

Weekly Security & Risk Report

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



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Issue 292 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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Gulf of Guinea

Media outlets in Ghana reported on July 30th that Rear Admiral Issah Adam Yakubu, the country's Chief of Naval Staff, has proposed the establishment of an ECOWAS joint naval assets to conduct regular patrols to protect commercial fishing vessels following increased armed pirates attacks in the Gulf of Guinea. He has also proposed the setting up of 'Transit Corridors' for ships from other West African countries which can then anchor and receive assistance.

Incidents:

1. On the 27th July at 0400UTC in position 0.53S-007.07E, an MV (NAME WITHHELD) reported a suspicious approach. One fishing vessel and 2 skiffs approached the vessel within 2NM with bright lights. The vessel applied BMP WA procedures and the skiffs stopped their approach. Reported by MDAT-GoG, July

MWUN Tasks NIMASA On Security Of Inland Waters

Nigeria's Tide newspaper reported on August 2nd that the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN) had asked that NIMASA expand the Deep Blue maritime security programme to cover inland waterways, given the ongoing problems of armed robbery and kidnap in the creeks and rivers of the Niger Delta. Despite the launch of the USD195 million maritime security assets, criminal acts have persisted in the Gulf of Guinea (GOG) and the nations inland waterways, witnessing the abduction of eight persons including five maritime workers in recent weeks.

4 S. Koreans abducted in waters off West Africa have been released: foreign ministry

South Korea's Foreign Ministry reported on Monday 2nd August that four South Koreans who were kidnapped in waters off West Africa on June 1st have been freed. The four were released at 10 p.m. Sunday (Korea time) and are in good shape, Yonhap reported. "They are under protection at a safe place that a local diplomatic mission has offered and will depart for home upon the completion of administrative procedures and flight reservations," the ministry said in a press release.

Nigeria, Ghana Navies Strengthen Ties over Security Threats

Nineteen Nigerian and Ghana navy recruits have successfully completed the Nigerian Navy Basic Operating Capability course and, after 24 weeks of intensive training, are now eligible for Nigeria's Special Boat Service (SBS). The 19 were

among 44 participants of the BOC course 16, which featured rigorous and dangerous tasks in counter terrorism, counter insurgency, hostage rescue, riverine/back waters, anti-piracy, sabotage/enemy infiltration operations.

Nigerian Navy holds Exercise Beni Kekere

In an effort to demonstrate rapid mobility and inter-operability, the Nigerian Navy's Eastern and Central Naval Commands recently held Exercise Beni Kekere. For the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) and Central Naval Command (CNC), Exercise Beni Kekere was an opportunity to deploy ships, helicopters and men for a joint sea and shore exercise targeted at demonstrating their operational capability in securing their contiguous areas of responsibility (AOR). To achieve this, both commands deployed a total of eight ships, two helicopters, Maritime Domain Awareness facilities and elements of the NN Special Boat Services (SBS).

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

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures:

2021:

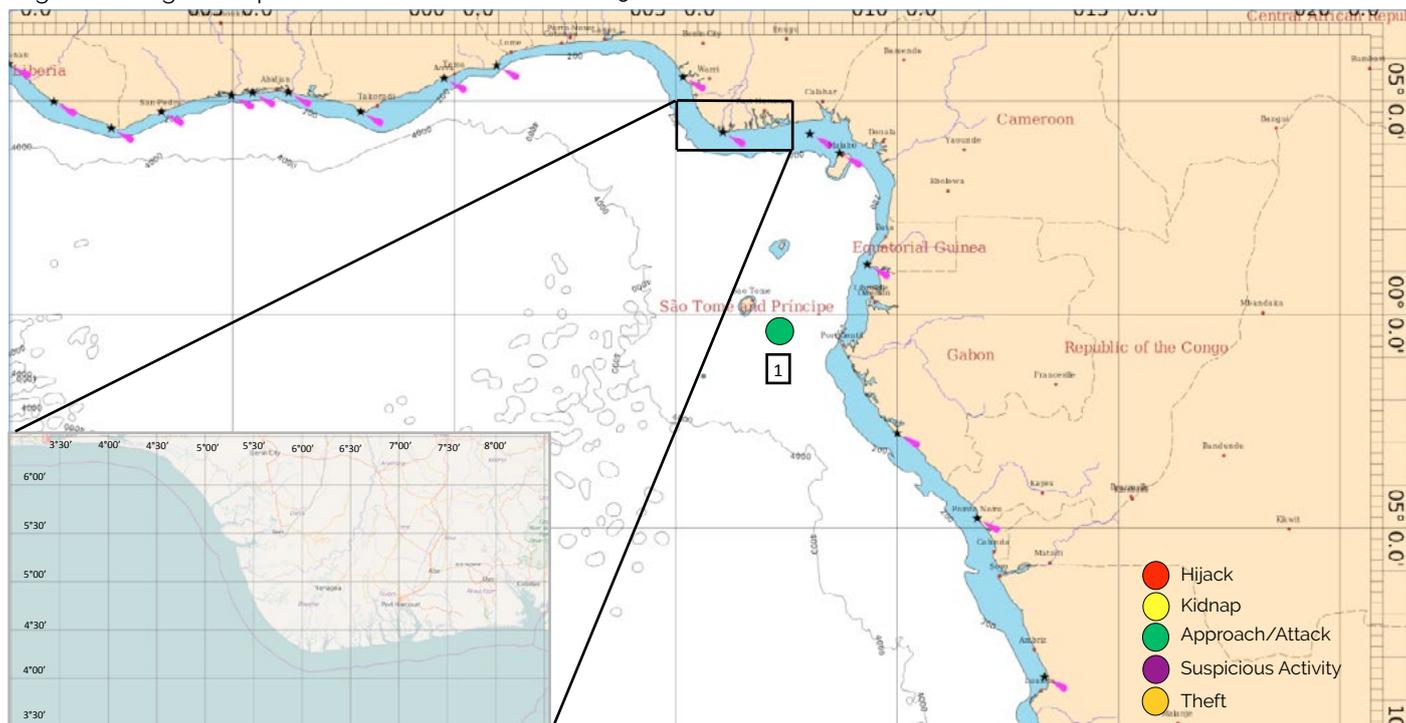
Incidents reported: 35 (MDAT-GoG)
Crew kidnapped: 45 (IMB, MDAT)
Vessels hijacked: 1 (MDAT-GoG)

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

Men who boarded and seized a ship in the Gulf of Oman have left the vessel and all those remaining on board are safe, officials say. UKMTO said the potential hijacking of the Panama-flagged MV Asphalt Princess had ended but gave no further details. The bitumen tanker was seized on Tuesday August 3rd, heading into the congested approach to the Strait of Hormuz. It is not clear who seized the ship, but analysts suspected Iranian forces. In 2019, IRGC Navy personnel seized another vessel owned by the same Dubai-based company.

Incidents:

1. Underway Panama-flagged product tanker reported boarded by eight to nine armed persons at 1230 UTC in position 25:02N - 057:28.54E, approx 60nm East of Fujairah, UAE. Possible Hijack with boarding by Iranian Forces, heading toward Iran TTW. Unknown persons who boarded have now left the vessel. Reported (UKMTO/Sources) 3rd Aug.

2. Liberia-flagged product tanker reported attacked at 1800 UTC in position 21:16.12N - 059:45.42E, approx 60nm NE Masirah Island, Oman. Comms lost at 2126 UTC. Incident stated as non-piracy related. Two crew reported killed as a result of the attack. Vessel under crew control using own power at speed 14knts. Under escort by US Navy to safe location. Reported (UKMTO/Source) 29th July.

MV Mercer Street incident: UK, US blame Iran

The UK and US believe Iran was behind a suspected drone attack off Oman that killed two people, and have vowed to respond, calling it a violation of international law. The MV Mercer Street, operated by an Israeli-owned firm, was attacked off Oman on Thursday July 29th. A British national working for maritime security firm, Ambrey Risk, and a Romanian citizen were killed. The attack on the MV Mercer Street appears to be the latest escalation in an undeclared "shadow war" between Israel and Iran.

Mozambique Says African Troops Will Target Insurgents

Mozambique's defense minister says South African troops are expected this week to join operations meant to counter insurgents in northern Cabo Delgado province. Defense Minister Jaime Neto says terrorists are being cornered as a result of intense operations by Mozambican and Rwanda forces in Cabo Delgado. Briefing the media in Maputo on Friday 30th,

the defense minister said it was difficult to count the number of insurgents killed in the operations, Voice of America reported.

Somalia to tighten fishing licences

Garowe Online reported on July 29th that the Somali government was set to tighten the fishing licence procedure following 'rampant cases of Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing'. The move follows a damning report which went as far as naming senior politicians allegedly involved in the practice, which many believe led to the first wave of Somali piracy. The Somali coastline stretches for over 3,000km, but a lack of Coast Guard assets and governance means that regulation has been extremely difficult.

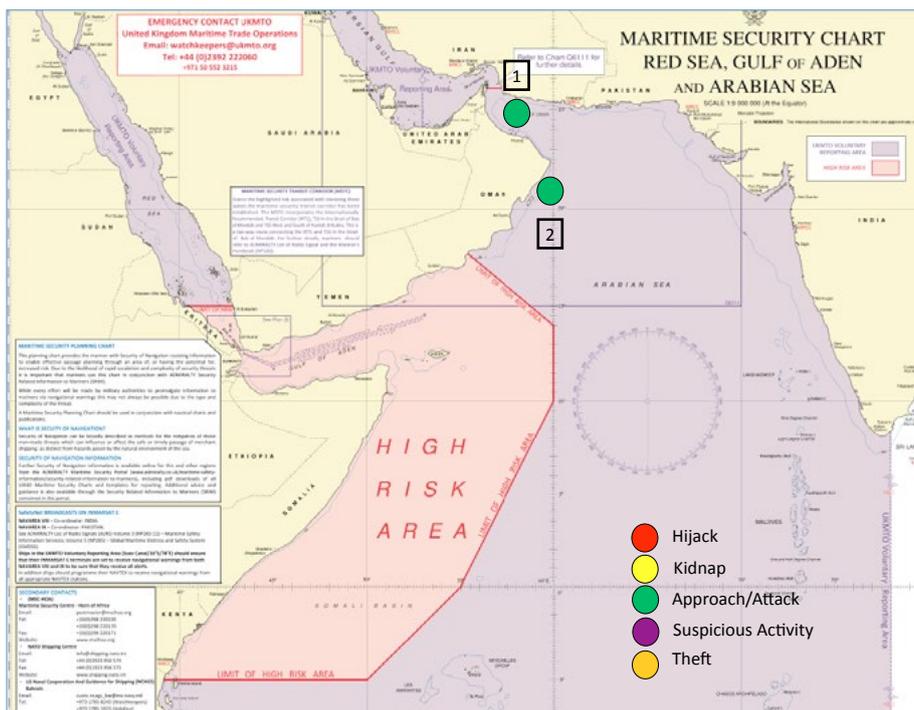
Indian and Indonesian navies undertake patrols

ANI reported on July 30th that the Indian and Indonesian navies had begun a two-day coordinated patrol in the IOR, as the 36th edition of India-Indonesia coordinated patrol (CORPAT). The drill also featured maritime patrol aircraft from both countries.

IRGC Navy Commander Underlines Preparedness

The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy said the forces should maintain the highest level of preparedness and be ready for the toughest missions. In a meeting with a group of the IRGC Navy's forces in southern Iran, Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri said the forces must maintain their preparedness at the highest level, strengthen their spiritual life and get ready for the toughest missions, Tasnim News reported on July 29th.

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





Somalia

At least four football players have been killed after a bomb hit their team bus in Somalia's southern port city of Kismayo, state-owned TV reports, according to BBC News on July 30th. It added that 10 others were injured in the attack. The report says the bus carrying the players was completely destroyed. The team was heading to a stadium in Kismayo to play a match. While no group has claimed responsibility, it is likely that Al Shabaab was behind the attack.

US Military Targets Al-Shabab in Somalia With More Airstrikes

Voice of America reported on August 2nd that the United States military has confirmed that it carried out another airstrike against Al Shabaab militants, its third in less than two weeks. Sunday August 1st's strike was in support of Somali government forces in the vicinity of Qeycad, in the central Gal-mudug state, according to the U.S. military. The Somali government earlier reported the strike was in an area where federal and U.S.-trained forces were fighting the militants. There was no word on whether militants were injured or killed.

Somalia Raises Alarm Over Food Shortage

Kenya's Daily Nation reported on August 1st that Somali politicians are raising the alarm over a potential food shortage, with officials from the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management said on Saturday that a humanitarian crisis is looming in the country. The ministry said it needs urgent aid delivered to more than a third of the country's population that it said is at risk of starvation.

UK PM meets with Prime Minister of Somalia

The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, met with Mohamed Roble, Prime Minister of Somalia, at the Global Education Summit in London on July 29th. They discussed the security situation in Somalia and the UK's commitment to Somalia's stability and economic development. The leaders also spoke about the importance of boosting girls' access to education in Somalia, and how the UK can support that effort.

Senior Al Shabaab fighter surrenders to Somalia troops

Xinhua reported on July 29th that a senior member of Al Shabaab on Wednesday surrendered to government forces in Garbaharey, a town located in Southern Somalia, an official confirmed on Thursday. Mohamed Jama, commander of Somali National Army (SNA) in Garbaharey, told SNA radio that Abdirazak Abdullahi Mohamed, who was a senior al-Shabab operative contacted Somali forces and informed them that he was willing to join the government.

KDF: We won't leave Somalia any time soon

Garowe Online reported on July 29th that General Robert Kibochi, Chief of Kenya Defence Forces, has said that the KDF will remain in Somalia a little longer, ruling out reports that they would pull out at the end of the year. "We cannot be in Somalia forever," he told Kenya's state broadcaster. "Just like the USA, which has left Afghanistan after a long war with militants, we will also leave when our objective is achieved."

Somalia Minister Mohmaud Ibrahim Sues Canadian Journalist Over 'Plot' to Kill Him

In a bizarre move, Somalia's Finance Minister, Mohmaud Hayir Ibrahim, has accused Canadian journalist, Jay Bahadur, and a non-governmental organisation of hacking his email and plotting to kill him. Mr Ibrahim has asked the Kenyan courts to issue orders barring Canadian journalist Jay Bahadur and the Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime (GIATO) from investigating him over illegal fishing along Somalia's coastline.

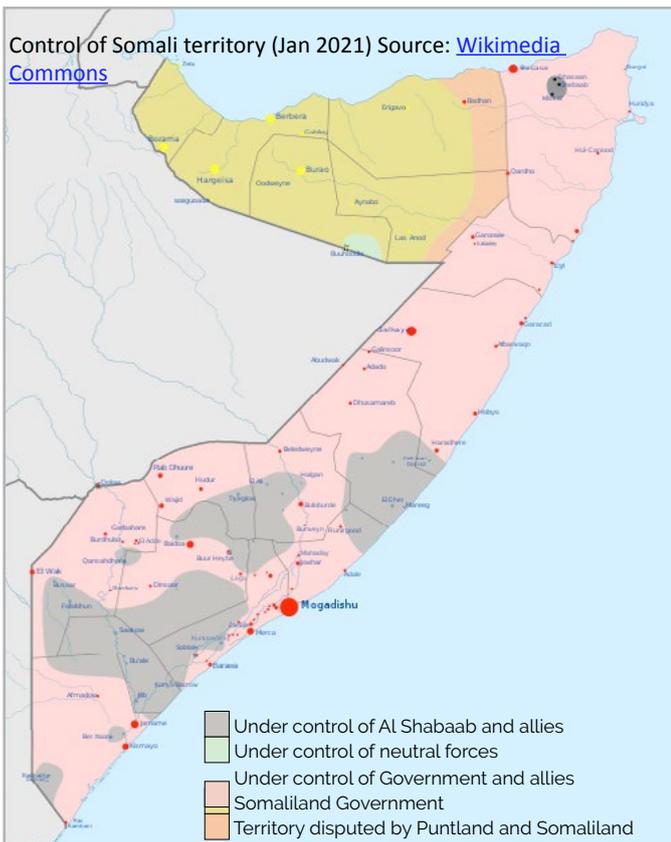
Analysis

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

At least four people were killed in an explosion of a landmine laid previously by the Houthi rebels in the country's Red Sea port city of Hodeidah on Thursday, a government official told Xinhua. "An explosion caused by a Houthi-laid landmine struck a bus in Durayhmi district of Hodeidah's southern part, leaving four killed," the local government source said on condition of anonymity. Xinhua reported that the explosion took place as a bus in Durayhmi district struck the landmine.

Yemen army recaptures strategic mountains

IANAS news agency reported on August 2nd that Yemeni army assets had recaptured a string of strategic mountains from Houthi rebels at the southeastern tip of Houthi-held Sanaa, according to military sources. "The army forces backed by Saudi-led coalition warplanes pushed back the Iran-backed Houthi rebels from the chain of Al-Abzakh mountains in Rahabah district southwest of Marib province," the source told Xinhua news agency on Sunday, August 1st.

Armed tribesmen kill senior pro-gov't security official

A senior commander of the pro-government Yemeni security forces was killed by armed tribesmen in the country's oil-rich province of Marib on Monday 2nd, a military official told Xinhua on August 2nd. "Confrontations erupted between the security forces and armed tribesmen who set up checkpoints and barriers near an oil field in Marib's eastern part," the local military source said on condition of anonymity.

Senior security official ambushed in southern Yemen

China's Xinhua agency reported on August 1st that unknown gunmen had ambushed the motorcade of a senior security official in the province of Ayban on Sunday. "The soldiers of the convoy clashed with assailants during the ambush on the outskirts of Zinjibar, capital of Abyan Province, and managed to rescue the security leader," the local government source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

3 killed in Yemen landmine blast

Three civilians died when their motorcycles hit a landmine planted by Houthi rebels in the province of Lahj, The Shillong Times reported on July 31st. The incident in Qubaita village took place while the three were returning from Friday prayers at a nearby mosque, an official said. The incident highlights the ongoing risk to civilians from munitions and mines planted in populated areas by Houthi rebels.

Acting head of the UN Special Envoy's office for Yemen (OS-ESGY) concludes visit to Riyadh

The Acting Head of OSESGY, Muin Shreim has concluded

yesterday a two-day visit to Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, during which he met with Yemeni Vice President Ali Mohsen and Prime Minister Maen Abdulmalek as well as other senior Yemeni officials. He also met with US Special Envoy Timothy Lenderking and other diplomats working on the Yemeni file. Mr. Shreim discussed the urgent need to agree on cessation of all forms of military operations in Yemen and across the border, ReliefWeb reported on July 30th.

Yemen's presidency ready to exchange prisoners with Houthis

Middle East Monitor reported on July 30th that the Yemen government was ready to exchange prisoners with Houthi rebels under an 'all or all' rule. The statements were made by Yemeni Vice President Ali Mohsen Saleh during his meeting with the deputy head of the United Nations (UN) special envoy to Yemen, Muin Shreim, in the Saudi capital of Riyadh.

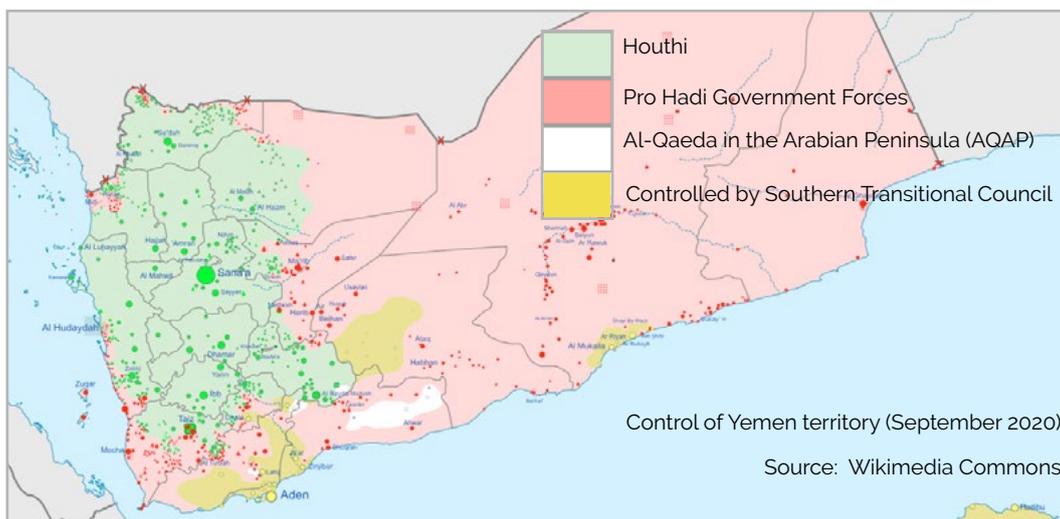
Houthis Say Made Gains in Central Al-Bayda Province

AFP and the Defense Post reported on July 30th that Houthi rebels claimed to have seized two districts in Al-Bayda province, as fighting for Marib continues in the north of the country. Operations have led to "the liberation of the Naman and Nateh districts" in Al-Bayda, Houthi spokesman Yahya Saree said in a statement carried by the rebels' Al-Masirah television. The Houthis are in the "process of clearing out the remaining pockets in Al-Bayda province after liberating most areas," he added.

21 members of Saudi-backed team killed clearing Houthi mines

Arab News has highlighted the dangers facing mine clearance experts in Yemen, reporting that 21 members of a mine clearance team have lost their lives in the last three years as they carried out their duties. Launched by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief) on June 25, 2018, the initiative has so far cost \$133 million, Masam's director, Osama Al-Gosaibi, told Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper.

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



South East Asia

The UK government has said it has no plans for a confrontation with China in the South China Sea and that it aims to send its carrier strike group in the most direct route across the contested body of water from Singapore to the Philippine Sea. The Guardian reported on July 30th, The carrier strike group will go on to take part in exercises with the US, Australia, France, Japan in the Philippine Sea, in a multinational show of strength aimed at Beijing, the newspaper reported. China, meanwhile, calls the ship's visit "colonial". It warns that if it "intrudes" on Chinese-claimed islands and reefs, it will be "expelled", according to News.com.au

Incidents: Nothing significant to report.

Philippine police arrest mole identified as Abu Sayyaf Group member

Arab News reported on Tuesday August 3rd that the Philippine National Police are to conduct an investigation after a civilian personnel member was found to be a key member of the Abu Sayyaf Group terrorist organisation. Police intelligence operatives arrested Masckur Adoh Patarasa, also known as "Makong" and "Omair Sali Taib," on Friday in Jolo, Sulu.

Drug smugglers head to sea to avoid Covid roadblocks

The Bangkok Post reported on August 3rd that drug smuggling gangs in the region are using the sea to avoid police checkpoints and road blocks, set up to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Gangs, the paper says, are: "loading their drugs onto a boat and shuttling them to spots close to the border with Malaysia where the supplies are then collected by a local agent who exports them to a third country." Marine police have already successfully seized several shipments of methamphetamine, destined for export, by intercepting the fishing vessels being used to smuggle the drugs. CIB commissioner Torsak Sukwimol said more networks of transnational drug traffickers are opting to transport drugs by sea in recent months to evade authorities, the paper said.

German Frigate Deploys on Indo-Pacific Mission

For the first time in almost 20 years, Germany has deployed a frigate to the Indo-Pacific, while analysts express concern that the move could strain ties with China. The Bayern deployed on a six-month mission to the region, where it will visit Singapore, South Korea and Australia, The Defense Post reported on August 2nd.

5 Years After South China Sea Ruling, Rivals Quietly Accepting China's Refusal to Comply

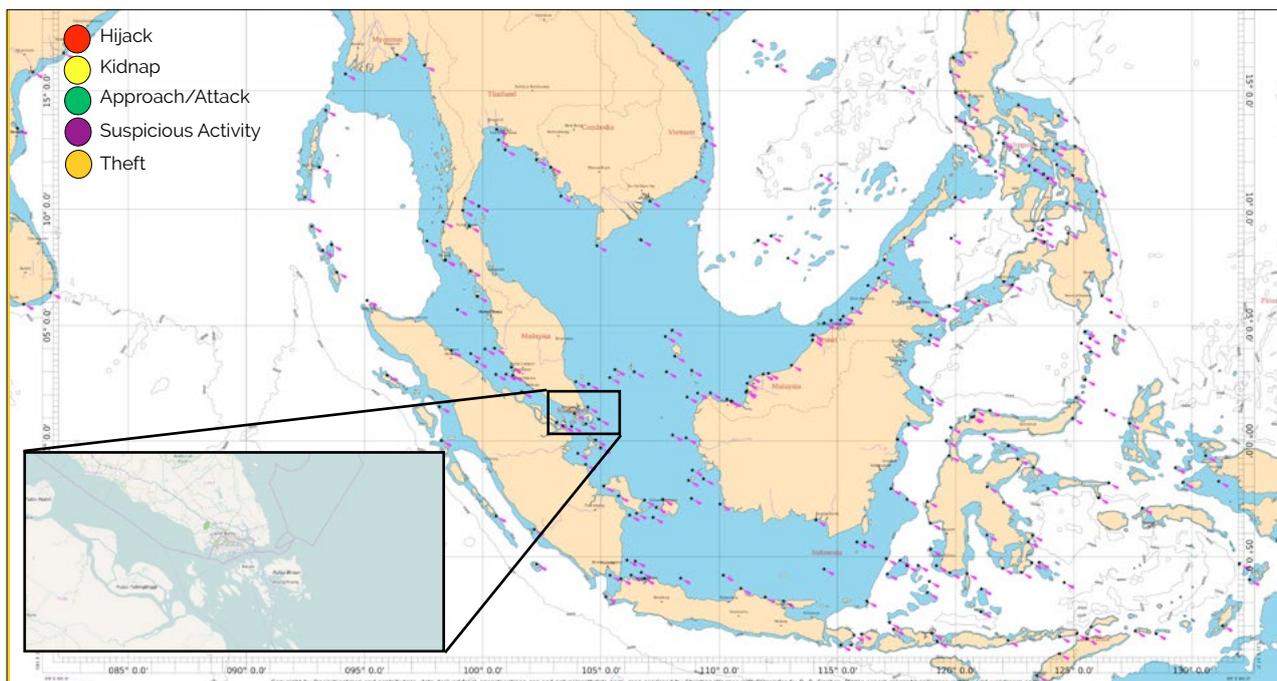
Five years after a landmark world court ruling against China's claims to a disputed sea, smaller Asian countries that contest Chinese maritime sovereignty have learned to live with Beijing's adamant rejection of the verdict, experts in the region say. China uses a "nine-dash line," citing maritime records from dynastic times, to claim about 90% of the 3.5 million-square-kilometer South China Sea that other governments value for fisheries and undersea fossil fuel reserves. The nine dashes cut into some nations' exclusive economic zones, Voice of America reported on July 31st.

Lawmaker Calls for New U.S. Maritime Strategy with Pacific Focus

To counter threats from China, a top U.S. lawmaker Friday called on the U.S. Navy to develop a new maritime strategy that would rebalance how it deploys and strategically scattered persistent deterrent force in an arc throughout the Indo-Pacific region. Two decades of focus on the Middle East has strained U.S. naval forces and worn out its fleet of carriers, said U.S. Rep Elaine Luria (D-Va.), a retired Navy surface warfare officer and vice chair of the House Armed Services Committee, USNI News reported on July 30th.

4 suspected gunrunners held at North Samar port

PhilStar Global reported on July 30th that four suspected gun smugglers had been arrested on their arrival at Allen port in Northern Samar, as they disembarked a ro-ro from Bicol on Wednesday July 28th. Philippine Coast Guard and Philippine National Police personnel said 36 M16 rifles, magazines and three .45-caliber pistols were recovered in the car that the suspects brought.



European Waters

Following a series of attacks on social media and comments from right-wing activists, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), has experienced a huge spike in donations, seeing a boost of some £200,000 in a 24-hour period. Sky News reported on July 29th. The RNLI came under fire or rescuing migrants in distress at sea.

As Record Number of Refugees Cross Channel, Britain Seeks to Criminalize Irregular Migration

A record number of migrants has crossed the English Channel from France to the United Kingdom this year in small boats. The British government is seeking to deter the migrants by making irregular migration a criminal offense. A record 430 people made the crossing in a single day last month. The total for 2021 so far stands at around 8,500, according to data from PA Media, formerly the Press Association, that was collated from government statistics. That number is higher than all of 2020, when 8,461 people made the crossing. Voice of America reported on August 2nd.

More than 700 migrants saved from Mediterranean

France 24 reported on August 2nd that NGO rescue vessels from SOS Mediterranee, ResQship and Sea-Watch rescued over 700 people from makeshift boats in the Mediterranean over the weekend of July 31st to August 1st. Ocean Viking alone has 555 passengers on board from this weekend's operations, including at least 28 women, two of whom are pregnant. The organisation has yet to determine at which safe port they will be able to leave them, France 24 reported.

Record 3,500 migrants arrived in July

The UK's Daily Mail newspaper reported on August 1st that a record 3,500 migrants arrived in Britain across the Channel last month, while in July Border Force intercepted more than 120 overcrowded boats of migrants from Africa and the Middle East.

Russia stops Cubans trying to enter EU on air beds

Three Cubans who took the desperate step of trying to cross one of Europe's most sensitive border rivers on air beds now face deportation from Russia. They were caught trying to paddle across into the EU state of Estonia, Russian border guards say. They are said to have told guards they were hoping to get to Spain, where one of them has a daughter living, BBC News reported on July 31st. Cubans only need their passports to visit Russia for tourism but cannot enter the EU legally without a visa.

394 migrants rescued from wooden boat off Tunisia

Reuters reported on August 1st that rescuers had saved almost 400 migrants from a wooden boat in the Mediterranean. The operation lasted six hours and was part of an ongoing effort by German and French NGO rescue vessels.

Nearly 1,000 migrants have drowned in the Mediterranean Sea in 2021: UN

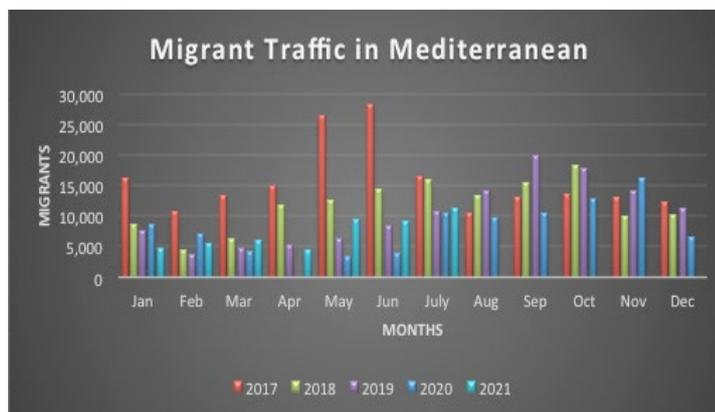
The 57 migrants who drowned off the coast of Libya in the final week of July added to the toll of nearly 1,000 lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea this year alone, the UN agency International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has revealed, FRI reported on July 29th. Good weather and sea states have seen a surge in crossing attempts in July, which has in turn seen an increase in fatalities at sea.

Libya is closing its migrant detention centres

Libya has been closing its migrant detention centres despite concerns in Europe about rising numbers of people attempting the treacherous journey across the Mediterranean. Euronews reported on July 30th. The report states that Libyan authorities think that the centres in Zawiya and al-Khums were becoming staging points for migrants hoping to enter Europe illegally via the perilous Mediterranean crossing route.

226 illegal immigrants voluntarily deported from Libya: IOM

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) on Friday said 226 illegal migrants were voluntarily deported from Libya to their countries of origin, China's Xinhau reported on July 30th. "This week, IOM assisted 226 stranded migrants in Libya to voluntarily return home to Burkina Faso, the Gambia, and Ghana. All were medically screened prior to departure and underwent PCR tests in compliance with mobility restrictions to contain the spread of COVID-19," IOM said in a statement. According to IOM, more than 18,000 illegal immigrants have been rescued at sea and returned to Libya so far in 2021, Xinhau said.



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

The current migrant smuggling situation

Another week of significant crossings, with 700 rescued over the weekend and almost 400 of that number in one, wooden boat. The UNHCR figures now show that over 11,000 crossed in July alone, making it by far the busiest month for rescue missions and border control forces so far in 2021. It seems that despite the pandemic, figures are on course to overshadow 2019's numbers, which MAST would hope might focus political minds in the EU, as Libya continues to move towards democratic elections. It can only be hoped that closer political ties between Libya and the institutions of the EU will in some way drive political policy in order to stem the continual tide.

Libya

The main coastal road in Libya between the east and west of the country has re-opened after being closed for two years because of conflict. The re-opening of the road is a key element of the ceasefire between the warring sides. The coastal road was briefly re-opened last month, but had to be closed again after only one day, BBC News reported on July 30th.

Libya, Italy vow to enhance bilateral ties in various fields

Libya's President of the Presidency Council Mohamed Menfi on Monday stressed the importance of the partnership with Italy, and the enhancement the bilateral relations in the fields of investment, trade and economic exchange, Xinhau reported on August 3rd. Menfi made his remarks during a meeting with visiting Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio in Libya's capital Tripoli, said a statement issued by the Presidency Council.

Libya to impose prison sentences, fines for curfew breaches

Amid rising concern over the spread of Covid-19 in the country, the Libyan Interior Ministry on Sunday 1st August said that people who breach curfew instructions against COVID-19 could be punished with six months in prison or receive a fine of 200 dinars (about 44 U.S. dollars) or both, according to Xinhau. The curfew lasts for two weeks and runs from 6 p.m. (1600 GMT) until 6 a.m. (0400 GMT) the following morning, said the government.

Mercenaries 'impede' peace, must leave Libya to allow elections

The continued recruitment and presence of mercenaries in Libya is impeding "progress in the peace process" and an obstacle to upcoming elections, independent UN human rights experts said on Friday July 30th, calling for their "long overdue" departure. "Nine months after the ceasefire agreement calling for withdrawal of foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya, mercenaries and private military and security contractors continue to operate in the country" said the chair of the UN's Working Group on the use of mercenaries, Jelena Aparac. Some of the highly armed and well-trained private contractors operating in the country, hailing from Russia, Syria, Sudan and Chad, meet the criteria for mercenaries, according to the Working Group.

Libya: Hundreds of thousands of people including children risk losing water supply as critical facilities vandalized

It was reported that a main station of the man-made river at the eastern track of Hassawna system was vandalized on Thursday, affecting the water supply to four main cities, Bani

Walid, Misrata, Al-Khums, Zliten and other surrounding areas. ReliefWeb reported on August 1st. On 24 July, a major leak had occurred in the water transmission line in Tazerbo, Benghazi located close to the city of Awjila, leading to a large volume of water to be wasted. In the past two weeks alone, one of the wells of AL-Hasawna, AL-Juffra Water System in the western and southern field was destroyed and totally put out of service. The well has high daily production capacity of over 5000 cubic meters of water.

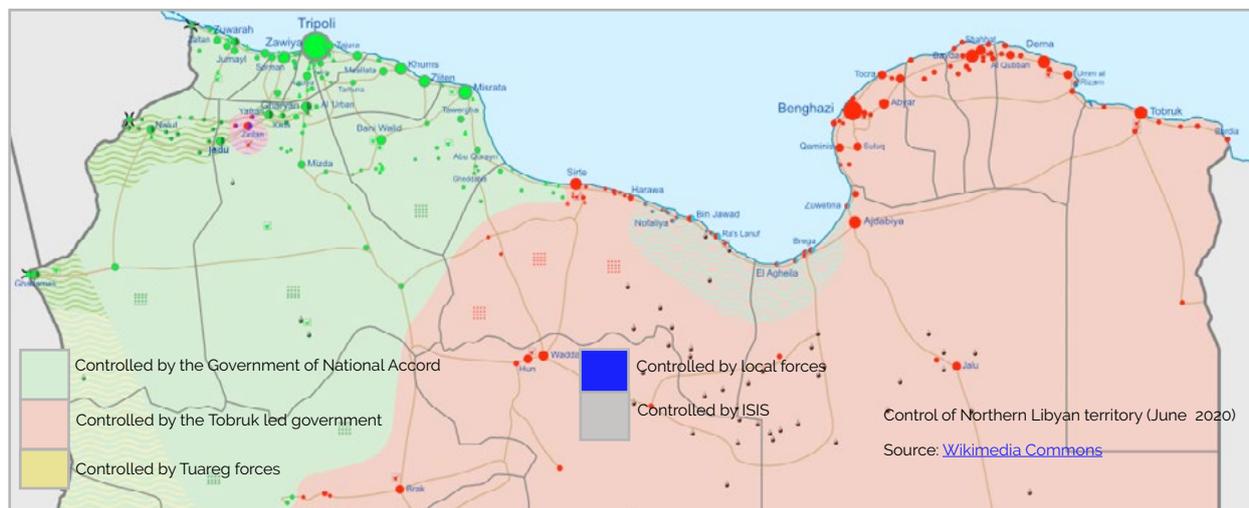
Muammar Gaddafi's son suggests he may run for president in Libya

In news that surprised few, Saif al-Islam, son of former Libyan dictator, Muammar Gaddafi, has told the media that he wants to "restore the lost unity" of Libya and, according to France 24, does not rule out a run for President in this year's promised elections. In an interview with The New York Times, he said: "It is time for a return to the past. The country -- it's on its knees... There's no money, no security. There's no life here," Saif al-Islam said in his first appearance in years. Any possible return by Saif al-Islam to Libyan politics would face hurdles, including his conviction by the Tripoli court and the ICC warrant for his arrest. France 24 reported.

NOC reports record revenues for June

The National Oil Corporation (NOC) announced on Friday that it had achieved record revenues of more than \$2.13 billion for the month of June, the Libyan Observer reported on July 31st. Crude oil revenues amounted to \$ 2,069,856,297.84, condensate gas revenues stood at \$ 66,246,667.01, and petrochemicals rose to \$3,251,283.50, the data shows.

To read MAST's Libyan Country report on MASTOPEDIA, please click here.



Central and South America

Nothing significant to report.

Incidents:

1. Unnoticed, robbers boarded an anchored general cargo ship and escaped with stolen ship's stores at 0500 UTC in position 00:03.80S – 051:06.03W, Fazendinha Anchorage, Brazil. The theft was noticed by the duty crew during routine rounds. The incident was reported to the Harbour Master through the local agent. Reported (IMB) 30th July (*Not shown on chart*).

2. Duty crew onboard an anchored bulk carrier noticed two robbers on the forecastle at 0530 UTC in position 10:19N – 075:31W, Cartagena anchorage, Colombia. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Seeing the alerted crew the robbers escaped with stolen ship property. Incident reported to VTS. Reported (IMB) 29th July.

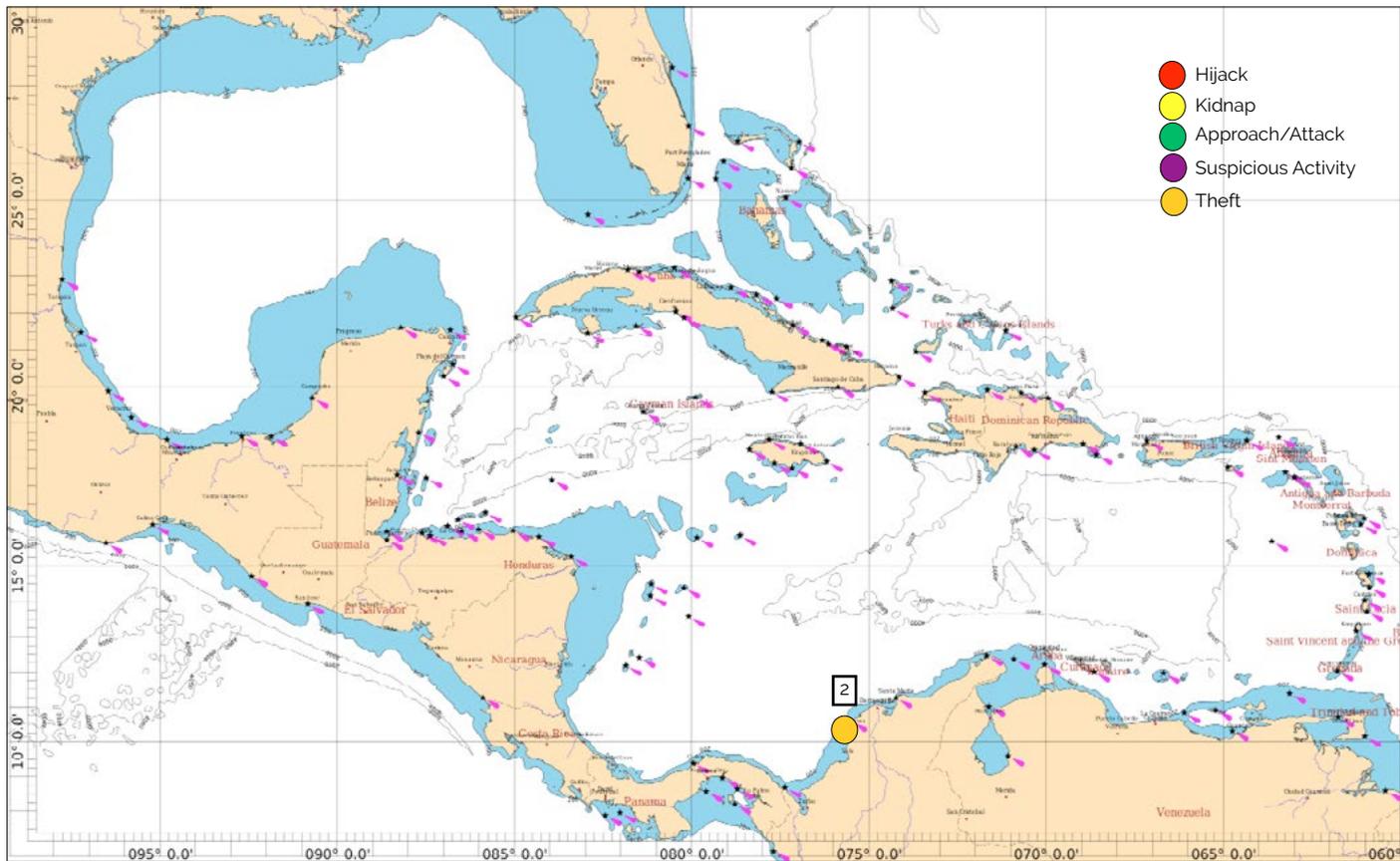
Standing advice:

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.