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Weekly Security & Risk Report

07th January 2022



MAST Intelligence

UK Domestic

International Incidents

Industry and SIA updates

LAND



SEA

West Africa

Indian Ocean
Yemen, Somalia

ROW / Europe

Weather & Any other points



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Issue 313

Issue 313 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the conflict-affected coastal states of Somalia and Yemen and associated waters, as well as ongoing issues facing the maritime industry in West Africa. The Mediterranean migrant crisis, security issues facing the UK and incidents affecting maritime security are also reported and analysed.

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

Nigeria's Upstream Regulatory Petroleum Commission (NURPC) said on Dec. 30th that Nigeria recorded a huge deficit of almost 200 million barrels in the first 11 months of 2021. The reduction was blamed on rising crude oil theft, old infrastructure and poor security on the country's waterways, ThisDayLive reported.

Incidents

1. Underway fishing vessel boarded by unknown number of armed persons in black-hull speedboat at 0300 UTC in position 01:34N - 009:05E, approx 32nm West of Benito River, Equatorial Guinea. Unconfirmed report state one crew killed, six crew abducted, including Captain. FV sailed Sw toward FPSO for assistance. Equatorial Guinea Navy informed. Incident ended. Awaiting update. Reported (MDAT/Source) 30th Dec.

10 Killed As Nigerian Navy Storms Kidnappers' Hideout In Anambra

Nigerian media reported on Dec. 31st that Nigerian Navy personnel stormed a kidnappers' hideout, killing 10 and wounding several others. Five arrests were made during the assault, which took place on Friday at around 1:20am in an area of Ochan forest where they had been told the camp was hidden. As well as operating in waterways, the kidnappers were believed to have been involved in the kidnap of a local traditional ruler in Nov. 2021.

Military destroys 1,423 illegal refining sites in 2021-DHQ

Media outlets in Nigeria reported on Dec. 31st that the country's Defence Headquarters (DHQ), had reported that the country's military had destroyed some 1,423 illegal oil refinery sites in 2021. The Director Defence Media Operations Maj.-Gen Benard

Onyeuko told reporters: "The efforts led to the demobilization of about 1,423 illegal oil refining sites (each of which contains many camps), over 4,929 storage facilities and 536 large wooden boats, popularly called 'Cotonou boats' among others. 13 ships laden with crude oil cargo, 9 barges, 137 trucks and other types of vehicles conveying illegally refined products. Additionally, about 40 million litres of crude oil and 67 million litres of illegally refined products, mostly AGO, were recovered from the criminals."

Navy boss decries personnel colluding with criminals on nation's waterways

Vice Admiral Awwal Gambo, Chief of Naval Staff, Nigeria, has warned naval personnel that he will not tolerate involvement with oil thieves and pirate gangs by his personnel. He said: "While there are significant achievements in the various maritime crimes, there are pockets of personnel still colluding with criminals to sabotage these efforts."

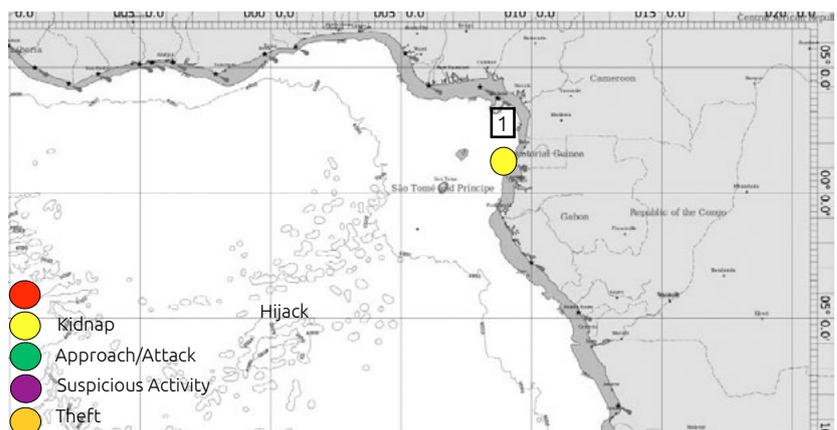
For further information, please [click here](#).

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures

2021
Incidents reported: 56 (MDAT-GoG/Others) Crew kidnapped: 46 (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

Yemen's Houthi rebels have seized a UAE-flagged vessel off Hodeidah in the Red Sea, claiming that it was transporting military supplies and had entered waters under their control without permission. The Saudi coalition described the incident as 'piracy'. The incident was initially reported by UKMTO on Jan. 3rd.

Incidents

Report indicates UAE-flagged MV attacked at 2150 UTC in position 15:13N - 042:12E, approx 23nm West of Ras Issa Oil Terminal, Yemen. Unconfirmed report states vessel hijacked by Houthi rebels. Awaiting confirmation. Reported (UKMTO/Source) 2nd Jan.

US Navy seizes \$4 million in drugs

Two U.S. Navy ships seized 385 kilograms of heroin worth approximately \$4 million from a stateless fishing vessel transiting the Arabian Sea, Dec. 27th. U.S. Coast Guard personnel embarked aboard USS Tempest (PC 2) and USS Typhoon (PC 5), operating as part of CTF 150, with the Combined Maritime Forces, discovered the illegal shipment while conducting a flag verification boarding in accordance with customary international law. The confiscated drugs were destroyed at sea by U.S. forces.

U.S. Navy Seizes 1,400 Assault Rifles During Illicit Weapons Interdiction

Homeland Security Today reported on Jan. 3rd that ships from the US Fifth Fleet conducted a VBSS in the north Arabian Sea on Dec. 20th and discovered around 1,400 AK-47s and 226,000 rounds of ammunition hidden on board the vessel. The stateless vessel was assessed to have originated in Iran and transited international waters along a route historically used to traffic weapons unlawfully to

the Houthis in Yemen, HS Today said. Five crew who claimed to be from Yemen will be returned to the country. After removing the illicit cargo, the US Navy believed the vessel was a hazard to shipping and scuttled it.

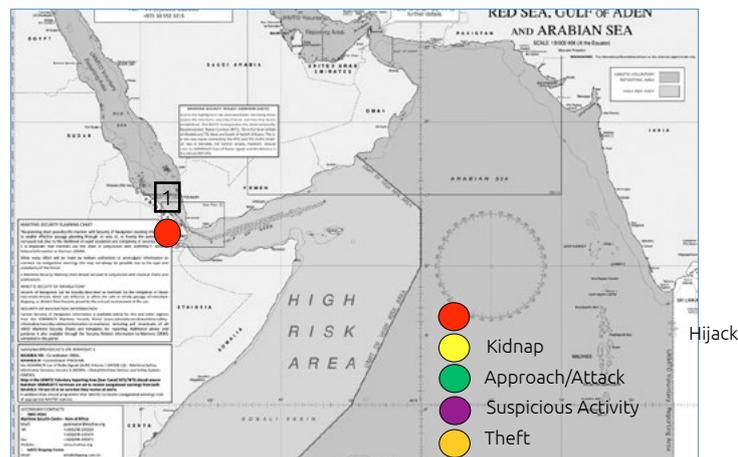
India, Russia to boost defence ties in Indian Ocean region

The Economic Times reports that India and Russia plan to increase ties in the Indian Ocean Region. The move could see an increase in Russian naval port calls as well as joint exercises between the two countries' navies, with the possibility of trilateral naval drills in the future. Russia has recently enhanced its ties in the region with new agreements with Sri Lanka and is a dialogue partner in the Indian Ocean Rim Association.

Bangladesh, Maldives join hands for Indian Ocean region security

The Maldives and Bangladesh have signed an agreement which will see the two countries work more closely on maritime security issues such as piracy, organised crime and drug smuggling at sea, New Age Bangladesh reported on Jan. 4th.

For further information, please click here.



MAST Note: This chart will be replaced as soon as Admiralty UK releases the updated version.

European Waters

The number of people who crossed the English Channel in small boats last year was treble the number for 2020. Figures compiled by the BBC show at least 28,431 migrants made the journey in 2021. On Tuesday 4th, a further 66 people arrived off Kent in two small boats, The Guardian reported.

Number of people lost at sea trying to reach Spain 'doubles in a year'

Spain continues to deal with a significant increase in the number of migrants arriving in the country via the Mediterranean, EuroNews reported on Jan. 4th. This, in turn, has led to a tragic increase in loss of life at sea. EuroNews report that the number of migrants who died trying to reach Spain reached 4,400 in 2020. Caminando Fronteras (Walking Borders) says in its report published on Monday that some 90% of those lost perished on 124 boats shipwrecked on their way to Spain's Canary Islands in the year to Dec. 20th, EuroNews said. The figure quoted by the NGO is significantly higher than the IOM total of 955 persons missing or lost at sea in 2020.

Three people smugglers arrested for murder after 16 people drowned at sea

Metro reported on Dec. 29th that Greek authorities had arrested and charged three people with murder, following the deaths of 16 people who were trying to cross the Mediterranean from Turkey to Italy. Their boat capsized off Paros, Greece. Sixty three people were picked up from the shipwreck by Greek rescuers, including the trio who were later arrested for their involvement in trafficking and suspected murder. The trio has been accused of causing an accident at sea, intentional manslaughter and membership of a criminal organisation.

Bodies of 27 migrants found on beach in Libya

InfoMigrants reported on Dec. 27th that the authorities in Libya had reportedly recovered the remains of some 27 people believed to have died in shipwrecks off the country. The bodies were collected by staff from the Red Crescent from beaches around Al-Alous, around 120km from Tripoli.

67 people rescued from boat in English Channel

Sky News reported on Dec. 25th that some 67 people had been rescued from the English Channel by Border Force personnel. Two small boats were involved in the incident, Sky said, also reporting that

French authorities had intercepted a third boat that day. Those rescued by Border Force were transferred to Dover, where they will be processed.

UK court overturns convictions of 4 asylum seekers who crossed English Channel

Middle East Monitor reported on Dec. 24th that the convictions of four asylum seekers who travelled to the UK in small boats across the English Channel, had had their convictions revoked on appeal. The UK Court of Appeal acknowledged a lack of proof that they intended to illegally enter the country, MEMO reported. The four were accused of steering small boats on their journeys in 2019 and 2020.

UNHCR regrets loss of life in the Aegean Sea

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is deeply distressed by the recent tragic death toll in Greece's Aegean Sea. At least 31 people lost their lives in three separate shipwrecks between 21st and 24th December, while an unknown number are still missing. More than 160 people were rescued by the Hellenic Coast Guard, with support from the country's navy and air force, as well as merchant and private vessels. UNHCR commends the efforts of all those involved in bringing survivors to safety.

German NGO rescues over 400 migrants over Christmas weekend

Sea-Watch rescued over 400 people over the weekend of Dec. 25th-26th, DW reported on Dec. 27th. All 446 rescued migrants were taken on board the Sea-Watch 3, following five rescue operations over the weekend, the paper reported. A pregnant woman and two-week old baby were among those rescued. The end of December saw a significant number of rescue operations take place in the Mediterranean, as well as many fatalities.

For further information, please [click here](#).

Somalia & Yemen

Yemen's Houthi rebels have seized a UAE-flagged vessel off Hodeidah in the Red Sea, claiming that it was transporting military supplies and had entered waters under their control without permission. The Saudi coalition described the incident as 'piracy'. The incident was initially reported by UKMTO on Jan. 3rd.

National Action Plan for Women in the Somali Maritime Sector

Efforts to enhance opportunities for Somali women in their country's maritime sector took a significant step forward recently with a national gathering aimed at establishing the next actions in this field. EUCAP Somalia, together with the UN Mission to Somalia (UNSOM), is supporting the Ministry of Ports and Marine Transport (MPMT) and the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development (MWHRD) in implementing the Women in the Maritime Sector (WiMS) project, EUCAP Somalia reported on Jan. 4th.

Somalia opens consultative talks

Xinhau reported on Jan. 4th that Prime Minister Roble had begun consultative talks intended to speed up the country's election process. The Office of the Prime Minister said the meeting brought together the presidents from Jubbaland, HirShabelle, SouthWest, Puntland, Galmudug and Banadir Regional Administration. "The meeting mainly focuses on security and the expeditious conclusion of the elections of the House of People," Roble's office said in a brief statement.

Effort to suspend Prime Minister fails

AFP reported on Dec. 27th that Somali President, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, announced that he was suspending Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble, following a spat over the country's delayed elections. Accusing Roble of corruption, the office of the president's statement also accused the premier of interfering with an investigation into a land grabbing case. Roble, however, has defied the order.

UN closes passenger operations at Mogadishu

At the request of the Somali Government, the United Nations in Somalia has closed its passenger operations facility (known as MOVCON) at the Aden Adde International Airport, effective 24th December 2021.

Yemen: Saudi-led coalition targets Sanaa

Al Jazeera reported on Jan. 5th that Saudi coalition forces had launched a number of air strikes on suspected Houthi targets in Sana'a, following the seizure of a vessel in the Red Sea. State TV said that the strikes had hit workshops and warehouses associated with Houthi drone production. The coalition destroyed five drones which were heading for Saudi Arabia on Monday, the media outlet added.

UN suspends some Yemen relief projects

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has been forced to suspend some relief programmes in Yemen due to a funding issue. On Twitter, on Jan. 4th, they said: "Lack of funding is forcing aid agencies to cut or reduce some critical assistance programs, including food, nutrition, health and WASH."

Saudi Arabia launches forum for confronting Houthi terrorism

The authorities in Saudi Arabia have created a forum for advocates and scholars from Yemen which it hopes will work to counter terrorism in the country, Arab News reported on Jan. 5th. Minister of Islamic Affairs Sheikh Abdullatif Al-Asheikh affirmed the support of his country for the initiative, acknowledging that scholars play an important role in the country.

UN urges Yemen govt to allow new equipment for Sanaa airport

The UN has called on Yemen's internationally recognised government to permit new comms equipment to be installed at the Houthi held airport in Sana'a. Flights in to the airport have been largely stopped by a coalition blockade, but aid flights are exempt, the New Arab reported on Jan. 1st. The Saudi coalition has accused Houthi rebels of using the airport as a base for missile and drone launches, and bombed it in December.

For further information, please [click here](#).

UK Security News

New rules came into force on Jan. 4th, which allow the UK government to intervene in the sale of UK companies, if it believes they could harm the UK's national security. The National Security and Investment (NSI) Act – is the biggest shake-up of the UK's national security regime for 20 years, the government said.

Covid lockdowns may have increased UK terrorism threat, says security minister

UK Security Minister, Damian Hinds, has expressed concern that the UK terror threat may have been worsened by lockdowns aimed at preventing the spread of Covid. Hinds told the Daily Telegraph that "Clearly, logically, when you have more people who are spending more time in their bedrooms at their computer ... you are going to get a growth in that tiny proportion of people for whom that is a dark journey." Counter Terrorism Policing said in December that they had disrupted seven 'late stage' terror attacks since the beginning of the pandemic in the UK. Hinds also said that it was wrong to believe that there had only been a rise in Islamic terrorism, with extreme rightwing terrorism also a posing a serious threat.

Almost 100 terror offenders being considered for release from British prisons

The UK's Parole Board is reviewing the status of 92 terror offenders who are being considered for release, The Independent reported. There are obvious concerns surrounding the process, following high profile terror attacks in the UK by released prisoners who were supposed to have been under probation monitoring, including the incidents in Fishmongers' Hall and Streatham in London. There are currently 218 people in UK prisons for terror-related offences, including 71 per cent who are categorised as having extreme Islamist views, and 22 per cent who are said to be extreme right wing terrorists. The figure includes those who have been returned to prison for breaching licencing conditions.

British terrorists should face Treason law for UK attacks

MP Tom Tugendhat MBE, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, has said that he feels a new UK Treason Law is needed in order to provide the correct response to those who not only commit acts of terror against the UK, but also a "genuine

betrayal" of the UK, it was reported. He cited the horrific murder of MP, David Amess, at his constituency office as an example of why the new law was required.

London News

Two police officers injured using Taser on motorcyclist in violent traffic stop in Croydon

The Evening Standard reported on Jan. 5th that two police officers had been injured after a motorcyclist became violent during a traffic stop in Croydon. The man became violent and officers deployed their Taser. A knife was found at the scene, and one officer was treated for concussion, while another suffered a fracture during the incident.

Man knifed to death on west London high street

London Murder Squad detectives are investigating the first killing of 2022, Evening Standard reported on Jan. 4th. A man in his 40s was reportedly stabbed to death in the early hours of Tuesday, in West Drayton. The incident took place close to the scene of another stabbing on Dec. 30th.

Sadiq Khan to invest almost £50m additional funding to reduce crime across London

A new package to tackle crime in London was unveiled by Mayor, Sadiq Khan, at the end of December. The London Crime Prevention Fund will see almost £50 million distributed between London's boroughs over the next three years. Projects will include mentoring and interventions for those at risk from violence, the Evening Standard reported.

For further information, please [click here](#).

Global Security News

France has opened a terror investigation after one of its citizens was injured by an explosion which hit his car during the Dakar 2022 race. Euronews reported on Jan. 5th that the investigation is ongoing for “attempted murder in relation to a terrorist undertaking”.

South Africa parliament fire suspect had explosives - prosecutor

A man who allegedly set fire to South Africa’s parliament was caught with explosives, prosecutors say. Zandile Christmas Mafe is facing five charges - including two counts of arson - following the blaze which began tearing its way through the historic Cape Town building on Sunday. The 49-year-old has denied all charges, and his lawyer has said he is a victim of mistaken identity. Mr Mafe is the only person arrested in connection with the fire. The blaze, which totally destroyed the National Assembly, or lower chamber, but injured no one, has shocked South Africa, and the court was packed ahead of Mr Mafe’s appearance on Tuesday 4th, BBC News reported.

Nigerian gang leader releases kidnap victims - reports

The leader of a notorious armed gang in Zamfara state, in northern Nigeria, is reported to have released more than 50 people who had recently been kidnapped. Eyewitnesses saw buses full of hostages heading to the state capital, Gusau. Officials have not said why the group’s leader, Bello Turji, decided to release dozens of people. It appears to be part of an effort to persuade the state government to grant him amnesty, local residents say, BBC News reported on Jan. 4th.

Haiti PM Ariel Henry survived assassination attempt - officials

Gunmen tried to kill Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry during an event on Saturday to mark the anniversary of the country’s independence, officials say. The incident happened as Mr Henry took part in the ceremony at a church in the northern city of Gonaïves. Video posted online showed the prime minister and his entourage scrambling toward their cars amid intense gunfire. The security situation has deteriorated significantly since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse last July.

90% of terrorists operating in Afghanistan targeting CPEC projects: Pak’s counter-terrorism wing chief

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) CTD Javed Iqbal Wazir, of Pakistan’s counter-terror department, has claimed that 90 per cent of terrorists operating in Afghanistan are targetting China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, WION reported on Dec. 30th.

Industry and SIA News

Security Industry Association Announces Women in Security Forum Power 100

The Security Industry Association has now opened nominations for its SIA Women in Security Forum Power 100. The forum is intended to honour women in the security industry who work as role models and advance diversity, inclusion and leadership in the security industry.

BSIA launches first division of British Security Awards 2022

Due to take place in June this year, the British Security Awards 2022 is now running regional rounds in its security personnel categories. The awards will celebrate the achievements of security officers and teams throughout the UK and the first phase is identifying regional finalists in five security personnel categories, including Best Newcomer, Best Team, Security Manager of the Year and Service to the Customer. Regional winners will be announced in April and the industry overall will be recognised in 18 categories, Ifsecglobal reported.

For further information, [please click here.](#)



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