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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

In the month of November, there were several noticeable developments in the maritime security domain. The Australia, China and New Zealand navies held 'Exercise Cooperation Spirit.' Bangladesh jailed Indian fishermen for crossing the new maritime border between the two countries. India donated an SDB Mk 5 patrol boat to Seychelles. Indonesian leadership directed its security forces to sink/burn illegal foreign fishing vessels to discourage them to enter its maritime waters. Mauritius signed a US\$16 million surveillance aircraft deal with India's HAL. China docked its submarine at the Colombo port. Tanzania conducted its first ever joint naval exercise with China. Operation Atalanta initiated by the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) off the coast of the Horn of Africa in 2008 was extended till December 2016.

On the economic cooperation front in the region, the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture Report 2014 marked Bangladesh as the fourth largest sweet-water fish producer. India signed a new oil deal with Mozambique; and its Ashtamudi clam fishery received the first ever MSC certificate for the country. India also expressed readiness for providing ocean science training to more Indian Ocean countries. Malaysia's Sabah region became the first ground for commercially bred lobster. An agreement was signed to shift the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission Secretariat to Maputo, Mozambique. IORA tourism ministers met to discuss about sustainable growth of tourism industry.

On the environmental and disaster risk front, a study concluded that India and Bangladesh, with their joint effort, can save the Sunderban mangrove forests. Bangladesh Government decided to provide three million solar home systems to the rural families. Malaysia announced that trawl net fishing would be banned in the country with the beginning of year 2016.

Hope the readers would find this issue useful.

Ruchita Beri

Editor

MARITIME SECURITY

Australia, China and New Zealand hold Exercise Cooperation Spirit in Nanjing

Exercise Cooperation Spirit 2014 by Australia, China and New Zealand began on November 20, 2014. It aimed at enhancing coordination and cooperation among the three countries while responding to some unforeseen disasters that occur in the Asia-Pacific region. The exercise took place at the Navy Command College in Nanjing, China. Building upon the shared experiences gained during the search for missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 in the Southern Indian Ocean, the exercise was focused on a maritime search and rescue response involving the Australian Defense Force, the Chinese People's Liberation Army and the New Zealand Defense Force. Approximately 55 military personnel from the three nations participated in the naval exercise that lasted till November 22, 2014. The exercise was first held in November 2011 as a bilateral activity between the Australian Defense Force and China's Peoples' Liberation Army in Sichuan Province focusing on humanitarian and disaster relief.¹

Australian Navy seizes heroin off-coast of East Africa

The crew of the Australian Navy's frigate HMAS Toowoomba boarded a vessel in international waters and impounded 388 kilograms of heroin inessian bags after an intelligence tip-off on November 17, 2014. The frigate was deployed as part of Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) to counter piracy, militancy,

smuggling and other illegal activities in an area covering the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Gulf, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Oman. The CMF did not give the precise location of the seizure but to date most of the major heroin seizures in east Africa has taken place near Kenya and Tanzania. This passage has been widely perceived as the main gateway for Afghan drugs into east Africa. In April 2014, another Australian warship near Kenya had raided a vessel with 1,023 kilograms of heroin onboard, which remains the record heroin haul seized by the CMF in the region.²

Bangladesh jails Indian fishermen for crossing the new maritime border

The government of the West Bengal state in India has been caught unawares by the new eastern maritime border that was re-drawn by a UN tribunal in July 2014. Due to their ignorance about the new border, 132 Indian fishermen who were on ten trawlers landed in jail in Bangladesh for straying into its waters. In July 2014, around 19,000 sq km of exclusive economic maritime zone where Indian fishermen would cast their nets was given to Bangladesh following a five-year long arbitration process. However, the fishermen continued fishing in these waters as they were ignorant about the development. Trawlers began to be seized by Bangladeshi authorities. After an enquiry by the District Magistrate (DM), South 24-Parganas, West Bengal, India, the fisheries department realised that it had not notified the re-alignment of the international maritime border.³

¹ "Australia: Maritime SAR in Asia Pacific a priority", *MarineLink.com*, November 20, 2014, at <http://www.marinelink.com/news/australia-maritime381185.aspx>

² "Australian navy seizes heroin worth \$183m near east Africa", *ABC News*, November 21, 2014, at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-11-21/australian-navy-seizes-heroin-worth-millions-near-east-africa/5908030>

³ "Fishermen languish in Bangladeshi jail, West Bengal unaware of new maritime border", *The Times of India*, November 29, 2014, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Fishermen-languish-in-Bangladeshi-jail-West-Bengal-unaware-of-new-maritime-border/articleshow/45314610.cms>

India will cooperate with Mauritius for the safety and security of sea-lanes

India's External Affairs Minister Ms Sushma Swaraj, on November 2, 2014, said that the Indian Navy is committed for ensuring the safety and security of the Indian Ocean Region in cooperation with the Mauritius Coast Guard. She highlighted the importance of maritime security for an island nation like Mauritius and a country with a long coastline like India as well. Large amount of their trade passes through this region making the safety and security of the sea-lanes indispensable for their territorial, economic and energy security. Ms Swaraj was on a three-day visit to Mauritius to celebrate 'Apravasi Divas' that marked 180 years since the arrival of the first Indian indentured labourers in the country. Meanwhile, three ships of the Indian Navy – INS Mumbai, INS Deepak and INS Talwar from the Western Fleet – were also docked in Mauritian waters to enhance and deepen security ties.⁴

India gives SDB Mk 5 patrol boat to Seychelles

Nine years after donating the PS Topaz (formerly INS Tarmugli) in 2005, India has donated PS Constant, a second SDB Mk 5 patrol boat to the Seychelles. The 46 metre long donated vessel would be used by Seychelles' Coast Guard to enhance their patrolling capacity. The vessel was handed over to the Seychelles Coast Guard at its Ile du Port base on November 7, 2014. PS Constant was known as INS Tarasa in the Indian service. The handing over ceremony coincided with the arrival of two other Indian Navy warships and a tanker in Seychelles – INS Mumbai, INS Talwar and INS Deepak – on November 6, 2014. President Michel of Seychelles said that the donation is a sign of

strong ties between the two countries. The donated patrol boat with a displacement of 319 tons has been built by India's state-owned Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers in Kolkata and refurbished by the Naval Dockyard Mumbai.⁵

India- Australia maritime security cooperation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced that closer economic and maritime security cooperation with Australia is a national priority. In addition to this, he said that Australia is also viewed as "a major partner" in providing skills, healthcare and building homes and in energy, building smart cities, in agriculture and in technologies to save water. However, Modi emphasised that the need for cooperation with Australia in the Indian Ocean is crucial to fight against any terrorist activities that threaten the stability of the region. In terms of an economic partner, Australia has plenty of opportunities to participate in India's progress in areas like agriculture, food processing, mining, infrastructure, manufacturing, finance, technology and energy.⁶

India engages 24 Indian Ocean countries for maritime information sharing

For the sharing of maritime intelligence amongst the Indian Ocean countries, India would help in strengthening coastal security networks and accurately assess the security dynamics in the strategic South China Sea. India's National Security Adviser, Ajit Doval, is leading the dialogue regarding the matter with 24 nations. While the exact nature of information that New Delhi seeks remains unknown, India, from a strategic perspective, would like to know a lot more about the cargo movement in the South China Sea where vessels

⁴ "India to cooperate with Mauritius to safeguard Indian Ocean", *The Economic Times*, November 2, 2014, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-11-02/news/55682596_1_indian-ocean-port-louis-prime-minister-navinchandra-ramgoolam

⁵ "India donates patrol boat to Seychelles", *Defence Web*, November 10, 2014, at http://www.defencenews.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36928:india-donates-patrol-boat-to-seychelles&catid=51:Sea&Itemid=106

⁶ "India, Australia should cooperate in maritime security: Modi", *Business Standard*, November 18, 2014, http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-australia-should-cooperate-in-maritime-security-modi-114111800265_1.html

come transiting through one of the three straits – Malacca, Sunda and Lombok.⁷

Indonesia to sink/burn illegal foreign fishing vessels

Indonesia's President Joko Widodo, who wants to make his country a "global maritime axis," is focusing on developing his country's vast maritime potential in general and fishing in particular. He is taking a tough stance against poachers in the Indonesian waters. Indonesia's maritime security forces are sending a message of "Sink or swim" to the foreign fishing fleets illegally fishing in its maritime borders. The President informed that maritime poaching costs Indonesia about US\$24.7 billion annually. He further hinted the forces to stop arresting the poachers and sink some boats so that they would think twice before entering in Indonesian waters. His remarks were also echoed by Susi Pudjiastuti, the Maritime and Fisheries Minister, who called on local authorities in the Derawan Islands, to burn the foreign fishing vessels caught poaching in the area. However, both of the leaders cautioned against killing or harming people while burning or sinking illegal boats.⁸

India boosts military ties with Indonesia

On the side-lines of the India-ASEAN meeting, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a bilateral talk with his Indonesian counterpart on strengthening mutual military cooperation in maritime security. Indonesian Defence Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu discussed Maritime Axis Doctrine of Indonesia and recalled the close cooperation between the two countries in the

Indian Ocean. In addition to this, Indian Air Chief Marshal, Arup Raha, visited the Indonesian Aerospace (PTDI) company at Bandung where he witnessed the production and maintenance facilities. He complimented PTDI for its efforts at indigenisation and expressed India's commitment to support the Indonesian defence industry.⁹

Iran military holds drills in the Indian Ocean

The commander of Iran's navy, Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, announced that Iran would be holding a military drill in the Indian Ocean. The drill named Veleyat 93 is scheduled to be held late December in the 10 degree geographical latitude. This is Iran's way to show that future military drills by their navy would not be limited to its own territorial waters. Iran says that this is in line with its commitment to the security of international waters and protecting Iran's and other merchant vessels from pirate attacks.¹⁰

Iranophobia mitigated through anti-piracy missions

The Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said that the Iranian Navy forces were present in international waters, including the Pacific Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, with the aim of eradicating the Iranophobia schemes, strengthening ties with these regions' littoral states, and sending a message of peace and friendship to all these countries. According to him, the navy, through its anti-piracy missions, has been successful to send a message of peace and friendship to the international community.¹¹

⁷ "India in talks with 24 nations over maritime intelligence", *Deccan Herald*, November 20, 2014, <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/443084/india-talks-24-nations-over.html>

⁸ "Indonesia declares war on illegal foreign fishing boats", *Jakarta Globe*, November 18, 2014, at <http://thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/indonesia-declares-war-illegal-foreign-fishing-boats/>

⁹ "India, Indonesia set to boost defence ties", *Business Standard*, November 28, 2014, http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-indonesia-set-to-boost-defence-ties-114112800516_1.html

¹⁰ "Iran to hold military drills in Indian Ocean", *Trend*, November 15, 2014, <http://en.trend.az/iran/society/2333404.html>

¹¹ "Anti-Piracy missions help thwart Iranophobia: Iranian armed forces", *Tasnim News Agency*, November 29, 2014, <http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/573380>

Kenya and Somalia tense over maritime border dispute

Kenya and Somalia are fighting in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to resolve their dispute over the maritime boundary in the Indian Ocean. Somalia had initiated proceedings against Kenya in the ICJ in August 2014. Kenya argues that its maritime boundary should run east from the point where it touches the Indian Ocean, while Somalia argues that the boundary should take a south-east direction if its border with Kenya runs continuously from land into the ocean. The acceptance of Somalia's position will put Kenya in a loss of more than 100,000 sq km of territorial waters. It will also leave a small triangle in Indian Ocean without free access to the high seas. As each delimitation of a maritime border by the court is unique, it may be difficult to predict the kind of decision the court will make in the Kenya-Somalia case. The court would be a solution only in case the parties agree with its decision. In case of disagreement of either of the parties, there are chances of conflict between the countries in long term. Given Kenya's military strength and Somalia's weakness, Kenya can acquire the disputed territorial waters by manifesting power and authority over the contested territorial waters on a continuous basis.¹²

Mauritius signs surveillance aircraft deal with India's HAL

The Government of Mauritius signed an US\$ 16 million contract with India's aerospace company Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to acquire its Dornier aircraft for maritime surveillance. The acquisition of Dornier aircraft by the National Coast Guard, Mauritius Police Force, would enhance their

current search and rescue capabilities extensively and provide strategic depth in securing the extensive exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The HAL, in the past, has supplied to Mauritius the Cheetah, Chetak and Dhruv helicopters as well as two Dornier aircrafts in maritime version. According to the HAL, those aircrafts were equipped with a combination of 360 degree Surveillance Radar, Traffic Collision and Avoidance System, Forward Looking Infra-Red System, Weather Radar and host of other customer specified sensors.¹³

Mauritius court acquits 12 Somalis of piracy

Twelve Somali men on trial for piracy in Mauritius were acquitted on November 6, 2015. According to the court, the prosecution could not provide enough evidence to prove the guilt of the accused. The acquitted men were accused of attacking the Panama-registered container ship MSC Jasmine in the Indian Ocean on January 2013. They were apprehended by the European naval forces and transferred to Mauritius for trial that began in October 2013.¹⁴

Mozambique's Nacala port visited by India's stealth frigate

On November 17, 2014, Indian Naval Ship Teg, a guided missile stealth frigate with formidable arsenal, visited the Nacala Port of Mozambique. It was there on a goodwill visit aiming at furthering and strengthening the ties between the two nations. Officials calls and receptions were planned onboard the ship during the stay in harbour. India and Mozambique enjoy traditionally friendly relations. They are also members of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), a voluntary initiative of 35 countries of the Indian Ocean Region. The port call was a part of India's venture to

¹² "Kenya-Somalia ocean dispute could spark war", *The Star*, November 13, 2014, at <http://the-star.co.ke/news/kenya-somalia-ocean-dispute-could-spark-war>

¹³ "Mauritius inks Rs 100 crore deal with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for Dornier aircraft", *The Economic Times*, November 28, 2014, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-11-28/news/56540254_1_dornier-hal-chairman-hindustan-aeronautics-limited

¹⁴ "12 Somalis acquitted of piracy in Mauritius", *Sabahi*, November 7, 2014, at http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2014/11/07/newsbrief-06

underscore its solidarity with countries of the Indian Ocean Region.¹⁵

South African Navy prepares for a revamp

Dr Sam Gulube, the Secretary for Defence, South Africa, in the latest report (2013-14) of the Department of Defence, recognised the lack of resources for the South African Navy, both in terms of manpower and equipment. He also stated that the “delivery of replacement equipment for the SA Navy is planned for January 2016.” In early 2014, the South African Navy Chief, Vice Admiral Mosuwa Hlongwane, had said that the maritime arm of service was “on track” to renew its offshore patrol and hydrographic capabilities. The country also plans to replace its 43-year old hydrographic vessel as it had recently organised a bidders’ conference, arranged by the Armaments Corporation of South Africa SOC Ltd (Armscor). The Department of Defence had also placed contract for two harbour tugs and logistic support for the SA Navy in January 2014. The delivery of the tugs is to be completed by January 2016. President Jacob Zuma also announced in October 2014 that South Africa would actively expand its ocean economy that would inevitably include “marine protection services and ocean governance.” As President Zuma wants results by 2017, the naval forces would require more budget allocations. Therefore, the South African Navy is to be allocated more money for Maritime Defence in the coming years. The 2014-15 budget allocation for maritime defence was R3.6 billion that would rise to R3.7 billion in 2015-16.¹⁶

South Africa gets involved in counter-piracy activities in the Indian Ocean

In 2010, Somali pirates had struck off Mozambique’s coast, and the South African Department of Defence responded to this attack by deploying warships in Mozambique. Since that incident, South Africa has openly given its support in identifying non-traditional security threats prevailing in the Indian Ocean and examine their causes and trends as an essential first step to respond to these challenges. Counter-piracy activities have also allowed South Africa to get involved in frontiers farther away from home and effectively assisting neighbours through collaborative efforts while keeping the trouble at a safe distance from South Africa’s doorstep.¹⁷

China docks submarine in Sri Lankan port

Sri Lanka allowed a Chinese warship and a submarine to dock at a port in the capital of Colombo. The frequency of Chinese submarine visits in the Indian Ocean Region has become a concern for India. Previously, India had raised concerns over an aircraft maintenance facility in Sri Lanka’s eastern port city of Trincomalee, which India considers a strategic location in national security terms. However, according to Sri Lankan navy spokesman Kosala Warnakulasuriya, this is nothing unusual. Since 2010, 230 warships have called at Colombo port from various countries on goodwill visits, for refuelling and crew refreshment. Although the recent docking of the Chinese submarines in the

¹⁵ “Indian Naval Ship Teg visits Nacala, Mozambique”, *Business Standard*, November 17, 2014, at http://www.business-standard.com/article/government-press-release/indian-naval-ship-teg-visits-nacala-mozambique-114111701138_1.html

¹⁶ “Navy can look forward to new equipment in 2016”, *Defence Web*, November 4, 2014, at http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36865:navy-can-look-forward-to-new-equipment-in-2016&catid=51:Sea

¹⁷ “Djibouti: Piracy, a non-traditional threats to security”, *Geeska Africa Online*, November 9, 2014, at <http://www.geeskaafrika.com/djibouti-piracy-a-non-traditional-threats-to-security/6280/>

Indian Ocean has been explained as a part of the larger mission of fighting against piracy in the Gulf of Aden, this, according to India, is an uncommon practice raising questions about the true intentions of the Chinese in the Indian Ocean Region.¹⁸

Sri Lanka committed to fight piracy in the Indian Ocean

Sri Lanka has formed a unique public-private model to combat piracy in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden. The 4th UAE Counter Piracy Conference was held in Dubai from October 29-30, 2014. This International Conference was attended by more than 600 delegates, including representatives from over 50 government and non-government organisations and senior industry and business executives. During the two days, both public and private sector participants from Sri Lanka and around the world had a productive dialogue about countering maritime piracy. The Sri Lankan delegation reiterated that their country would support the regional and global initiatives taken by partner countries for the enhancement of maritime security.¹⁹

Tanzanian Navy trains with the EU NAVFOR

In support of EUCAP Nestor's initiative to conduct Local Maritime Capability Building, European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) warship BNS Leopold, hosted the Tanzanian Navy personnel for training on November 19 & 20, 2014. The warship was on a port visit to Dar-es-Salaam. Several workshops covering topics from Global Maritime Distress System (GMDSS), first aid techniques, evidence and detainee

handling, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and diving were organised onboard the warship. The Tanzanian personnel were also demonstrated about the conduct of the warship's boarding operations during a full-fledged counter-piracy operation.²⁰

Tanzanian defence delegation visits Seychelles' air surveillance capabilities

As part of a regional exchange programme organised by the European Union's mission EUCAP Nestor, a high level delegation from the Tanzania Peoples' Defence Forces (TPDF) visited Seychelles for meetings and knowledge exchanges with the Seychelles Air Force (SAF). This visit was the first of its kind between Tanzania and Seychelles. The Tanzanian delegation assessed air surveillance capability of the SAF that has been developed in cooperation with the EUCAP Nestor. The SAF has played an important role in safety of maritime zone through air surveillance in cooperation with international partners such as India and the EU. Colonel Kapinga, the head of the Tanzanian delegation, met with the Chief of Seychelles Peoples' Defence Forces (SPDF) Brigadier Leopold Payet and appreciated this "cooperative and collegiate approach which will greatly assist the future Tanzanian Air Surveillance capabilities."²¹

Tanzania conducts historic joint naval exercise with China

Tanzania and China had a month-long joint naval training exercise for the first time in the history of their bilateral military relationship. The exercise named Beyond/Transcend 2014 was formally concluded by

¹⁸ "Chinese submarine in Sri Lanka; India concerned", *The Maritime Executive*, November 2, 2014, at <http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/Chinese-Submarine-in-Sri-Lanka-India-Concerned-2014-11-02>

¹⁹ "Sri Lanka has a unique model to fight piracy in the Indian Ocean", *Asian Tribune*, November 9, 2014, at <http://www.asiantribune.com/node/85808>

²⁰ "EU Navfor warship trains with Tanzanian Navy", *Defence Web*, November 25, 2014, at http://www.defencewebsite.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37183:eu-nafor-warship-trains-with-tanzanian-navy&catid=108:maritime-security&Itemid=233

²¹ "Tanzanian and Seychelles' militaries share notes on air surveillance capabilities", *Seychelles News Agency*, November 11, 2014, at <http://www.seychellesnewsagency.com/articles/1747/Tanzanian+and+Seychelles+militaries+share+notes+on+air+surveillance+capabilities>

a ceremony at the Kigamboni Naval Base on November 14, 2014. Although the official opening ceremony was held on October 21, the exercise between the navies of the two countries had kicked off in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, on October 16, 2014. More than 100 navy officers and seamen participated in the exercise. Counter-terrorism activity against 'international terrorists' was one of the main scenarios during the exercise. Tanzania has emerged as a key country for the Peoples' Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) as it intensifies its naval deployments in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).²²

Operation Atalanta against maritime piracy extended up to December 2016

Operation Atalanta, the European Union (EU) counter-piracy effort off the coast of Somalia has been

extended to December 12, 2016. The operation focuses on protection of World Food Programme (WFP) vessels going to Somalia and deterring and disruption of piracy off the Somali coast. It also monitors fishing activities in the area. The Operation was launched in 2008. However, despite significant progress regarding its objectives, it has only been able to fracture the pirate business model, not break that. A number of new secondary tasks has been added to the Operation's mandate by the EU Council. Including support to the EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, the EU Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) will now contribute, within existing means and capabilities, to other relevant international community activities to address the root causes of piracy in Somalia. The operation, for the period of its extension, is likely to cost the EU about €14.7 million.²³

²² "China and Tanzania conclude historic naval exercise", *Defence Web*, November 18, 2014, at http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?Itemid=106&catid=51:Sea&id=37029:china-and-tanzania-conclude-historic-naval-exercise&option=com_content&view=article

²³ "Anti-piracy Operation Atalanta extended to December 2016", *Defence Web*, November 24, 2014, at http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37119:anti-piracy-operation-atalanta-extended-to-december-2016&catid=108:maritime-security

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Tourism Australia signs a deal with Singapore Airlines to promote tourism

On November 10, 2014, Tourism Australia announced a new three-year marketing deal worth US\$12 million with Singapore Airlines to attract foreign tourists from many countries, especially India. According to the latest official data, 14,200 visitors from India travelled to Australia during September 2014, bringing the total number for the period from January to September to 140,400. This is an increase of 17.8 per cent compared to the same period in the year 2013. Tourism Australia said that the agreement will see the two countries jointly fund a range of tourism campaigns and promotional activities in seven of Australia's key inbound markets including India, the United Kingdom, Germany and China. Singapore Airlines will be the exclusive airline partner for all 'Restaurant Australia' campaigns in Singapore, India, Indonesia and Malaysia as well as provide international flights for Tourism Australia's key Corroboree Europe trade event, taking place in Adelaide in 2015.²⁴

Bangladesh is the fourth largest sweet-water fish producer

According to The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture report, 2014, by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), Bangladesh is the fourth largest sweet-water fish producer in the world. The country had launched extensive campaigns during the 1990s to increase fish cultivation. As a result, self-reliance in fish production is no longer a dream for the country. The

success of Bangladeshi fish farmers has been repeatedly cited as an example for other countries. China, India and Myanmar are the first three sweet water fish cultivators, according to the report. Despite its government offers little cooperation to the fish farmers to avail agricultural loans, the FAO sees Bangladesh as a country that holds the largest potential for future. The country has been considered as the best place for sweet water fish cultivation.²⁵

India signs new oil deal with Mozambique

The Government of India has given approval for an oil and gas deal with Mozambique. It is expected to promote trade, investment and technological transfers while synergising both the countries in upstream and downstream activities. A Mozambique Government statement said, "Mozambique is strategically located near India and is ideally suited for bringing natural gas to India. The participation of Indian energy companies will facilitate access to liquefied natural gas (LNG) for the growing Indian gas market." The gas reserves in Mozambique have increased from 5 trillion cubic feet to over 200 trillion cubic feet in the past five years and an investment of about US\$50 billion can fully harness the gas discovered around the northern coast of the country.²⁶

Ashtamudi clam fishery gets the first MSC certificate for India

The Ashtamudi short-neck clam fishery in Kerala, India, has received the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

²⁴ "Tourism Australia, Singapore Airlines sign 12 million dollar deal", *The Economic Times*, November 10, 2014 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-11-10/news/55955955_1_singapore-airlines-tourism-australia-mak-sweet-wah

²⁵ "Bangladesh stands fourth in fish production", *Prothom Alo*, November 7, 2014, at <http://en.prothom-alo.com/bangladesh/news/56042/Bangladesh-stands-fourth-in-fish-production>

²⁶ "India, Mozambique enter new oil deal", *Ventures Africa*, November 3, 2014, at <http://www.ventures-africa.com/2014/11/india-mozambique-enter-new-oil-deal/>

Certificate for its sustainable practices. This is the third fishery in Asia to have received this recognition. This would help bring global sustainability standards in fisheries for the benefit of conservation and local livelihoods. Ashtamudi clam fishery dates back to 1981 and supports around 3000 fishing people involved in clam processing and trade. The Ashtamudi Lake is a Ramsar wetland with mangrove habitats harboring nearly 90 species of fish and 10 species of clams.²⁷

India to offer ocean science training to more Indian Ocean countries

Under a pact signed between India's Earth Sciences Ministry and Unesco, India would train more countries in Asia and Africa regarding ocean sciences and services. The training centre at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (Incois), Hyderabad, has already conducted four international training workshops over the year 2014, drawing participants from Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. India has the capacity and infrastructure to train and help other countries of the Indian Ocean Region in the field of ocean sciences. The Incois will offer the training to scientists, administrators and policy makers from the Indian Ocean Rim countries in ocean behaviour modelling, ocean data management and standard response protocols for cyclones, tsunamis and satellite-aided search and rescue missions.²⁸

Malaysia's Sabah becomes the first ground for commercially bred lobster

Sabah in Malaysia has become the world's first breeding ground for commercially hatched lobster. The ground

breaking milestone has been set at the Integrated Lobster Aquaculture Park (iLAP) Mini Commercial Hatchery in Tuaran. The feat is being seen as a leap in Sabah's aquaculture technology that would bring Malaysia a step closer to the US\$4 billion annual global market for lobsters. Only a few people in the world have the knowledge of the 11 stages technology to successfully culture lobsters on commercial scale. No country had ever been successful in breeding large edible lobsters in captivity before. Sabah, with its natural tropical environment, has become a landmark in this regard.²⁹

The South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission Secretariat shifts to Mozambique

With the signing of a Host Agreement between Mozambique and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission's Secretariat has been shifted to Maputo, the capital of Mozambique. Earlier, the SWIOFC's secretariat was located in Harare, Zimbabwe. The SWIOFC is consists of the coastal states that are FAO Members and their territories are situated wholly or partly within the area of the Commission. Comoros, France, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen are the current 12 members of the group. Although Zimbabwe is home to the FAO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, it is not a member of the SWIOFC. Therefore, the secretariat has been shifted after Mozambique proposed to host it. The move is expected to increase the involvement of the partner countries in the Commission's work.³⁰

²⁷ "India gets its first MSC certified fishery", *WWF Global*, November 5, 2014, at http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?232416/India-gets-its-first-MSC-certified-fishery

²⁸ "India to widen ocean science training", *The Telegraph*, November 24, 2014, at http://www.telegraphindia.com/1141125/jsp/nation/story_19084400.jsp#.VMCaECwprdE

²⁹ "World's first commercially hatched lobster in Sabah", *The Star Online*, November 16, 2014, at <http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/11/16/Lobster-Worlds-first-hatched/>

³⁰ "South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission moves to Mozambique", *The Fish Site*, November 20, 2014, at <http://www.thefishsite.com/fishnews/24573/south-west-indian-ocean-fisheries-commission-moves-to-mozambique>

Oman and China to invest in the development of economic zone and port in Tanzania

The Sultanate of Oman's State General Reserve Fund, Chinese port and free zone operator, China Merchants and the Tanzanian government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for development of the special economic zone and port in the Bagamoyo area of the Republic of Tanzania. The MoU was signed on October 26, 2014, but the details came out on November 1, 2014. The investment signifies a strategic commercial vision that links East Africa to Asia through the Indian Ocean. For Chinese industry, which relies on stable and efficient infrastructure support, it represents a strong partnership that will assist in its trade with East Africa.³¹

Seychelles and Mauritius renegotiate old air services agreement to improve air links

Seychelles and Mauritius have negotiated new terms and conditions to amend an air service agreement they had signed in April 1997. They have decided to revamp and strengthen air links between them. The new agreement is for higher safety and security levels in accordance with the international obligations. It arranges for the highly sought flexibilities for the operations of codeshare flights in the region and beyond. It also provides for tariff liberalisation and cooperative arrangements between the two countries' airlines. Many Seychellois make the 1758 km and two and a half hour long trip to Mauritius for holiday, shopping, business and medical treatment. Mauritius is ranked second on the list of countries most visited by Seychellois nationals after Dubai.³²

SICCI and the Indian diplomatic mission to support Singapore companies investing in India

Indian High Commission in Singapore and the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce (SICCI) would work together to facilitate Singaporean companies that want to venture into India. SICCI chairman R Theyvendran in a function organised on the occasion of Diwali on November 26, 2014, said, "SICCI will set up a one-stop centre to provide advisory services on setting up of businesses in India". He also said that SICCI's Trade Match Programme is designed for the business community to build collaboration and networks, facilitate learning and improve capacity to enhance business practices in Singapore and around the region. SICCI along with Singapore Business Federation would also lead a business designation in Vibrant Gujarat festival to be held in January 2015. The chamber also plans an international trade conference which would bring together businessmen from the South East Asian region in 2015.³³

Tanzania denies any plan for eviction of Maasai people for tourism hunting reserve

There are reports that the Maasai people of Tanzania's Serengeti face possible eviction by the Government to provide a hunting reserve for the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Royal family. Such a proposal by the government was discarded in 2013 but it is now back with the plan. About 40,000 semi-nomadic Maasai people with their distinct culture live on the 1,500 square kilometer "wildlife corridor" bordering Serengeti National Park in Tanzania. For Maasai people, the sale of the land to

³¹ "Oman to invest in development of economic zone and Bagamoyo Port in Tanzania", *Times of Oman*, November 1, 2014, at <http://www.timesofoman.com/News/42040/Article-Oman-to-invest-in-development-of-economic-zone-and-Bagamoyo-Port-in-Tanzania>

³² "Seychelles and Mauritius renew 17 year old Air Services Agreement in a bid to improve air links", *Seychelles News Agency*, November 6, 2014, at <http://www.seychellesnewsagency.com/articles/1719/Seychelles+and+Mauritius+renew++year+old+air+services+agreement+in+a+bid+to+improve+air+links>

³³ "Singapore Chamber of Commerce and Industry to help firms investment in India", *The Economic Times*, November 26, 2014, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-11-26/news/56490207_1_venture-india-indian-high-commission-sicci

the government would in some way or another impact the lives of at least 80,000 people. The government, in return for the sale, has proposed to offer an investment of US\$590,000 in socio-economic projects, that the Maasai people have refused. Meanwhile, the government authorities have denied the existence of any such plans.³⁴ It stated in a press release that it “has never had any plan to evict the Maasai people from their ancestral land as falsely reported by the media in recent days.”³⁵

Tanzania to subsidise modern fishing gear for farmers

Fishermen in Tanzania would be helped by their government through subsidy to buy modern fishing gear. Kaika Telele, Tanzania’s Deputy Minister for Livestock Development, informed that the government has set aside about US\$1.27 million for the purpose during 2014-15. A recent report by the Tanzanian marine authorities says that if the government effectively invests in the fishing industry, the country has the potential of making an annual profit of at least US\$50 million. Tanzania has huge packs of tuna fish in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the Indian Ocean that could be harnessed using modern technology.³⁶

IORA tourism ministers discuss sustainable growth of tourism industry

Firdaus Dahlan, the Director of the Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), in a meeting of its members, stated that there is a need for enhanced cooperation between the member states to further develop the tourism industry as it is one of the six agendas of the organisation. Each member country present at the meeting expressed commitment to adopt an active approach for the growth of the tourism industry in the region. During the meet, it was felt that more profitable and sustainable measures should be explored for the further growth of the Indian Ocean tourism industry. The delegates at the meeting discussed ways to improve air and maritime connectivity and also various forms of tourism products. Cruise tourism that Seychelles wants to prioritise in the region was also high on the agenda. The delegates agreed to have a permanent committee on tourism development that would be supported and strengthened by individual subcommittees in each member state.³⁷

³⁴ “Tanzania’s tourism poster people face eviction so Dubai royalty can hunt”, *eTN*, November 17, 2014, at <http://www.eturbonews.com/52629/tanzanias-tourism-poster-people-face-eviction-so-dubai-royalty-c>

³⁵ “Tanzania statement on relocation of Maasai tribesmen to establish a tourism hunting ground”, *eTN*, November 28, 2014, at <http://www.eturbonews.com/53050/tanzania-statement-relocation-maasai-tribesmen-establish-tourism>

³⁶ “Tanzania government plans to subsidise fishers to buy new gear”, *East African Business Week*, November 30, 2014, at <http://www.busiweek.com/index1.php?Ctp=2&pl=2325&pLv=3&srI=84&spl=463>

³⁷ “IORA tourism ministers plan better air and maritime links for Indian Ocean tourism growth”, *Seychelles News Agency*, November 23, 2014, at <http://www.seychellesnewsagency.com/articles/1812/IORA+tourism+ministers+plan+better+air+and+maritime+links+for+Indian+Ocean+tourism+growth>

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS/ DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

India-Bangladesh can jointly save the Sunderbans

During discussions on the key recommendations and findings of a project - 'Ecosystem For Life: Bangladesh-India Initiative' – Sugata Hazra, Director, School of Oceanographic Studies (SOS), Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, said that India and Bangladesh must save the joint Sunderbans mangrove ecosystem by collaborating to facilitate and maintain a flow of fresh water in the area round the year. More than two-thirds of the Sunderbans, world's largest mangrove forest, lies in Bangladesh and the rest in the state of West Bengal, India. The project was carried out by a joint research team from India and Bangladesh on environmental flow assessment methodology for the Sunderbans ecosystem. The livelihood and wellbeing of the people living in the area depend on these ecosystems. The area is also a Unesco world heritage site known for its exceptional biodiversity in flora and fauna. According to the project findings, the present level of flow is insufficient to maintain the ecosystem. More water is needed during the lean period. The findings of the joint study show that if the designated amount of fresh water is pumped into the mangrove ecosystem, then flora and fauna could be stabilised to what it was two decades ago.³⁸

Bangladesh Government to provide three million solar home systems to rural families

Bangladesh Government would provide solar home systems (SHS) to three million more rural families in

by 2017. The programme is a part of the scheme to produce 24,000 megawatt electricity in the country by 2021; including 10 per cent from solar power. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that the government is also engaging the neighbouring countries to enhance regional cooperation in the power sector. Electrification in Bangladesh has taken strides since 2009. About 38 per cent of the population of the country is still not having access to electricity and Prime Minister Hasina had made an electoral promise to provide every household with electricity connection. She is trying to fulfil her promise through solar power. She also informed that the existing diesel-run pumps and mini-grids of the country would be replaced by solar powered irrigation pumps and mini-grid projects gradually.³⁹

Trawl net fishing would be banned in Malaysia from 2016

Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Minister of Malaysia, informed that the use of trawl nets for fishing will be banned with the beginning of the year 2016. Zone B, the area between eight and 15 nautical miles (14.8 km and 28 km) from the shore, would be the first to experience the ban that may be extended further after discussions with fishermen associations and concerned agencies. The minister said some 5,000 trawler boat operators in Malaysia have also been advised to use the purse seine or *pukat jerut* while fishing from next year in order to protect the interests of inshore fishermen operating in Zone A (less than 14 km from the shore). Purse seine nets, according to scientific studies, are more suitable

³⁸ "India-Bangladesh collaboration can save Sunderbans: Experts", *The Times of India*, November 22, 2014, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/India-Bangladesh-collaboration-can-save-Sunderbans-Experts/articleshow/45242965.cms>

³⁹ "Bangladesh unveils solar power plan for 3 mn rural families", *Gulf Times*, November 5, 2014, at <http://www.gulf-times.com/bangladesh/245/details/415109/bangladesh-unveils-solar-power-plan-for-3mn-rural-families>

for Zone B and further as they put less impact on the marine ecosystem compared with trawl nets.⁴⁰

US\$46.3 million approved for Mozambique's conservation project

To support the implementation of a conservation project prepared by the Mozambican government, the World Bank has approved a grant of US\$40 million through the International Development Association (IDA). The World Bank also announced that the project, named as Mozibo, for conservation of areas for biodiversity and development would benefit from an additional donation of US\$6.3 million from the World Environment Fund (WEF). The Bank pointed out that Mozambique has a great diversity of habitats with 5,500 species of plants, 222 mammals and 600 birds, most of which are endemic. But the level of conservation tourism income and investments in the country is very low. The project intends to improve both the management of the conservation areas and the lives of local communities.⁴¹

A new drift model being worked upon to locate the debris of MH370

Australia is working on new drift modelling to expand the geographical area in which wreckage from missing Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 may come ashore, said the Australian search coordinator Peter Foley on November 26, 2014. Initial analysis had suggested that the first debris from the plane could come ashore on

Indonesia's Western Sumatra after about 123 days. Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) Chief Commissioner Martin Dolan, on November 25, 2014, dismissed suggestions that there was disagreement among the five groups that make up the international team on where to search.⁴²

A fourfold rise in ship traffic between 1992 to 2012 increases risk of ocean pollution

A study published on October 20, 2014, in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*, said that with increase in global trade, the period between 1992 and 2012 has witnessed a four-fold increase in shipping traffic. Author of the study, Jean Tournadre, an oceanographer at French Institute for Marine Research (IFREMER), said that cargo shipping accounts for much of the growth. The biggest increase in ship traffic between 1992 and 2012 has been along popular shipping lanes in the Indian Ocean and the Chinese seas. Maritime shipping supports about 90 per cent of global trade and most of this shipping relies on a few strategic routes that must accommodate both growing traffic and larger ships. In 2000, the biggest container ship could carry about 8,000 containers. In 2013, the biggest ships hauled 18,000 containers. Therefore, shipping traffic is one of many human activities in the ocean that has a heavy impact on the marine environment. The effects include air pollution, ocean noise, oil spills and spread of invasive species.⁴³

⁴⁰ "Ban on trawl net fishing from 2016", *The Star Online*, November 3, 2014, at <http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/11/03/Ban-on-trawl-net-fishing-from-2016-Minister-Move-to-protect-interests-of-inshore-fishermeng/>

⁴¹ "Mozambique receives US\$46.3 million for conservation project", *macauhub*, November 20, 2014, at <http://www.macauhub.com.mo/en/2014/11/20/mozambique-receives-us46-3-million-for-conservation-project/>

⁴² "Australia working on new drift modelling for MH370 wreckage", *Reuters*, November 26, 2014, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/26/malaysia-airlines-australia-idUSL3N0TG1FB20141126>

⁴³ "Ship traffic increases dramatically, to oceans' detriment", *Live Science*, November 18, 2014, at <http://www.livescience.com/48788-ocean-shipping-big-increase-satellites.html>

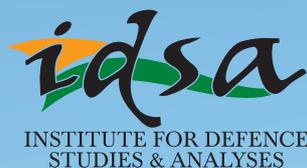
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This newsletter, compiled by the IDSA covers the recent developments in the fields of maritime security, economic cooperation and environmental concerns/ disaster risk management in the various countries of the Indian Ocean region.



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