

Covering period 14 - 20 Feb 2015



The Malta Armed Forces...

are assisting the Italian coastguard in the rescue of at least 1,000 migrants on 12 boats some 110 miles south of Lampedusa. This is the third operation of its kind in as many days.



Top Story This Week...

Thailand-registered tanker, Lapin, was boarded by eight armed men who siphoned its fuel and planted an improvised explosive device (IED) on the tanker's bridge while it was underway in the Strait of Malacca off Port Klang, Malaysia



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West Africa

The Nigerian Navy has announced the acquisition of four warships, in a renewed effort to battle piracy and oil theft. A statement signed by the Director of Information of the Nigerian Navy, Commodore Kabir Aliyu, listed the warships are: NNS CENTENARY, NNS OKPABANA, NNS PROSPERITY and NNS SAGBAMA - [New Telegraph Online](#)

The statement reads: “The Nigerian Navy has recently taken delivery of four warships.

“Accordingly, the Commissioning Ceremony of the four ships will be performed by the President, Commander-in- Chief of the Armed Forces, His Excellency, Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan GCFR on Thursday, 19 February 2015. The venue is the Naval Dockyard Ltd, Victoria Island, Lagos at 9:30 am.

“The acquisition is a landmark achievement for the Nigerian Navy and the Federal Government. The occasion is unique because this is the first time in the history of the Nigerian Navy that four capital warships will be commissioned at once.

Nigeria president Goodluck Jonathan commissions 4 warships in Nigerian Navy 19 Feb.



NNS PROSPERITY



NNS OKPABANA



NNS SAGBAMA



NNS CENTENARY

[duration

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The Adjabeng magistrate court in Accra yesterday ordered the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) to grant access to the counsel of the eight suspected Nigerian pirates standing trial before the court - [GhanatoGhana](#)

Per the order, the BNI is to allow the lawyer of the accused persons two hours each every Tuesday and Friday between the hours of 9am and 2pm, effective today, to see his clients.

The court, presided over by Ms. Efua Gyetowah Sackey, had made the order following a complaint

by Uche Nwosu, lawyer for the eight suspected pirates that he (Uche) had not been allowed to see his clients. The accused persons are Molih Williams, Molih Klinsman, Peggy Aki, Ebiyaibo Amos, David Jacobs, Apetimiya Onyinie, Pinano Saniyo and Picolo John.

They are facing charges of conspiracy to commit crime and piracy. Pleas of the accused persons have not been taken.

The case has been adjourned to March 5, 2015.



THE WARSHIP Leopold I, a Karel Doorman-class frigate and flagship of the Belgian Navy, set sail on Tuesday from its base in Zeebrugge. The ship and its crew last year were part of the European Union's Operation Atalanta fight against Somali piracy, but this time their destination is the coast of Africa in the west and particularly the Gulf of Guinea for a period eight weeks -



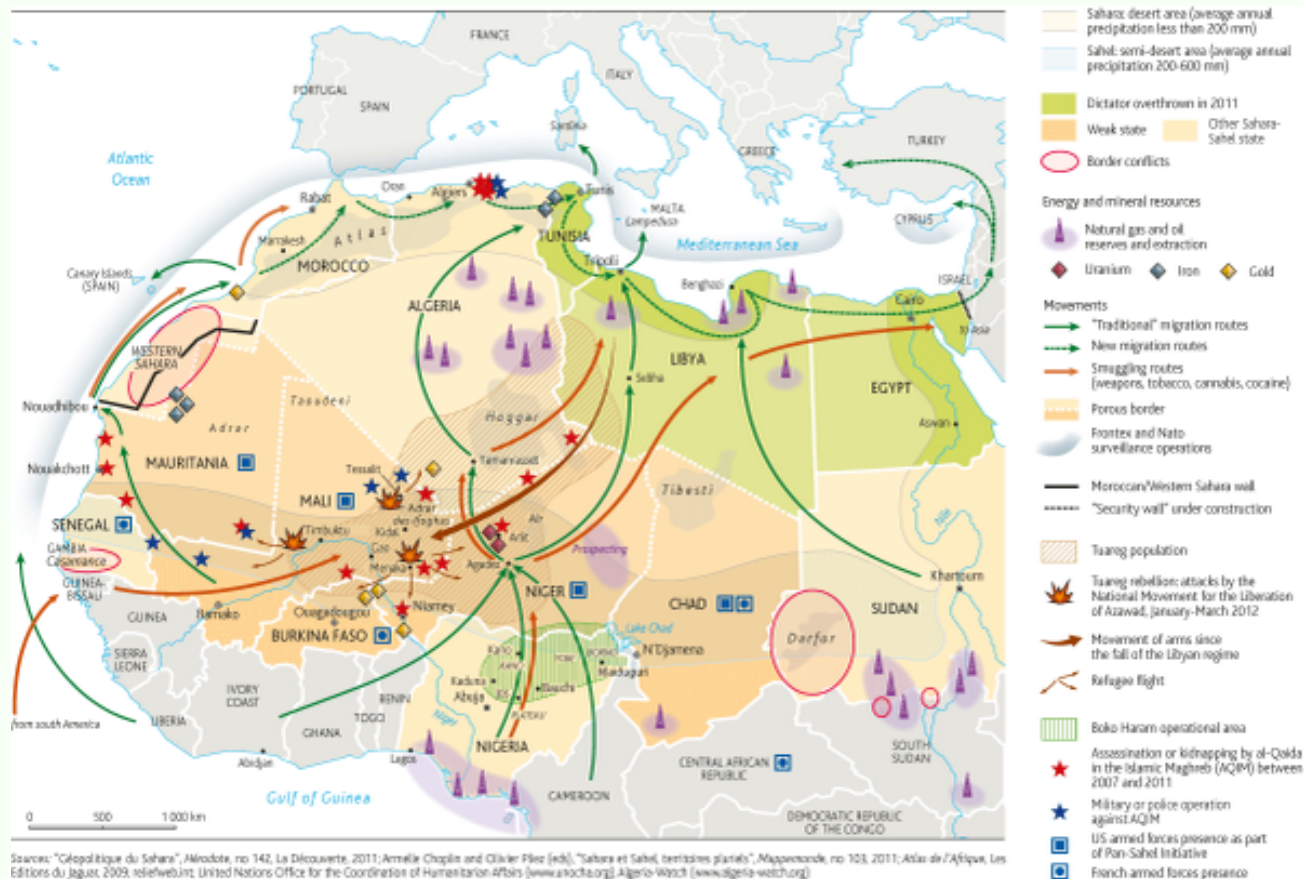
[OCEANUSLive](#)

This mission will have two components with the same purpose: to strengthen the capacity of African countries to ensure the safety of their territorial waters and the fight against piracy and numerous other maritime crimes.

The goal: improving maritime safety in the region through training, support and professionalisation of navies of

Africa in the west and local coastguards. These navies, have very different challenges in the fight against illegal fishing, human and arms trafficking, drug trafficking and piracy.

The Gulf of Guinea has become the new piracy centre of gravity in Africa, with piracy largely contained in the east of the continent, thanks to the presence of several fleets of warships in the Indian Ocean, off the Somali coast. Due to the limited resources of the regional countries, often poor, the region is struggling to put in order of battle against the scourge of piracy.



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Horn of Africa/Indian Ocean

Among the pirates on board the freighter Leer "Susan K" He was just a little light, but the district court Aurich now has sentenced a 20-year-old Somali to probation - *East Frisian newspaper* [Google Translation].

Two years in a detention 1st Big Youth Criminal Court, chaired by Judge Jan Heine Meier decided - including aiding and abetting extortionate kidnapping. The probation period shall expire three years also the man is required to complete 400 hours of community service.

The court was convinced that the then 17-year old belonged to a group of pirates on April 8, 2011 brought the "Susan K." just a few nautical miles from the coast of Oman away into their hands and then held for ten weeks off Somalia, Only after two waterproof bags with the ransom money from the hatch of a Russian cargo plane - according to the court, \$ 3.5 million - were dropped, the pirate ship and the ten-man crew gave freely again.

Convicted in Aurich Somalis did not belong to the leadership of the Pirates - let alone their masterminds. He had washed ashore the cars of criminals and kept their goats, according to a statement by the court. Finally, he stayed two to three weeks aboard the "Susan K.". "He took no specific responsibilities and performed not in contact with the kidnapped crew," the court said.



Been taken, was the 20-year-old early September last year in Eisleben (Saxony-Anhalt). The applicant was the authorities went to the net because his fingerprints had been found on board the "Susan K."

In April 2014 a 44 year old Somali was sentenced to twelve years in prison in Osnabrück already - for the kidnapping of moving for a shipping company Emsland "Marida Marguerite". His defence had filed an appeal in the port. Also, the 44-year-old had been reached on the ropes because he had come to Germany as an asylum seeker and his fingerprints appeared in a register.

That was now the 20-year-old in Aurich in court was a "result of long collaboration with the state police and the Ministry of Interior," said Friday Ursel Nimmrich from Leer company Nimmrich & barge, for driving the "Susan K.". After the abduction, she had reported under what great psychological pressure, the ten-man crew had been during the captivity. On board were four Ukrainian officers and six Filipinos. They are all now back on ships.

Recently Seychelles hosted a ministerial meeting on maritime security in Africa, bringing together all stakeholders in the fight against this crime - *Seychelles New Agency* [in French].



This subject concerns the Seychelles directly, as the country has suffered pirate attacks in the region. Seychelles was among the first countries in the region to lead the fight against this scourge, hosting on its soil responsible for the attacks, to try them.

France was represented at the meeting by Véronique Roger-Lacan, Special Representative in charge of the international fight against piracy maritime.

SNA met Mrs. Roger Lacan to know the role of France in the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean and other regions of Africa.

SNA: when looking at the figures for attacks piracy , 0 this year, last year 1 or 2, do you think this is the end of piracy on the side of the Horn of Africa?

Véronique Roger-Lacan: There was actually observed in 2013 and in 2014, no attack succeeds. And is that this is a trend which is final or is it that the piracy risk again. What is certain is that the intense naval presence, both multinational naval 3: Operation Atalanta , Operation Ocean Shield and NATO combat forces operation 151, have had a real impact. Because they have created the "International reconnu corridor" corridor. This corridor was squared and in each grid, we installed a warship. Had more national naval operations; Russia, Japan, Korea, China, India, In any case for China and India, they have not squared, maisont process escort. They followed vessels flying the flag of their country down the corridor ...

Now, is this going to change, is that the international community has the means and the will to maintain warships, they are expensive means. In the region, it is called defense budget and resources to develop such capacities so we measure how they are expensive to maintain capacity. Are we going to maintain these capabilities with the same grid or not, for the moment the EU and NATO have renewed the mandate of operations until 2016, so it is there, and during those days where we will observe the tendency to see if the actions will start or not. Then on this trend, we have two types of analysis:

- The first type of analysis observes that these sponsors the piracy benefited also that these funds they collected to acquire new skills, new boats means of communication, the logical conclusion would be to say that they are getting ready to resume operations

- Other analyzes say they have enough money and invested in other activities and also the Somali government is trying to finish preparing the elections is just finishing writing would prepare need to get these people that they cease their activities, otherwise the overall disapproval will continue to manifest itself with regard to Somalia. And we feel that the Somali government wants to make sure that its people are its territory his nation a nation that really is part of the international arena and that Somalia is not matched to shebab and sponsors of piracy , so we rely heavily on the commitment of the Somali authorities to address this issue.

Piracy was good to Omar Hassan.

The skinny Somali fisherman in his mid-20s throws his head back and rolls his eyes when he recalls better times thanks to pirates. "There were way too many fish," he says, laughing. Five years ago, Somali pirates were attacking foreign ships on a near-daily basis, which scared off the unlicensed European and Asian fishing vessels that for years ravaged Somalia's seas. Somalis felt safe to fish anywhere, and marine stocks grew - *Newsweek*.

Hassan started fishing in 2000 at the age of 10—it is all he knows. But last month, he quit. Piracy is dead, thanks to the multilateral effort to stamp it out, and the unlicensed foreign fishing vessels are back. Just as piracy was good to the fishermen of Somalia, Hassan says, NATO's \$75 million anti-piracy task force has been good to those looking to plunder her seas.

The conditions Hassan describes today are almost exactly the same as those 10 years ago that drove some Somalis to attack foreign fishing vessels in an attempt to recoup their losses, which in turn led to the multibillion-dollar piracy industry. By 2005, according to the U.N., Somalia was losing \$300 million to illegal fishing every year. The Federal Republic of Somalia has the longest coastline

on mainland Africa, but now artisanal fishing is not viable, according to residents in the semi-autonomous state of Puntland.

"I'm jobless," Hassan says, "and I'm not the only one. Our options are either to become a charcoal maker, a pirate, to join al-Shabab [the extremist military group] or to starve or beg." I ask if the rebirth of piracy is really an option, and he looks glum. "As long as NATO is there, it's a dead end. If they're not, then it becomes an option. NATO? We can't take on that."

Alt link: [Sahan Journal](#)



The Seychelles police have reported the death of a 33 year old Estonian national who was found floating in the sea at the New Port – the island nation's commercial port in the capital of Victoria - [Seychelles News Agency](#)

According to a police statement issued this afternoon the incident was reported at around 7:00 pm local time on Thursday February 12.

"According to information it was one of his colleagues who were fishing at that time who heard a splash in the sea and saw him floating," read the statement.

The man who has been identified as Kivi Meelis was a security guard onboard the cargo ship 'Julie Delmas'.

The police says CPR was performed after the man was removed from the sea and that he was transported to the English River Health Centre as he was not responding.

Meelis was certified dead at 9:07 pm last night.

"The Police have not yet determined Mr. Meelis' cause of death, the investigation is still in progress and a post mortem will help determine the cause of his death," concluded the statement.

Rear Admiral Jonas Haggren of the Royal Swedish Navy assumed command of Operation Atalanta's Force Headquarters (FHQ) during a ceremony held in Djibouti last week -

[DefenceWeb](#).



ITS Andrea Doria.

The new FHQ staff, which is embarked in Royal Netherlands Navy warship, HNLMS Johan de Witt, comes from 15 European Union member states.

Haggren will lead the EU Naval Force at sea for three months and it is the second time Sweden has led the EU's counter-piracy task force off the coast of Somalia.

"I am looking forward to this and am confident we will do our best to support the operation," he said.

Haggren assumed Force Command from Rear Admiral Guido Rando of the Italian Navy and during the handover ceremony he stated his intention to continue the work Rando and his staff had done aboard the Italian warship

Work is to start next month on a regional maritime information centre (RMIC) for the western Indian Ocean - [IHS Maritime 360](#)

The European Union-funded project, initiated by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), will be located in Madagascar, it was decided at last week's African Union (AU) maritime security meeting in Seychelles. Madagascar was competing with Seychelles - which already hosts IOC's Anti-Piracy Unit and the regional maritime crime information centre Reflecs3 - and Mauritius to host the project.

The centre is intended to ensure the safety and security of the estimated 7,000-8,000 ships that sail every day between Africa and Southeast Asia, and specifically the 2,500 vessels that transit daily the 230 nm-wide, 860 nm-long Mozambique Channel between Madagascar and the east African mainland.

The facility will bring together, process, and analyse maritime information for the 4,000 nm of sea passage between the Horn of Africa and the Cape of Good Hope. Under its EUR37.5 million (USD42.7 million) EU-funded MASE maritime security programme, IOC is also improving maritime surveillance capability and co-ordination in the region.

According to IOC secretary-general Jean-Claude de l'Estrac, quoted in Témoignages, "These two complementary initiatives are keystones of a maritime security architecture for the whole of eastern and southern Africa and the Indian Ocean."

International Responses:

Japan and the European Union are strengthening anti-piracy cooperation in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia to reduce the number of pirate attacks on commercial vessels - [Bernama](#).

Their joint operation had helped an international mission to reduce piracy incidents from 174 in 2011 to just two last year, Japan's Jiji Press news agency reported.

The first operation took place in January 2014 when EU naval forces and Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Force (MSDF) troops teamed up to capture a pirate ship.

MSDF destroyer Samidare initially received information about a commercial ship coming under attack in the Gulf of Aden.

It then sent a P-3C patrol aircraft to monitor the situation while an EU naval vessel from France was dispatched to the site to arrest five pirates.

The trial of the five men began in January at a court in the Republic of Seychelles in eastern Africa, where they were indicted under an agreement between the EU and Seychelles.

Japan and the EU have conducted three anti-piracy exercises together in the Gulf of Aden since October.

EU and the MSDF have respectively extended their anti-piracy mission to the end of 2016 and up to July this year.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had fruitful discussions with her Oman counterpart here on anti-piracy operations, cooperation in maritime security and other issues relating to the Indian Ocean where the two nations are maritime neighbours - [Business Standard](#)

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) official spokesperson Syed Akbaruddin said the External Affairs Minister informed the Omani leadership that India will provide multiplicity of opportunities for Oman to invest.

"There was a discussion on specific investment opportunities including in the sector of storage of agricultural products as well as on medical treatment. Also they discussed anti-piracy operations, cooperation in maritime security and other issues relating to the Indian Ocean where Oman and India are maritime neighbours," Akbaruddin told ANI here.

"We hope that this visit will set in motion a deeper engagement between Oman and India," he added.

We hope this will be a step toward expanding the overseas missions of the Self-Defense Forces and strengthening international cooperation - [The Japan News](#).

At the end of May, the Defense Ministry will dispatch a rear admiral of the Maritime Self-Defense Force to assume the position of commander of the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF-151), a multinational naval task force that conducts antipiracy operations in the sea off the African country of Somalia. Nations participating in CTF-151 include the United States, Britain, Australia and South Korea.

This will be the first time an SDF officer has held the top position of a multinational force.

This development will deepen trust between the MSDF and the military forces of each CTF-151 nation. It will also facilitate the smooth exchange of information and collaboration during various international cooperation activities. Acquiring new expertise about how a force operates and its strategies will also be useful for improving the abilities of the MSDF itself. This is hugely significant.

SE Asia

ON 12 Feb, a Thailand-registered product tanker, Lapin, departed Singapore for Krabi province, Thailand. The vessel with 15 crew was laden with 2,000 tons of bunker oil when it was boarded and hijacked by 6-8 armed pirates - [OCEANUSLive](#)

On 13 Feb at about 1955 LT, six to eight perpetrators armed with pistols and knives boarded Lapin from a small boat at approximately 39.73nm west-southwest of Port Klang, Malaysia in position 03:11N - 100:43E. The perpetrators gathered the crew and took control of the tanker. Thereafter, an unknown vessel came alongside Lapin and siphoned a total of five tons of diesel and 2,000 tons of bunker oil from Lapin. On 14 Feb, at about 0400 LT, the perpetrators stopped the vessel and anchored Lapin at approximately 62.7nm southwest of Port Klang in position 03:23.94N - 100:22.71E.

After the perpetrators had siphoned the fuel/oil from Lapin, they destroyed the communication devices onboard Lapin and stole the ship property and the crew's belongings. The perpetrators also tied the crew, informed them that an **improvised explosive package was left onboard** and threatened the crew not to move, before they escaped.

Thai Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team managed to disarm the "improvised" explosive

package and found only an electric circuit with no explosive or detonator attached.



Eight fishermen were wounded by gunfire in a pirate attack in the Bay of Bengal at Sonarchar area, about 120km off the coast of Pathorghata upazila, early Monday - *The Independent Bangladesh*.

The victims were identified as Kabir Haolader, 45, Nurul Islam, 30, Saidur Rahman, 26, Liton, 35, Khokon, 25, Masud 25, Forkan, 40 and Liton, 32, hailing from different villages of Patharghata and Barguna upazilas, reports UNB.

The victims said the pirates gave them a chase during a fish haul in the bay around 2:30am. As the fishermen moved their three fishing trawlers – ‘FB Mohsin Aulia 1’, ‘FB Mohsin Aulia 2’ and ‘FB Mohsin Aulia 3’ – towards the shore, the pirates opened fire at them, leaving eight fishermen with bullet injuries.

However, the fishermen managed to reach the shore and the pirates gave in the chase at last. The injured fishermen were rushed to Pathargatha Health Complex.

The Philippine Navy is upgrading its capabilities at a time of continuing tensions with China over disputed territory in the South China Sea - *VOA News*.

In recent weeks, an Indonesian naval shipbuilder started work on two "strategic sealift vessels" that the Philippines is acquiring for more than \$87 million and expects within two years, said Commander Lued Lincunad, a navy spokesman.

Each one "will enhance our defense capability and operational capabilities. It has a helipad and can accommodate three choppers at any one time," Lincunad said. Each can be used for command and control, and each "can house a battalion of the marines" and special operations forces.

The vessels represent the navy's latest efforts to control a resource-rich and strategically valuable expanse of ocean.

It was an operation hailed as a classic case of jointmanship between multiple security agencies. After the disaster of 26/11, when agencies could barely get their act together before

terror struck, here was timely cooperation leading to the target getting neutralised before damage could be done - [*India Today*](#)

However, it is only now emerging that the case concerning the terror boat which came perilously close to Indian waters on new year's eve, was not devoid of a turf war and one upmanship between the two lead maritime security agencies i.e. the Indian Navy (IN) and the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).

Reliable sources have confirmed that the two agencies sparred for access to ICG in-shore patrol vessel (IPV) Rajratan which was the craft which intercepted the Pakistani fishing vessel and its crew on the intervening night of December 31, 2014-January 1, 2015. While the IN was keen to get onboard and dig details about the incident from the vessel's records which could include photographs, videos, ship's logs, navigation charts, ammunition expended as well as access to the crew, the ICG was determined to stop this since it did not want its 'crew members to be treated like accused persons'. While ultimately the ICG's view prevailed over the IN and the crew was not subjected to any examination, the incident has left a bitter after taste. When asked, it was confirmed that the naval team was indeed at the jetty when the Rajratan arrived. Additionally, neither the navy nor coast guard denied the issue but chose not to elaborate the intention behind the navy's probe and the subsequent denial of access.



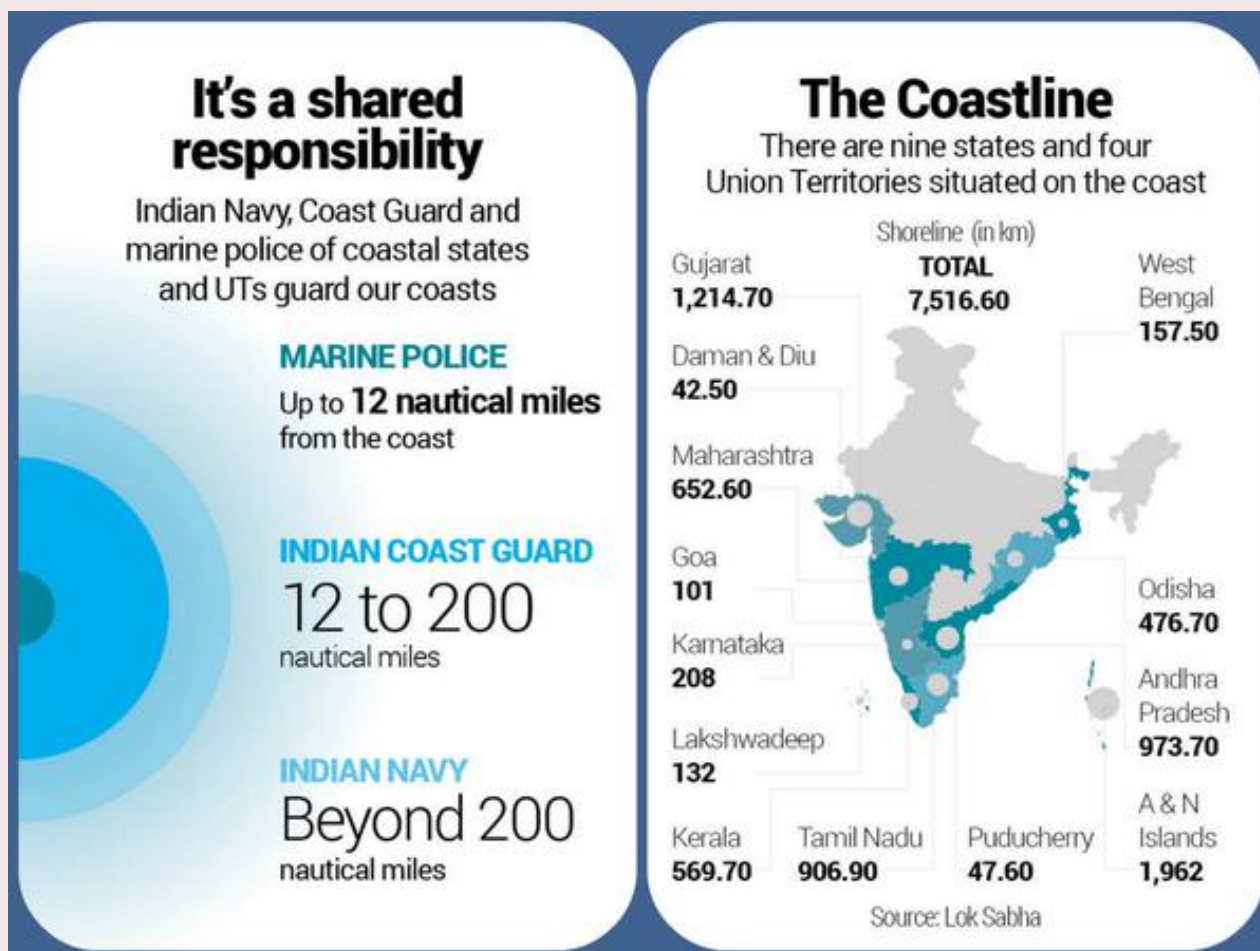
An aerial view of the fishing boat carrying explosives before being intercepted by Indian Coast Guard in Gujarat. Photo: PTI.

The Indian media is currently having a field day with a national security spectacle. Diplomat readers may recall reports on New Year's Eve of a Pakistani boat blowing itself up near the Indian coast with explosives that were allegedly being carried on board. The Times of India, in its report at the time, described the incident as a potential attempt to "unleash havoc on Indian shores like the 26/11 terror strikes," calling the vessel a "terror" boat - [*The Diplomat*](#)

According to the initial reports, the boat was intercepted by the Indian Coast Guard approximately 365 km from Porbandar, a coastal city in Gujarat. "The Coast Guard warned the boat to stop but it increased speed and tried to run away. After being stopped, the four persons on board the boat blew themselves up. The boat sank at the spot. Search operations are still in progress," a source told the Times of India at the time. Reports further noted that the boat was in communication with Pakistan's military.

Recent comments by B.K. Loshali, a senior Indian Coast Guard officer, however, contradicted the official government explanation of that event. Controversy arose after the Indian Express released a video on Wednesday showing Loshali stating that he had ordered the Indian Coast Guard to attack and destroy the boat. In the video, Loshali says the following [all sic]: "Let me tell you... I hope you remember 31st December night... we blew off that Pakistan... We have blown them off... I was there at Gandhinagar and I told at night, blow the boat off. We don't want to serve them biryani..." If Loshali's comments are true, then the government's account that the boat blew itself up is false.

Loshali's statements have put the government in a tough spot. Parrikar, in the wake of the controversy, reiterated his commitment to his ministry's January statement that the boat blew itself up. Parrikar has additionally said that the government will release evidence in the coming days to substantiate its position.



After almost 11 hours search operation, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) ship Agrim commanded by Commandant(JG) Umed Singh's team interdicted Russian flagged Cargo vessel—MV Sevastopol—110 nautical miles (204 km) that tried to escape on Tuesday. The ship was under order of arrest by the Madras high court and was trying to flee, to circumvent judicial proceedings against the vessel, said the official - *The Times of India*

The ICG in a sea air coordinated operation interdicted the vessel at 11.45am which was trying to enter UAE and was trying to cross the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). The ship was on 27 km north-west of Mumbai in "Alpha Anchorage" when the Russian Federation Flagged General Cargo Vessel tried to escape.

The shipping company was facing a litigation in Madras high court based on the plea filed by M/s NTC Logistics (P) limited, Chennai. The HC had issued an arrest warrant against the vessel on February 13, in a commercial dispute. The information was shared to us on February 15 regarding the arrest notice. The vessel was informed the same during patrolling and through shore based monitoring stations on MMB channel about the arrest order," the Indian Defence spokesperson told TOI.

The vessel was also directed not to proceed without resolving the commercial dispute, as the matter was under litigation. "On Tuesday at about 1am, the vessel picked up her anchor and started getting underway. It was also noticed that the vessel had switched off her automatic identification system (AIS), GMDSS equipment and navigational lights, against provisions of SOLAS convention and collision regulations.

Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Chairman General Rashid Mehmood has said that the littoral states of the region need to focus on collaborative maritime security with a spirit of cooperation rather than competition - [Daily Times Pakistan](#)

This he said that while addressing the concluding session of 6th International Maritime Conference as chief guest here on Monday, says an official press release. He said that Maritime security has assumed ever-greater significance in face of changing global scenario and the activities of non-state actors, transnational threats and challenges, such as piracy and terrorism, illegal exploitation of natural resources, marine environment and pollution, unlawful trade and less than adequate preparedness to meet natural disasters are some of the key issues, which require thorough deliberations at such international forums.

Upon his arrival the chief guest was received by Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah, Chief of the Naval Staff along with Vice Admiral (Retd) Asaf Humayun, DG NCMPR. The conference organised by National Centre for Maritime Policy Research (NCPMR) in collaboration of Pakistan Navy on the theme; "Maritime Economy, Environment, and Security co-operation: Bringing the West Pacific and the Indian Ocean Closer," concluded today after 3 days of threadbare discussions by the experts on Maritime Security, Economy and Environment.

As many as 17 speakers from 8 countries exchanged ideas for bringing the maritime region of the Indian Ocean and West Pacific closer.

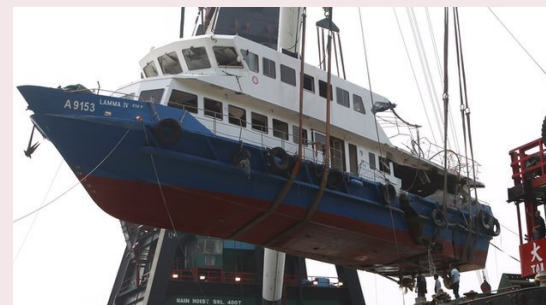
The captain of a ferry involved in one of Hong Kong's worst sea disasters has been convicted of manslaughter over the 39 people who died - [BBC News](#)

Lai Sai-ming, who captained the Sea Smooth in the 2012 collision, was also found guilty of endangering the safety of others at sea.

The skipper of the other boat involved was acquitted of manslaughter.

Chow Chi-wai - captain of the Lamma IV, which half-sank - was also found guilty of endangering the safety of others.

The crash was Hong Kong's worst maritime accident since 1971.



The ROC Navy is planning to put its first locally designed stealth missile corvette and a new home-manufactured supply vessel into service in late March, a Navy source said Saturday - [Want China Times](#).

"A ceremony to formally put the corvette, the Tuo Jiang and the supply vessel, the Panshih, into service is scheduled to take place in late March at the Navy's Zuoying base in Kaohsiung," the largest naval base in Taiwan, the source told CNA.

After the vessel is put into service, it will help extend the Navy's maritime combat capabilities through its support of Taiwanese warships, as well as Taiwan's ability to provide international humanitarian assistance, the Navy said.

Americas/Caribbean

NSTR

Other Maritime Matters

The operative word is vergognoso -- shameful -- and my Italian friends have been using it repeatedly since the verdict in Francesco Schettino's trial was issued earlier this week in Grosseto, Italy - [Huffington Post](#)

Schettino was the captain of the Costa Concordia, which struck rocks off the island of Giglio in January, 2012, resulting in 31 deaths, and injuries for many others. It took two years for engineers to raise the ship upright and nearly another year thereafter for it to be towed to the port of Genoa for dismantling.

Schettino was sentenced to 16 years -- 10 for manslaughter, five for causing a maritime disaster, one for abandoning his passengers. The last time I heard vergognoso used this much was when Schettino abandoned ship, in January 2012 (and then when Italy's national soccer team failed to get past the group stage in the 2014 World Cup). While many feel the sentence itself is non coraggioso -- tentative -- what they find truly shameful is that as long as his sentence is under appeal, Schettino will not go to prison.

Noteworthy (and a tad absurd), too, is that another part of his sentence is a five-year ban on captaining a ship. In other words, he could -- in theory -- take command of a ship while his sentence is still under appeal. Italian legal cases can take years and even decades to fully unfold (see: Knox: Amanda), though perhaps public outrage over this one won't allow that to happen.

There is simultaneously anger and acceptance in Italy about the failures of the justice system and the machinations that allow certain people to get away with much while others pay the price. Italians get mad about it, but also shrug and say, this is how it is.

Cambodia has rescued 17 Cambodian labourers, who were trafficked to work as illegal fishermen on Thai fishing boats in Indonesia, Foreign Ministry's spokesman Koy Kuong said Wednesday - [*Cihan*](#)

"With the cooperation from the Indonesian authorities, the Cambodian Embassy to Indonesia has saved 17 Cambodian labourers, who had been cheated by ringleaders to work illegally on Thai fishing boats," he said in a press statement. "The victims had been rescued when the boats illegally fished over Indonesian maritime territory."

He said the victims will be repatriated to Cambodia soon.

Trafficked fishermen are frequently forced to work long hours and physically and psychologically abused. They are often unpaid and forced to serve on voyages for months or even years.

As they have no documentation, they are often unable to seek protection from the authorities in Thailand or abroad.

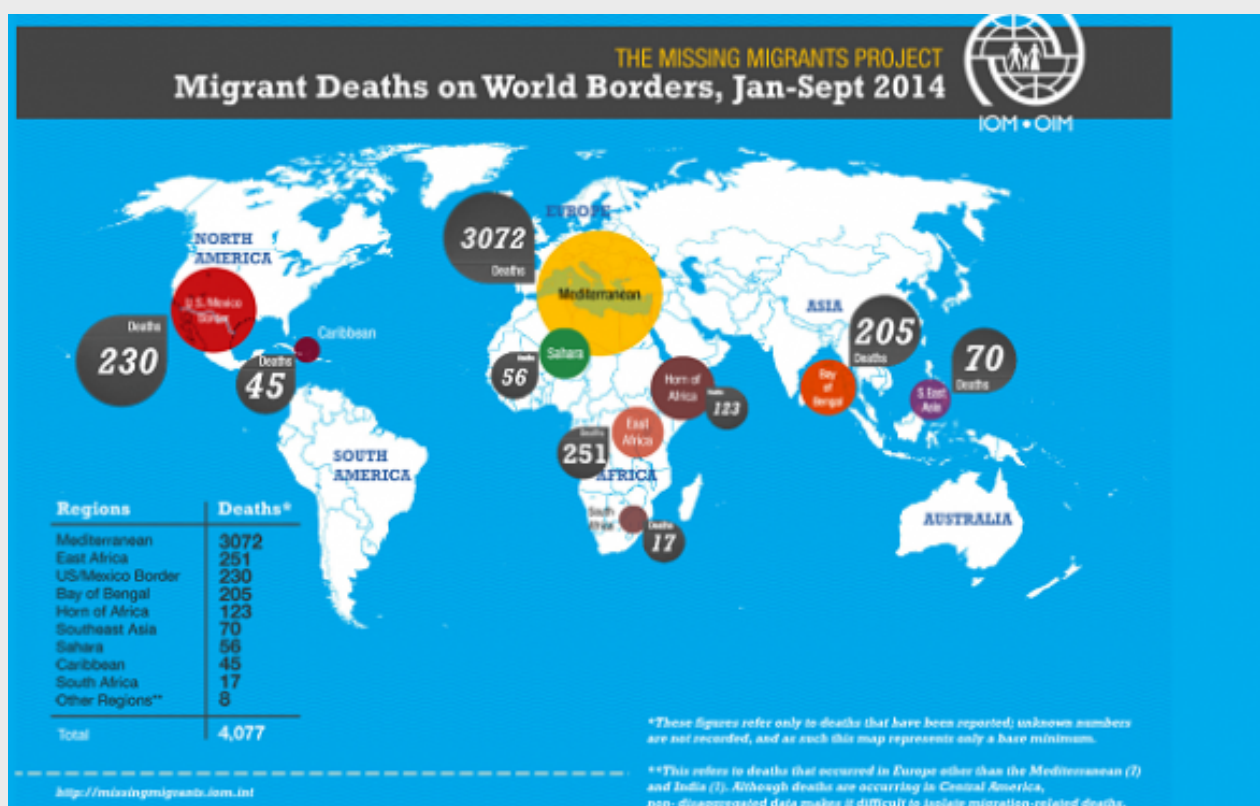
Signum Services have recently dealt with a case of suspicious stowaways found on board a RoRo ship sailing from Italy to Turkey - [*UK P&I Club*](#).

The two suspects with no identification documents were found by the crew. The Captain contacted the coast guard in Greece who arranged for the stowaways to be taken ashore by launch to the Island of Limnos. During the investigation it became clear that they boarded the vessel in Italy, hiding under the chassis of a truck. Their intention was to travel onwards from Istanbul to Syria. Concerns were raised that both of them were trying out a new route to get to Syria to avoid detection and join ISIS, or one of the other militant groups fighting in the region. The Greek authorities believe that as stowaways on ships they will avoid the need to have photographic national identification travel documents as used at airports and borders.

More worrying is that this could also be the return route after their training or fighting in Syria or Iraq and could pose a bigger threat to their returning country.

Migrants at Sea:

The Missing Migrants Project has published a report tracking deaths of migrants along migratory routes across the globe. The report, titled "Fatal Journeys: Tracking Lives Lost during Migration," provides the most comprehensive global tally of migrant fatalities for 2014, and estimates deaths over the past 15 years - [*eNikos*](#).



With a count surpassing 40,000 victims since 2000, IOM calls on all the world's governments to address what it describes as "an epidemic of crime and victimization."

According to the data, in 2014, the vast majority of migrant fatalities (75 pct) occurred in the Mediterranean, with the number reaching 3,072, making it the deadliest sea in the world for migrants.

Four small boats set out from the Libyan coast this weekend carrying hundreds of migrants and refugees desperate to cross the Mediterranean and reach Europe. On Wednesday, the UN's refugee agency said that up to 300 people aboard the ships were missing and feared drowned in the freezing waters - [Huffington Post](#)

UNHCR's announcement on Wednesday came just two days after Italy reported that 29 migrants had died of hypothermia aboard coast guard ships. The 29 had been found by Italian authorities alongside more than 70 others at sea without food or water. Reuters reports that the migrants spent 18 hours in freezing temperatures on the decks of the boats taking them to the Italian island of Lampedusa. It was unclear whether they were aboard one of the four ships that left Libya over the weekend.

The flotilla that was saving lives last year isn't there this year. In this week's case, the Italian coast guard had to go far from shore in really inappropriate boats to make these rescues. The small number of people who were rescued later this week were picked up by commercial shipping. Of course the other concern is that people are actually drowning and dying. IOM has been the first organization to draw attention to the global numbers of migrants dying. We estimate that about 3,200 people lost their lives while migrating in 2013. Last year, the number topped 5,000. It's shouldn't be as much about the blame game here, but about the fact that the world needs to pay attention to this issue. We've got to actually give migrants the same attention as we give all sorts of other issues.

Two merchant ships and an Italian coast guard vessel went to the rescue of more than 600 migrants who sent emergency calls for help from their packed rubber boats near the Libyan coast on Saturday - [Newsweek](#)

The rescue operation is the second of its kind in two days, and closely follows the deaths last week of more than 300 people who were trying to make the crossing to Europe.

The Italian coast guard in Rome said the rescue vessels had located six boats drifting about 50 miles from the coast of Libya, after receiving calls for help by satellite telephone.

The coast guard ship Peluso has started the rescue operation, a spokesman for the coast guard said, a day after about 700 other migrants were plucked from overcrowded boats.

The [Malta] Armed Forces are assisting the Italian coastguard in the rescue of at least 1,000 migrants on 12 boats some 110 miles south of Lampedusa - [Times of Malta](#)

This is the third operation of its kind in as many days.



Prime Minister Joseph Muscat tweeted:

"#Malta @Armed_Forces_MT working with #Italy authorities in major joint operation rescuing migrants on numerous boats leaving from #Libya."

The Italian coast guard said it had plucked more than 130 people from two rubber boats about 180 kilometres south of the island of Lampedusa so far, and was working to save eight more vessels.

"We are certainly at more than 1,000 migrants"

involved in today's rescue operation, a spokesman for the coast guard in Rome told Reuters. Assistance has also been provided to 40 people on board a dinghy just a few miles off Libya.

Better weather since last week has encouraged migrants to make the perilous journey from North Africa, where a breakdown of order in Libya has made it almost impossible to police the traffickers who pack people onto rickety boats. More are said to be leaving Libya, which seems to be experiencing a mass exodus, according to Italian media.



The Italian coastguard is conducting a major rescue operation to try to save more than 1,000 migrants in difficulty on the Mediterranean Sea - [BBC News](#).

Search teams have helped get at least 130 people to safety so far and are working to reach more, officials said.

There were reports that rescuers were threatened by armed men who approached them in a speedboat from the Libyan coast.

According to Italy's Transport Ministry, four men with Kalashnikov rifles sped out from the Libyan shore during the rescue and ordered the coastguard to return a boat that had been emptied of migrants.



The Italian coastguard has rescued more than 2,000 migrants in a major operation off the Libyan coast, officials have said - [BBC News](#)

During the rescue, search teams were threatened by Kalashnikov-wielding men who approached in a speedboat from Libya. They demand empty migrants boats back from the coastguard.

Two merchant ships helped rescue around 700 migrants off the coast of Libya.

Migrants from three rubber dinghies, each containing about 100 people, were brought aboard Malta-flagged container ship MSC Belle, while Panama-flagged LPG carrier Gaz Energy rescued another 100 from a fourth craft. Italian Coast Guard (ICG) patrol vessel CP 904 Nave Fiorillo came to the rescue of three more boats, Italian news agency ANSA reported - [IHS Maritime 360](#)

"All of those rescued appear to be in good shape and the sea conditions are good and getting better," Reuters quoted an ICG spokesman as saying. Fiorillo landed its group of 280 migrants in Pozzallo, Sicily.

On Saturday, the ICG was in action again after being alerted by satellite telephone calls to a further 600 migrants in six boats drifting 50nm off the Libyan coast. ICG sent Fiorillo's sister vessel, CP 905 Nave Peluso, to intervene.

Following the events of recent days in which more than 2000 migrants were rescued



from the Mediterranean Sea and several hundred lost their lives, International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu today (Monday 16 February) called for more concerted action to address the issue of criminals who organize illegal and unregulated sea passage by migrants, putting thousands of lives at risk - [IMO](#)

"We do not seek to prevent migration. People have the human right to migrate. But it is time to stop illegal, unregulated passage arranged by people smugglers. Not only do they put the lives of the migrants in danger, they also endanger the rescue services and merchant shipping which take part in the rescue operations. Something needs to be done against the smugglers or the situation will not improve. It is placing an intolerable strain on rescue services and on merchant vessels," Mr. Sekimizu said.

A small multinational fleet patrols the Mediterranean, hoping to intercept and rescue the thousands of refugees trying to reach the coast of Italy. It can be a thankless task - [BBC News](#)

Clinging to the safety bar of the top bunk in the hot and airless cabin, I decide I want to die. For 24 hours now the sea has boiled beneath us, catapulting us upwards on the swell and then crashing back down, the 5m (15ft) waves squeezed and squashed under the ship's hull with the juddering force of a pneumatic drill.

The metallic stench of bile and acrid engine fuel is choking me - I've been sick so many times now that I am shaking.

And there's no getting off - we're on board an Icelandic coastguard vessel in the middle of the Mediterranean, part of a mission run by the EU's border agency, Frontex, to intercept a cargo ship which is suspected of having

migrants hidden in its hold. I try to imagine them, three to five hundred of them perhaps, crammed into the bowels of the boat with no space to lie down, the waves smashing them against the hull and scattering them like skittles.

"I never thought I'd see anything like it," crew member Andri Johnson had told me when we'd sat together on deck near the port. Last month Andri was part of the rescue team which saved hundreds of migrants on a rusty decommissioned cargo ship which had been abandoned by its crew off the Italian coast. He spoke hesitantly, not because of a lack of fluency in English, but because he clearly didn't welcome revisiting dark memories. His young, moon-shaped face gave him a curious look of purity and innocence.

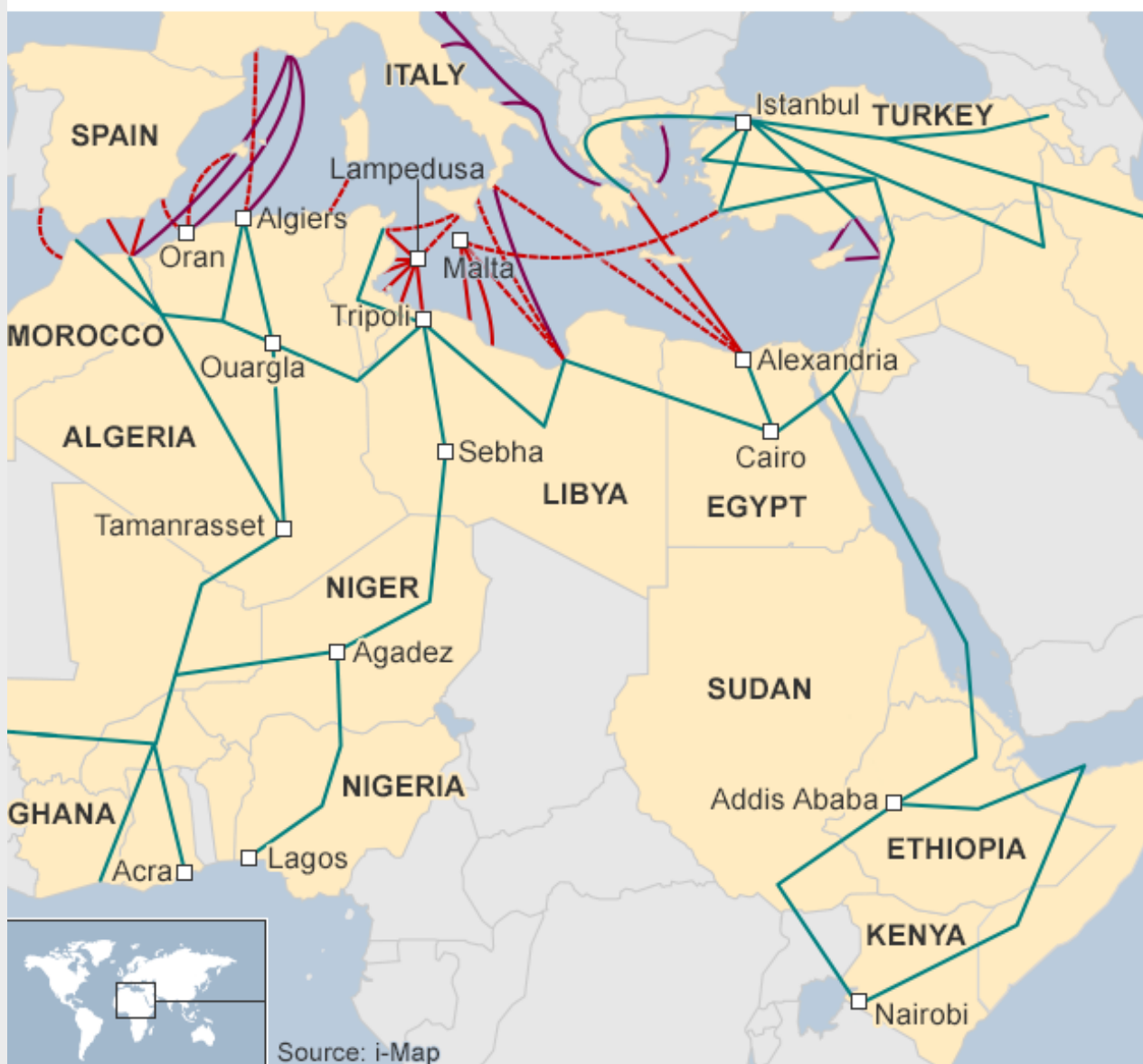
The problem is too many people need Frontex's help. More than 19,000 migrants have arrived on Italy's shores since last November. Frontex which doesn't have any operational equipment of its own, relies on EU or Schengen member states (like Iceland) to lend it the planes, ships and helicopters it needs for operations. It currently has a handful of resources to cover the huge Mediterranean sea.



Conditions at a migrant reception centre on the island of Lampedusa are "getting desperate", an Italian official has told the [BBC](#)

Key migration routes

- Major maritime routes
- Minor maritime routes
- Ferry routes used by migrants
- Major land routes



There are now more than 1,000 men, women and children housed at the centre, which is over double its capacity.

Some 2,700 migrants have been rescued from the Mediterranean since Saturday, the UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) said.

Boats carrying more people are due to dock at Lampedusa later on Tuesday. The influx has added more pressure to the already overflowing reception centre. The centre's capacity has been reduced to 250 while refurbishment work is being carried out. It can normally accommodate 400 people. The BBC's Tom Burridge on Lampedusa says he has seen bus loads of men, women and children being transported around the island. "There were some children without their parents, as young as 9," he said.

The Assize Court in Agrigento, Italy, has sentenced Somali national Mouhamud Elmi Muhidin to 30 years in prison for his part in the brutal Mediterranean migrant smuggling trade - [*IHS Maritime 360*](#).

After charging migrants – mostly Eritreans and Somalis – USD3,000 for their passage to Europe, Muhidin and his gang abused some of them, extorted another USD1,000 from their victims at the beachhead in Libya, then forced them at gunpoint on to rubber dinghies. The migrants' desperate search for a better life turned to disaster as the boats sank. In all, 366 of Muhidin's passengers died en route to the Italian island of Lampedusa in October 2013. On reaching Lampedusa, Muhidin tried to pass himself off



as an ordinary migrant but was recognised by survivors who threatened to lynch him, according to Radio France Internationale (RFI). In testimony, some of the victims of Somali piracy and Muhidin's 'customers' told police that the 30-year-old had kidnapped them, tortured some with electric shocks, and raped 20 women.

RFI quoted Agrigento prosecutor Renato di Natale as saying, "This is a chilling illustration of the reality of smuggling organisations."

Listen to the story of Wealthy Italian-American couple, Regina and Chris Catrambone, who have spent millions on MOAS, which uses a motor boat to rescue migrants in the Mediterranean Sea. On [*BBC Outlook*](#)



The [Irish] Government is to gift one of its Naval Service ships to the Maltese to help them cope with the ongoing refugee crisis in the Mediterranean and is planning to deploy Irish ships on an EU anti-piracy missions off Somalia - [*Irish Examiner*](#)

Defence Minister Simon Coveney agreed to give the recently decommissioned LÉ Aoife to Malta following a meeting in Latvia with his Maltese counterpart, Carmelo Abela.

"The Maltese authorities require the ship for their armed forces to assist in the patrolling of the Mediterranean Sea to deal with the ongoing difficult refugee crisis in the region. Recent tragic events in that part of the Mediterranean have underlined the significant challenges which need to be addressed by the international community and Ireland is very keen to play an active part in this regard," Mr Coveney said.

Talks between the two ministers also focused on future potential co-operations.

"I welcome this very important contribution from Ireland which will help in bridging a gap in Malta's naval capacity pending our future acquisition of a new offshore patrol vessel," Minister Abela said.

Meanwhile, the Naval Service looks poised to send ships to the Horn of Africa as part of an EU anti-piracy mission.

The IMO will host an inter-agency meeting on the Travelling of Migrants by Sea on 4 March. - [*IHS Maritime 360*](#)

The meeting will build on a meeting with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) in December 2014 and aims to develop "potential ways forward" such as creating an incident database to assist law enforcement agencies identify, arrest, and prosecute people smugglers. A greater control over coastal zones and ports is also sought. Participation is expected from the UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), members of the Global Migration Group and interested IMO member states and shipping industry bodies.

"I firmly believe that there is scope for greater efforts by the international community to better manage the process of migration," IMO Secretary-General, Koji Sekimizu, said in a statement. International media reports this week claimed that the terrorist organization Islamic State (IS) plans to infiltrate migrant flows into Europe.

The UK's Daily Mail newspaper cited transcripts from "telephone intercepts" published in the Italian press that claim to provide evidence that IS plans on sending 500,000 migrants out to sea in boats as a 'psychological weapon' against Europe if military action is taken in Libya.

As violence escalates in Libya, IOM is calling on world governments to act swiftly to face the growing threat to migrants. Over 1,600 have been rescued from unseaworthy boats on the Mediterranean Sea since Friday (13/2) - [IOM](#)

"This is a clear signal that the situation in Libya is unravelling. We also know this from the fact that Italy and several other nations have already evacuated their citizens from the country," IOM Director General William Lacy Swing said on Monday (16/2). "We must stand ready to assist thousands of extremely vulnerable people who need our help," he added.

IOM pointed to the rescue since Friday of over 1,600 migrants from multiple vessels. This took place just days after some 330 adults and children were reported lost, presumed drowned, the previous weekend.

IOM staffers in Sicily and the island of Lampedusa are preparing this week to help the Italian authorities to care for the latest victims of criminal Libyan trafficking gangs, who reportedly sent at least a dozen unseaworthy inflatable vessels into a stormy Mediterranean starting last Tuesday.

Militias loyal to ISIS could bring Somalia-style piracy to the Mediterranean, officials fear - [Mail Online](#).

Two centuries after the brutal Berber pirates were cowed into submission, the threat of maritime terror in the Med is once again looming from North Africa.

Fighters that have sworn allegiance to the Islamic State have made sweeping new inroads in Libya, and have taken numerous coastal towns, just a few hundred miles across the water from mainland Europe.

Italian officials believe that militants are already working with experienced seamen – the human traffickers shipping tens of thousands of migrants to Europe every month.

And it is feared they could be close to striking into a bold new business on one of the world's busiest waterways.

Officials at the Italian Ministry of Defence have warned that IS 'could replicate in the Mediterranean the scenario that has dominated the maritime region between Somalia and Aden for the last ten years'.

Rampant piracy has characterised shipping in the Gulf of Aden between Somalia and Yemen since the civil war in the 1990s plunged the country into lawlessness and clan warfare.

[IRIN News](#)



Rescued migrants sleep after being plucked from a boat off the coast of Italy in summer 2014.

Thousands of refugees attempt to make the perilous journey to Europe every year, with hundreds dying. In the summer of 2014 the Mare Nostrum search and rescue team picked up over 750 a day.

© Alfredo D'Amato/UNHCR

Industry representatives will explain to the EU why the shipping sector should no longer be

expected to shoulder the burden of large scale migrant rescues in the Mediterranean Sea - IHS Maritime 360

Intermanager and the European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA) will hold a seminar next month during European Shipping Week to explain to European members of parliament how the dangerous nature of rescues highlights how the current state of affairs is exacerbating an already hazardous situation.

The partners note that the situation has moved long past expectations of an improved situation during winter months. "During the winter months, following the end of the Mare Nostrum operation, the number of migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean has only increased," they stated. In 2014, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) report that a total of 218,000 irregular sea crossings in the Mediterranean were made during 2014, compared to the 60,000 in 2013. In addition, this year, some 4,000 migrants have already made the journey.

Referring to the EU's inadequate coastal surveillance programme, Triton, which replaced Italy's dedicated search and rescue programme Mare Nostrum at the end of 2014, the partners said, "Scaling-back efforts is deplorable as it leaves a gap which has de facto been filled by shipping companies. Search and rescue operations are sovereign functions and entrusting them to the industry is as dangerous as it is irresponsible."

Libya

A bomb exploded at an oil pipeline from Libya's El Sarir field to Hariga port on Saturday, halting flows to the terminal as the North African OPEC nation struggles to restore crude exports battered by fighting - Reuters

Libya is caught up in a conflict among rival factions with two governments operating their own armed forces and separate parliaments, nearly four years after the civil war ousted leader Muammar Gaddafi.

No group claimed responsibility for Saturday's bombing, but the country's oil infrastructure, ports and pipeline are often the target of fighting or attacks by armed groups. Hariga oil terminal supervisor Rajab Abdulrasoul told Reuters on Saturday the bomb exploded at around 5 a.m. approximately kilometers north of the El Sarir field.

"A bomb exploded at a pipeline carrying crude between El Sarir oil field to Hariga port," he said. "The firefighters are still trying to put out the fire. What happened is sabotage."



Libya's National Oil Corporation urgently called on Saturday for more official protection for its installations after an oil pipeline from its El Sarir field was sabotaged, halting flow to Hariga port - Reuters

In a separate incident, gunmen stormed government buildings in the coastal city of Sirte, forcing officials out at gunpoint and taking over administrative offices and television and radio stations, the state news agency said.

No group claimed responsibility for Saturday's pipeline sabotage, but oil infrastructure, ports and pipelines in the North African OPEC member state are often targets of attack.

The headquarters of the National Oil Corporation in Tripoli are gleaming, the floors marble, the offices decked out with black leather chairs and fake flowers. It seems far from the fighting going on over oil terminals around the country - NPR News

But the man in charge looks at production and knows the future is bleak.

"We cannot produce. We are losing 80 percent of our production," says Mustapha Sanallah, the chairman of Libya's National Oil Corporation.

He looks like a typical executive, decked out in a suit and glasses. But beneath his calm veneer, he's worried.

"Now we have two problems: low production and low price," he says.

At the current rate, he expects that the country won't even earn 10 percent of the budget money Libya had in 2012, before militias started taking oil infrastructure hostage.

"If there is security in Libya, we can resume production within a few days," Sanallah says.

If there's one thing that has a chance of keeping Libya from totally falling apart, it's oil. It provides nearly all the country's revenue. It's what militias are fighting over. And it's the prize coveted by the two rival governments — one in Tripoli, the other in Libya's east — that claim to be running the country.

The Tripoli factions seen as Islamist, the eastern government as anti-Islamist — but the fighting is mainly over turf and resources like oil, rather than ideology.

"We are still the NOC [National Oil Company]; the legal NOC is here. I am the chairman of NOC," he says. "[The east] nominated a new chairman of NOC, but there's no staff, there's no people, there's no hardware, there's no software."

International mediators are trying to keep the oil company independent of either side, but oil fields are under attack. One tanker was bombed, and another one was threatened.

Italy's coast guard has rescued some 2,164 migrants whose lives were in peril between the Italian island of Lampedusa and the Libyan coast over the weekend. According to the Italian



transport ministry, the rescuers subsequently encountered four suspected smugglers armed with Kalashnikovs traveling by speedboat who forced them to return one of the 12 ships that had been emptied of migrants - [Vice News](#)

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi has repeatedly appealed for international help to deal with migrants, and reiterated his plea in remarks to RAI TV on Saturday. "The problems cannot all be left to us because we are the first, the closest, the people who pick up the boats," he said.

Italy on Wednesday issued its strongest warning yet about the danger of the Islamic State group establishing a stronghold in Libya that would threaten Europe's security and the stability of neighbouring states - [Yahoo News](#)

Addressing parliament, Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni said there was an "evident risk" of IS fighters in Libya forging an alliance with local militias or criminal gangs currently engaged in a multi-sided battle for control of the country.

He also warned that time was running out for the troubled north African state, and called for a "change of pace" in the international community's efforts to restore stability to a country that has descended into chaos.

"There is an evident risk of an alliance being forged between local groups and Daesh and it is a situation that has to be monitored with maximum attention," Gentiloni told MPs. Daesh is the Arabic acronym for IS.

Gentiloni said it was clear the situation in Libya had deteriorated in recent weeks, raising the risks faced by Italy and neighbouring countries.

A massive wave of migrants in overcrowded boats is heading across the Mediterranean, fleeing the chaos in Libya and attempts by Isis militants to press-gang them into jihadist ranks - [The Times](#).

Italy said yesterday that 2,490 migrants had landed on its shores since Sunday and 1,200 people were crammed into a holding centre on the island of Lampedusa that was built to house 800.

Braving seas that claimed the lives of more than 300 people last week, about 7,000 have already made the crossing this year — beating the record number logged this time last year.

Egypt

Israel plans to install surveillance cameras and radar units on the security barrier that runs along its border with Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Israeli media reported on Friday - [World Bulletin](#)

Israeli paper Maariv quoted military sources as saying that Israel planned to install surveillance cameras and radar units along the border with Sinai to prevent militants from infiltrating into Israel. The borders will be fortified in the coming period, the source said, adding that the Israeli military had not ruled out the possibility of Sinai-based militant groups carrying out attacks on Israeli targets from Egyptian territory.

The sources added that the Israeli security apparatus was closely following events in Sinai.

DHL global express shipping company intends to increase its investments in Egypt by adding new shipping lanes and offering logistical services to its centre in Cairo International Airport, as part of its plan to develop its business in the Egyptian market, according to Ken Allen, CEO of Global DHL - [*Daily News Egypt*](#)

During his meeting with Prime Minister Ibrahim Mehleb on Saturday, Allen noted the company is currently contributing to the ongoing preparations for the “Egypt The Future” economic development conference to be held in March. It will be sending invitations as well as shipping all logistical needs of the conference.

It's too soon to determine whether a new police department tasked with protecting the Suez Canal will do enough to secure the region, a supply chain security expert told JOC.com on Wednesday - [*JOC*](#)

The Egyptian government's announcement of its intention to create a new police force comes roughly three months after four boats ambushed an Egyptian Navy patrol boat near the Suez, ending in the destruction of the attacking vessels, the killing of four of the attacking gunmen and the capture of 32 others, according to reports. The Egyptian military had already strengthened security in the region after footage of a rocket-propelled grenade attack on a Cosco container ship traversing the waterway went viral.

“Any effective police force in the region will need to provide surveillance and protection to long swaths of canal banks in desolate and uninhabited areas where attackers could stage attacks on vessels,” Robert Shelala II, a supply chain security expert and author of a recent report on maritime security in the Middle East, told JOC.com.

An attack on the Suez Canal doesn't just threaten the main driver of the Egyptian economy, but also the \$8.4 billion project to build a second channel and a nearby logistics hub. Although the government says a second channel is needed to cut down wait times, many in the maritime industry say delays aren't an issue. Foreign policy experts say the multibillion-dollar project is an effort for Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, a former general and current president, to shore up support for his government after the ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood from power in 2013.

Libya and Egypt asked the United Nations Security Council on Wednesday to lift an arms embargo on Libya, impose a naval blockade on areas not under government control and help build the country's army to tackle Islamic State and other militants - [*Reuters*](#)

Libya has descended into factional fighting, leaving the country almost lawless nearly four years after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi. Two competing governments backed by militia brigades are scrambling for control of the oil-producing country and the chaos has created havens for Islamist militants.

The Security Council met to discuss Libya after Islamic State released a video showing the beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians. Egypt responded to the killings with air strikes on Monday on militant camps, training sites and arms storage areas in Libya.

Jordan told council members during closed door consultations after the meeting that it planned to circulate a draft resolution later on Wednesday, diplomats said. Jordan said the text would propose lifting the arms embargo on the Libyan government, condemn attempts to provide weapons to other parties and support Libyan efforts to combat terrorism.

And Finally...

The latest International Maritime Bureau (IMB) Piracy Report for 2014 has revealed that piracy at sea has fallen to its lowest level in eight years. Yet, while the drop in overall incidents is good news for the industry, **another type of piracy is finding its way onto the radars of shipowners and managers**; one that is harder to analyse by region or statistics: Online piracy - [*MTI Network*](#).

MTI can report that, in the last month, internet service provider Inmarsat, sent the below message (reprinted here with authorisation) to a ship owner, threatening to stop all internet service to their ships after Hollywood Studio Columbia Pictures lodged a legal complaint, relating to the illegal download of one of their films by a seafarer onboard a company vessels. Inmarsat listed the title, exact date, hour and minute the movie was downloaded and to which ship.



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

Hijack:

- **SE Asia** - Thailand-registered product tanker, **Lapin**, was boarded by eight armed men at 1955 LT in position 03:11N - 100:43E, approx 40nm west-northwest of Port Klang, Malaysia, Malacca Strait. Loaded with 2,000 tonnes of bunker oil and 5 tonnes of diesel oil and with 15 crew on board, the tanker was boarded by eight men armed with guns and knives. The tanker was forced to slow speed and the armed men brought a larger vessel alongside and siphoned off both the bunker oil and diesel oil. After siphoning its fuel and destroying communications equipment, they stole ship property and crew belongings. The robbers tied up the crew and informed them that they had planted an IED at the tanker's flying bridge area and threatened the crew not to move, before they escaped. Around 0700 LT 14 Feb, the crew managed to free themselves and the master sailed the tanker into Thai waters and anchored approx 14.34nm west of Ko Tarutao, Thailand and activated the SSAS alarm. He managed to contact the shipping company with assistance of a passing fishing vessel. Thai marine police were contacted for assistance at 0920 LT on 15 Feb. At 1420 LT, Royal Thai Navy (RTN) boarded the vessel at location north of Ko Tanuato and sent its explosive ordnance disposal team to inspect the IED. All 15 crew members were unharmed, but the IED remained on board. Reported 13 Feb.
Update: RTN EOD team managed to disarm the IED package and found only an electric circuit with no explosive or detonator attached.

Attack/Robbery Attempt:

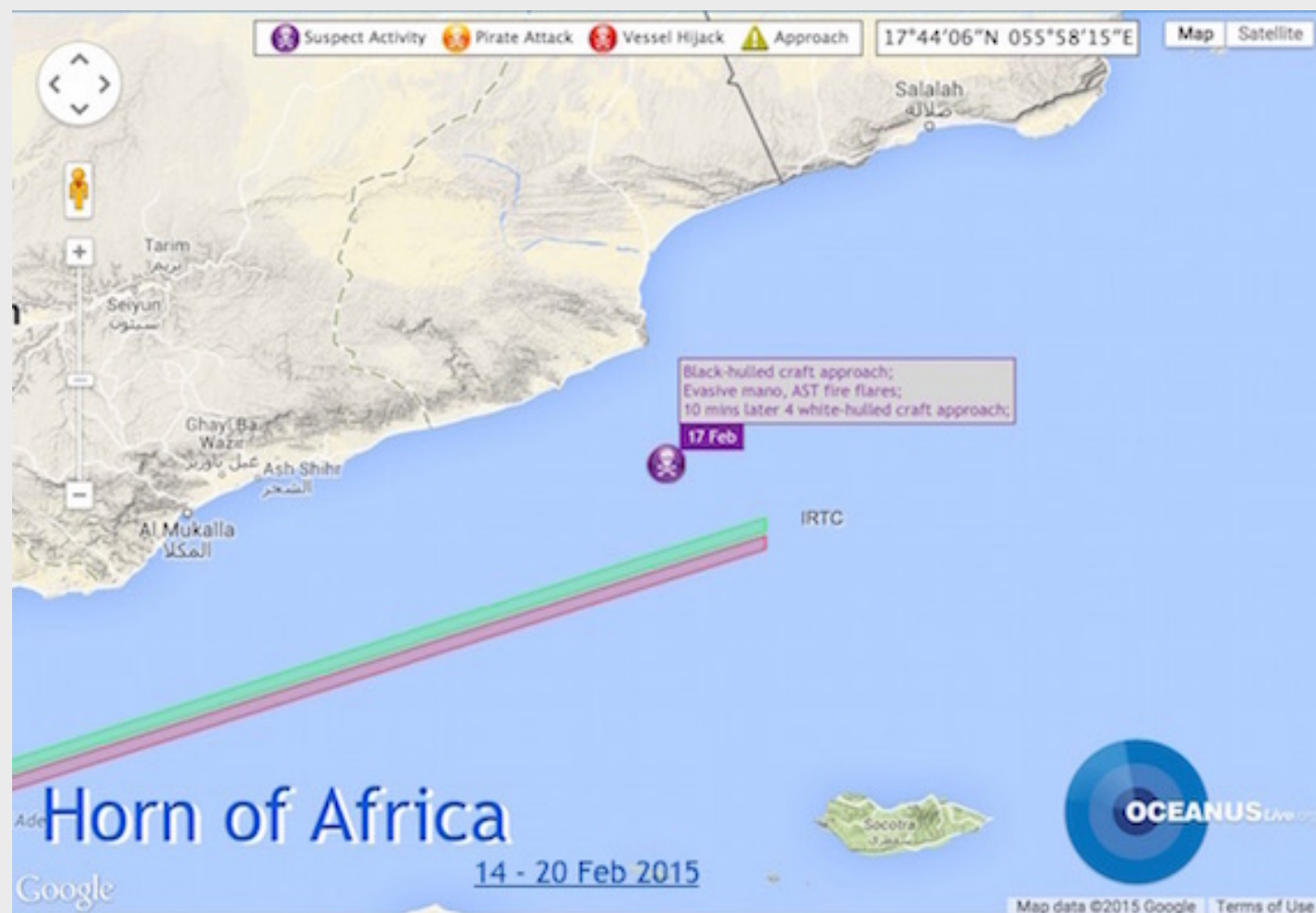
- **SE Asia** - Duty AB on routine rounds noticed five robbers on the forecastle deck of Marshall Islands-flagged container ship, **Cape Franklin**, at 2010 LT in position Haiphong OPL Anchorage, Vietnam. He immediately informed OOW, who raised the alarm and crew mustered. Upon hearing the alarm and seeing the crew alertness, the robbers escaped in their wooden motor boat. Investigation revealed that the paint store door was damaged and ship's stores stolen. Incident reported to Port Control via VHF channel 16. Reported (IMB) 14 Feb.
- **SE Asia** - Ten robbers armed with knives boarded a berthed Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier, **Sea Star**, at 0430 LT in position Berth 107, Belawan, Indonesia. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Local authorities boarded the vessel. Seeing the alerted authorities, Port Security Guards and ISPS Port Facility Police urged the robbers to leave the ship, the robbers escaped with 10 bags of stolen ship cargo. Reported (IMB) 14 Feb.
- **SE Asia** - Two robbers boarded an anchored Singapore-flagged bulk carrier, **Bridgegate**, using hooks attached with ropes at 2000 LT in position approx 11nm from Entrance of Banjarmasin, Taboneo Anchorage, Indonesia. Duty crew spotted the robbers and informed the bridge. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Seeing the crew alertness, the robbers escaped in their boat. Upon investigation, it was found that two padlocks were broken but nothing stolen. Master attempted to contact Port Control but received no response. Reported (IMB) 12 Feb.
- **SE Asia** - Five robbers armed with knives boarded an anchored Singapore-flagged bulk carrier, **Anne Kjersti**, at 0254 LT in position approx 4nm SSE of L'Orange Island, Hongai Outer Anchorage, Vietnam. OOW noticed some movements on the forecastle and instructed the duty AB to check. As the AB proceeded forward the OOW directed the Aldis lamp towards the robbers who escaped in their boat. Upon investigation, it was found that ship's stores and property were stolen. Reported (IMB) 12 Feb.
- **Pacific** - Six robbers on a fibreglass dinghy, armed with guns and knives, approached underway Papua New Guinea-flagged passenger ship, **Kwadima II**, from astern at 1650 LT in position 10:18.60S - 150:45.60E, Heira Heira Point, Milne Bay, PNG. They passed by the ship and pointed a gun at the crew that was steering the ship. The robbers boarded the ship and demanded money. One robber fired a shot out the window to intimidate the crew. The Master who sustained a cut above his eye and had shotgun pellets in his arm, jumped through the broken window and into the water, but returned to the ship once he realised he was bleeding. One of the crew was beaten and a passenger suffered a cut. Another person received a blow to the head from one of the robbers using a gun butt. The perpetrators, who also cut the wires of the ship's communication systems, took the crew and passengers' personal belongings. Reported (ReCAAP) 1 Feb.
- **SE Asia** - LATE Report | Duty oiler during routine rounds onboard an anchored vehicle

carrier noticed four robbers in the engine room at 2220 LT in position 05:50.6S – 106:55.8E, Jakarta Anchorage, Indonesia. One of the robbers took him as hostage and threatened him with a knife. The remaining robbers stole engine spares and escaped. Alarm raised and all crew alerted. Port Authority informed. Reported (IMB) 22 Jan.

- **W Africa** - [Boarding/Robbery] LATE Report | While crew on board Marshall Islands-flagged chemical tanker, **Pure Grace**, were engaged in cargo tank squeezing operations, robbers boarded the ship in Monrovia Port, Liberia and took items from the ship's lifeboat and also attempted to steal the ship's rescue boat engine and rescue boat can. The robbers eventually escaped unnoticed. Reported 21 Jan.
- **S Amer** - US coastguard seized 989 Kgs of cocaine from the 3,124-DWT St Vincent and the Grenadines-flagged cargo ship **ATLANTIC VII**, approximately eight nautical miles off Puerto Rico. Authorities were first alerted to the ATLANTIC VII when they noticed a small 'delivery vessel' launched from the ATLANTIC VII carrying 'suspicious' parcels. The ship was intercepted and 13 men were arrested. The cocaine consignment was estimated to have a street value of approximately USD \$29 million. Reported 3 Feb

Suspicious Activity/Advisory:

- **Gulf of Aden** - MV reported seeing a suspicious vessel with black hull approaching on the port side to within 2 cables at high speed at 1120 UTC in position 14:51N - 052:20E, approx 187nm ENE of Al Mukalla, Yemen, Gulf of Aden. Vessel carried out evasive manoeuvres and AST fired rocket flares. Suspicious vessel then slowed down and changed direction. Ten minutes later 4 more suspicious vessels with white hulls approached on the port and starboard sides at a distance of 5 cables. MV carried out evasive manoeuvres until the distance increased and the suspicious vessels moved away. No weapons/tripwires sighted. MV is safe. Reported 17 Feb.



Maritime Situation Map for HoA/IOR 14 – 20 Feb 2015



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