

Weekly Security & Risk Report

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MAKING THE
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MARITIME SECURITY PHYSICAL AND ASSET SECURITY RISK CONSULTING SECURITY SYSTEMS



T +44 (0) 1279 216726 E operations@mast-security.com W mast-security.com

Maritime Asset Security and Training (MAST) Ltd Thremhall Park, Start Hill, Bishops Stortford, Herts CM22 7WE

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Issue 282 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the fragile and conflict affected coastal states Libya, Somalia and Yemen. The Mediterranean migrant crisis, incidents affecting maritime security and influencing maritime news are also reported and analysed, focusing on the keys theatres of maritime instability.

Coronavirus Port and Terminal Restrictions

The situation remains extremely fluid. For the most recent updates on closures and re-openings, MAST Security recommends using the Wilhemsen Covid-19 Global Port Restrictions Map. [Please Click Here](#) to visit their site.

The Security and Risk Report Series focuses on:

- Operational risks in areas of instability which could affect the safety of commercial and private vessels and personnel ashore and at sea.
- In country reporting on key countries where civil conflict are directly impacting on maritime operations; and
- Reporting and analysis of incidents of terrorism, piracy and other related criminal activity.

MAST has a global reach and presence, delivering first hand, accurate and exclusive intelligence. MAST is entrenched and committed in continuing to support and promote the awareness of the very real risks that seafarers and other stakeholders face.

This Intelligence Report Series is a brief snapshot of MAST's Intelligence capabilities. MAST Intelligence specialises in providing clients with a suite of products and services, including; political and economic risk analysis, detailed port and vessel security briefs, vessel passage plans, threat and risk mitigation and travel risk management.

Working closely in conjunction with a host of experts, MAST Intelligence offers a market leading service pertaining to all maritime affairs.

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Editor: David Rider
www.mast-security.com

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Gulf of Guinea

The global maritime community is calling for enhanced efforts to tackle the rising menace of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea with the adoption of new IMO resolutions on increased collaboration. The resolutions adopted at a meeting of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) safety committee are centered on the need to strengthen law enforcement, arrest and prosecute pirates and provide security escorts for vessels. "The resolution highlights the need for greater collaboration with all critical stakeholders, including information-sharing on maritime criminality and illegality," said IMO in a statement.

Incidents:

1. Underway Ghana-flagged fishing vessel attacked and boarded by eight armed pirates in a speedboat at 1830 UTC in position 04:33.12N - 000:15.49E, around 66nm South of Tema, Ghana. Pirates fired upon the vessel before boarding. Vessel then sailed south before pirates stole crew personal belongings, kidnapped five crew and escaped at 0145 UTC (20 May). Ghana navy notified and a patrol boat was dispatched to escort the fishing vessel back to Tema. Reported (IMB/MDAT) 19th May.

Deep Blue project launches

On May 21st, NIMASA formally launched Deep Blue, 'The Integrated National Security and Waterways Protection Infrastructure project to protect the country's waters from maritime crime. A key asset in this struggle to improve maritime security will be the use of two Cessna Citation CJ3 maritime surveillance aircraft by the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA).

New Kidnappings as Efforts Grow to Stop GoG Piracy

After a period of inactivity in the Gulf of Guinea, pirates have struck again. Five crew members were reportedly kidnapped from a Ghanaian fishing vessel on May 19th operating beyond the traditional range of the Nigerian pirates. The attack on the FV Atlantic Princess is the first report of kidnapping in the Gulf of Guinea in nine weeks and the furthest westerly kidnapping within the Gulf of Guinea to date.

Agreement Between Switzerland and Nigeria Ends 3-Year Tanker Detention

Swiss authorities announced that they have completed an agreement for the release of a Swiss product tanker that has been detained by Nigeria for over three years. The product tanker MT San Padre Pio is registered in Switzerland and oper-

ated by a Swiss shipping company ABC Maritime, owned by Augusta Energy. The 7,600 dwt vessel was engaged in the company's bunkering business in West Africa when on January 23, 2018, the vessel was intercepted by the Nigerian Navy.

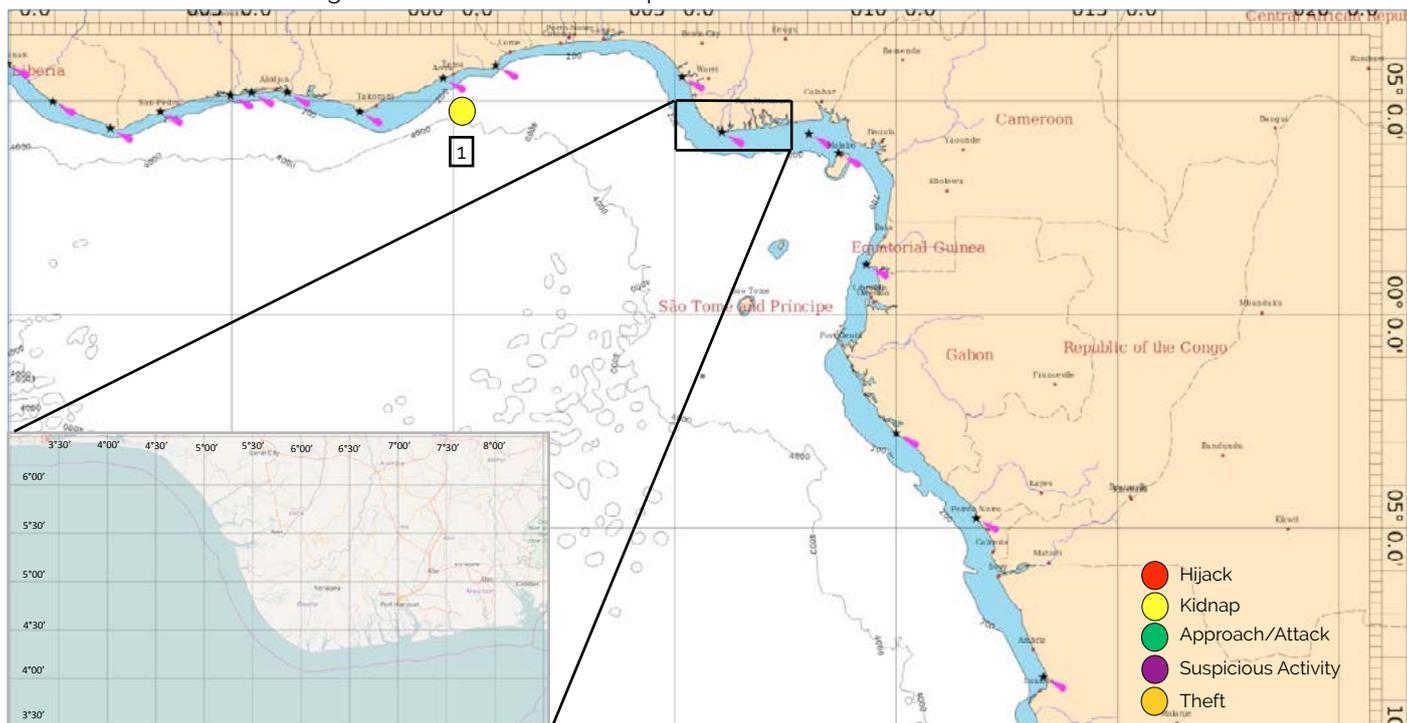
Nigerian Navy, stakeholders discuss maritime security

The Nigerian Navy (NN) in collaboration with Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KA IPTC) and Danish Government, has held a maritime security training themed 'Developing Maritime Security Culture in the Gulf of Guinea' in Lagos. The training programme, which had many participants from various security sectors across the country including Nigerian Navy, Police, NAPTIP, EFCC and others, was organised in an effort for collective synergy to curb criminality in the Gulf of Guinea.

To see MAST Services in the region, [please click here](#). And to read Nigeria's country report, [please click here](#).

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures:

- 2021:**
Incidents reported: 29 (MDAT-GoG)
Crew kidnapped: 45 (IMB, MDAT)
Vessels hijacked: 1 (MDAT-GoG)
- 2020:**
Incidents reported: 132 (MDAT-GoG)
Crew Kidnapped: 130 (IMB)
Vessels Hijacked: 3 (IMB)
- 2019:**
Incidents reported: 111 (MDAT-GoG)
Crew kidnapped: 121 (IMB)
Vessels hijacked: 4 (IMB)





Indian Ocean Region

Mozambique's army over the weekend of May 22nd-23rd foiled an attempted attack by Islamist militants in the northern town of Palma, according to President Filipe Nyusi. Palma is near a major gas project run by the French energy giant Total. The president said the weekend's incident saw militants attempt to invade the village of Lumbi, in Palma district. He added that the militants killed five of their own who had attempted to defect.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

CMF continue drug seizure successes in IOR

The Marine Nationale's (MN) FS Guépratte and the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) ship HMCS Calgary made four rapid counter-narcotic seizures under CTF-150. FS Guépratte began with a seizure of 6,136 lbs (2,784 kg) of hashish on 12th May. HMCS Calgary followed on 16th, 17th and 18th May, seizing a combined haul of 15,465 lbs (7,015 kg) of hashish, 330 lbs (150 kg) of heroin and 529 lbs (240 kg) of methamphetamine. The seizures are an indication that drug smugglers and organised criminal groups are returning to favourite routes as the pandemic eases.

Sudan declares state of emergency over clashes

Sudan has declared a state of emergency and a night curfew in parts affected by ethnic clashes. Violence was reported in some parts of the coastal Port Sudan city. At least five people were killed and 13 injured, according to the state media Suna. The Red Sea state governor's media office did not give any figures in their statement.

Tanzania's pirate port plans

Tanzanian media report that the country's port and shipping agency, Tasac, intends to bring 100 'pirate' ports under the authority of the Tanzanian Ports Authority, issuing licences to un-registered ports as it clamps down on smuggling and criminal activity at sea.

Why vessels off Iran may have trouble staying on course

The Economist warned on May 22nd that Iran may be using GPS spoofing techniques to confuse the onboard navigation systems of vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz. There have

been several incidents in recent years of vessels being detained for being in Iranian waters, while the ships have insisted that they were not. MARAD and USCG have issued several warnings over the last year to warn shipping of the potential issue.

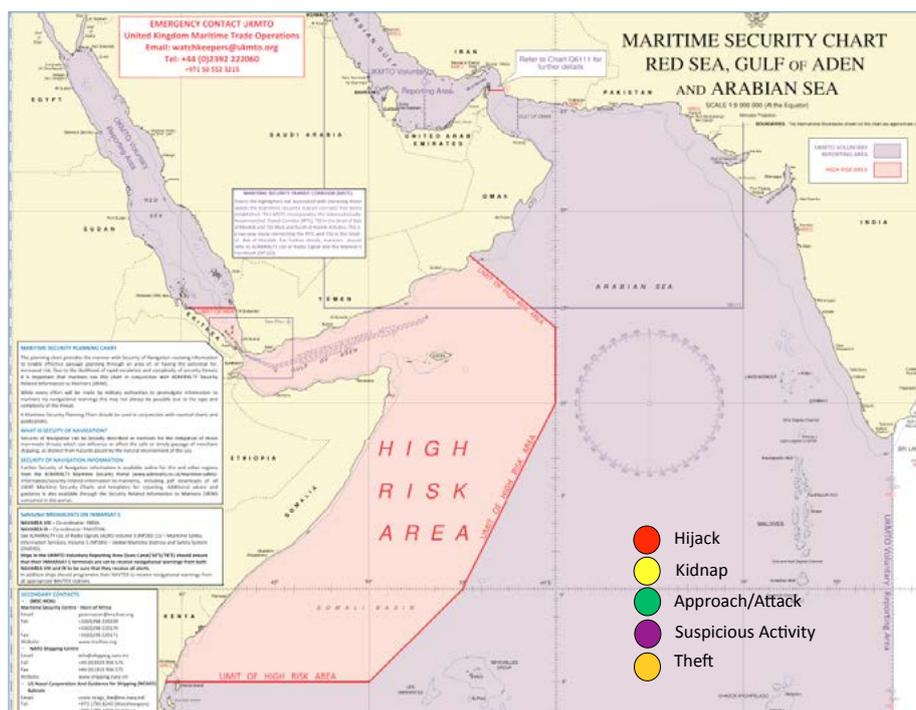
First cargo ships arrive at Kenya's Lamu port

The first cargo ships have docked at Kenya's new deepwater port at Lamu which was commissioned on Thursday 20th by President Kenyatta. The \$3bn (£2bn) facility aims to attract cargo destined for Kenya's landlocked neighbours, South Sudan and Ethiopia. Kenya is already building roads towards these countries from Lamu. Concerns have been expressed about security at the port as the Islamist militant group Al Shabaab regularly attacks the area and has kidnapped victims in Lamu previously.

International Maritime Security Construct Releases New Bridge Reference Card Edition

The International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) released the newest edition of its IMSC Bridge Reference Cards Task Force sentinel Public Affairs said in a release. Originally published in June 2020, the reference cards are designed as a quick-access distillation of guidance found in the United Kingdom Marine Trade Operations' (UKMTO) Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy and Enhance Maritime Security, edition 5 (BMP5) and address specific scenarios that threaten the physical security of merchant vessels. To download the new card, [please click here](#).

To see MAST's services in the Indian Ocean Region, [please click here](#).





Somalia

The Somali National Army (SNA) on Saturday 22nd said that its forces had killed six Al Shabaab terrorists during an operation at a village in the central region of Hiran, according to a report by Chinese media outlet, CGTN. The latest operation came after Al Shabaab launched an attack on Bulo-Burte district, Hussein Hassan Jodah, commander of SNA's 5th Unit division 27 said that the army inflicted heavy casualties on the terrorist group.

Somali Leaders Converge in Mogadishu to Discuss Elections

Somali leaders met on Saturday in Mogadishu to discuss the electoral calendar. The National Consultative Forum, comprising the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS), was initially scheduled for Thursday by Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble. It was, however, pushed to Saturday after some leaders failed to arrive on time.

AU regrets Somalia's rejection of former Ghanaian President as special envoy

The African Union expressed its disappointment by Somalia's decision to reject the appointment of former Ghanaian president John Mahama as the continental body's High Representative to the Horn of Africa nation. After the initial announcement of Mahama's appointment, Somali politicians were quick to reject the idea, arguing that the former head of state has "extensive links" with Kenya, which Somalia is embroiled in a political dispute with.

UN says attacks on aid workers decrease in Somalia in Q1

Violent attacks on humanitarian workers operating in Somalia decreased in the first three months compared to a similar period last year, the United Nations humanitarian agency said on Friday 21st. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said one humanitarian worker was killed, four injured, one abducted and one detained between January to March. In the last quarter of 2020, four humanitarian workers were killed although there were no reports of any humanitar-

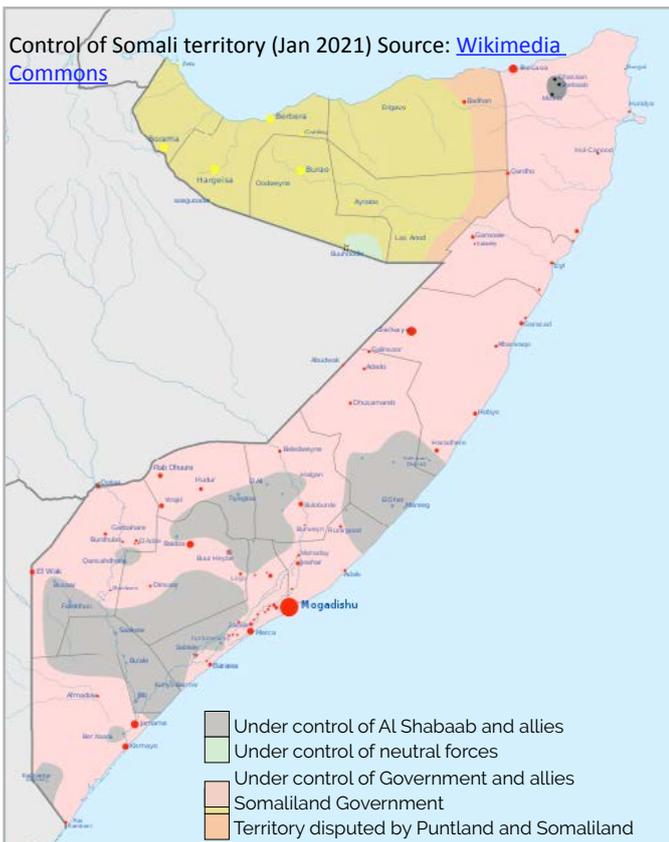
ian workers injured, abducted, or detained, said OCHA.

Clan clashes kill 15 in Somalia

Fighting between communities caused 15 deaths in Somalia, due to a dispute over a bridge built by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Goobjoog News portal summarized on May 20th. According to the website, two clans from the central area of Beleweyne and Jowhar differ on the construction of the viaduct, while one supports it, the other claims ownership of the land where it is located and they have clashed in the towns of Baladul Amin and Baad Buuke over the last two weeks.

Somaliland Celebrates 30 Years of Self-Rule

The self-declared Republic of Somaliland marked 30 years of self-rule with festivities in the capital Hargeisa. On May 18th, 1991, Somaliland announced independence from the rest of Somalia. The crucial event occurred at Burao town, about 160 km east of Hargeisa, the capital, following a reconciliation conference where representatives of multiple clans converged just five months after the fall of the dictatorial regime of General Mohamed Siad Barre in Mogadishu in January 1991. The autonomous state is still not recognised officially by the international community.



Analysis

On 8th February 2021, the Council of Presidential Candidates announced that they no longer recognise Mohamed as the President of Somalia since his constitutional term in office expired on 8th February without any agreement on the path toward elections to replace him. James Swan, the Special Representative and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia, confirmed that the electoral implementation tensions had been compounded by questions over the legitimacy of Mohamed's mandate following the expiry of his constitutional term in office, and that the growing political tensions threatened Somalia's State-building progress and even security. He encouraged Somalia's political leaders to "pull back from confrontation and avoid risky winner-take-all tactics". Over the past 6 weeks there have been numerous attacks against politicians, including former high ranking ministers and leaders, and attacks on journalists in Somalia. Specifically, Amnesty International has called on the Somali authorities to bring an end to the arbitrary arrest and persecution of journalists in Puntland.

Given the blatant disregard for the constitution by the current President, Somalia's political future as a nation state remains uncertain. Indeed, regional fragmentation may once again be on the cards, and this can only be to the benefit of Al Shabaab terrorists as well as criminal organisations who may be interested at some point in a return to piracy in the Indian Ocean.

Threat Assessment

There is a risk that complacency in some quarters has seen a reduction in PMSC presence in these waters that could result in a piracy success. A lack of adherence to BMP5 protocol, particularly not maintaining a safe distance off the coast, has increased risks to shipping. Merchant vessels would be wise to maintain the same distance from the coast, particularly ensuring that the Socotra Gap isn't taken. All vessels are advised to update risk assessments and register with UKMTO/MSCHOA prior to entering the Indian Ocean High Risk Area (HRA).

Yemen

Reuters reported on Monday 24th that Saudi coalition forces had intercepted and destroyed a SVBIED "south of the Red Sea". Further details were unavailable at the time of writing.

World Food Programme increases efforts to supply Yemen

The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) is increasing the level of food assistance in Yemen's worst affected areas in an effort to prevent a devastating famine. But the agency's ability to sustain the response to the end of the year remains uncertain, Mirage reported on May 24th. In April and May this year, after new funds were confirmed, WFP began increasing assistance to nearly 6 million people in the nine governorates.

Houthi rebels say shoot down Saudi-led coalition drone

Yemen's Houthi rebels shot down a drone of the Saudi-led coalition forces near the border with Saudi Arabia on Sunday 23rd, the Houthi-run al-Masirah TV reported. "A surface-to-air missile downed the drone over the area of al-Marazik in al-Jawf Province," the television said, citing a statement by Houthi military spokesman Yehya Sarea. The Saudi-led coalition has made no comment yet.

Three women killed by landmine explosion in Hodeidah

Three Yemeni women were killed by a landmine explosion in the country's Red Sea port city of Hodeidah on Sunday 23rd, a government official told Xinhua. The deadly explosion was "caused by a landmine laid previously by the Houthi rebels in Hays district in southern Hodeidah," the local official said on condition of anonymity. The three women were killed "while they were caring for their sheep near an agricultural area," the source added.

Saudi project clears 2,500 more mines in Yemen

Arab News on Monday 24th reported that the Saudi Project for Landmine Clearance (Masam) dismantled 2,500 mines in Yemen during the third week of May. The Saudi Press Agency stated that they comprised 1,500 anti-tank mines and 1,000 unexploded ordnances.

Military conflict looms in southern Yemen

Military confrontations between forces loyal to the Southern Transitional Council (STC) and Yemen's government became imminent amid rising tensions over the control of key areas, a military official told Xinhua on Saturday 22nd. Tensions esca-

lated in the wake of recent government's accusations to the STC on refusing to implement a Saudi-brokered deal signed between the two rivals in 2019. "The government and the STC dispatched heavy troops backed by armored vehicles to areas near the coastal town of Shuqrah that's located on the Arabian Sea," the source said on condition of anonymity.

Houthi rebels refuse to distribute vaccine as case numbers increase

The National reports that Houthi rebels are refusing to take or distribute the Covid-19 vaccine in areas under their control. The internationally-recognised government on Thursday 20th said that the country has received 360,000 doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine and expects to get 1.9 million doses this year. "The Houthis' refusal to receive the Covid-19 vaccine is threatening the lives of citizens in areas under their control," said Ali Al Walidi, the undersecretary of Yemen's Health Ministry, during an online meeting hosted by the World Health Organisation.

US Sanctions Two Yemeni Houthi Commanders

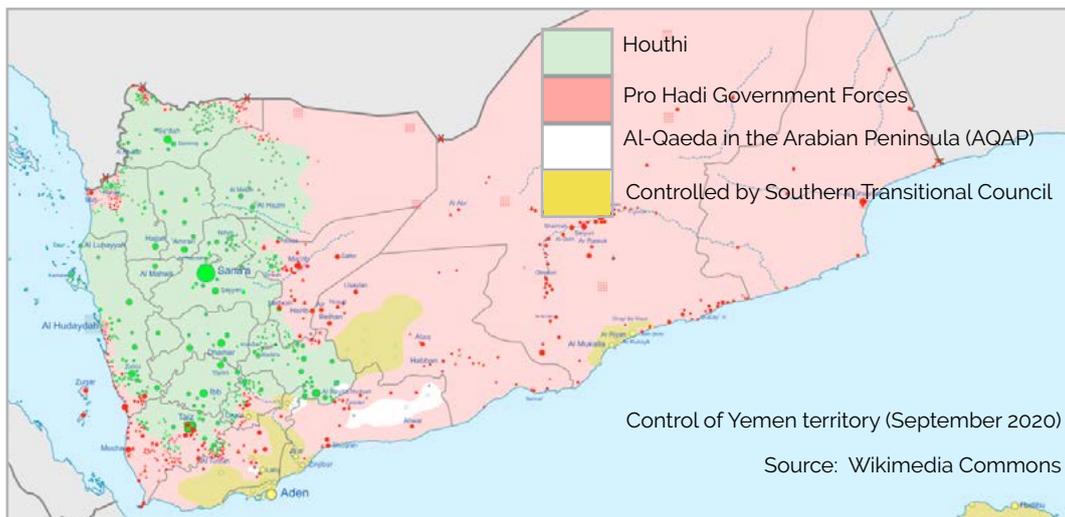
Mohammed Abdul Kareem al-Ghamari, the Houthi's Chief of the General Staff and Youssef al-Madani, a fellow Houthi leader, have both been placed under sanctions by the US government, according to reports on Thursday 20th. Reports suggest that al-Ghamari is currently involved in the Houthi offensive for Marib.

Renewed fighting in Yemen's Hodeidah kills eight

Eight people were killed in renewed fighting between warring factions in the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah, a military official said. "Two groups of Houthi rebels carried out an attack in an attempt to to advance towards key areas located in the southeastern parts of Hodeidah," the official told Xinhua news agency on Wednesday 19th.

To see the latest threat analysis and Yemen port information in **MASTOPDEIA**, please click here.

MAST recommends BMP measures be enforced and watches strengthened during transits in the region.





South East Asia

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has defended the Royal Navy's deployment of aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth to the South China Sea for its first operation, claiming the move shows the UK's belief in international maritime laws. Late last month, it was announced that a carrier strike group, including the newly deployed flagship carrier, would travel to Asia via Europe, Africa and the Middle East on a 28-week-long course. Responding to Beijing's criticism of Western nations for deploying their naval forces in the South China Sea, Johnson on Friday 21st defended the plan, denying its impetus was an attempt to "antagonize anybody."

Incidents:

1. Duty engine crew onboard a bulk carrier underway noticed unauthorised persons in the engine room at 1647 UTC in position 01:16.37N – 104:16.49E, Singapore Straits. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Suspecting the persons to be still on board, the vessel anchored at the OPL. At daybreak, a full search was carried out. The vessel continued her voyage once it was determined that no unauthorised persons were onboard. Reported (IMB) 23rd May.

2. Four robbers armed with knives boarded a bulk carrier underway and threatened a duty crew who retreated into the accommodation at 1430 UTC in position 01:16.7N – 104:16.6E, Singapore Straits. Alarm raised and crew mustered resulting in the robbers escaping without stealing anything. Reported (IMB) 23rd May.

Fishing boat capsizes off West Philippine Sea; 31 rescued

The Philippine Navy reportedly rescued 31 crew after their fishing vessel, the Pauline 2, capsized in the West Philippine Sea on Sunday 23rd. "All those aboard the FB Pauline 2 are in good condition and will be brought to San Jose, Occidental Mindoro," Commodore Donn Anthony Miraflor, chief of the Naval Forces West said.

Philippines politician wants forward naval bases in West Philippine Sea

ABC-CBN news reported on May 23rd that Surigao del Sur Rep. Johnny Pimentel, chairperson of the House strategic intelligence committee had called for the government to construct naval "forward operating bases" (FOBs) in the West Philippine Sea amid the continuing incursions of Chinese vessels in Philippine waters.

8 Abu Sayyaf bandits surrender in Sulu

Eight Abu Sayyaf bandits have surrendered in Sulu. The military said personnel of the 2nd Special Forces, 15th Civil-Military Operations and 100th Infantry Battalions facilitated the surrender of Padding Padjiri, Ibrahim Jul Uppih, Yasser, Abraham Alawara, Adzar Karun, Dansalan Jumadil, Sahadani Murani and Bulli Barri at the headquarters of the 1101st Infantry Brigade (IB) in Talipao on Friday 21st, Philstar reported.

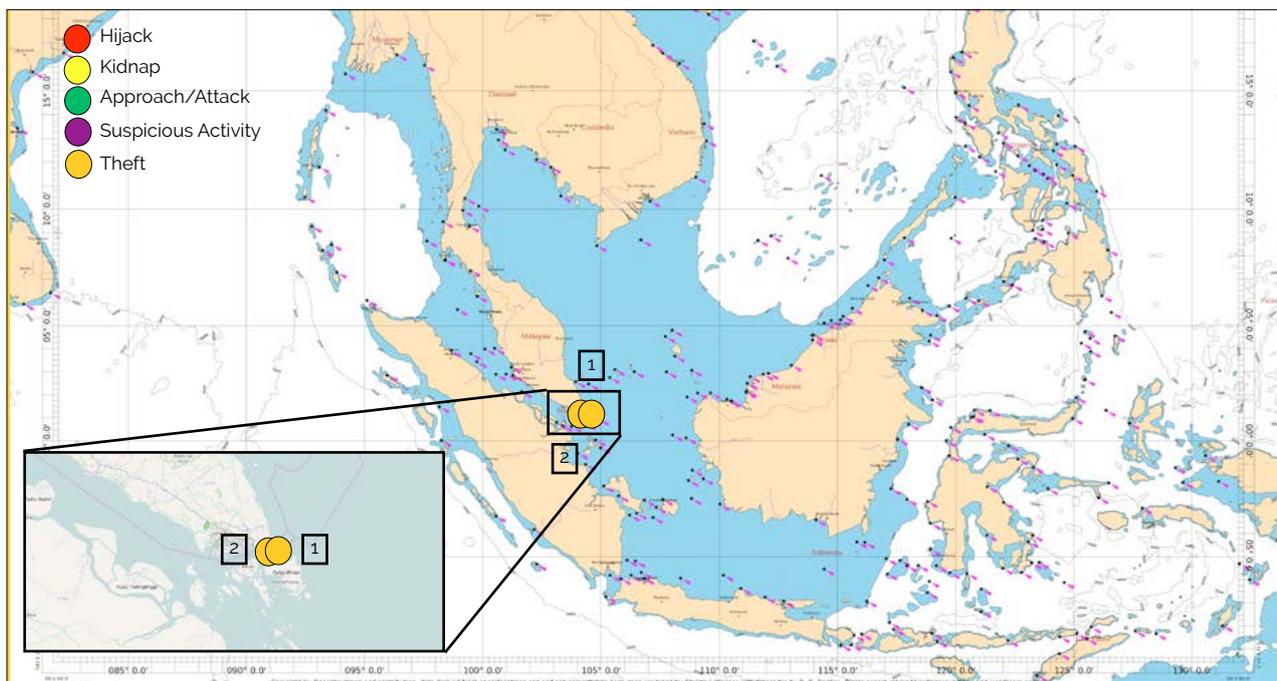
Philippines to Acquire Israeli Missile-Capable Patrol Boats for \$209M

The Philippines is poised to acquire missile-capable fast patrol boats in a deal with an Israeli shipbuilding company. Israeli Shipyards announced in a press release this month that it has been awarded a tender to supply an undisclosed East Asian country with the Shaldag MK V vessel, Defense Post wrote on May 20th.

US destroyer backs up Biden's tough words in South China Sea

CNN reported on May 20th that guided-missile destroyer USS Curtis Wilbur performed a freedom of navigation exercise near the Paracel Islands, just hours after President Biden said the US must protect open access to the South China Sea. Beijing, which claims almost all of the South China Sea as its territory, said the movement of the US warship violated its sovereignty.

To see MAST's services in the region, [please click here](#).



European Waters

The number of migrants crossing the English Channel has doubled year on year despite Priti Patel's vow to make the route "unviable". The Independent reported on May 23rd. Over 3000 migrants have crossed the Channel in small boats since the beginning of the year, an increase of around 1400, year on year, the paper reported. This is despite a significant increase in spending to protect UK borders.

1,500 illegal migrants rescued off Libyan coast in past week: UN migration agency

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) on Monday 24th said that nearly 1,500 illegal migrants were rescued off the Libyan coast over the past week. "In the period of May 16-22, 1,489 migrants were rescued/intercepted at sea and returned to Libya," the UN migration agency said, adding that 9,659 illegal migrants, including 678 women and 424 minors, have been rescued and returned to Libya so far this year. The agency said that 173 illegal migrants have died and 459 others gone missing off the Libyan coast on the Central Mediterranean route so far this year, Xinhau reported.

Tunisia rescues 100 migrants at sea

The New Arab reports that a Tunisian naval vessel rescued some 100 migrants at sea on Monday 24th. The migrants were in an inflatable boat and had set off from Libya at dawn, with 82 men, 10 women and eight children on board. The report stated that the boat's engine had failed.

Spain rescues 65 migrants off Gran Canaria

Reuters reported on May 23rd that 65 migrants were picked up by the Spanish Coast Guard and transferred to Arguinegin port for medical checks and Covid tests. Spain reported that 4,935 migrants had reached the Canary Islands via boat since the beginning of the year.

Cyprus asks EU to prevent migrant boat departures from Syria

Associated Press reported on May 21st that Cyprus has asked the EU to move to stop migrant vessels leaving Tartus in Syria, warning that Cyprus is "saturated" and unable to accept any more migrants. Cyprus Interior Minister, Nicos Nouris, stated that the country was in a "state of emergency" because of repeated arrivals of migrant boats in the last week.

Coast guard rescues 49 migrants from boat off Belgium

Belgium authorities have brought 49 mostly Vietnamese migrants to shore after their boat ran into difficulties, according to an official. They were trying to reach the UK and it is thought they set off from France. The rescue by the coast guard took place off the Belgian coast on Wednesday (May 19), the dpa news agency reported, citing the Belgian news agency Belga. InfoMigrants wrote on May 20th.

EU seeks migration deals with Libya and Tunisia

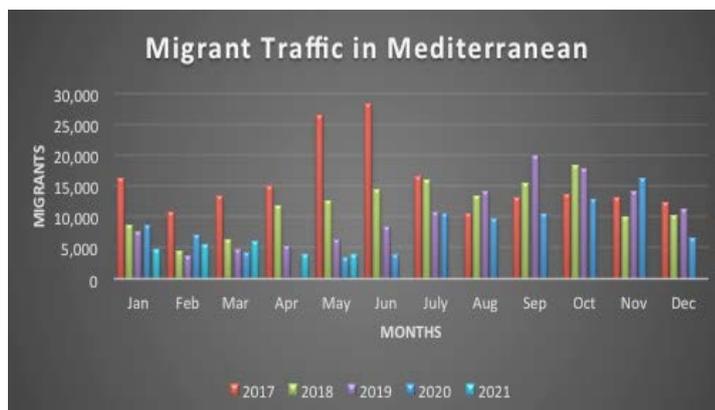
The European Commission is in talks with EU member states, as well as Libya and Tunisia, over ways to ease the number of migrants stuck in Italy, the Italian newspaper La Repubblica reported on Thursday 20th. German newspaper, DW, reported that the Commission was hoping for a quick agreement on the voluntary redistribution of migrants in Italy to other EU states.

Italy allows Sea-Eye 4 to disembark migrants

AFP report that Italian authorities on Thursday 20th had agreed to allow NGO rescue vessel, Sea-Eye 4, to disembark some 415 migrants rescued at sea. The ship was off Palermo when the news was released, following denial of entry into a Maltese port. While welcoming Italy's decision, the NGO expressed frustration at having to delay disembarking in order to sail from Palermo to the southeastern port of Pozzallo.

Migrants rescued off Tunisia, reports of migrants lost

Tunisia's Defence Ministry reported on Thursday 20th that 36 Bangladeshi migrants had been rescued at sea after their boat capsized. On Tuesday 18th, 32 migrants were rescued after their boat sank, with as many as 58 migrants thought to be missing after the incident. Tunisia's Defence Ministry spokesman Mohamed Zikri told AFP the survivors of the shipwreck were picked up after clinging to an oil platform off the southern coast of Tunisia. The boat had departed Zuwara, Libya on Sunday. There have been no further reports of rescues in the region.



Migrant crossings 2017-2021. Source: [UNHRC](https://www.unhcr.org/)

The current migrant smuggling situation

According to figures updated by UNHCR, May has seen a significant increase in migrant crossing numbers, as improving weather and sea states combined with ongoing issues surrounding Libya have seen some 6,464 migrants cross the Mediterranean Sea. While the EC attempts to shuffle migrants around member states, the issues behind the problem remain, both in Libya and sub-Saharan Africa. It is unlikely that much will change until the root causes are addressed and this would appear to be outside the EU's remit, currently.

Libya

The UN Special Envoy for Libya warned the Security Council that progress on the key issue of withdrawing mercenaries and foreign fighters from Libya has stalled and their continued presence is a threat not only to Libya but to the North African region. Al Jazeera reported on May 22nd. According to the report, Special Envoy, Jan Kubis, said on Friday 21st that incidents involving rebels in Chad were a reminder that the security situation in Libya was linked to that of the entire region.

Int'l meeting held to discuss Libyan economic situation

The Co-Chairs of the Economic Working Group (EWG) and a number of senior officials of the Libyan government on Sunday 23rd held a meeting to discuss the economic situation in Libya, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) said Monday. "All participants agreed on the importance of maintaining the momentum on the economic track, including on further developing and harmonizing critical policies and moving forward with the unification of Libya's financial and economic institutions. Among the issues discussed was the importance of the swift adoption of the 2021 national budget," the UN agency said in a statement, Xinhau reported.

Libyan political parties call for holding elections as scheduled

During a video conference with Assistant Secretary-General and Coordinator of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Raisedon Zenenga, a group of representatives of more than 15 political parties called on the relevant Libyan authorities to hold national elections later this year. "Participants unanimously stressed the need to break the endless cycle of transitions and for all relevant authorities and institutions in Libya to prioritize the holding of elections on 24 December 2021 as scheduled," the UNSMIL said in a statement.

Ceasefire, planned elections, offer rare window of hope, Security Council hears

On the heels of recent positive developments, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Libya pointed to renewed hope for peace in the conflict-affected country, and stability across the wider region, in a briefing to the Security Council on Friday 21st. Welcoming the continued holding of Libya's ceasefire agreement, Mr. Kubiš said confidence-building between the parties continues notwithstanding occasional clashes between armed groups. In recent months, hundreds of prisoners and detainees were released by both sides, with releases taking place almost weekly in different parts of the country during the month of Ramadan.

Libyan Coast Guard receives supplies from Italy

The Libya Observer reported on Sunday 23rd that the Libyan Coast Guard had received new equipment and supplies from the Italian embassy. "Italy's assistance comes in the framework of the support project provided by the European Union," a Spokesman for the Libyan Naval Forces Chief of Staff said.

Turkey working with Libya to push migrants back?

A report in The Times newspaper on Friday 21st states that Turkey is working alongside Libyan Coast Guard assets to return migrants back to Libya, a role the paper says was previously played by the EU. Accusations of migrant push back by various Mediterranean countries are nothing new, but Turkey has also assisted in training programmes for the Libya CG and plans to maintain a long-term presence in the country, the paper reports.

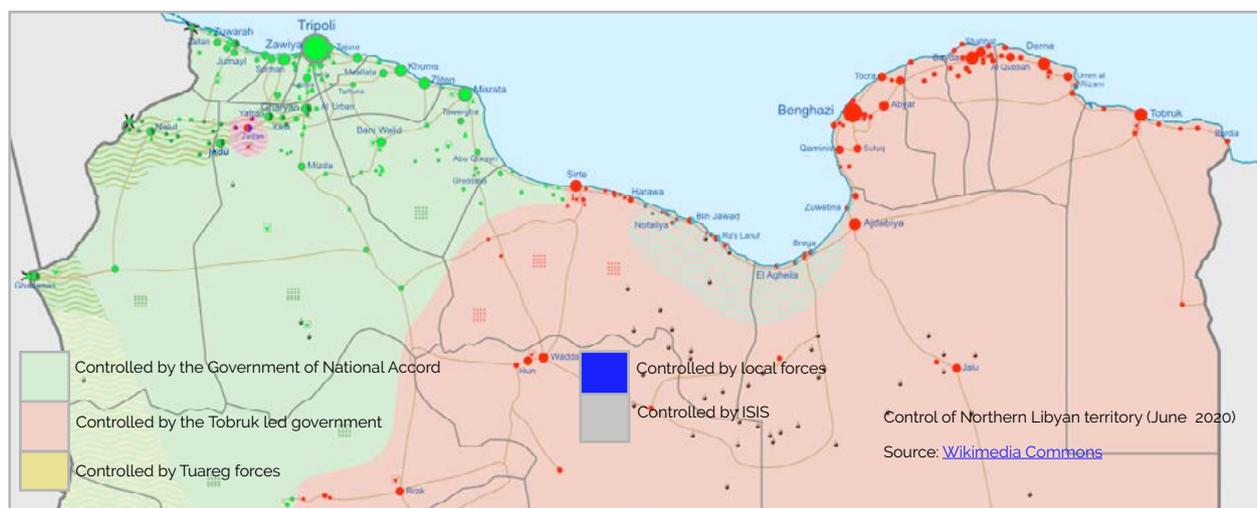
Japan supports Libya against COVID-19: UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on Wednesday 19th said the Japanese government has approved a funding program worth 833,000 U.S. dollars to support Libya against COVID-19. The fund is aimed at strengthening Libya's preparedness for the COVID-19 vaccination program, especially with regard to the procurement of cold chain equipment and institutional capacity development of health staff, UNICEF said in a statement, China's Xinhau agency reported.

Haftar's economic arm forces Kwadik tribe to donate land

The Military Investment Authority affiliated with Khalifa Haftar has conned members of the Kwadik tribe into giving away a vast area of their land to build a hospital, local sources from Benghazi reported, according to a report carried by the Libya Observer on May 20th. The article states that the tribe were told that the land would be used to construct hospitals and facilities for rehabilitation, but have now discovered that the land is actually intended to be used for commercial premises, such as supermarkets.

To read MAST's Libyan Country report on MASTOPEDIA, [please click here](#).



Central and South America

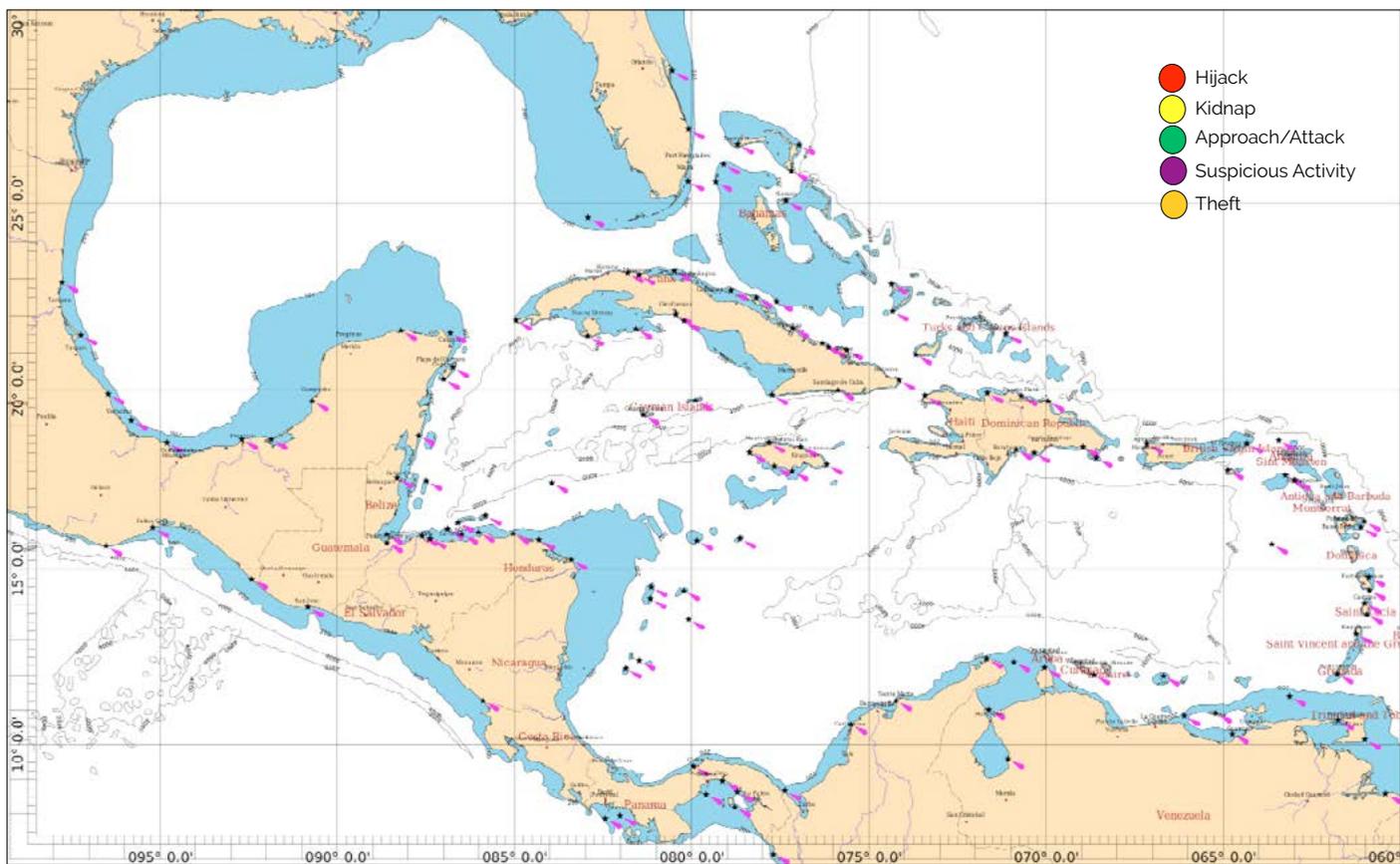
Nothing significant to report.

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Standing advice:

The repercussions of a vessel being caught acting as a mule with drugs stowed will depend on the type, amount and national laws, but may be disruptive and costly. When and if operating in these areas, especially Columbia and Peru, it is advised that:

- Potential stowage areas such as rudder shafts are denied as far as possible, and/or routinely searched.
- Access points are closely monitored by a vigilant watch for the duration of the vessel's call at port.

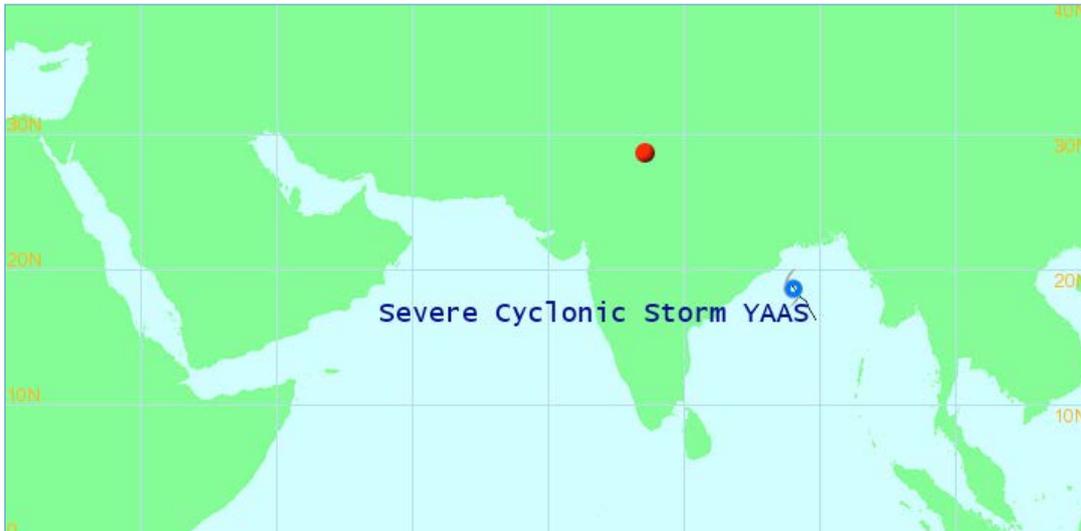




Severe Weather Warnings

Warnings detailed on this page are from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and are issued by respective Regional Specialised Metrological Centres, Tropical Cyclone Centres or National Meteorological Services. For further information on severe weather warnings please click [here](#).

Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea



Note: The forecasts are correct as of the day before publication. For latest updates please follow the provided links.