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Indian Ocean Watch

A Monthly Newsletter on the Indian Ocean Region



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This Newsletter tracks developments in the following countries of the Indian Ocean region

Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

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EDITOR'S NOTE

There have been several developments in the security, economic and environmental fields recently. India handed over four Advanced Light Helicopters to Maldives. Sri Lanka, Maldives and India held a joint coast guards exercise. The developments indicate that both Kenya and Seychelles are cracking down and prosecuting sea pirates in their own capacities with the cooperation of other nations. In the meanwhile, two Chinese Navy ships visited Dar es Salaam.

A Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) delegation was in Tanzania to explore opportunities for the promotion of trade and industrial cooperation. Airtel, an Indian telecom company, has been recognised and awarded as the 'African Operator' of the year 2013. A high level cooperation council has been established between Iran and Turkey. An ambitious deep sea pipeline between Iran and India has also been proposed.

On the environmental front, lethal eruptions have been reported in Indonesia's Mount Sinabung volcano. India's National Institute of Oceanography received its first research vessel. The stakeholders in the Nairobi Convention met and discussed on 'Green Economy in a Blue World for the Western Indian Ocean'.

We hope that our readers find this issue useful.

Ruchita Beri

Editor

MARITIME SECURITY

Waters around the Indian subcontinent - third dangerous

International Chamber of Commerce's International Maritime Bureau (London) statistics show how the waters around the Indian sub-continent are the third most dangerous in the world. The bureau has reported 199 pirate attacks on vessels in the sub-continent's waters in the period of 2006-2012. It warned mariners to be extra cautious when transiting from Southeast Asia and the sub-continent (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malacca Straits, Singapore Straits and South China Sea), Africa and Red Sea (Africa, Gulf of Aden/Red Sea, Somalia, Ivory Coast, Guinea, The Congo and Egypt), South and Central America and the Caribbean waters (Ecuador) and Rest of the World (Gulf of Oman). The bureau's 2012 report stated that 2,386 ships from over 97 countries in the merchant shipping business were attacked between the periods of 2006-2012. The seas and oceans around Africa top the chart with 1,228 cases, and Indian waters come third after Southeast Asian waters.¹

India floats domestic tender to construct four landing platform docks

The Indian Navy has floated a US\$ 2.6 billion domestic tender for construction of four landing platform docks (LPDs) and bids were sent to domestic shipyards, Larsen & Toubro (L&T), Pipavav Defence and Offshore Engineering, and ABG Shipyard. A senior Navy planner said that the service will select a winning

design based on the low bidder. State-owned Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. (HSL) then will build two LPDs based on that design and the winning company will build two. This will be India's first attempt to build 20,000-ton vessels. To build the LPDs in India, Larsen & Toubro has tied up with Navantia of Spain, while Pipavav Defence has teamed with France's DCNS and ABG Shipyard has partnered with Alion of the US.²

India hands over four advanced light helicopters to Maldives

The Indian Navy on December 14, 2013 handed over an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) built by Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL) to Maldives, marking a new chapter in defence ties between the two Indian Ocean neighbours. Mohamed Nazim, defence minister of Maldives unveiled "aircraft frame marking" endorsing the formal hand over of the ALH. Indian Navy personnel will continue to man the ALH, which will be used for search and rescue operations as well as for surveillance in the exclusive economic zone of Maldives.³

Indian Navy is expected to send warship for global fleet review in China

China has invited the Indian Navy to take part in an international fleet review being staged by it in waters off Qingdao in the Shandong province next year. The invite comes at a time when the Chinese Navy is taking steady strides to expand in the Indian Ocean Region.

¹ "Indian waters third worst for pirate attacks", *The Times of India*, December 23, 2013, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-12-23/india/45508998_1_international-maritime-bureau-indian-waters-somali-pirate-attacks

² "India to construct 4 LPD's", *Defence News*, December 12, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131212/DEFREG03/312120012/India-Construct-4-LPDs>

³ "New chapter in India-Maldives defence ties", *The Times of India*, December 15, 2013, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-12-15/india/45215795_1_mndf-mohamed-nazim-maldives

The Indian Navy is expected to send some of its frontline warships for the review being held from April 21-24, 2014, even as New Delhi closely monitors the progress made by China to have a credible sea-based deterrence.⁴

Joint coast guard exercise by Sri Lanka, India and Maldives

Officers of Sri Lanka Coast Guard along with Coast Guard officers of India and Maldives took part in the Trilateral Tabletop Exercise (TTEX) 2013 on December 18, 2013 in the Eastern port city of Trincomalee. Delivering the keynote address as the Chief Guest of the occasion, Director General of Sri Lanka Coast Guard Rear Admiral Ravindra C Wijegunaratne highlighted the importance of trilateral response to major issues such as maritime search and rescue (SAR), oil spill and maritime piracy. Officers of Sri Lanka Army and Air Force also participated in the exercise as observers.⁵

164 sea pirates prosecuted in Kenya since 2006

Since the establishment of the Anti-Piracy Unit in Kenya in 2006, the efforts of the Kenyan Government have been on the upper hand against the pirates in the Indian Ocean. International naval forces operating in the Indian Ocean in combination with efforts to increase security in Somalia have helped decrease the numbers of incidents of piracy; and a total of 164 pirates have been prosecuted by Kenya's Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) since the establishment of the Anti-

Piracy Unit.⁶

Maritime Security cooperation between US and Kenya

U.S. Ambassador to Kenya attended the Kenyan Navy's Special Boat Unit closing ceremony on October 24, 2013 and participated in the dedication ceremony of the Kenyan Special Boat Unit Maintenance facility. He also toured the boat maintenance facility, which was donated by the United States to the Kenyan Navy to assist in maritime security operations. Both the countries are looking for further cooperation in security and counterterrorism. The US training and infrastructure improvement programmes account for more than US\$20 million for building the capabilities of the Kenyan Navy. The US supports Kenya as a regional leader in securing the nearby maritime zone.⁷

The Kenyan seafarers' union calls for more safety at Mombasa port

Accidents have increased at the Mombasa port and container terminals in Kenya, claims the Seafarers Union of Kenya. These are happening at an average rate of 50 accidents per day. The Union has called for a review of the health and safety services at the port. It demands that the Kenyan Port Authority's (KPA) safety department should work closely with the Operations Department and the Commercial Department. The shipping companies are not following the section 421 of the merchant shipping Act of 2009 which calls upon the Kenya Maritime Authority to take appropriate action

⁴ "China invites Indian Navy for global fleet review", *Hindustan Times*, December 15, 2013, at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/china-invites-indian-navy-for-global-fleet-review/article1-1162740.aspx#sthash.MRuSXv5g.dpuf>

⁵ "Sri Lanka, India and Maldives take part in trilateral maritime exercise", *Colombo Page*, December 19, 2013, at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_13B/Dec19_1387436260CH.php

⁶ "Kenya prosecuted 164 pirates since 2006", *Sabahi*, December 10, 2013, at http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/12/11/newsbrief-06

⁷ "U.S. and Kenya cooperate on maritime security", *Embassy of the US in Nairobi*, December 13, 2013, at http://nairobi.usembassy.gov/pr_20132511.html

against rogue ships operating at the Mombasa port. The accidents are the results of rogue ship contractors' working practices and the lack of training for their day-workers who are inexperienced and untrained.⁸

Transfer of nine suspected pirates to Seychelles

Seychelles has accepted to prosecute the suspected Somali pirates captured by the Royal Danish Navy during the ATLANTA Operations against piracy. They were apprehended by the Danish Navy when they attacked M/V TORM KANSAS. A whaler, suspected for being used as the mother ship has been destroyed and a skiff being used in the attack has been captured during the operation. The suspected pirates have been handed over to the Seychelles authority together with their skiff.⁹

Chinese Navy ships visit Dar

Two giant Chinese Navy ships docked at the Dar es Salaam Port for a four-day visit on December 29, 2013. The visit aimed at sharing of cultural and naval experiences. Tanzania became the first country to be visited by the group of ships after they completed their mission in the Gulf of Aden. The Tanzanian Acting Navy Commander Rogastian Shaaban said that the visit will help them learn a number of things from their Chinese counterparts. The visiting group was composed of LPD Jing Gangshan (hull number 999), FFG (hull number 572) and supply ship Tai Hu (hull number 889) with three helicopters and 80 Marine Corps members.¹⁰

⁸ "Seafarers call for increased safety at port", *The Star*, December 31, 2013, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-148739/seafarers-call-increased-safety-port>

⁹ "Seychelles accepts transfer of nine suspected pirates for trial", *Seychelles Nation*, December 4, 2013, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=239994>

¹⁰ "Two giant Chinese Navy ships in Dar", *Daily News Online*, December 30, 2013, at <http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/26408-two-giant-chinese-navy-ships-in-dar>

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Bilateral talks held between Comoros and Oman

Comoros and Oman held bilateral talks at the headquarters of the Council of Ministers in Muscat. The Omani delegation was led by H H Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud al Sayyid, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, while the Comoros side was led by Dr. Ikilou Dhoinine, the President of Comoros. A number of issues of mutual interest were discussed in the meeting. President Dhoinine commended the achievements made by Oman in the domestic and global levels. Sayyid Fahd reviewed the cooperation between the two countries. He urged them to focus on enhancing bilateral ties through effective implementation of existing mechanisms.¹¹

Confederation of Indian Industries delegation in Tanzania

A Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) delegation was in Tanzania to explore opportunities for the promotion of trade and industrial co-operation. There are indications that the trade between the two countries may be doubled in a few years from the current approximate US\$ 1.4 billion. The CII, Andhra Pradesh, organised the delegation as a part of a business tour to three African countries - Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia, from December 8-18. India has been involved in various projects in Tanzania in industry, road construction, bridges, natural gas, oil exploration and mining. The country wants cooperation with India in manufacturing, tourism, hotel-hospitality and pharmaceutical industries. Tanzania also sees India with

a huge population as a market for its products.¹²

Airtel is the 'African Operator' of 2013

At the Eighth CommsMEA Awards in Dubai, Bharti Airtel, with operations in 20 countries across South Asia and Africa, has been recognised as the African Operator of the Year 2013. The award is given for excellence within telecom sector for operations in the Middle East and Africa. Airtel has consolidated its position as the best African Operator by beating serious contenders like MTN Group, Vodacom and Nedjma. Airtel Africa has the largest 3G and Mobile Commerce country footprint in sub Saharan Africa. The company now provides 3G services in 14 African countries and Airtel Money services in 17 countries of the continent. Airtel Money is poised to become Africa's largest financial services provider.¹³

Bilateral ties between Indonesia and Australia hurt after allegations of spying

Indonesia's President Yudhoyono said that ties with Australia had been damaged by reports that Australian government spied on his phone calls. The allegations came from one of the documents leaked by Edward Snowden and it revealed that Australian spy agencies had named the President, the First lady, the vice-president and other senior ministers as targets for phone monitoring. Australian PM Tony Abbot expressed regret but refused to apologise for what he termed as reasonable intelligence gathering operations. Meanwhile, Indonesia said that it would review its bilateral cooperation agenda with Australia. It recalled its

¹¹ "Sayyid Fahd leads Omani side in talks with Comoros delegation", *Muscat Daily*, December 17, 2013, at <http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Oman/Sayyid-Fahd-leads-Omani-side-in-talks-with-Comoros-delegation-2sc0>

¹² "It's high time Dar-India ties reached new levels", *Daily News Online*, December 17, 2013, at <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/dailynews/25939-it-s-high-time-dar-india-ties-reached-new-levels>

¹³ "Airtel wins African Operator of the Year 2013 award", *Seychelles Nation*, December 16, 2013, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=240114>

ambassador and summoned the Australian ambassador for questioning. Currently, Australia and Indonesia are key allies and trading partners.¹⁴

High level cooperation council established between Turkey and Iran

The Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu met his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif in Istanbul to discuss the establishment of a high level cooperation council to improve bilateral economic relations. Davutoglu said that the two countries aimed at increasing bilateral trade by US\$30 billion and raising it to US\$50 billion by 2015. Javad Zarif said that the two countries should work for a boost to energy, trade and transportation fields. The meeting followed a statement by the Turkish Ambassador to Tehran Umit Yardim, on December 29, saying that both the countries have set a long term target of US\$100 billion for annual bilateral trade.¹⁵

Deep sea pipeline proposed between Iran and India

Iran plans to export natural gas to India along a deep sea route, following the signing of the Geneva nuclear accord that could help relax sanctions against it. According to Ali Amirani, Director of Marketing at the National Iranian Gas Exports Company (NIGEC), negotiations were held with three Indian companies for purchase of gas from Iran and general agreements were reached. India's South Asia Gas Enterprise Pvt. Ltd. (SAGE) conducted a feasibility test for the project and estimated the cost of building the pipeline at US\$4-

5 billion. Once operational, the pipeline is expected to channel 31 million cubic meters of gas per day.¹⁶

Kenya-Sri Lanka agree to establish a Joint Commission for Cooperation

The Sri Lankan president visited Kenya during the celebrations to mark the 50 years of Kenyan independence. They signed an agreement establishing the Kenya-Sri Lanka Joint Commission for Cooperation. The commission will be responsible for advancing bilateral ties between the two countries. Both the countries will work together to improve security on sea lanes within the Indian Ocean to improve shipping and port connectivity that will improve the bilateral trade ties. Kenya wants to cooperate with Sri Lanka in the development of agriculture, minerals processing, hospitality, textiles development and financial services. The two presidents are willing to start talks for agreement in investment promotion and protection and the avoidance of double taxation.¹⁷

Kenya Ferry launches special tourist passes

Numerous complaints about congestion and delay at the Likoni Crossway channel have compelled the Kenya Ferry Services (KFS) to launch priority passes for tourist groups. A statement by the KFS says that the tour operators using a scooter will pay Sh16,800 every three months for the priority service. The saloon cars and the tourist Landrovers would be paying Sh36,100 and Sh43,200 for the same time period. These charges also vary for the tour buses according to their carrying capacities.¹⁸

¹⁴ "Indonesia leader says Australia spying damaged ties", *BBC News*, November 19, 2013 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-24986093>

¹⁵ "Tehran, Ankara set to establish high level economic cooperation council", *Tehran Times*, January 6, 2013, at <http://tehrantimes.com/economy-and-business/113225-tehran-ankara-set-to-establish-high-level-economic-cooperation-council>

¹⁶ "Iran backs deep-sea gasline to India", *The Hindu*, December 17, 2013, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/iran-backs-deepsea-gas-pipeline-to-india/article5466999.ece>

¹⁷ "Kenya, Sri Lanka to improve trade ties", *The Star*, December 16, 2013, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-147458/kenya-sri-lanka-improve-trade-ties>

¹⁸ "Ferry firm to improve service for tourists", *The Star*, December 31, 2013, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-149227/ferry-firm-improve-service-tourists>

Kenya wishes to learn from the Tanzanian experience in gems trade

Kenya wants to learn from Tanzania for maximum benefits from small scale mining and gem extraction. Prof. Christine Onyango, the Deputy Principal of Taita Taveta University College, said that they want to know how to create business from mines and attract investors in the sector without affecting local communities. He noted that Tanzania has long experience in small scale mining and they need to learn to put proper structures in place. Kenya's Coast Region has a huge potential in industrial, gemstone and metallic minerals which are mainly extracted by small scale miners. Prof. Onyango observed that most of the gems from the area end up in the Tanzanian market which further exports them. This happens because the dealers in the country are better connected and experienced.¹⁹

Mozambique wants to renegotiate agreement on fishing with the EU

The government of Mozambique wants to renegotiate its fishing agreement, particularly about tuna fishing, with the European Union. Mozambique plans to ensure that the larger part of tuna fishing in its Exclusive Economic Zone should come to the Mozambican vessels. The country plans to develop a national fleet under the Strategic Plan for the Development of the Tuna Fishery (PEDPA) so that the activity comes to be dominated by Mozambicans in the next 15 years. The current agreement with the EU on fishing expires in 2014.²⁰

Norway aids Mozambican energy, fisheries and statistics projects

Mozambique and Norway have signed an agreement

in which Norway will support Mozambican fisheries for the period 2013-2017. Norway has been supporting the country in fisheries for the past 30 years. The support is focused on development and management of small scale fishing and aquaculture to improve food security, nutrition, and sustainable use of aquatic resources. The Norwegian government will provide US\$24.2 million out of the total estimated cost of US\$29 million. Both the countries have also signed agreements on institutional cooperation on energy matters intended to support sustainable management of energy resources. Norway is supporting rural electrification as well as dam and river projects to produce electricity. It has also agreed to help implement the Strategic Plan for the Mozambican National Statistics System.²¹

Seychelles and Sri Lanka share their economic experience for a prosperous future

Aith Nivard Cabraal, The governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, feels that Seychelles is on a good economic track indicating a great future. He pointed out the steps taken by Seychelles to double its GDP by 2017 through financial services industry and the resulting growth of other economic sectors. Mr. Cabraal also explained how his country diversified its economy to revive and strengthen its financial sector after decades of civil war. The governor of the Central Bank of Seychelles, Caroline Abel, stated that partnerships between small Islands will help share experiences and learn from each other.²²

Record number of air service accords by Seychelles in 2013

A record number of air services accords have been concluded by Seychelles in the sixth ICAO Air Services Conference (ICAN held in Durban from December

¹⁹ "Kenya to learn from Tanzania on gem trade", *Daily News Online*, December 9, 2013, at <http://www.touch.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/25613-kenya-to-learn-from-dar-in-gem-trade>

²⁰ "Mozambique: EU Fishing Agreement to be renegotiated", *All Africa*, December 10, 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201312110103.html>

²¹ "Mozambique: Norwegian aid in energy, fisheries and statistics", *All Africa*, December 19, 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201312201177.html>

²² "Seychelles economy on track for a great future", *Seychelles Nation*, December 2, 2013, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=239959>

9-13. This International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAN) conference is an annual forum for its 191 member states to meet, negotiate and conclude air services agreements within a short time. Seychelles had discussions with 13 countries and concluded 11 air services agreements during the conference while two more agreements are yet to be signed. According to the Seychelles government, these agreements set the stage for more air links to be established with important countries in Europe, middle East, Africa and Asia. A record 73 countries and 406 delegates participated in the conference from all over the world. More than 500 air agreements were initiated or concluded. Seychelles concluded a total of 15 agreements in the year 2013.²³

Road development deal signed between Zimbabwe and South African NEO Capital

NEO Capital, a South African company, has signed a deal with the Harare City Council whereby it will help in rehabilitating and maintaining roads in the Zimbabwean capital. The deal worth US\$400 million will lead to a broader infrastructure plan which will include mass light rail, bus and taxi transport systems. NEO Capital is expected to raise funding for the project against a 30 year concession at repayment of US\$15 million per year. This means the city council will eventually pay back US\$450 million, translating to a US\$50 million return to NEO Capital. The repayment has been guaranteed by the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development, Zimbabwe.²⁴

Sri Lanka offers big fishing deals to Asian countries

The Government of Sri Lanka is offering its fisheries harbours to foreign vessels from Asian countries in a

fresh bid to prevent European countries from exploiting fishing resources in the Indian Ocean. Under the plan, fishing vessels from China, Dubai, Japan, Thailand and Vietnam will be invited to engage in fishing in the international waters in the Indian Ocean and export their products via the fisheries harbours in Sri Lanka while Sri Lanka will benefit by levying port charges and export taxes, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Minister of Sri Lanka Rajitha Senarathne said. She said that at present 48 per cent of the fishing resources in the Indian Ocean was exploited by non-Asian countries, mainly European Union member countries. She also told that these fishing vessels were known to net about 900 tons of fish and were well equipped while the Sri Lanka fishing vessels had a capacity to net only about 50 tons.²⁵

UAE's Zayed Port sees record maiden calls

Abu Dhabi Ports Company (ADPC), the master developer of ports and industrial zones, is welcoming a record number of maiden calls at Zayed Port this cruise season. The number of cruise liners visiting Abu Dhabi for the first time has doubled compared to the last season, making it a total of ten scheduled debut visits until April 2014. The cruise tourists coming to Abu Dhabi are primarily from Germany, France, Italy and Great Britain. Besides Emirates Palace and Shaikh Zayed Grand Mosque, places such as Ferrari World, Yas Waterworld and the UNESCO World Heritage sites in the heartland of Al Ain are the most popular destinations.²⁶

²³ "Seychelles signs record number of air service accords in 2013", *Seychelles Nation*, December 20, 2013, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=240159>

²⁴ "SA firm in \$400 m Harare roads deal", *fin24*, December 27, 2013 at <http://www.fin24.com/Companies/Industrial/SA-firm-in-400m-Harare-roads-deal-20131227> .Also see, "US \$400m city roads deal in the pipeline", *The Herald*, December 26, 2013, at <http://www.herald.co.zw/us400m-city-roads-deal-in-the-pipeline/>

²⁵ "Big fishing deals with Asian countries", *The Sunday Times (Sri Lanka)*, December 15, 2013, at <http://www.sundaytimes.lk/131215/news/big-fishing-deals-with-asian-countries-76831.html>

²⁶ "Abu Dhabi Zayed Port sees record maiden calls", *Gulf News*, December 27, 2013, at <http://gulfnews.com/business/general/abu-dhabi-zayed-port-sees-record-maiden-calls-1.1271380>

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS/ DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Research ship for India's National Institute of Oceanography

For the first time in its 48-year existence, the Dona Paula-based National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) has acquired a brand-new research ship - R V Sindhu Sadhana. Built by a private shipyard in Surat, Sindhu Sadhana is also the first research vessel to be built entirely in India. It will leave for a shipyard in Kochi for a few 'additional fittings', after which it will take its first experimental cruise in the Bay of Bengal in February, said NIO director S W A Naqvi on December 28, 2013. NIO aims to have the ship sailing for at least 300 days in a year. The ship's plaque was handed over by Rishi Agarwal, chairman of ABG shipyard, to Samir K Brahmachari, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) at a 'handing over ceremony' held on the ship's deck at the Mormagao Port Trust (MPT), Vasco.²⁷

Fresh eruptions in Indonesia's Mount Sinabung

Mt. Sinabung, located on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia, has let out a series of fresh eruptions, shooting lava and gas up to 7,000m in the air. Around 19,000 people were forced to flee their homes even as officials enforced a 5 km danger zone around the volcano's crater. The National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman, Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said that the number of displaced people was set to rise as Mt. Sinabung had been put on the highest alert level and police and soldiers were patrolling the danger zone to evacuate people.²⁸

'Green Economy' discussed in the Nairobi Convention meet

Parties and stakeholders to the Nairobi Convention, environment experts, and representatives of different UN environment agencies discussed the 'Green Economy in a Blue World for the Western Indian Ocean' region. The Convention provides a mechanism for regional cooperation, coordination and collaborative actions in the Eastern and Southern African region, the Western Indian Ocean. The mechanism helps harness resources and expertise from a wide range of stakeholders and interest groups in solution of interlinked problems of the coastal and marine environment including critical national and trans-boundary issues. The Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region was signed in 1985 and came into force in 1996. It was amended and adopted in April, 2010. The objective of the deliberations by the Contracting Parties - Comoros, France Reunion, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania and the Republic of South Africa – was to discuss at length the concept of Green Economy in a Blue World and its application at the national level. It intended to find policies and strategies towards green economy that best suits the needs of coastal states in the Western Indian Ocean region.²⁹

World Bank aids for climate resilient roads in Mozambique

The World Bank has approved US\$55.15 million to rehabilitate nationally important roads and bridges in

²⁷ "National Institute of Oceanography acquires new research ship", *The Times of India*, December 29, 2013, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-12-29/goa/45674492_1_indian-ocean-research-ship-industrial-research

²⁸ "Indonesia volcano Mt. Sinabung in fresh eruptions" *BBC News*, December 31, 2013, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-25548526>

²⁹ "Western Indian Ocean states discuss 'Green Economy'", *Seychelles Nation*, December 13, 2013, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=240082>

Mozambique's Gaza province. Access to markets, health clinics and other services for the people who were rendered devastated by floods is to be restored with this aid which will develop infrastructure to ensure that rural roads are climate resilient. The Government of Mozambique has made climate resilient road standards a priority in its National Climate Change Strategy. The funds provide additional financing to Mozambique's Roads & Bridges Management and Maintenance Project Phase 2 (RBMMP2), designed to improve the conditions of roads and bridges. It also supports Mozambique's Integrated Road Sector Program 2012-15, (Programa Integrado do Sector de Estradas, or PRISE). The additional financing will support emergency works or spot interventions throughout the Gaza province as well as a series of more complex and intensive road works to help reduce future flood damage in the area.³⁰

Seychelles is introduced with an environment-friendly ultra anchor

Seychelles introduces new environment-friendly anchor to save its coral reef. Sea, wide range of fish and coral reefs benefit not only locals but the tourism industry of Seychelles as well. To keep a wide range of fish, coral reefs must be in good conditions and protected. The country has already experienced crisis in the past in the form of declining fish harvest due to dying coral reef. Anchors are a big cause of dying corals. Therefore, the ULTRAnchor has been introduced in Seychelles in a presentation held at the Eden Plaza on Eden Island. The anchor is the strongest ever made. Hence, it has a life time guarantee, once purchased. It represents a new way of anchoring that is gentle to the environment.

The design of the anchor prevents drift if the wind changes direction. The performance of the anchor has been approved by several European insurance companies that are giving special insurance deals to boats equipped with the anchor.³¹

US\$100 million loss to Indian Ocean Nations due to marine pollution

Speaking at a session on 'Harmful Algal Blooms of the Indian Seas' in a workshop on Fisheries Management at the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS), N R Menon, School of Marine Sciences, Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) and Co-Chairman of Nansen Environmental Research Centre India said that the spread of harmful algal blooms and marine pollution are a serious threat to the fishery resources of the Indian Ocean RIM countries. The expansion of these algal blooms in the past 25 years is responsible for losses to the tune of US\$100 million a year in the region. He added that loss of production in fisheries, severe reduction in local or regional tourism, public illness and decline in fisheries-related business are the major economic consequences of harmful algal blooms. The possible reasons for the increase in algal blooms, he pointed out, are the natural processes such as circulation, upwelling and river flow and anthropogenic loadings leading to eutrophication, wind, weather and tidal or other hydrographic conditions related to the initiation of near shore blooms. Transport of seed population to the coastal waters and dumping of wastages into sea are other major causes, he said. Precautions should be taken while conducting cage culture by avoiding coastal areas where harmful algal blooms occur.³²

³⁰ "Mozambique: World Bank funds climate resilient road works in Mozambique", *All Africa*, December 13, 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201312171161.html>

³¹ "New environment-friendly anchor introduced in Seychelles", *Seychelles Nation*, December 30, 2013, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=240252>

³² "Indian Ocean nations face \$100m loss due to marine pollution", *The Hindu Business Line*, December 11, 2013, at <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/agri-biz/indian-ocean-nations-face-100m-loss-due-to-marine-pollution/article5448448.ece>

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This newsletter, compiled by the IDSA covers the recent developments in the fields of maritime security, economic cooperation and environmental concerns/ disaster risk management in the various countries of the Indian Ocean region.



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