

# Weekly Security & Risk Report

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MAKING THE  
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Issue 291 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.

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## Gulf of Guinea

A Nigerian court has sentenced ten pirates to jail terms of 12 years for their roles in the hijacking of a Chinese fishing vessel, in only the second case of its kind since a new law was introduced in 2019. A Federal High Court judge also ordered the guilty men to pay a fine of \$600 (£435) and said they were “an embarrassment to the nation” that had “impacted the economy negatively”, Reuters reported, according to the BBC on July 26th.

**Incidents: Nothing significant to report.**

### Eight men kidnapped on Nigerian waterway

The head of Nigeria’s NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, has condemned ‘sea pirates’ who kidnapped eight Nigerians last week as they were travelling to Port Harcourt from Kula area in Akuku-Toru LGA, before the gunmen struck at Kula-Abonnema waterway. Five of the kidnapped men are maritime workers, leading the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria. Jamoh vowed that the personnel of the Deep Blue Project would ensure that all waters of the coastal states are covered in their daily patrol to nip in the bud any act of criminality in the waterways and creeks. This Day reported on July 26th.

### Nigeria receives six warplanes from US to fight insurgency

Arab News reported on July 24th that Nigeria had received the first six of 12 turboprop light attack aircraft from the US to help fight mounting insecurity. The next batch are due to arrive in October, as part of \$593 million deal agreed with the Obama administration in 2016.

### Surging pirate activities threaten west African maritime trade: expert

Xinhau reported that a surge in pirate activities in the Gulf of Guinea poses a grave threat to the survival and growth of west African maritime trade, an expert has said. Albert Derrick Fia-tui, executive director of the Ghana-based Center for International Maritime Affairs, told Xinhua on Thursday 23rd that the increase in pirate activities in regional waters have had catastrophic effects on the economies.

### AU, Gulf of Guinea Commission ink agreement on maritime security, safety

The African Union (AU) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to rein-

force joint efforts of addressing maritime security and safety along the Gulf of Guinea. According to an AU statement on Friday 23rd, the agreement includes operationalization of the integrated strategy for the Seas and Oceans Horizon 2050, dubbed AIM Strategy 2050, and the strategy of the Blue Economy of the 55-member pan-African bloc, Xinhau reported.

### IMO Applauds Alliance to Combat Piracy in Gulf of Guinea

Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Kitack Lim, has said that the launch of a new collaborative framework to combat illicit maritime activities in the region will enhance the economy of the nations in the region. Lin was speaking at the very first Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum and Shared Awareness and De-confliction conference (GOG-MCF/SHADE), which he said was an encouraging move in itself.

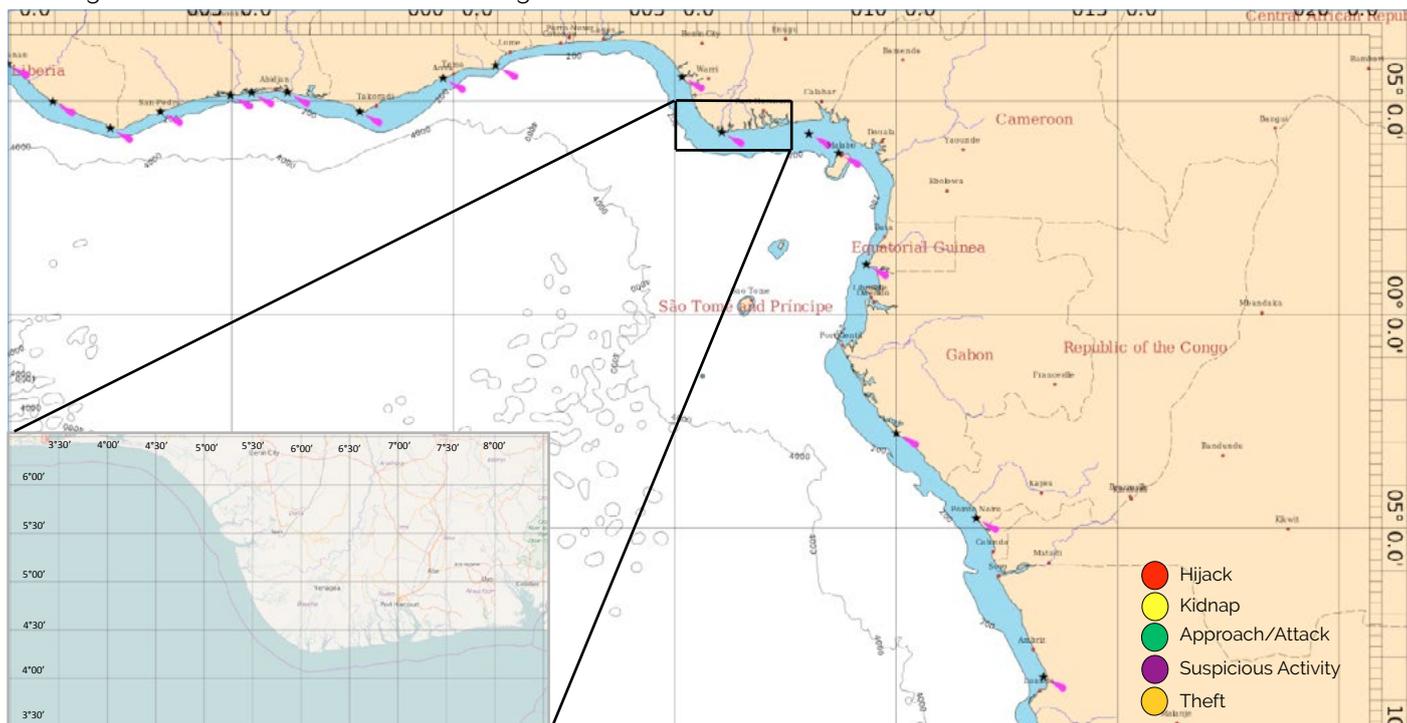
To see MAST Services in the region, [please click here](#).

**Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures:**

**2021:**  
 Incidents reported: 34 (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

Exercise Cutlass Express 2021, sponsored by U.S. Africa Command and conducted by U.S. Naval Forces Africa, is taking place between July 26th and August 6th, in the vicinity of Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar and Seychelles. Merchant vessels should expect to see increased numbers of military vessels transiting the region as a result. The 13 participating nations include Comoros, Djibouti, Georgia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, United Kingdom, and the United States.

**Incidents:** Nothing significant to report.

## Cabo Delgado insurgency grows amid Rwandan and SADC deployment

The conflict in the Cabo Delgado province of Mozambique has led to over 3 000 deaths, displaced just under a million people and is showing no signs of slowing down, Defence Web reported. They state that intelligence sources believe that some 470 dhows have entered Mocimboa da praia, some from Tanzania, Madagascar and that there could be as many as 3,000 insurgents spread throughout Cabo Delgado, but confirmation was extremely difficult due to under-reporting and a lack of accurate intelligence.

## Kenya Not to Back Down on Protection of Maritime Border with Somalia

President Uhuru Kenyatta has told Somalia that Kenya has no plans to back down in its quest to secure its maritime border, MENAFN reported on July 24th. Kenyatta stated that his government will not cede even an inch of its soil to anyone or any state, suggesting that tensions remain high between the two countries over the issue.

## Maldives among top destinations of drug cargoes from Pakistan

India's Zee News reports that most of the drug boats from Pakistan originate from Gwadar and that the Pakistani origin is rarely caught as the "drugs are exchanged in mid-sea". Drugs from Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan are regularly transferred by sea and Maldives and Sri Lanka are both target destinations for smugglers based in Pakistan, highlighting the difficulties of stopping transnational drug smuggling.

## Indian Navy declares 'No Fly Zone' near naval facilities in Bengal

Following a recent incident involving a drone at an Indian Air Force base at Jammu, the Indian Navy has declared a 3km no fly zone perimeter around all Navy establishments, which applies to any and all UAVs and drones, media reports on July 23rd stated.

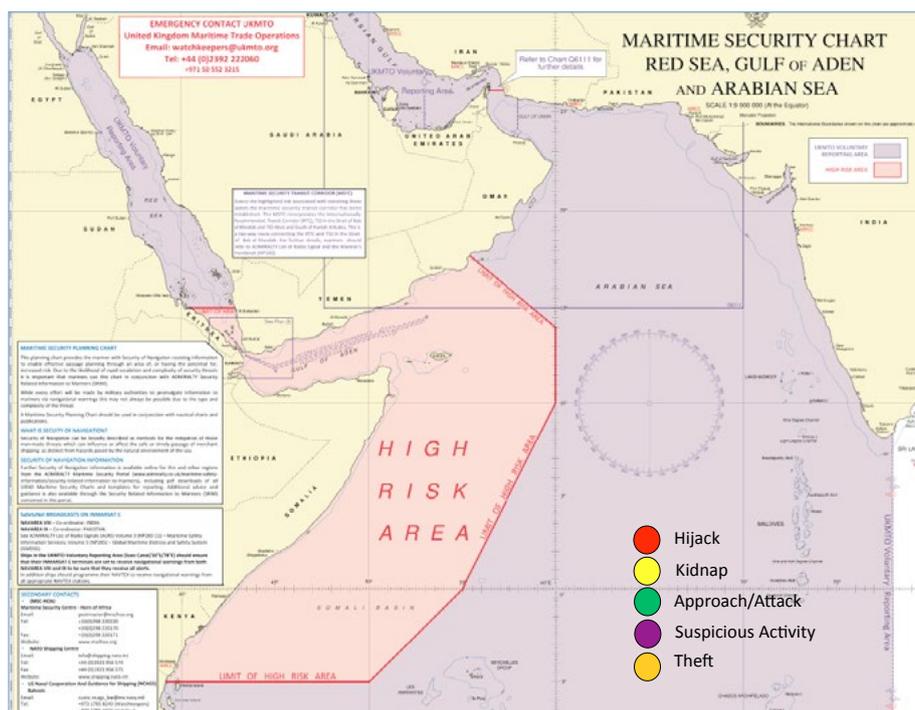
## UK Carrier Strike Group starts maritime exercise with Indian Navy

The maritime partnership exercise between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy will see the two navies conducting a range of multi-ship, air, sea and sub-surface maritime evolutions, as well as, close quarter manoeuvring. This enables both forces to advance their interoperability and cooperation ahead of further exercises when the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) returns to the Indian Ocean in the autumn. The combined forces equate to 10 ships, two submarines, approximately 20 aircraft and almost 4,000 personnel the UK High Commission in Delhi announced on July 22nd.

## Iran opens oil terminal to bypass strategic Strait of Hormuz

Iran opened its first oil terminal in the Gulf of Oman, a move that will allow it to avoid using the Strait of Hormuz shipping route, Al Jazeera reported on July 22nd. "This is a strategic move and an important step for Iran. It will secure the continuation of our oil exports," Rouhani said in a televised speech

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





# Somalia

The United States is again targeting fighters with the al Qaeda-affiliated Al Shabaab terror group in Somalia, launching its second airstrike in the past four days following a nearly six-month hiatus that began when President Joe Biden took office. The strike, by U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), appears to be part of an effort to lend U.S. airpower to what has been described as a fierce struggle on the ground between the Somali military and Al Shabaab in Galmudug state, the same region targeted in Tuesday's airstrike, VOA reported on July 23rd.

## EU cuts cash for KDF in Somalia by half

The European Union (EU) has reportedly cut the budget Kenyan troops fighting Al Shabaab militia in Somalia after a secret partial withdrawal of Kenyan soldiers, Kenyan media reported on July 27th. The Kenyan Treasury told Parliament on Monday that Kenya only received Sh4.5 billion from the African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom) in the 12-month period to June 2019 against a target of Sh8.5 billion.

## Somalia postpones long-delayed election

In a disappointing but not unexpected move, Somalia on Sunday 24th, postponed its elections due to issues with candidate lists and assigning local committees to cast ballots, AFP reported. Last week, the country's Al Shabaab jihadists warned politicians against taking part in the elections, which were due to kick off after months of deadlock and delays.

## Somalia's COVID-19 cases rise to 15,230

Somalia's Covid-19 cases have reached 15,230 after its health ministry recorded 27 new cases of the disease from a sample size of 675 tests, the Horn Observer reported on Monday 26th. The country's official death toll stands at 796.

## Somali Army intensifies fight against Al Shabaab

Garowe Online reported on Monday 26th that the Somali National Army (SNA) was increasing its efforts to combat Al Shabaab. The SNA is focussing on the South and Central regions of the country, where the terror group has been active in

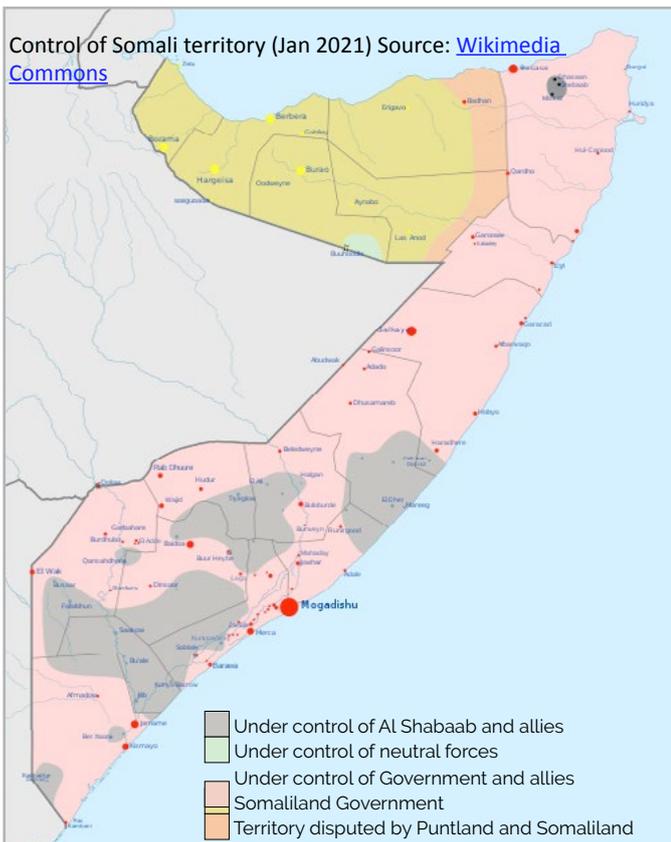
recent weeks. At least 13 terrorists were killed during an operation against Al Shabaab following a mortar attack on military bases near Awdheghele town on Saturday 24th.

## PM Sacks Top Intelligence Officials

Somali Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble fired two senior officers at the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) on Friday 23rd, regional media report. Abdullahi Kulane, NISA Chief of staff and Abdiwahab Sh. Ali, head of NISA at Mogadishu's Aden Abdule Airport were both dismissed for blocking a group of Somali passengers from leaving the airport in Mogadishu.

## World Bank approves 100 mln USD for healthcare services

The World Bank said Thursday it has approved a total of 100 million U.S. dollars to help improve healthcare services in Somalia, Xinhau reported on July 23rd. "The project will help catalyze Somalia's resilient growth by improving health and productivity during and after the COVID-19 pandemic," World Bank Country Manager for Somalia, Kristina Svensson said in a statement issued in Mogadishu, as the country continues to grapple with the impact of the pandemic and its own vaccination programme.



## 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

21 Houthi rebels were killed in overnight airstrikes launched by the Saudi-led coalition on Houthi positions in Yemen's central province of Al Bayda, local medics told China's Xinhua news agency on Saturday 24th. "The airstrikes hit the Iran-backed Houthi militia in several positions in Nati district, killing 21 and injuring 13 others...they were brought in the morning to the hospital in the province," the medics said on condition of anonymity. Houthi-run al-Masirah TV reported five airstrikes on Nati district late on Friday, without providing further details.

### Houthis release 2 al Qaeda prisoners: source

China's Xinhua reported on July 27th that on Monday 26th, Houthi forces released two mid-level members of the Yemen-based al Qaeda branch after a local meditation in the country's central province of al-Bayda. Two Houthi troops were set free in exchange for the release of the al Qaeda prisoners from the Houthi-controlled jail in Sanaa.

### UN disappointed over Houthi remarks on oil tanker Safer repair

The United Nations is disappointed by Houthi rebels' comments on the derelict tanker Safer carrying 1.1 million barrels of oil in danger of spilling, a UN spokesman said on Monday 26th, Xinhua reported. "From what the United Nations can understand, the Houthis are demanding advance guarantees that the United Nations will complete all the potential light maintenance activities in the mission plan," said Farhan Haq, deputy spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. "The SAFER is a very dangerous site, and advance guarantees - before verifying conditions onboard - are not possible. That is also why the November 2020 agreement explicitly conditions the light maintenance activities on the safety environment we find onboard."

### Aden Receives Third Batch of Saudi Oil Grant

Arab News reported on Monday 26th that Yemen's port of Aden had received some 75,000 metric tons of oil derivatives as part of a third shipment under the Saudi Development and Reconstruction Program for Yemen (SDPRY). The Kingdom had allocated a \$422 million fuel grant based on requests by Yemen's Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

### KSrelief extends Yemen mine clearance contract by 1 year

The Saudi Gazette reported on July 24th that the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief) has extended the contract for implementing the Saudi Project for Landmine Clearance (Masam) in Yemen for a year, for an amount of SR125,98 million (\$33.59 million). The Masam project has been instrumental in clearing as many as 263,428 mines and shells to date, and represents a serious effort to reduce civilian casu-

alties from forgotten landmines.

### Aden port 'facing difficulty' floating sunken oil ship

As well as leaking diesel fuel and oil, which is now affecting areas of Aden's coastline, the Aden Ports Corporation announced that it was facing difficulty in floating the oil ship "Dia", which sank off the port of Aden last week, Arab News reported on July 24th. Bad weather and strong winds disrupted several attempts to refloat the tanker, according to reports. However, APC will continue its efforts despite the port's "modest capabilities."

### Coalition destroys Houthi drones

Reuters reported on July 24th that Yemen's Houthis had launched three drones against targets in the south of Saudi Arabia. All three drones were reportedly destroyed by the Saudi armed forces, with no reports of any casualties or damage to local facilities.

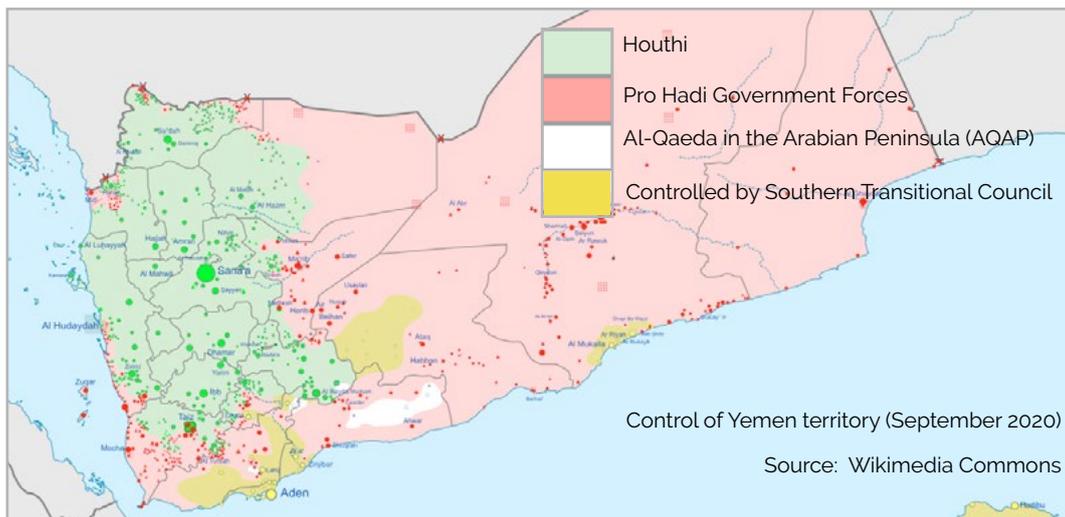
### Yemeni army repels Houthi attacks on two governates

Houthi attacks on Marib and Al-Bayda governates on Wednesday 21st were both successfully repelled by elements of the Yemeni Army, the country reported last week, according to Arab News. Quoting Asharq Al-Awsat military sources, Arab News said that Yemeni army offensives, backed by local tribes and Arab Coalition airstrikes, managed to disrupt Houthi efforts to expand the area of confrontations and try to penetrate both areas.

### Coalition forces bolstered in Aden

Middle East Monitor reported on July 22nd that two plane-loads of troops, vehicles and equipment had been deployed to Aden last Monday. It is believed that the force is in place as a prelude to Aden once again becoming the seat of government, although there has been no official confirmation of this.

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



## South East Asia

China's Guangdong Maritime Bureau on Monday 26th announced that the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) will conduct an exercise in the South China Sea. In a statement, the PLAN announced that the exercise would take place between Shangchuan Island and the South China Sea from July 27th to 29th.

**Incidents: Nothing significant to report.**

### UK Royal Navy Carrier Strike Group conducts exercise with Republic of Singapore Navy

Ships from the UK's Carrier Strike Group, led by the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, performed an exercise with the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) on Monday 26th. The exercise, to advance interoperability and coordination between the two navies, builds on the deep and long-standing defence partnership between the UK and Singapore. It was also the first time that ships from the Royal Navy's 5th generation Carrier Strike Group exercised alongside the RSN, the UK government announced.

### Philippines Coast Guard to receive 2 new vessels in 2022

Philstar Global reported on Tuesday 27th that the Philippines Coast Guard is set to receive two new assets in 2022. Two 94-metre multi-role response vessels (MRRVs) that can withstand harsh weather conditions and conduct sea patrols in the West Philippine Sea and the Philippine Rise are due to be delivered in the first half of next year, improving the PCG's capabilities.

### 16 Abu Sayyaf bandits surrender

Philippine officials in Sulu reported on Saturday 24th that 16 Abu Sayyaf Group terrorists had surrendered to Filipino forces. The bandits were followers of seven Abu Sayyaf subleaders tagged in kidnapping activities and neutralized in previous military offensives Philstar Global reported on July 26th.

### US-donated coast guard vessel arrives in Vietnam

A former U.S. vessel donated to Vietnam Coast Guard arrived in the country earlier this month, according to the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, VNExpress reported on July 24th. A Facebook post

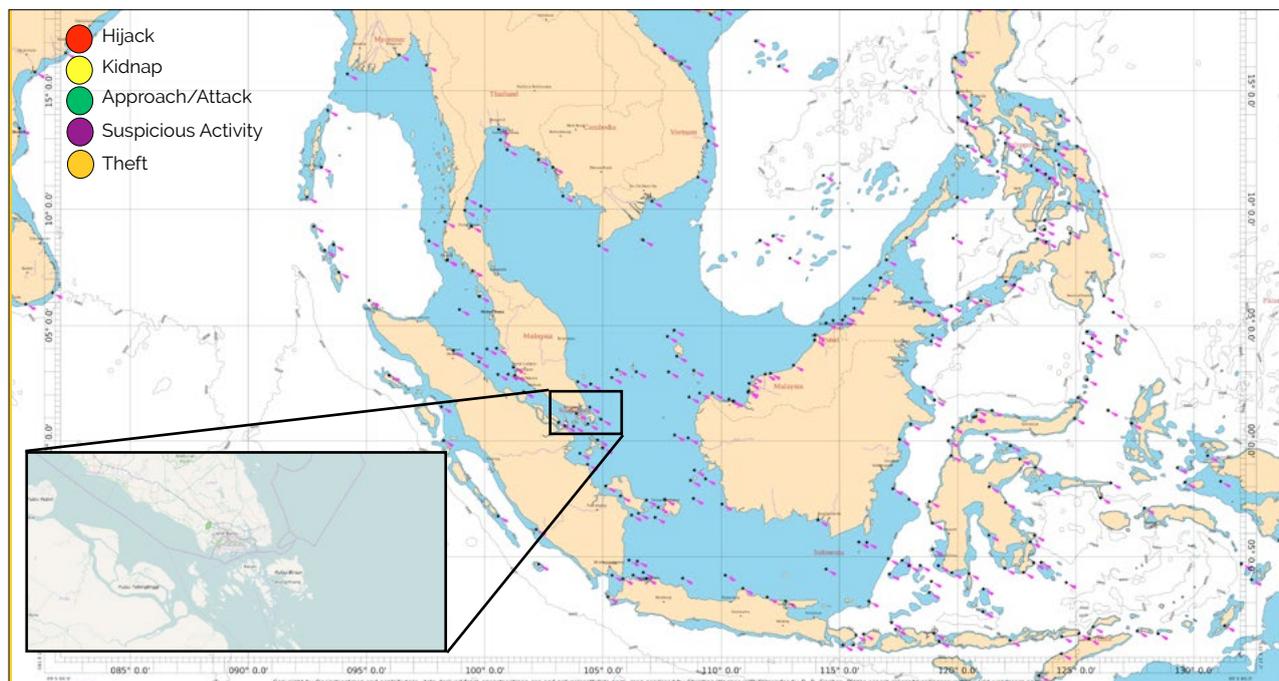
by the Embassy on Friday said the CSB 8021, formerly known as the USCGC John Midgett, along with its crew, have safely arrived in a Vietnam port.

### MMEA seizes methamphetamine hidden in oil barrel

The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) in Johor seized drugs believed to be methamphetamine worth RM200,000 hidden in an oil barrel on a wooden boat in the waters of Pulau Merambong near Pontian on July 21st. Drug smuggling is a significant issue at sea in the region. Johor MMEA director First Admiral Nurul Hizam Zakaria said the seizure was made after a patrol boat spotted the boat 0.4 nautical miles southwest of the island driven by an individual in a suspicious manner at 3am. The Sun Daily reported on July 22nd.

### China not exploring for oil in South China Sea, says Malacañang

The Philippine government has dismissed suggestions that China is exploring for oil in the South China Sea, after fishermen claimed to have found an ocean bottom seismometer which is used in both oil exploration and detecting earthquakes. "We're confident that there's no exploration happening at Scarborough Shoal," presidential spokesman Herminio L. Roque, Jr. told a televised news briefing, BusinessWorld reported on July 22nd.





## European Waters

At least 57 people are reported to have drowned off the Libyan coast - the latest large-scale loss of life involving migrants trying to reach Europe. The head of the International Organisation for Migration in Libya, Federico Soda, said he was horrified. The IOM said survivors told its staff that 20 women and two children were among those who died. The cause of the accident near the Libyan port of Khoms is unclear, BBC News reported on Tuesday 27th.

### France, UK sign new security deal to protect against Channel terror threat

A new maritime security deal has been signed by France and the UK on Tuesday 27th. The new 'UK-France Maritime Security Treaty' is described by the British government as a foundation for "seamless joint and coordinated action to be taken by UK and French forces in response to an incident, such as a terrorist attack on board a ferry or other large vessel in the Channel." As part of the deal, both countries will share intelligence and threat data as well as agreeing to mount swifter responses to incidents in the Channel.

### Almost 600 migrant Channel crossings at weekend

The Home Secretary pledged her "unwavering determination" to stop migrants crossing the English channel after nearly 600 people were intercepted over the weekend. On Sunday 25th, 378 migrants crossed the Channel on 12 boats and the French are understood to have stopped 178 people in five interceptions. At least 430 migrants crossed in a single day last week - a new record. In a statement released on Sunday, Home Secretary Priti Patel said: "The British public should be in no doubt of our unwavering determination to stop these dangerous crossings from safe EU countries and take down the evil criminal gangs behind them. We are utilising all aspects of government to tackle this issue and our significant actions are having an impact," BBC News reported.

### France says boatload of 42 migrants rescued in English Channel

Reuters reported on July 23rd that authorities in France had successfully rescued some 42 migrants whose vessel got into difficulties in the waters off France. It comes during a week of numerous migrant crossings, possibly brought on by favourable weather conditions and sea states.

### Turkey carries out search, rescue for 45 migrants in Mediterranean

Turkey's Defense Ministry reported on Friday 23rd that a vessel with some 45 migrants on board had sunk off the coast of Antalya province and that they had begun rescue efforts. Two Coast Guard frigates responded to the incident, the Defence Ministry reported. At least 37 more migrants were rescued the same day off Crete, after their boat capsized. The Daily Sabah reported that eight people were reportedly missing in the incident.

### 17 Bangladeshi migrants drown off Tunisia in shipwreck – Red Crescent

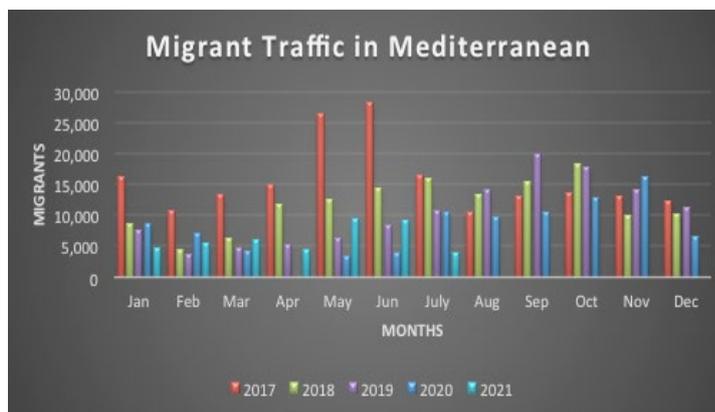
Gulf News reported on July 22nd that as many as 17 people died when their vessel got into difficulties off Tunisia. The boat sailed from Zuwara in Libya and more than 380 other migrants were rescued by Tunisian Coast Guard vessels, Red Crescent said.

### Morocco intercepts 368 irregular migrants in Mediterranean

China's Xinhua news agency reported on July 24th that Morocco's Coast Guard had rescued 368 migrants in the Mediterranean over a four-day period last week. The migrants were attempting to cross the Mediterranean in a variety of inflatable boats and 30 kayaks, Xinhua reported. Those in poor health condition had received first aid from the navy units before being transferred to the nearest Moroccan ports and handed over to security authorities.

### Armed Forces of Malta rescues 46 migrants

Xinhua reported on July 26th that the Armed Forces of Malta had rescued a group of 46 migrants who were in distress and had been located within Malta's Search and Rescue region on Sunday 25th. According to NGO Alarm Phone, which receives distress calls from people making the Mediterranean crossing, some of the migrants were nursing "severe" gunshot wounds. However, the police spokesman could not immediately confirm this.



Migrant crossings 2017-2021. Source: [UNHCR](#)

### The current migrant smuggling situation

UNHCR has updated its figures this week, showing around 3,000 more crossing attempts in the past week, once again highlighting the sheer number of people risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean. Sadly, the past week has also seen an increase in fatalities, with UNHCR now estimating that 937 people have lost their lives at sea so far in 2021. The incident involving migrants rescued by the Armed Forces of Malta, where some migrants apparently had severe gunshot wounds, appears to have slipped through the media's cracks, although MAST will monitor the situation for further developments.

# Libya

There are signs that Khalifa Haftar's efforts to become an elected politician in Libya this year are underway. The Libya Observer reported on July 25th that loyalists in eastern Libya launched a campaign to collect names and national identification numbers as well as electoral centers, numbers of people to vote for Haftar in the upcoming presidential elections

## Intra-Libyan talks on election law to take place in Rome on July 26-29 - authorities

Russia's Tass News Agency reported on July 26th that Intra-Libyan talks on developing a unified stance on the law on general elections are expected to take place in the Italian capital of Rome on July 26th-29th, Parliament Spokesman Abdullah Blehik said that the focus of the talks would be on the necessary legal instruments which are required in order to organise the country's elections.

## Libya's FDCC releases 500 thousand doses of Sputnik V

The Libyan Express reports that the country's Food and Drug Control Centre had moved on July 26th to release a shipment of half a million doses of Russia's Covid-19 Sputnik V vaccine. The shipment of 500,000 doses of Sputnik V anti-Coronavirus vaccinations landed by plane at Tripoli's Mitiga airport on the 19th of this month, according to the Ministry of Health.

## Alarmed by neighboring Tunisia, Libya scrambles to vaccinate

Despite beginning its vaccination programme in April this year, ongoing cases of Covid-19 and an increase in reports from neighbouring Tunisia are alarming the Libyan authorities and has led to a renewed push to vaccinate as many people as possible in the country, Africa News reported on July 25th. Libya has received vaccines from China, Russia, Turkey, and the COVAX initiative. UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has welcomed the initiative of the Libyan authorities under which refugees and asylum-seekers have received vaccinations against COVID-19, together with other thirdcountry nationals as well as Libyans. The first vaccination drive which included also foreign nationals began on Saturday 25th in several locations of Tripoli, with an initial target of 40,000 jabs.

## Libyan PM from Sabha: There will be no more wars

The Libyan Prime Minister, Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah, said the lack of services in the south is an outcome of the wars over the past years, saying there will be no more wars in Libya and that his government will provide Sabha and the rest of the region with all necessary services to alleviate the people's suffering,

the Libya Observer reported on July 25th. He also said his government was working on ending the shortage of medics and paramedics in the south of the country.

## Disease Control Center says Coronavirus spread in Libya's west and south concerning

The Head of vaccination management at the Libyan National Center for Disease Control, Abdelbasit Samiyo, said the epidemiological situation in Libya's west and south is very serious and concerning, the Libya Observer reported on July 24th. Despite an increased push to vaccinate the population, Samiyo urged on Libya Alahrar TV Channel the officials in eastern Libya to get ready by preparing quarantine centers and keeping a good stock of oxygen as well as medical equipment in case of increased spread.

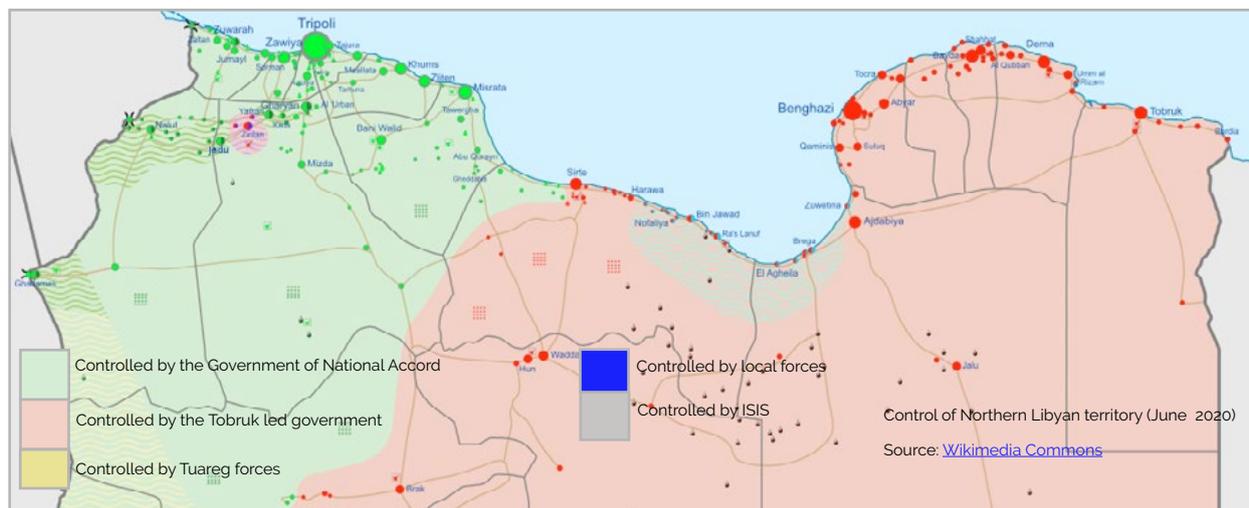
## 'Regular Russian troops stationed in Libya'

The head of the Democracy and Human Rights Foundation (DHRF), Emadeddin Muntasser, has told the United Nations that regular Russian troops have been deployed and are now stationed in Libya. Muntasser made the claim on Friday 23rd after being told by a source within the Libyan Defence Ministry that regular Russian troops have been spotted near Jufra Airbase and provided proof with confidential aerial photographs and coordinates of the location, according to a report in the Daily Sabah.

## US Pushes for Withdrawal of Foreign Forces from Libya before Elections

The US has renewed its call on the withdrawal of foreign forces from Libya before the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for December 24th, Asharq Al-Awsat reported on July 23rd. The news comes amid reports of regular Russian forces on the ground in Libya, despite joint negotiations between Russia and Turkey in Moscow which are intended to see the orderly removal of foreign fighters from Libya.

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





# Central and South America

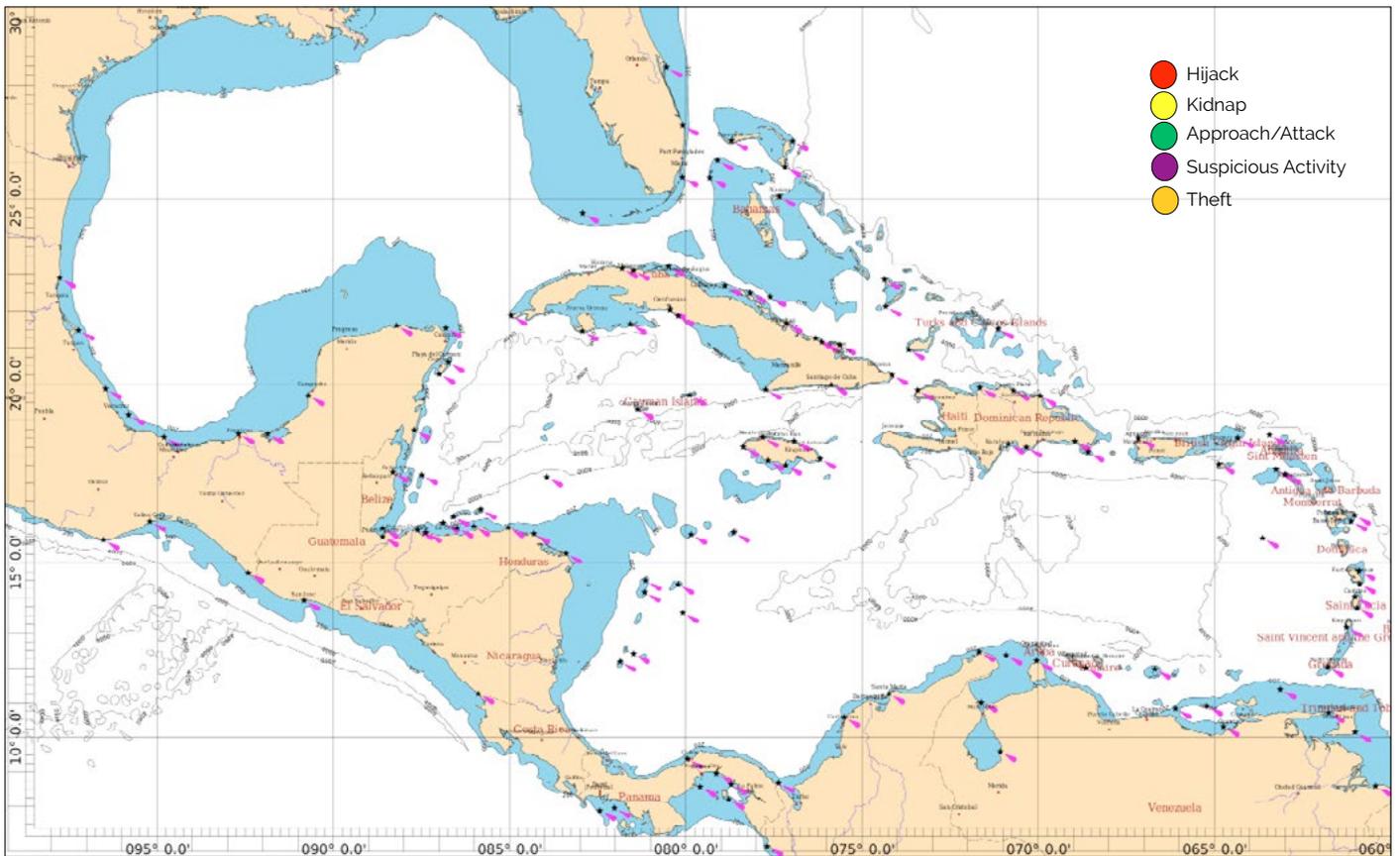
Nothing significant to report.

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](#).

Nothing significant to report.

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