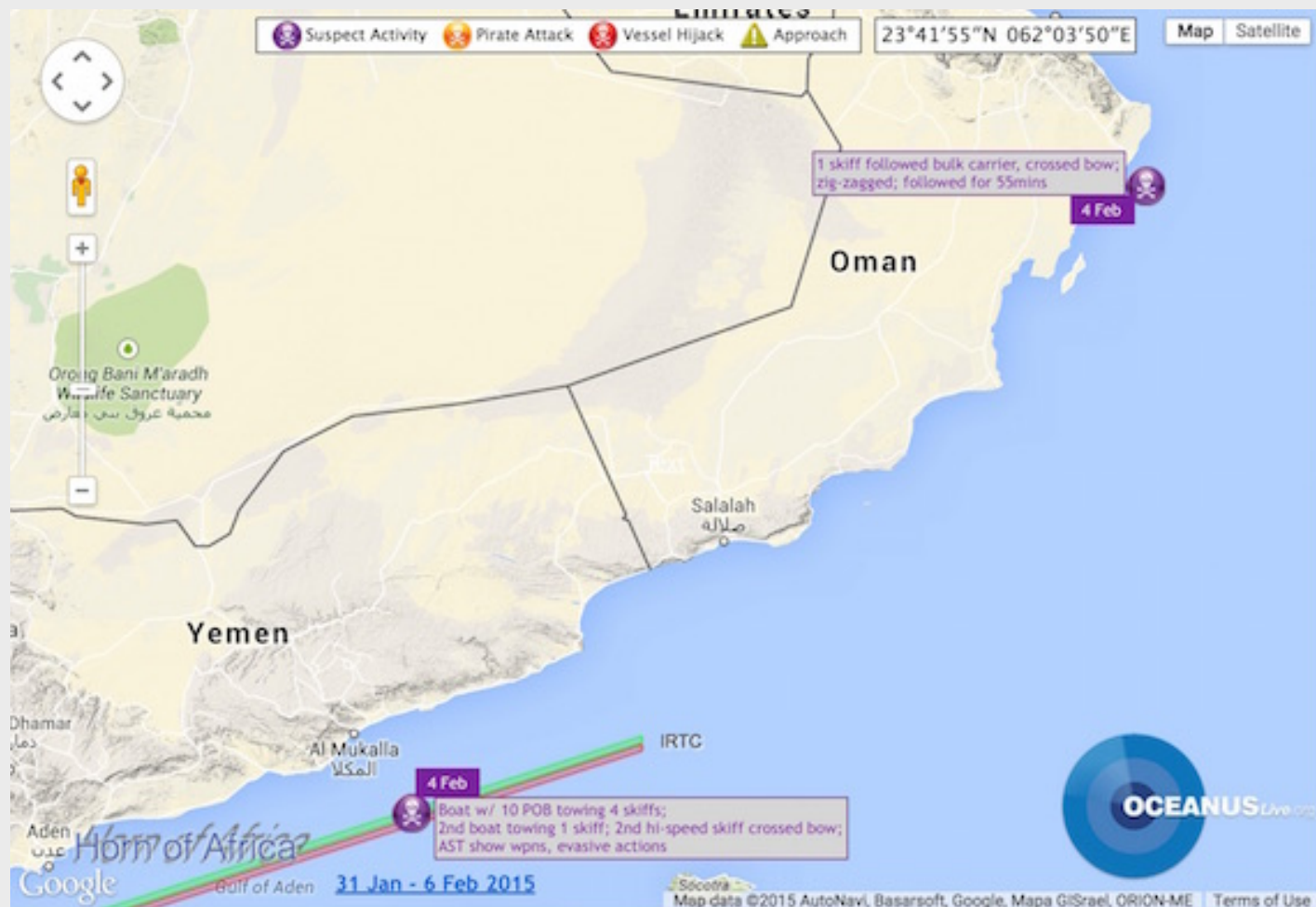
- **Gulf of Guinea** - Duty AB onboard a berthed chemical tanker spotted a robber attempting to board the vessel at 0320 LT in position 06:25.31N - 003:24.21E, Berth 5 and 6, ENL Jetty, Lagos Harbours, Nigeria He alerted the onboard security team who chased the robbers away. After a while the robbers attempted to return and the security team fired one warning shot resulting in the robbers aborting the approach. Reported (IMB) 5 Feb.
- **SE Asia** - Five robbers boarded an anchored container ship at 0730 LT in position 10:12N - 107:03E, around 7nm South of Vungtau, Vietnam. Alert crew spotted the robbers and raised the alarm. Seeing the crew alertness, the robbers escaped with stolen ship's store. Reported (IMB) 4 Feb.
- **Gulf of Guinea** - 14 pirates aboard 2 skiffs approached and attacked Malta-flagged crude oil tanker, **Kalamos**, at 1521 LT in position 04:12.3N - 008:04.4E, approx 21nm south of Kwa Ibo, Nigeria. Eight pirates boarded the vessel. The SSAS alarm was activated and a distress call made on VHF Chan 16 including requesting medical assistance following the Greek deputy captain being killed and three crew members, including 2nd engineer, were taken hostage, another crew member was shot and seriously injured. A NIMASA patrol boat reportedly engaged the pirates in a gun battle. Reported 3 Feb.
- **Gulf of Guinea** - Two crew on the forecastle of an anchored Nigeria-flagged tanker, **REMI**, noticed a boat approaching at high speed at 1830 UTC in position 05 28 5N – 005 05 54E, around 10nm SW of Escravos, Nigeria. As the boat closed the crew noticed something being thrown towards the vessel. The boat moved away and waited. After a while the two crew noticed the boat slowly approach the vessel again. The crew noticed the persons in the boat light an object and throw it towards the vessel, which hit the ships rail and fell into the water. A loud explosion was heard. The boat moved away. Nigerian navy and port authority informed. A gun boat was deployed and the vessel moved to a secure anchorage. Reported (IMB) 1 Feb.
- **SE Asia** - Duty AB on routine rounds onboard an anchored Isle of Man (UK)-flagged bulk carrier, **Name Withheld**, noticed an 'unknown person' on the forecastle deck at 1530 LT in position 03 55N – 098 46E, Belawan Anchorage, Indonesia. He immediately informed the D/O who raised the alarm and crew mustered. Seeing the crew alertness, the 'unknown person' jumped overboard and swam to a nearby boat in which the AB noticed two other persons. On investigating it was noticed that the child had accessed the forecastle deck by climbing the anchor chain and crawling through the hawse pipe cover opening. Nothing stolen. Reported (IMB) 31 Jan.
- **SE Asia** - While sailing, five robbers armed with knives and machetes were spotted on board Panama-flagged bulk carrier, **Global Aquarius**, at 0512 LT in position 01:09.10N - 103:27.06E, approx 8.35nm NW of Pulau Karimun Besar. The Chief Engineer was held hostage in the engine room by the robbers. Two boats were sighted in the vicinity of the ship. Some time later, the master reported that there was no further sighting of robbers on board. Engine spares were reported stolen. No injuries to the crew. Reported 31 Jan.
- **SE Asia** - LATE Report | Two deck watchmen on routine rounds onboard an anchored Liberia-flagged bulk carrier, **Amber Halo**, noticed two robbers on the forecastle deck at 0050 LT in position 06:01.2S – 106:55.1E, Tanjung Priok Outer Roads, Jakarta, Indonesia. They immediately informed the OOW who raised the alarm and crew mustered. Seeing the crew alertness, the robbers escaped with their accomplices in their boat. The crew members carried out a thorough search. Nothing stolen. The incident was reported to Port Control via VHF channel 12. Reported (IMB) 29 Jan.
- **SE Asia** - While sailing, seven unauthorised persons were spotted in the engine room of Gibraltar (UK)-flagged container ship, **APL Denver**, at 0414 LT in position 01:06N - 103:32E, approx 5.8nm South of Pulau Nipa, Indonesia. The alarm was raised and a search of the ship was conducted but no intruders were found on board. Engines spares reported stolen. No injury to the crew. Reported 28 Jan.
- **SE Asia** - LATE Report | While anchoring at the buoy, three intruders boarded Panama-flagged bulk carrier, **Bulk Atacama**, from a small boat at 0655 LT in position 10:10.69N - 107:02.12E, Vung Tau port, Vietnam. A crew member on lookout duty sighted the intruders and alerted other members. On being detected, the intruders, having stolen 800 litres of paint, jumped into the water and escaped in their small boat. No crew injuries. Reported 25

Jan.

- **Gulf of Guinea** - LATE Report | Nigeria-flagged offshore supply vessel, **Jascon 24**, reported attacked at 1845 UTC in approx position 03:29N - 005:27E, around 60nm SW of Brass, Nigeria, at the Agbami Oil Field. One Nigerian naval officer was reportedly killed during the attack. Awaiting further confirmation. Reported 23 Jan.
- **SE Asia** - LATE Report | While at anchor, four intruders armed with knives boarded Liberia-flagged vehicle carrier, **Fujitrans World**, and threatened the crew using knives at 0145 LT in position 05:50.70S - 106:54.50E, approx 5nm off Jakarta Port, Indonesia. They eventually escaped with stolen engine spares. Crew not injured Reported 20 Jan.
- **SE Asia** - LATE Report | While underway, robbers in two wooden boats boarded a barge under tow by Malaysia-flagged Tug, **Kien San 1** at 1548 LT in position 01:11.60N - 103:38.81E, approx 2.39nm North of Pulau Nipa, Indonesia. They stole some scrap metal and eventually escaped. No injury to crew. Singapore PCG patrol craft deployed. Reported (ReCAAP) 8 Jan.

Suspicious Activity/Advisory:

- **Arabian Sea** - Liberia-flagged bulk carrier reported sighting 1 white skiff at 0640 LT in position 21:30.48N - 059:45E, around 19nm off the Omani coast, Arabian Sea. Skiff identified and kept visual until passing stbd side, changing course to follow MV at steady 18-20kts within 2nm and CPA of 0.8nm. Skiff zigzagged towards MV, 2-3 POB. No weapons or ladders seen. AST stood to, hoses activated, horn sounded and MV increased speed. Skiff aborted following at around 0735 LT. Vessel is safe. Reported 4 Feb.
- **Gulf of Aden** - Master reported 1 boat with white hull, brown-coloured bridge and 10 POB sighted at 3nm at speeds of 7kts towing 4 white skiffs at 0500 UTC in position 13:30N - 049:54E, IRTC, Gulf of Aden. Suspicious boat moved towards vessel to 1nm and stopped. No weapons or ladders sighted. Another boat was observed on port bow at speed of 7kts towing 1 blue skiff and accompanied by a white skiff with 2 POB and 1 large outboard engine. The white skiff crossed the vessel's bow at speeds of 25kts and closed to 1nm on the starboard side. Embarked AST displayed weapons and skiff withdrew back towards the mothership, and was seen being towed by it soon after. The suspicious boats stayed closed to vessel for a further 20-30 minutes. Vessel is Safe. Reported 4 Feb.



Maritime Situation Map for HoA/IOR 31 Jan – 6 Feb 2015



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