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Indian Ocean Watch

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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

The month of April in the Indian Ocean saw several important developments. In the maritime security aspect, the second 2+2 dialogue between Australia and Indonesia took place to boost their defence ties. The Foreign Ministry of Bangladesh clarified that the Bangladesh-US cooperation for maritime security aims for regional security. India, China and Pakistan joined in a multilateral naval exercise. An Indian Coast Guard station was set up in the Sundarbans of West Bengal, India. Pirates raided an oil tanker in the Malacca Strait, robbed oil and kidnapped 3 Indonesians. Iran announced that the indigenously produced Mowdgh-class destroyers will soon join its naval fleet. International Maritime Bureau reported piracy at its lowest levels. A patrol vessel donated by China reached in Seychelles recently.

In the realm of economic activities and cooperation, the Bangladesh Government and the IMO signed MoU for cooperation in ship recycling. Indonesia tourism registered highest growth among G20 countries. Mauritius urged for cross-border investment in the SADC. The Mozambique Government announced that the new Nacala Port and railway link will be completed by December, 2014. South Africa and Malaysia signed a Science and technology cooperation agreement. China revealed that the 'Maritime Silk Road' would focus on infrastructure in the littoral countries of the region. Moreover, Tanzania reported a three-fold increase in the arrival of Chinese tourists.

On the environmental and disaster risk management front, Bangladesh asked for support to make it a low-emission economy. Reports suggest that an El Nino may lead to rainfall deficit in India this monsoon. Countries in the region have launched a collaborative Indian Ocean Data Rescue Initiative. Kenya established a National Disaster Management Unit. Aerial search for missing Malaysian Airlines ended while the expanded Ocean floor search was decided to be continued.

Hope the readers will find this issue useful.

Ruchita Beri

Editor

MARITIME SECURITY

Australian Navy seizes over a tonne of heroin near Kenyan coast, no link with Kenya found

More than a tonne of heroin on a sailing boat near the coast of Africa was seized by the Australian Navy patrolling the coast. The estimated value of the seized heroin is around US\$290 million. The drug was seized by the crew of HMAS Darwin as a part of an international operation against drug smuggling. The heroin was found packed in cement bags. Such shipments and sale of smuggled drugs often end up funding terrorist organisations including Al-Qaeda. The seizure is a part of the effort in denting the terror funding network. HMAS Darwin is currently deployed on Operation Slipper as a part of the Australian contribution to the international campaign against smuggling, terrorism and piracy in the Middle East.¹ The Australian government also clarified later that it has found no information linking Kenya to this seizure of heroin on its coast.²

The second 2+2 dialogue between Australia and Indonesia boost defence ties

Reaffirming the good and comprehensive strategic cooperation between Indonesia and Australia particularly in the defence and military sectors, the second annual “2+2” dialogue was held between the defence and foreign ministers of the two countries on April 2, 2014. Among other things, views were exchanged on regional as well as global issues like Southeast Asia and the South China Sea. A range of topics like peacekeeping operations, maritime joint patrols, disaster relief, army and navy joint operations, counter-terrorism, and tackling people involved in

smuggling and human trafficking were discussed at the meeting. Australia also offered to sell Lockheed Martin C-130H Hercules transport aircraft at a bargain price, less than the six previously reported by the Indonesian Military (TNI). The two sides also discussed on the implementation of the Lombok Treaty that is effective from February 2008. The treaty provides for an intensified bilateral cooperation across all areas of defence, law enforcement, counter-terrorism, maritime security and humanitarian and disaster relief. Under the bilateral Defence Cooperation Program, Australia also offered cooperation in officer and English language training which will take about 160 Indonesian military personnel to Australia in 2014.³

Bangladesh-US cooperation for maritime security aims for regional security

The third US-Bangladesh security dialogue began at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) on April 22, 2014. The dialogue primarily discussed bilateral security issues including counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, law enforcement, disaster risk management, non-proliferation, maritime security, joint military exercises and exchanges. During the discussions, the Bangladesh foreign ministry clarified that maritime and border security cooperation with the United States is something more than anti-piracy cooperation. It is actually meant for the security of the region as there is no piracy on the Bay of Bengal coastline. Bangladesh has a huge open sea but not enough capabilities to protect the area. The US is willing to cooperate with the country in protecting this area. Security in the Bay of Bengal is also vital to the US to

¹ “Australian Navy seizes \$290 million of heroin from boat off Kenyan coast”, *ABC News*, April 26, 2014, at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-04-25/australian-navy-seize-290-million-of-heroin-from-boat-off-kenya/5412108>

² “Australia says it has no evidence to link Kenya to seized drugs”, *Coastweek*, April 28, 2014 at <http://www.coastweek.com/3717-latest-news-Australia-government-assures-it-has-no-evidence-to-link-Kenya-to-seized-drugs.htm>

³ “Australia Indonesia boost security, defence ties”, *The Jakarta Post*, April 4, 2014, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2013/04/04/australia-indonesia-boost-security-defense-ties.html>

implement President Obama's objective to intensify US role in the Asia-Pacific.⁴

US sees no problem in Bangladesh joining naval exercise with China

Bangladesh's sovereign rights are to be respected and the US does not feel any problem with the country having naval exercise with China; clarified Tom Kelly, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the US Political-Military Affairs Bureau. Bangladesh's relationship with China was not an issue of discussion in the security dialogue. The fact is that US also carries out wide-range of military-to-military engagement with China. He highlighted that Bangladesh continues to participate in a number of military exercises with the US as well. The clarification was in the context of the departure of BNS Abu Bakar, a Bangladesh navy frigate, to the Chinese Qingdao port to take part in a naval exercise. However, Bimalendu Guha, a former Indian navy deputy chief has said that this kind of maritime cooperation with the countries around China is Beijing's attempt to counter "rival influence" in the region. This is to note that Japan has not been invited and the US, despite invitation, has not sent any of its ships for the same exercise.⁵

India, China and Pakistan join in a multilateral naval exercise

During the celebration of the 65th anniversary of the founding of Chinese Navy, Indian, Chinese and Pakistani naval ships participated in a joint multilateral exercise

organised during the event. INS Shivalik, an indigenously built Indian stealth frigate, also participated, along with ships from other countries, in the International Fleet Review organised by the People's Liberation Army Navy at the Qingdao port on April 23 and 24. The Indian naval ship took part in the drills along with 18 ships, seven helicopters and Marine Corps. The event was codenamed as 'Maritime Cooperation 2014'. The presence of INS Shivalik in the event is seen as a friendly gesture of mutual exchanges and bilateral defence cooperation between India and China. The participant countries declared 2014 as the "Year of Friendly Exchanges".⁶ Ships from six other countries - Bangladesh, Pakistan, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei – also took part in the exercise.⁷

Foreign sailor rescued by the Indian Coast Guard

After receiving an emergency call by the MV Emma Victory ship, on a voyage from Madagascar to Mumbai, an injured sailor was rescued by the medical team of the Indian Coast Guard on board the Norwegian oil tanker. The Indian Coast Guard was immediately informed by the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre. Soon after, a Coast Guard ship C 154, captained by Commandant A Tyagi along with a medical officer, was deputed to the spot to rescue the injured sailor. Divina Gracia, the 37 year old sailor, was found unconscious with a 6-inch long gash deep on his forehead. He was provided with immediate medical assistance and Shubhadhra Kumari Chauhan, a patrol vessel, took him to the Jaslok hospital in Mumbai.⁸

⁴ "BD-US maritime security co-op not for checking piracy alone", *The Financial Express*, April 23, 2014, at <http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2014/04/23/30321>

⁵ "US fine with Bangladesh joining Chinese naval exercise", *bdnews24.com*, April 22, 2014, at <http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2014/04/22/us-fine-with-bangladesh-joining-chinese-naval-exercise>

⁶ "India, China, Pakistan to take part in joint naval exercises", *ndtv*, April 11, 2014, at <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/india-china-pakistan-to-take-part-in-joint-naval-exercises-507335>

⁷ "India, China, Pakistan naval ships hold rare exercises", *zee news*, April 23, 2014, at http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/india-china-pakistan-naval-ships-hold-rare-exercises_926636.html

⁸ "Coast guard rescues foreign sailor", *The Times of India*, April 13, 2014, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/Coast-guard-rescues-foreign-sailor/articleshow/33673886.cms>

Indian fishermen being abducted by Pakistan repeatedly

After the abduction of 17 Indian fishermen in early April, the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) personnel abducted 24 more fishermen from Gujarat and seized their boats from the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) off Kutch coast. Of the four boats that were seized, three were from Porbandar and one from Diu. As stated by the Gujarat Fishermen Association, the PMSA towed away the boats after entering the Indian waters. In the month of February, the PMSA personnel had abducted 30 fishermen belonging to the Coastal region of Saurashtra from the IMBL and seized five boats from Indian waters. Abduction of 40 fishermen by Pakistan was also reported in October 2013. According to sources, 450 Indian fishermen were transported to Pakistani jails and 270 have been abducted in total since September 2013. Such repeated incidents of abduction and also the death of a fisherman named Naran Sosa from Gujarat have aroused concern for Indian fishermen.⁹

Indian Coast Guard station set up in the Sundarbans

For the purpose of providing coastal security in the waters off the islands of Sundarbans, a new Indian Coast Guard (ICG) station was set up at Frazerganj in the Sundarban area of West Bengal, India. The station would carry out several maritime operations like anti-piracy, search and rescue, pollution control and anti-piracy. The newly established station will ensure proper coordination with the state administration, police, customs, fisheries, forest department and other agencies for an effective surveillance and security network. Sundarbans, an archipelago of 54 islands, is a

UNESCO World Heritage site famous for housing mangrove forests and the Royal Bengal Tiger.¹⁰

IUU fishing in the Indonesian waters is a serious regional problem

Indonesia has found itself entangled in several maritime disputes with its neighbours and other countries in the region recently. Calling the move as insensitive, Singapore criticised the naming of an Indonesian frigate as “KRI Usman-Harun”. Indonesia also criticised Australia for lack of sensitivity over Operation Sovereign Borders conducted by the Australian Navy. In a couple of less covered incidents, it also had issues with Papua New Guinea and Thailand. According to some media reports, five Indonesian fishermen went missing after they were left to swim back to the coast when their fishing vessel was stopped and set alight by Papua New Guinean forces. Two Indonesian sailors were also killed on a Thai fishing vessel operating in Indonesian waters. These recent incidents highlight the sensitivity and implication of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing on the political relations and the maritime security of the countries in the region. The involvement of China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam in IUU fishing in the Indonesian Arafura, Celebes and Natuna seas gives a regional dimension to the issue. Indonesia annually loses about US\$2-5 billion to IUU fishing. This cost is quite conservative as it does not take into account the environmental consequences.¹¹

Indonesia organises ‘Komodo’ naval exercise in South China Sea

On an Indonesian invitation, warships from 18 different countries in the South China Sea conducted the ‘Komodo’ naval exercise. The theme of the exercise

⁹ “Pakistan abducts 24 more fishermen off Kutch coast”, *The Times of India*, April 14, 2014, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/rajkot/Pakistan-abducts-24-more-fishermen-off-Kutch-coast/articleshow/33725829.cms>

¹⁰ “Sundarbans gets Coast Guard station”, *Business Standard*, April 14, 2014, at http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/sundarbans-gets-coast-guard-station-114041400713_1.html

¹¹ “Indonesia and the problem of illegal fishing”, *The Jakarta Post*, April 5, 2014, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/04/05/indonesia-and-problem-illegal-fishing.html>

was humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). The exercise highlights the growing diplomatic importance of the Indonesian Navy (TNI-AL) in the international community. Amid the tensions in the South China Sea due to the lingering territorial disputes, the exercise carried mixed messages in the form of its scale, site and timing. Naval-centric cooperation in the region is becoming important which is facilitated by ASEAN Navy Chiefs' Meeting (ANCM). The ASEAN navies have now agreed to establish an ANCM Plus process that includes navies from the eight ASEAN dialogue partners. The Indonesian Navy wants to sustain the 'Komodo' exercise as a regular biennial event. But there are questions like how this exercise is different from the Indian biennial 'Milan' and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Plus exercises that carried the theme of HADR. Australia's withdrawal from the event recently (by only sending observers), has also raised questions about the acceptability of the 'Komodo' exercise in the region.¹²

Pirates raid oil tanker in Malacca Strait, kidnap 3 Indonesians

Indonesian pirates raided an oil tanker in Malacca Strait, syphoning off with fuel and taking three crew members as hostages. The pirates boarded the oil tanker Naniwa Maru No.1 at 1 a.m. local time on April 21, 2014 off the coast of west Malaysia. They pumped out about 3 million liters of the 4.5 million liters of diesel carried by the tanker into two waiting vessels and took off with three Indonesian crew members, including the captain and chief engineer. The oil tanker was sailing to Port Klang. Noel Choong, head of the International Maritime Bureau's Malaysia-based Piracy Reporting Centre said that it is the first time when attack has been carried out so far north in Malacca Strait and the

kidnapping of the crew members has also taken place for the first time. Malacca Strait is one of the busiest shipping routes with around world's one-quarter of sea-borne oil trade passing through the Strait. The attack has raised fear that piracy may be escalating in the area and as a result the insurance premiums may rise.¹³

Iran's 29th Flotilla docks in Djibouti

After sailing for 73 days, the Iranian Navy's 29th Fleet docked at the Port of Djibouti. The flotilla has already sailed across the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. It also berthed at the port of Salalah in Oman, before arriving at Djibouti. The fleet consists of Kharg helicopter carrier, Sabalan destroyer and cadets from Iranian Navy. Iranian Navy is increasing its presence in international waters. It has been conducting anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and Bab el-Mendeb strait to protect the country's cargo ships and oil tankers against pirate attacks.¹⁴

Iranian overseas naval deployments critical to Iran nuclear negotiation

Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said that Iranian Navy's presence on high seas plays a critical role in talks between Iran and the P5 + 1 (the five permanent UN Security Council members plus Germany) on nuclear issue. The presence of Iranian navy on high seas highlights the naval strength of the country as well as hedges the country in all the political, economic and cultural spheres. The Gulf of Aden is an important corridor for Persian oil exports to the West. After the Somali pirates hijacked the Iranian-chartered cargo ship, MV Delight, off the coast of Yemen, on November 2008, the Iranian Navy has been conducting anti-piracy missions in the region.¹⁵

¹² "Exercise Komodo' and the South China Sea", *The Jakarta Post*, March 29, 2014, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/03/29/exercise-komodo-and-south-china-sea.html>

¹³ "Pirates raid tanker off malaysia, 3 mariners taken", *MarineLink.com*, April 23, 2014, at <http://www.marinelink.com/news/malaysia-mariners-pirates367615.aspx>

¹⁴ "Iranian Navy's 29th fleet docks in port of Djibouti", *Tasnim News Agency*, April 8, 2014, at <http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/331590>

¹⁵ "Navy commander: Overseas deployment plays vital role in Iran-Power Talks", *FARS News Agency*, April, 28, 2014, at <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930208001021>

Indigenously produced Mowdige-class destroyers to join Iranian naval fleet

In an attempt to continue the modernization of its naval fleet, Iran is set to include two new home-made Mowdige-class destroyers to its fleet in the current Iranian year (that started from March 21, 2014), a senior naval commander announced on April 19, 2014. The destroyer will be fitted with fire control system for the destroyer's weapons, a 76-mm and a 40-mm canons and a surface-to-surface Nour (Light) missile system. Iran launched its first home made destroyer, Jamaran in late February 2010. Then in June 2013, destroyer Bayandor was launched after overhauling and modernization. In wake of Iran-Iraq war, Tehran had launched an arms development program during the 1980s. Iran, since then, has made big strides in defence sector production.¹⁶

Najib's and Obama's joint statement highlights maritime security issues

In the joint statement after their talk on April 27, the Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak and the visiting US President Barak Obama reiterated the importance of maritime security, freedom of navigation and safe over-flight throughout the Southeast Asian region, including in the South China Sea. They underscored the importance of the resolution of disputes - territorial and maritime - through peaceful means, including international arbitration in accordance with the principles of international law. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea has an important role to play in the resolution of such disputes. The two leaders recognised the need for Asean and China to work for an effective Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea.¹⁷

Malaysia plans to strengthen Esscom with technology

With an emphasis on information and communication technology, the Malaysian government plans to reinforce the Eastern Sabah Security Command (Esscom). The government is pondering about using satellites, closed-circuit cameras, sensors and other equipments for investigation and surveillance. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak set up the Esscom on March 7, 2013 to protect the 1,400 km coastline from Kudat to Tawau in Sabah. Maritime assets from the Armed Forces, Royal Malaysian Police and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) have come together to ensure that Sabah waters, including areas in Kunak, Sandakan and Lahad are free from threat.¹⁸

No plans for a Russian military base in Seychelles

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated in a TV interview on March 29 that his country has no plan to set up military bases in Seychelles. Nor does it intend to have bases in Vietnam, Nicaragua, Cuba and Argentina. The text of the interview is available on the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry website. He expressed his confidence in the Russian Navy. According to him, the Russian Navy is expected to get much more opportunities for development with the accession of Crimea to Russia. He explained that the Russian fleet makes long-distance voyages for various purposes and therefore Russia has agreements with some countries to use their infrastructure for calling into port, small repairs, maintenance, supplementing food and water reserves, recreation of crews, etc. He further emphasised that his country is not talking about any construction of bases similar to the Americans.¹⁹

¹⁶ "Commander: 2 New home-made destroyers to join Iranian Navy soon", *FARS News Agency*, April 19, 2014, at <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930130001192>

¹⁷ "Najib, Obama affirm importance of safeguarding maritime security", *New Straits Times*, April 27, 2014, at <http://www.nst.com.my/latest/font-color-red-obama-in-kl-font-najib-obama-affirm-importance-of-safeguarding-maritime-security-1.580648>

¹⁸ "Technology plan for Esscom", *News Image Bank*, April 24, 2014, at http://www.nib.com.my/archives/text/view/123816151?pops=15&hide_header=1&resultset=nsstpec%3Awww/cross-search/search.php%3A_1399551198%3Aresultset

¹⁹ "No Russian military base in Seychelles", *Seychelles Nation*, April 7, 2014, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=241261>

Patrol vessel donated by China reaches Seychelles

China has donated a new naval vessel to Seychelles for maritime security operations. The vessel arrived at the Ile Perseverance where the Seychelles' Minister for Foreign Affairs Jean-Paul Adam and the ambassador of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to Seychelles Shi Zhongjun visited it. The vessel has been purposefully built for Seychelles after the President James Michel visited the PRC in 2011 and expressed the concern of his country about patrolling and monitoring its vast exclusive economic zone. The vessel will now undergo a several week long commissioning process. The vessel is scheduled to be commissioned and become operational after its official hand-over on the Seychelles National Day in June 2014.²⁰

Maritime security in SADC demands much from the South Africa Navy

Rear-Admiral Rusty Higgs, Chief of Naval Staff of the South African Navy, expressed disappointment that the commissioning of much-needed patrol vessels for the navy was stopped six years ago. He also lamented that the defence spending in South Africa has dwindled to 1.1 per cent of the nation's budget. He was speaking at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) during a seminar on the prospects for achieving maritime security in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) on April 11. He emphasised that the South African Navy needs more patrol ships if it is to reach into the difficult oceans around South Africa. Ninety-five per cent of the country's trade passes through this area and the navy needs to successfully combat piracy, human trafficking and drug smuggling. For the performance of this task, the South African Navy also requires warships and

'expeditionary capability' that would allow it to undertake sustainable longer operations in complex conflict situations. South Africa, Mozambique and Tanzania have been working closely together in anti-piracy and other maritime security operations in the Indian Ocean. The naval capability in the SADC is limited and requires significant inputs for its strengthening. South Africa's own interest and position regarding maritime security in the region demands a stronger navy.²¹

International Maritime Bureau report reveals piracy at its lowest

A report by the International Maritime Bureau has revealed that piracy across the seas was at its lowest in the first quarter of 2014 since 2007. The report published on April 24, 2014 says that 49 piracy incidents in the first quarter of 2014 compared to 41 incidents recorded in the first quarter of 2007. The report illustrates that in the first three months, two vessels were hijacked, 37 vessels boarded, five vessels fired upon and five attacks were attempted. Forty-six crew members were taken hostage and two kidnapped from their vessel. The attacks by Somali pirates remain low, yet the report warned that the threat of Somali piracy is prevalent. The coast of West Africa witnessed 12 reports of hijacking. Angola reported first case of hijacking by Nigerian pirates, illustrating the range and capability of Nigerian piracy. The incident involved armed pirates boarding and hijacking a loaded tanker from Luanda anchorage in Angola. In general the IMB Director Pottengal Mukundan warned that despite fall in attacks there was no room for complacency and international navies should remain vigilant and the shipping companies should adhere to Best Management Practices recommendations.²²

²⁰ "China donates new boat to Seychelles", *Seychelles Nation*, April 30, 2014, at <http://www.nation.sc/article.html?id=241525>

²¹ "What does ensuring SADC's maritime security mean for South Africa?", *Institute for Security Studies*, April 16, 2014, at <http://www.issafrica.org/iss-today/what-does-ensuring-sadcs-maritime-security-mean-for-south-africa>

²² "Piracy on the seven seas at its lowest", *World Maritime News*, April 24, 2014, at <http://worldmaritimeneeds.com/archives/121867/piracy-on-the-seven-seas-at-its-lowest/>

Global maritime fleet is the next hacker's playground

As more devices are hooked up online in the internet age, the oil tankers and container vessels on the open seas are the next hacker targets. The hackers can exploit the weaknesses in the computer networks of the shipping companies that connect their vessels with them. The hackers shut down a floating oil rig recently by tilting it. The rig, in another incidence, was so infected with computer malware that it became seaworthy only after 19 days. Somali pirates are also using online navigational data to choose and confuse their victims. It is estimated that cyberattacks against only oil and gas infrastructure will cost energy companies close to

US\$1.9 billion by 2018. The reported attacks in the maritime industry are low because of their invisibility or suppression by the industry for the fear of alarming investors, regulators and insurers. Researchers say that there are significant holes in the three key technologies sailors use to navigate: GPS, marine Automatic Identification System (AIS), and a system for viewing digital nautical charts called Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS). They are vulnerable to hackers. A recent study found more than 100,000 devices, from maritime traffic signal equipment to oil and gas monitors, were connected to the internet with poor security ports.²³

²³ “Global shipping fleet exposed to hacking threat”, *The Star Online*, April 24, 2014, at <http://www.thestar.com.my/Tech/Tech-News/2014/04/24/All-at-sea-Global-shipping-fleet-exposed-to-hacking-threat/>

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Bangladesh Government and the IMO sign MoU for cooperation in ship recycling

The Bangladesh Government and the Technical Cooperation Division of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), on April 10, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) intending to work together for the improvement of environmental and safety standards in the Bangladesh ship-recycling industry. Both the signatories will jointly implement the first phase of a project titled “Safe and Environmentally Sound Ship Recycling in Bangladesh”. In terms of volume, Bangladesh has world’s one of the most important ship recycling industries with a gross tonnage capacity of more than 8.8 million annually, second only to India. The cooperation aims at improving standards and sustainability within the industry. The project intends for studies on economic and environmental impacts of shipbreaking and proper management of wastes and hazardous materials. It will also give recommendations on strengthening the Government’s One-Stop Service and an upgrade of existing training courses involving various ministries responsible for ship recycling.²⁴

Bangladesh suggests inclusion of oceans and seas in post-2015 development agenda

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, at a ‘high-level session’ of the “Global Oceans Action Summit for Food Security and Blue Growth”, suggested for the inclusion of oceans and seas in the post-2015 development agenda. This inclusion will help in poverty alleviation by leveraging the growth of “blue

economy”. His suggestion comes at a moment when the global community is working to shape the post-2015 development agenda after the expiry of the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) time limit. Citing the example of his country that around 30 million people earn their livelihood through blue economy, he highlighted that many other countries like Bangladesh also do not possess the capabilities and technology to harness their marine resources. Highlighting the adverse impact of climate change, he urged the scientific community to give particular attention in assessing the likely changes in marine fish stock in the Bay of Bengal. He emphasised on a seven-point programme that includes good governance for conventional fisheries management, promotion and protection of traditional knowledge, establishment of marine protected areas, reducing marine pollution, transfer of technology, capacity building for fish stock assessment and sustainable management of small scale fisheries.²⁵

Rapid development of ports is must to foster India’s foreign trade

Experts feel that that India must accelerate development of its deep sea ports in order to foster growth in foreign trade. There is a need for huge improvement in domestic transportation and investments in deep-sea ports by India to meet the challenge of increasing its trade volume. With Indian port expansion being a major concern and investment and infrastructure being planned, the challenge for India is to maintain large-size ships, by setting up deep-sea ports with a capacity to handle 18,000 twenty-foot equivalent (TEUs) size ships. However, India has very few areas to set up deep-

²⁴ “IMO and Bangladesh collaborate to improve shipbreaking”, *The Maritime Executive*, April 11, 2014, at <http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/IMO-and-Bangladesh-Collaborate-to-Improve-Shipbreaking-2014-04-11/>

²⁵ “Bangladesh stresses ‘blue economy’”, *bdnews24.com*, April 25, 2014, at <http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2014/04/25/bangladesh-stresses-blue-economy>

water ports, except for Mumbai and some islands on the Eastern and the Western Coasts.²⁶

Indonesia tourism registers highest growth among G20 countries

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), Indonesia's tourism sector recorded the highest growth of all G20 economies. Indonesia recorded a high growth in both international and domestic visitor expenditures. Due to Indonesia fast economic growth, its steadily growing middle class increasingly travels for the purposes of both business and leisure. The country's foreign exchange reserve has benefitted from the high increase in the number of foreign tourists. The WTTC estimates that the contribution of tourism to Indonesia's overall economy would grow to 8.1 per cent in the year 2014. It also estimates a growth of international tourists to the archipelago by 14.2 per cent, which will exceed the average growth of domestic tourists that is estimated to increase by 6.3 per cent. The Indonesian Government has been able to create conducive business environment and support infrastructure to help facilitate a sustainable tourist industry. It could also implement an easier visa procedure to attract more tourists.²⁷

Bali sees its future in village ecotourism

The Ecotourism Village Network (JED) that relies on the attraction of Bali's authenticity is optimistic about the prospect of community-based tourism. This mode of tourism, despite its low income in comparison to mass tourism, is considered as a good way for equal development across the island. More than half of the total revenue from tourism in the island goes to villages

while the remaining goes to the marketing, development and operational costs. The income of the villages is growing steadily and the most of the money directly goes to them. The JED initiative was taken by four villages with distinct characteristics on the island. Every villager is a shareholder in the tourism businesses that are managed on cooperative basis. Data with the network show that Australia, the US and France are the top three markets for village tourism. The number of tourist intake per day in these villages is restricted to 10. This helps maintain high standards of the services provided to them. In addition to its commercial implications, this concept of tourism offers the tourists a real opportunity to have a glimpse of Balinese life.²⁸

Anzali port to be Iran's conduit to boost economic ties with Caspian littorals

During the meeting of Iranian exporters with the Gilan province officials on April 15, 2014, the Deputy Governor of the Iranian Gilan province Mohammad Hossein Asgharian said that potential of Anzali port should be unlocked in order to build effective presence in regional markets. In order to improve transit capabilities, the administration plans to complete the Qazvin-Rasht-Anzali railway project, construction of a new port in the Caspian Sea and development of the Anzali port among other things. The Anzali port in northern Iran is one of the most important seaports of the country. The Anzali Free Zone is located in the south of the Caspian Sea and includes industrial, trading, commercial, tourist, and services sections. The Anzali Free Trade Area and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) established in 2000 by Iran, Russia, and India in order to promote

²⁶ "India must accelerate port development: Experts", *The Economic Times*, April 8, 2014, at <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/shipping/-transport/india-must-accelerate-port-development-experts/articleshow/33451496.cms>

²⁷ "RI has highest tourism growth in G20, says WTTC", *The Jakarta Post*, March 19, 2014, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/03/19/ri-has-highest-tourism-growth-g20-says-wttc.html>

²⁸ "Bali sees bright future in village tourism", *The Jakarta Post*, March 11, 2014, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/03/11/bali-sees-bright-future-village-tourism.html>

transportation cooperation among the members provides huge potential for economic profitability for Iran. Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Oman, Syria, and Bulgaria are members of the INSTC. The corridor links the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf with the Caspian Sea through Iran, and then reaches up to St Petersburg and North Europe via Russia. Iranian trade via Anzali Free Trade Zone is increasing with Iran having exported goods worth US\$142 million from Anzali Free Trade Zone during the last Iranian calendar year (which ended March 20, 2013), about 95 per cent more than the preceding year.²⁹

Iran calls for engagement with New Zealand

Ali Akbar Velayati, advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and the President of Center for Strategic Research of Iran's Expediency Council, has urged for closer cooperation between the research centres of Iran and New Zealand. In a meeting held on April 27, 2014 with visiting New Zealand's Deputy Secretary for the Multilateral and Legal Affairs Group Gerard van Bohemen, Velayati said the research centers of both countries can work together to look at the means to ensure security in the Indian Ocean and focus on issues facing international system.³⁰

Tourist figures slump in Kenya for the second consecutive year

For the second year in a row, terrorist threats and wildlife poaching hurt Kenya's tourist industry. The number of visitors to Kenya fell by 11 per cent in 2013.

The earnings from the tourism sector also fell by 2 per cent. The fall is obvious due to the travel advisories against non-essential travel to Kenya by several important tourist markets. Security is a big issue for tourists travelling to Kenya. Potential tourists are choosing alternative destinations. The country is also losing its competitive advantage in safari due to its dwindling wildlife population and improper accommodation facilities in major conservation areas. Figures from year 2011 show that tourism directly or indirectly contributed about 14 per cent of Kenya's economic output as well as 12 per cent of the total workforce. Tourist numbers in Kenya fell by 30 per cent after the 2007-08 post-election violence. The figures showed a recovery in three years but again fell down due to fear of terror attacks in Kenya. Meanwhile, the cost of visiting Kenya is also rising.³¹

Kenya courts China to boost its slumping tourism sector

Kenya Tourism Board's marketing in China has paid off. Kenya is trying to attract Asian countries to boost its slumping numbers of visitors because of feared terror attacks. More than 110 Chinese tourists visited Kenya on April 12. Muriithi Ndegwa, Managing Director, Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), received the tourists and hosted a dinner for them at the Safari Park Hotel. It was one of the biggest numbers of tourist arrivals at a go. Kenya has been marketing aggressively to first tier Chinese cities like Beijing and Shanghai to create more awareness in the Chinese tourism market. The Chinese channel CCTV also airs about the Kenyan tourism potential. After India, China is the second largest tourist destination for Kenya in Asia and more than

²⁹ "Iran to boost economic ties with littoral countries via Anzali port", *Azer News*, April 16, 2014, at <http://www.azernews.az/region/66167.html>

³⁰ "Iran urges closer ties with New Zealand", *Press TV*, April 29, 2014, at <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/04/07/357514/iran-urges-closer-ties-with-new-zealand/>

³¹ "Security fears drag Kenya tourist numbers down", *News24*, April 29, 2014, at <http://www.news24.com/Travel/International/Security-fears-drag-Kenya-tourist-numbers-down-20140426-9>

40,000 Chinese tourists visited Kenya in 2103. The numbers of these visitors are expected by the KTB to surpass the figure of 100, 000 by 2016.³²

Fish catch in Kenya's Lamu county falls by 80 per cent

The county fisheries officer of Lamu stated that the production of fish in the county has gone down by 80 per cent. Overfishing is being considered as the main reason for the drastic fall in the catch. He was speaking at the Lake Kenyatta Agricultural Institute in Mpeketoni. He informed that a lot of shore fishing in Lamu is being carried out as there are about 6000 fishermen in Kiunga, Faza, Lamu, Mpeketoni and Witu. He also told the audience that a large number of fish is lost due to poor preservation facilities. The poor fishermen do not have the equipment and machine for preservation.³³

Mauritius urges for cross-border investment in the SADC

The Mauritian Government is doing its best to provide a favourable environment for cross-border investment in the country. Speaking at a workshop on Trade in Services in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Arvin Boolell, Mauritian Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade Minister, told the audience that Mauritius should look for cross-border investments. He highlighted that Mauritius has comparative advantages over other countries. He also called for a support of the stakeholders in the crucial process of cross-border investments within the region. The SADC members, at present, are engaged in negotiations over Trade in Services based on a request basis in six priority sectors,

namely communications, tourism, financial services, transport, construction and energy-related services.³⁴

The new Nacala port and railway link in Mozambique to be completed by December

Gabriel Muthisse, the Mozambican Transport Minister, has announced that the new port and coal terminal at Nacala-a-Velha in the country's northern province of Nampula will be completed by December 2014. The railway line linking the port to the Moatize coal basin will also be concluded the same time. After the materialisation of the two projects, a total of about 22 million tonnes of cargo is expected to be exported from the port. This will include about 18 million tonnes of coal in it. The Moatize coal basin has been exporting its coal from the Sena railway line to the port of Beira. The Sena railway line has a capacity of handling only 12 million tonnes of coal. This line alone cannot handle all the estimated increase in coal export which is estimated to reach, in the medium term, up to 100 million tonnes annually. Vale, a Brazilian company, is financing the new railway line from Moatize to Nacala which include stretches through Malawi.³⁵

Russian company expresses interest in Mozambican oil and gas

The Foreign Ministry of Mozambique released to the press that Rosneft, a Russian gas and oil company, is interested in investing in the hydrocarbons of the country. The company expressed its interest after Odemiro Baloi, the Mozambican Foreign Minister, encouraged it to invest in Mozambique during the Russia-Mozambique Business Forum meeting. Any investment by the company will help in the development of

³² "Kenya turns to China to boost tourist numbers", *Standard Digital*, April 14, 2014, at <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/article/2000109373/kenya-turns-to-china-to-boost-tourist-numbers>

³³ "Lamu fish catch drops by 80%", *The Star*, April 11, 2014, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-162659/lamu-fish-catch-drops-80>

³⁴ "Mauritius looking for cross-border investments – Minister", *African Manager*, April 16, 2014, at http://www.africanmanager.com/site_eng/detail_article.php?art_id=21809

³⁵ "Mozambique: New Nacala Port and railway concluded by December", *All Africa*, April 8, 2014, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201404090501.html>

Mozambique. Rosneft is one of the largest hydrocarbon companies in the world and it is also active in other 16 important countries than Russia. Mr Baloi hopes that the Russian companies will become major investors in Mozambique.³⁶

Singapore's first-quarter growth was driven by marine and offshore engineering sector

After the first-quarter of 2014, the growth of Singapore could be revised based on a strong industrial output. The manufacturing output was double than what market had expected. In March 2014, manufacturing surged 12.1 per cent from the previous year, far exceeding expectations in a Reuter poll for growth of 6.3 per cent. The growth in manufacturing output was driven by marine and offshore engineering sector which grew 45.1 per cent year-on-year basis. The growth in the marine and offshore engineering segment can be attributed to the rise in work on several rig and ship building projects according the Singapore Economic Development Board.³⁷

Record number of tourists visited South Africa in December 2013

With most of the tourists coming from the SADC region, nearly one million tourists visited South Africa in the month of December 2013. This statistics were released by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on April 15, 2014. This was the highest ever number of tourists visiting South Africa in any single month. This shows an increase of 7.6 per cent from the same period of the previous year. The number rose to a total of 937,792

visitors in December 2013 from 871,774 visitors during December 2012. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) region contributed over two-thirds of all the visitors followed by 28 per cent of overseas visitors and 2 per cent of the visitors from the other countries on the continent. December is the most attractive month for the tourists to South Africa.³⁸

Science and technology cooperation agreement between South Africa and Malaysia

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) on science and technology cooperation aiming at socio-economic development through science, technology and innovation (STI) has been signed between Malaysia and South Africa. It will provide numerous opportunities for both the signatories for sharing knowledge and experience. Initiation of joint research projects and programmes between the science and technology communities of the two countries will develop huge human capital. The agreement is the strategic initial step in fostering a smart partnership between the two countries. Malaysia has successfully transformed its agriculture-based economy towards industrial phase. The emphasis in the country has shifted from agricultural products to biotechnology, nanotechnology, pharmaceuticals and other high-tech industries with a priority to information and communication technologies. The shift in South Africa from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based economy puts the country on a similar trajectory that increases the scope of science and technology cooperation between the two countries.³⁹

³⁶ "Russian company interested in Mozambican hydrocarbons", *All Africa*, April 23, 2014, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201404240250.html>

³⁷ "Singapore's marine & offshore sector powering output", *MarineLink.com*, April 25, 2014, at <http://www.marinelink.com/news/singapores-offshore367797.aspx>

³⁸ "December 2013 tourism stats at record high", *South African Government News Agency*, April 15, 2014, at <http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/december-2013-tourism-stats-record-high>

³⁹ "South Africa, Malaysia sign science memorandum", *SouthAfrica.info*, April 29, 2014, at <http://www.southafrica.info/news/international/malaysia-290414.htm#.U2tqsaIwaVY>

High volumes but low revenue in Sri Lankan ports

According to the 2013 official data, profits at the Sri Lanka Ports Authority fell to 2.4 billion rupees at 53.4 per cent, with the decrease of revenue to 37.2 billion rupees at 2.3 per cent, although an increase in container volumes at Colombo has been observed, with rise in expenditure to 34.8 billion rupees at 5.8 per cent. In totality, the cargo handled was upgraded by 2 per cent to 66.2 million metric tonnes. With the inauguration of a Chinese-owned terminal, “the overall port activities showed a turnaround in 2013 involving features like the recovery of foreign trade; new shipping lines; port efficiency; and improvement in production units, in spite of the challenging global environment”, as stated in the annual report of the Sri Lankan Central Bank. The number of vessels arriving in Sri Lanka decreased from 4,134 to 3,976; and from 3,870 to 3,667 at the Colombo port alone. Despite the decrease, an increase in the tonnage of container ships was recorded by 0.6 per cent. The Workforce also fell to 9,886 by 3.1 per cent in 2013 with reduction in the number of workers from 9,373 to 9,081 in Colombo; 391 to 370 in Galle and from 436 to 426 in Trincomalee. According to the critics, the ruling class of Sri Lanka stuffed the ports authority, the Sri Lanka Transport Board and the Sri Lankan Railways with supporters; pushing up costs and generating losses.⁴⁰

UAE firm partners in the Tanzanian Buckreef gold mine project

Allied Gold Corporation (AGC), a United Arab Emirates (UAE) based company, has joined the team of the Buckreef gold mine project owned jointly by Tanzanian Royalty Exploration (TRE) Corporation and State Mining Corporation (Stamico). The partners have signed a letter of intent to develop a commercially

producing gold mine located in Buziba-Busolwa, Tanzania. Buckreef Gold Company Limited is a project subsidiary of Tanzanian Royalty owned by Tanzanian Royalty and Stamico. It has signed the letter of intent with ARL Gold Tanzania Limited, a subsidiary of the AGC. The deal is aimed at concluding a definitive joint venture agreement for the development of a producing gold mine at Buziba-Busolwa. In 2011, TRE signed an agreement to partner with Stamico to jointly develop the Buckreef project which has been idle for several years. James Sinclair, President and Chief Executive Officer of TRE, said that if companies do not enter into equitable partnerships with the developing nations, it will be very difficult in future to obtain mineral opportunities from these mineral rich countries.⁴¹

Three-fold increase in the arrival of Chinese tourists to Tanzania

Thanks to vigorous tourism campaigns for the world's second biggest economy, Tanzania's share of Chinese tourists has grown steadily. The number of Chinese tourists arriving in Tanzania reached to 13,000 in 2013. This figure in the year 2012 was around 5,000. The efforts of the Tanzanian Government to attract Chinese tourists have paid off resulting in sharp increase in arrival numbers. The count is likely to increase further this year. Tanzania's policy in tourism industry is based on quality tourism rather than mass tourism. It pays more attention to developing the industry carefully and responsibly without harming natural tourist attractions. Both China and Tanzania feel that the tourism potential between the two countries is still underexplored. China feels that lack of direct transport to Tanzania deters its people from coming to the country for tourism. Another reason for deterring Chinese tourists to Tanzania is the lack of hospitality infrastructure to accommodate more tourists in the country. However, China is encouraging its airlines to start direct flights to Tanzania.⁴²

⁴⁰ “Sri Lanka ports agency profit, revenues down despite higher port volumes”, *Hellenic Shipping News Worldwide*, April 22, 2014, at <http://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/771b73c0-79f9-407d-88dd-01df19a85398/>

⁴¹ “UAE firm joins team on Buckreef project”, *Daily News Online*, April 16, 2014, at <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/biz/30403-uae-firm-joins-team-on-buckreef-project>

⁴² “Tourist arrivals from China rise three-fold”, *Daily News Online*, April 22, 2014, at <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/biz/30593-tourist-arrivals-from-china-rise-three-fold>

‘Maritime Silk Road’ to focus on infrastructure in littoral countries

In the ‘Maritime Silk Road’ strategy, building of ports and improvement of infrastructure in littoral countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka would be given priority. China also looks for establishing free trade zones in the Indian Ocean countries, to make its economic presence felt stronger in the Indian Ocean Region and in India’s neighbourhood. The Silk Road initiative is observed as a major diplomatic priority for the Chinese President Xi Jinping. The first official statement of the initiative read that the priority of the initiative was “port construction” and “free trade zones”. The report in China Securities Journal stated that the initiative would focus on infrastructural development along the route, including ports of Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. In order to facilitate the plan, China also seeks to monitor the coordination of customs, quality supervision, e-commerce and other functionalities in these countries.⁴³

US and Japan to intensify trilateral cooperation with India, South Korea and Australia

A joint US-Japan statement, issued after talks between the US President Barack Obama and Japanese PM Shinzo Abe in Tokyo, declared that the two countries will intensify trilateral cooperation with India, the Republic of Korea and Australia, aiming to achieve shared objectives of promoting peace and economic prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. A fact sheet issued by the White House stated that talks between US, Japan and India have been already taking place on a wide range of regional and global issues, including cooperation in maritime security in the IOR and Western Pacific; development of an Indo-Pacific economic connectivity corridor to enhance regional connectivity; and humanitarian assistance for disaster management.⁴⁴

⁴³ “China’s ‘Maritime Silk Road’ to focus on infrastructure”, *The Hindu*, April 20, 2014, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/chinas-maritime-silk-road-to-focus-on-infrastructure/article5929297.ece>

⁴⁴ “US, Japan boosting trilateral cooperation with India, South Korea”, *dnaindia.com*, April 25, 2014, at <http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-us-japan-boosting-trilateral-cooperation-with-india-south-korea-1981880>

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS/ DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Bangladesh requires support for a low-emission economy

In the pursuit of low-carbon growth, Bangladesh is seeking support of the developed countries. Speaking at the “Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change” at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels, M Shahriar Alam, Bangladesh’s State Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that if the process of achieving low-carbon emission does not put additional burden on its economy and financial capacity, Bangladesh was committed to adopt low-emission development strategies (LEDS). There is a huge scope of renewable energy expansion in Bangladesh but replacement of expensive oil based power generators would require financial support both from developed and other countries.⁴⁵

Banned chemicals found in Bangladeshi food by UN-FAO-backed lab

The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) backed National Food Safety Laboratory at the Institute of Public Health, Dhaka, Bangladesh, has found “serious level” of chemicals present in common food items. It found nearly 40 per cent of the samples of milk and milk products, fruits, fish and vegetables full of banned chemicals like DDT, Aldrin, Chlordane, Heptachlor and others. The amounts of the chemicals trace in the samples were almost 3 to 20 times the limits set by the European Union. Mike Robson, FAO Representative in Dhaka, was baffled by the findings and was not sure about how the banned pesticides found their way into

food products. Arsenic, one of the largest environmental health hazards in Bangladesh, was also found in some of the samples. Either people in Bangladesh are using these chemicals or these are still there in the environment. However, he appreciated the passing of the new food safety law in October 2013.⁴⁶

El Nino may lead to rainfall deficit in India this monsoon

According to the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) the 2014 is going to see a recurrence of the El Nino phenomenon. The El Nino is oceanic phenomenon which occurs after a gap of three to seven years. Warm water temperature develops around the Pacific coast of South America leading to fluctuating weather across Pacific Ocean. Sea surface temperatures increase above normal by 0.5 degree. The phenomenon is linked to below normal rainfall in Indian monsoons.⁴⁷

Fire breaks out on INS Matanga

In an incident that took place at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, a minor fire broke out on the INS Matanga, an ocean-going tug while it was undergoing repairs. The fire, after detection by the duty personnel and the ship staff, was extinguished immediately by the Naval Dockyard fire station. According to official reports, some insulating material in the adjacent compartment started smouldering and emitting thick smoke while conduction of steel welding works in the Sewage Treatment Plant compartment. During an Inquiry, a

⁴⁵ “Bangladesh seeks support for low-carbon economy”, *bdnews24.com*, April 30, 2014, at <http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2014/04/30/bangladesh-seeks-support-for-low-carbon-economy>

⁴⁶ “UN-FAO-backed lab finds chemicals in Bangladeshi food”, *bdnews24.com*, April 16, 2014, at <http://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2014/04/16/un-fao-backed-lab-finds-chemicals-in-bangladeshi-food>

⁴⁷ “An El Nino year? Australia too sees rain deficit this monsoon in India”, *The Economic Times*, April 23, 2014, at <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/an-el-nino-year-australia-too-sees-rain-deficit-this-monsoon-in-india/articleshow/34084070.cms>

naval official said that there were no casualties or damages due to the minor nature of the fire. This incident has been a new addition to the series of maritime mishaps.⁴⁸

A collaborative Indian Ocean Data Rescue Initiative launched

In the International Workshop on the Recovery and Digitization of Climate Heritage in the Indian Ocean Rim Countries and Islands, the Indian Ocean Data Rescue Initiative (INDARE) has been launched by the governments of the region. The initiative recognises the need of accelerating the recovery of the region's historical climate records. The countries have also agreed to finalise an INDARE implementation plan. The workshop, held in Maputo, Mozambique from April 21-24, aimed to inform the climate experts on the analytical tools and methodologies on the rescue of ocean and climate data. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), weather and climate forecast in the Indian Ocean basin is quite difficult due to the lack of climate data. Much data exists on obsolete media and paper stored under poor conditions. Therefore, the INDARE seeks to rescue these data through modern archiving facilities and improved techniques and methodologies.⁴⁹

Experts from Indian Ocean Rim countries mull over climate change risks

Experts from countries around the Indian Ocean rim met in India to discuss ways to improve their disaster

resilience and improve the management of future climate risk. The meeting was held in the National Institute of Ocean Technology in Chennai from April 1-3, 2014. The meeting was held under the auspices of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as a part of a US\$1.175 million package launched at the IORA Council of Ministers' Meeting in Perth in November 2013. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and the Indian Ministry of Earth Sciences co-organised and supported the meeting. Ms Jennifer Sutton from the CSIRO Climate Adaptation Flagship said that the meeting aims for building capacity within countries around the Indian Ocean rim to identify, develop and implement appropriate adaptations to climate risks. The participant countries included Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand and Yemen.⁵⁰

Iran oceanography vessel set to be operational from May/June 2014

Iran is all set to launch its indigenously produced oceanography vessel by May or June this year, according to a researcher at the Iranian National Institute for Oceanography (INIO). The construction of the body of the ship is in the final stage. The ship is supposed to carry out research in the Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman, the Arab Sea (in Northeastern parts of the Indian Ocean) and the Indian Ocean. In July 2012, the INIO had announced that it would build an oceangoing research vessel.⁵¹

⁴⁸ "Fire on INS Matanga in Mumbai dock, no casualties", *dnaindia.com*, April 7, 2014, at <http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-fire-on-ins-matanga-in-mumbai-dock-no-casualties-1975840>

⁴⁹ "Indian Ocean countries collaborate on climate data rescue", *International Institute for Sustainable Development*, April 24, 2014, at <http://climate-iiisd.org/news/indian-ocean-countries-collaborate-on-climate-data-rescue/241914/>

⁵⁰ "Indian Ocean Rim weighs climate risks", *PS News Online*, April 4, 2014, at http://www.psnews.com.au/Page_psn403f7.html

⁵¹ "Iran's oceangoing vessel to come into operation in June", *FARS News Agency*, April 26, 2014, at <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930206000694>

National Disaster Management Unit launched in Kenya

The Kenyan Government has set up the National Disaster Management Unit. The unit consisted of police officers and other professionals will be responsible to respond to emergencies and disasters in the country. David Kimaiyo, Inspector General of Police, said that the unit is well-equipped for any disaster. President Uhuru Kenyatta has instructed for the operationalisation of the units as soon as possible. The Swedish Government has also helped the team by providing prefabricated temporary accommodation units. There is also a plan for setting up of such prefabricated units all over the country.⁵²

Aerial search for missing Malaysian Airlines ends, expanded Ocean floor search to continue

The Australian PM Tony Abbot announced that the aerial search for the missing Malaysian passenger jet MH370 has come to an end after 52 days of crash. However, an expanded search of the Indian Ocean floor will continue. More than 330 flights were involved in the aerial search for a period of over seven weeks. Military and civilian planes from Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia have searched more than 4.5 million square kilometers of ocean. It is now increasingly felt that any debris of the aircraft will not be found on the surface. Hence, an underwater search of Indian Ocean floor will be expanded in order to search for the wreckage. The use of the unmanned Bluefin-21 underwater vehicle would continue for the search. The underwater search is expected to take months. Meanwhile, the Australian Prime Minister also said that some commercial companies could also be involved in the search at a cost of US\$60 million.⁵³

Committee to investigate illegal chemical debris in the Serian town of Malaysia

The tonnes of debris from the fertilizer factory that exploded and went up in smoke in Serian town in Malaysia on March 14 is not being taken lightly by the Malaysian authorities. Officials of the Department of Environment (DOE) investigated the site where the ashes and rubbles of the burnt factory had been buried. A disaster committee, with the DOE as its part, has been formed under the headship of the district officer of Serian. Piles of fertiliser, insecticide, weedicide and acetylene cylinders triggered three huge explosions affecting the Serian town that is inhabited by about 30,000 people. The nauseating smell of chemicals remained in the air for about a week. Now the debris from the burnt factory has been found dumped in an open space along the Serian-Tebedu highway. The chemicals are affecting the people in the area. It is also feared that the debris, although buried, may affect the water supply to the population of the Serian district as the dumping site is too close to a tributary of Batang Sadong. It is to be noted that Serian gets its water from Batang Sadong.⁵⁴

Mozambique and South Africa agree to work jointly to prevent poaching

An agreement regarding the conservation of biodiversity and prevention of poaching in the Greater Limpopo Cross-Border Park has been signed between Mozambique and South Africa. This park is a cross-border fusion of the Limpopo National Park, the Kruger Park, and Gonarezhou Park in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe respectively. Mozambique has emerged as a transit route for rhino horn that is trafficked to Asia from the Southern Africa. South

⁵² "Disasters police unit launched", *The Star*, April 30, 2014, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-165188/disasters-police-unit-launched>

⁵³ "Ocean floor search for MH370 to be expanded", *SBS Online*, April 28, 2014, at <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/04/28/ocean-floor-search-mh370-be-expanded>

⁵⁴ "Disaster committee formed, illegal dumping of chemical debris under probe", *The Star Online*, April 17, 2014, at <http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Community/2014/04/17/Authorities-spring-into-action-Disaster-committee-formed-illegal-dumping-of-chemical-debris-under-pr/>

African reserve wardens shot 25 Mozambican poachers dead in the first three months of 2014. Poaching of rhinos continues despite the deployment of South African troops in the Kruger Park. In 2014, poachers in South Africa have killed 293 rhinos so far. This number, as seen in the light of only 13 reported killings of rhinos in 2007, suggest a dramatic increase in rhino poaching in the successive years. The newly signed agreement enables South Africa and Mozambique to work together to eradicate rhino poaching and stop Mozambique to be used as a transit route for horn smuggling.⁵⁵

Tanzania to launch new anti-poaching operation

After the killing of 26 elephants for their tusks taken by poachers in two game reserves, the Tanzanian Government decided to launch a second phase of the national anti-poaching operation soon. Lazaro Nyalandu, the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, informed that Operation Tokomeza Majangili – II is in the pipeline as a part of the country's war against illegal wildlife hunting and ivory trading. Tanzania has become a part of the global war against ivory trading involving China, the United Nations and the International Police (Interpol). He also reminded that Tanzania had led the war against poaching in the late 1980s and had become home to Africa's second-largest elephant population. The country, unfortunately, has now become the epicentre of the poaching epidemic these days and a third of all the illegal ivory seized in Asia comes from or through Tanzania.⁵⁶

Tanzania flooding displaces 20,000; kills at least 32

At least 20,000 people in Dar es Salaam have been displaced by heavy flooding in Tanzania. The flood has left at least 32 dead in Dar es Salaam and the Morogoro region. Ten temporary shelters were made for the displaced in mosques, schools and churches. Tigo, the Tanzanian telecommunications firm has provided to the Red Cross' relief efforts a cash assistance of US\$12,700 and US\$2,400 as foodstuffs that include beans, cooking oil, flour and maize. The flood victims lack foods and shelter.⁵⁷

Oil spill in the Gulf of Thailand

Thailand witnessed an oil spill due to sinking of an oil tanker that sank on April 8, 2014. The tanker sank about 4 km from the coast, southwest of Bangkok, in the Gulf of Thailand. As a result 60,000 liters of oil sludge that the tanker was carrying leaked, causing an oil spill in the area. The tanker started to capsize on April 7, 2014 after water flooded the engine room. Five crew members were rescued from the sunken tanker. The oil spill spread to the coast southwest of Bangkok to a nearby fishermen's village and forest. Thai authorities have launched a clean-up operation and have already collected majority of oil, some 1,500 liters. The authorities said that they would start a recovery of the tanker too.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ "Mozambique and South Africa sign anti-poaching agreement", *All Africa*, April 21, 2014, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201404220548.html>

⁵⁶ "Tanzania to launch new anti-poaching operation", *East African Business Week*, April 7, 2014, at <http://www.busiweek.com/index1.php?Ctp=2&pI=915&pLv=3&srI=%2057&spI=&cI=19s>

⁵⁷ "32 dead, 20,000 displaced by Tanzania flooding", *Sabahi*, April 18, 2014, at http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2014/04/18/newsbrief-03

⁵⁸ "Tanker sinks causing oil spill in the Gulf of Thailand", *World Maritime News*, April 9, 2014, at <http://worldmaritimenews.com/archives/120541/tanker-sinks-causing-oil-spill-in-gulf-of-thailand/>

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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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