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MARITIME SECURITY PHYSICAL AND ASSET SECURITY RISK CONSULTING SECURITY SYSTEMS



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Issue 299 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the fragile and conflict affected coastal states Libya, Somalia and Yemen. The Mediterranean migrant crisis, incidents affecting maritime security and influencing maritime news are also reported and analysed, focusing on the keys theatres of maritime instability.

The Security and Risk Report Series focuses on:

- Operational risks in areas of instability which could affect the safety of commercial and private vessels and personnel ashore and at sea.
- In country reporting on key countries where civil conflict are directly impacting on maritime operations; and
- Reporting and analysis of incidents of terrorism, piracy and other related criminal activity.

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Gulf of Guinea

The crew of NNS Beechcroft has apprehended a group of pipeline vandalism suspects at Snake Island, Nigerian media reported on Sept. 20th. At Snake Island, a boat laden with 11 kegs of 50 litres each of PMS was intercepted and five suspects were arrested by NNS BEECROFT patrol team during a routine harbour patrol. This Day reported.

Incidents:

1. On 14th Sept. at some point overnight, intruders boarded a MV and stole equipment in position 05°59'N-012°24'E. They left without being detected. Reported by MDAT-GoG.
2. On the 11th September at 0820 UTC, a MV noticed 7 skiffs coming from starboard side. 3 skiffs approached the vessel at a distance of 0.3Nm and altered their courses to be parallel with the vessel. After half an hour the skiffs were out of sight and vessel continued her route. Vessel and crew reported safe.

Navy hands over three suspected rice smugglers to Customs in Calabar

The Nigerian Navy Ship, NNS, Victory has arrested and handed over three suspected rice smugglers to the Area Command of the Nigeria Customs Service ,NCS, of Cross River and Akwa Ibom, Vanguard reported on Sept. 20th. The men were caught with 1209 smuggled bags of par-boiled rice at Fairway bouy. Rice smuggling is an ongoing issue for Nigeria. .

Multinational Maritime Coordinating Centre claims success

Ghana media reports that the Multinational Maritime Coordinating Centre (MMCC) has reportedly successfully deterred a number of potential pirate attacks. The acting Director, Commander Yussif Benning, said that in at least 16 cases, pirate attacks had been prevented and vessels warned of the potential threat to security. Commander Benning added that ransoms paid to pirates in the region ranged from \$50,000 to \$150,000 and sometimes more. "This is a worrying trend that can only be resolved through increased information exchange and coordination between vessels and reporting and response agencies in the Gulf of Guinea Region", he said.

New patrol boats for Ghana Navy

Defence Web reported on Sept. 16th that Ghana had agreed a deal with US company, SAFE Boats, to supply two Defender

class boats by the end of Sept. 2023. The two 38-foot vessels will be used in anti-piracy and maritime security operations and are part of Ghana's moves to expand the navy and enhance its maritime security capacity.

Niger Delta amnesty programme called a sham

In the last week, several prominent ex-militants and community leaders have called the Presidential Amnesty Programme a sham, Nigerian media reports. Aimed at rehabilitating former militants and offering them training and financial support to re-enter society, the scheme has reportedly been subject to fraud and criticism. Reuters reported on Sept. 16th that projects have stalled in some cases as people in positions of power have demanded financial kickbacks. The amnesty is one of the few ways the government has to prevent further violence by militants in the Niger Delta.

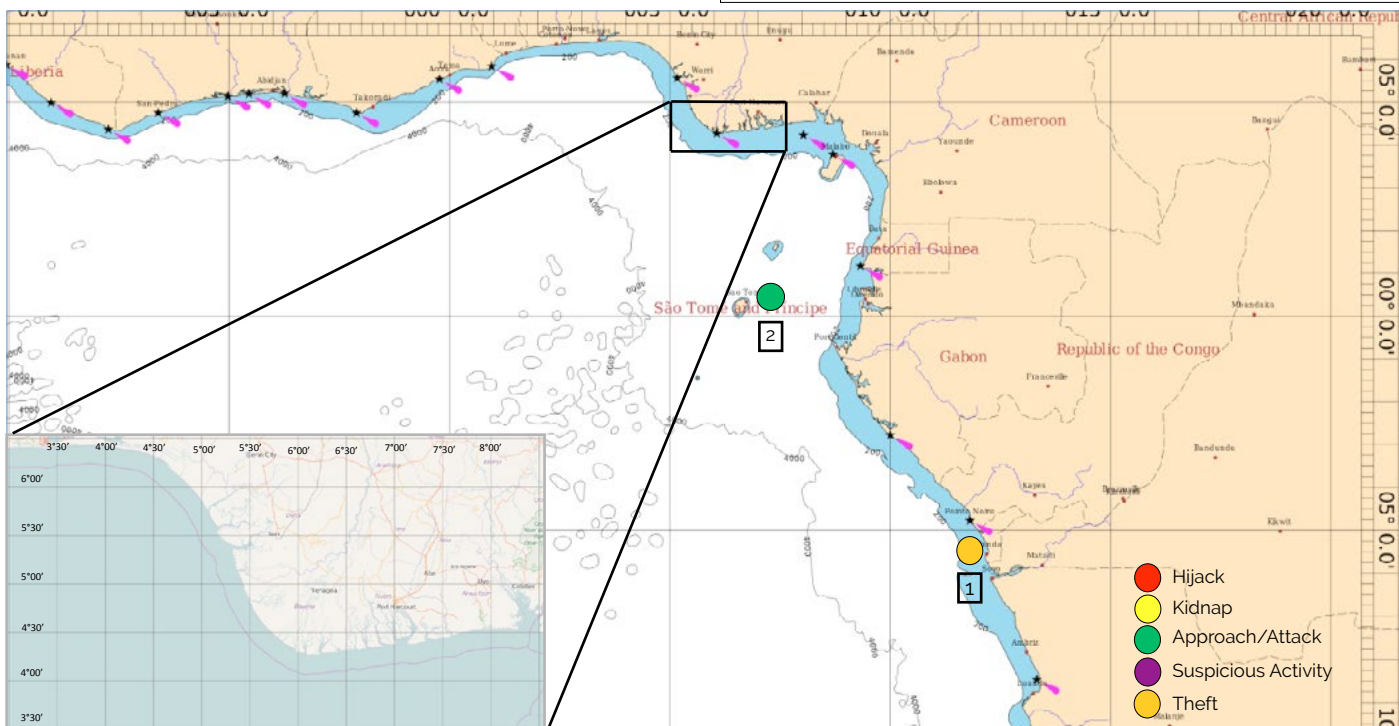
For further information and to see MAST Services in the region, [please click here.](#)

Gulf of Guinea Piracy & Maritime Crime Figures:

2021:
 Incidents reported: 41 (MDAT-GoG/Others)
 Crew kidnapped: 46 (IMB, MDAT)
 Vessels hijacked: 1 (MDAT-GoG)

2020:
 Incidents reported: 132 (MDAT-GoG)
 Crew Kidnapped: 130 (IMB)
 Vessels Hijacked: 3 (IMB)

2019:
 Incidents reported: 111 (MDAT-GoG)
 Crew kidnapped: 121 (IMB)
 Vessels hijacked: 4 (IMB)





Indian Ocean Region

From a new rail and road link that gives China overland access for the first time to the Indian Ocean via Myanmar to infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka's east and north, concerns are running high in India as its rival, China, edges closer to its coast. Analysts have told VOA. While India has long confronted China along their rugged Himalayan borders, the maritime challenge is also growing as relations with its Asian neighbor have worsened. Beijing, which has not condemned the army coup in Myanmar, is pressing ahead with bilateral projects that include a deep seaport in Myanmar's Kyaukpyu along the Bay of Bengal, VOA wrote on Sept. 16th.

Incidents:

1. Master of underway MV reported approach by two suspicious boats at 1410 UTC in position 13:08.44N - 043:06.52E approx 13nm West of Mokah. Boats w/ nine POB. Embarked AST showed weapons resulting in the boats departing the vicinity. Vessel and crew reported Safe. Reported (UKMTO) 18 Sept.

With Eye on Iran, Israeli Navy Steps Up Red Sea Presence

Israel's recently retired naval commander, Vice Adm. Eli Sharvit, told media that the country had increased its activities in the Red Sea "exponentially" in the wake of an increased threat from Iran, Associated Press reported on Sept. 16th. Sharvit's area of responsibility centred on the maritime security of Israel's Mediterranean and Red Sea coasts and he described Iran's activities as a top Israeli concern, Associated Press said.

Sri Lanka Navy seizes smuggled turmeric

As part of their ongoing drive against smuggling and other maritime crimes, the Sri Lanka Navy has apprehended four local suspects and a cargo of 3704kg of smuggled turmeric, Columbo Page reported on Sept. 19th. In a further incident, Sri Lanka Navy intercepted an Indian dhow believed to have been used for smuggling. A search led to the discovery of 2100kg of smuggled turmeric. It was taken in to custody along with the 10 crew members on board. In a separate operation, SLNS Gajaba of the North Central Naval Command, overnight on 17th Sept. in the lagoon area of South Bar, spotted a suspicious dinghy. Upon a search of the dinghy, the Navy managed to seize about 866kg and 200g of dried turmeric in 20 sacks, and a further four suspects.

Bright Star 2021 exercise concludes in Egypt

The multinational Bright Star exercise has concluded in Egypt.

with the Pakistan military attending for the first time in over a decade. Representatives of the country's army, air force and navy took part, along with 20 other countries, Pakistan media reported on Sept. 19th. The exercise was aimed at enhancing the capability to counter regional hybrid threats, strengthen regional stability by fostering combined force interoperability, joint force integration and enhance maritime security operations.

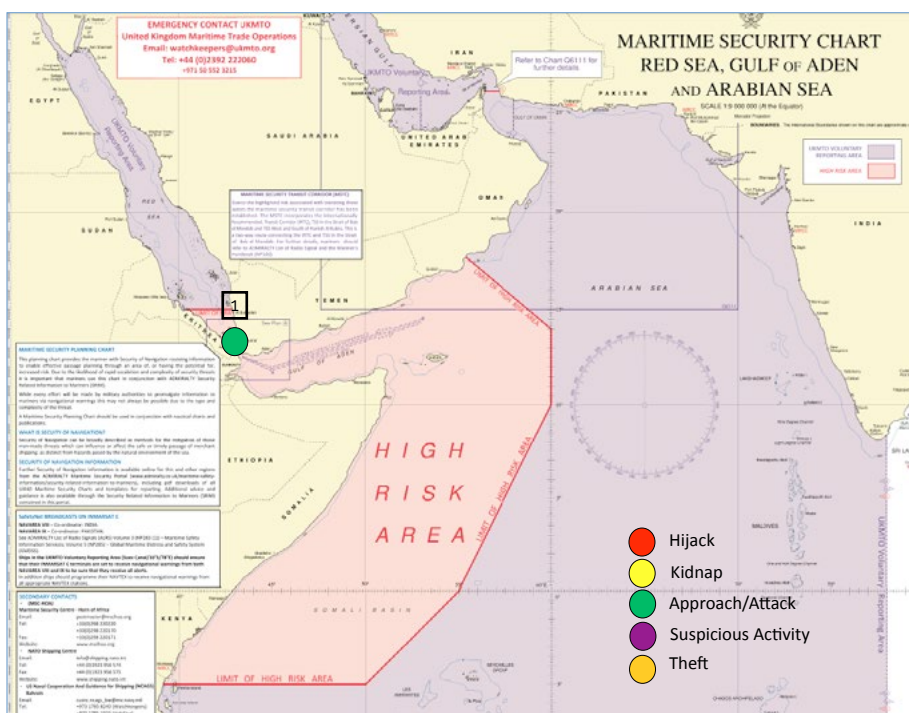
Indian Coast Guard Seizes Sea Cucumber Worth Rs 8 Crore In Mandapam

The Indian Coast Guard in Tamil Nadu has seized two tonnes of sea cucumber cargo, valued locally at Rs 8 crores. The incident took place on Sunday 19th, after a patrol noticed a boat behaving suspiciously near Pamban. Sea cucumbers are a popular delicacy in South East Asia, but the animal is considered an endangered species in India.

IFAN to update ME Gulf DGPS in safe navigation initiative

In a positive move for the region, the International Foundation for Aids to Navigation (IFAN), has announced a new investment of over \$1 million to improve safe navigation in the 'Middle East Gulf', Shiplsight reported on Sept. 16th. The money will be used to recapitalize Differential Global Positioning System sites as well as maintaining Aids to Navigation.

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





Somalia

Somalia's President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo has cut some of the prime minister's powers as a bitter rift between the two men intensifies. He accused Mohamed Hussein Roble of "taking reckless steps that could lead to a political and security crisis". But Mr Roble said he would not abide by the order, calling it unconstitutional. The dispute, fuelled by the mysterious disappearance of a female spy, raises fears of armed conflict on the streets of the capital between rival forces, BBC News reported.

UK expresses concern at political situation in Somalia

Vicky Ford, Minister for Africa, has issued a statement about the escalating political crisis in Somalia: "The UK is deeply concerned by the escalation of the current political crisis in Somalia. The situation threatens to undermine the credibility of Somalia's leadership and risks the safety and future of the Somali people. It is vital that Somalia's leaders refrain from unilateral actions that could deepen political tensions, including any further public statements and personnel announcements which could increase the risk of violence."

Malaysia Confirms Citizen Arrested in Somalia on Suspicion of Joining Al Shabaab Militants

Media in Malaysia on Sept. 20th reported that one of the country's citizens had been arrested in Somalia on suspicion of working with Al Shabaab. The man was named as Ahmad Mustakim Abdul Hamid and had allegedly been a member of the terror group for nine years. Although it is the first known case of a Malaysian joining the group, Al Shabaab members have tried to study in Malaysia, with several arrested in 2014.

5 people injured in landmine blast in central Somalia airport

Xinhau reported on Sept. 19th that at least five people had been injured and one reported dead after an explosion near Bulburte airport in the Hiran region of the country on Sunday. It is believed that Al Shabaab terrorists entered the airport on Saturday night and planted explosives which later detonated. A section of the airport, due to be opened soon, had been de-

stroyed by the blast, according to the District Commissioner. The airport is around 5km away from several Somali and AU army bases.

Somalia accuses Djibouti of detaining its security official

The President of Somalia has accused Djibouti of detaining his national security advisor, MENA FN reported on Sept. 17th. But Djibouti's Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Youssouf denied the allegations, tweeting: "There are fake news released in social media trying to create confusion and drag Djibouti into Somalia's internal challenges and crisis." He said a Turkish Airlines flight to Mogadishu did not take off from Djibouti due to what the company described as "technical problems", adding that one of the pilots was not authorised to land in the Somali capital, which meant all passengers would have to return to Istanbul, MENAFN stated.

Tension in capital as troops and police clash

Clashes between members of the Somali National Army and Haramcad police officers in Mogadishu on Thursday 16th, amid ongoing political upheaval in the country. Shots were reportedly fired during the clash, leaving eight people critically injured, and at least 10 wounded, including five civilians. The reason for the clash was blamed on a land dispute, Garowe Online reported, although it was unable to discover why this would spark a gunfight. However, the incident again highlights the tension in the country.

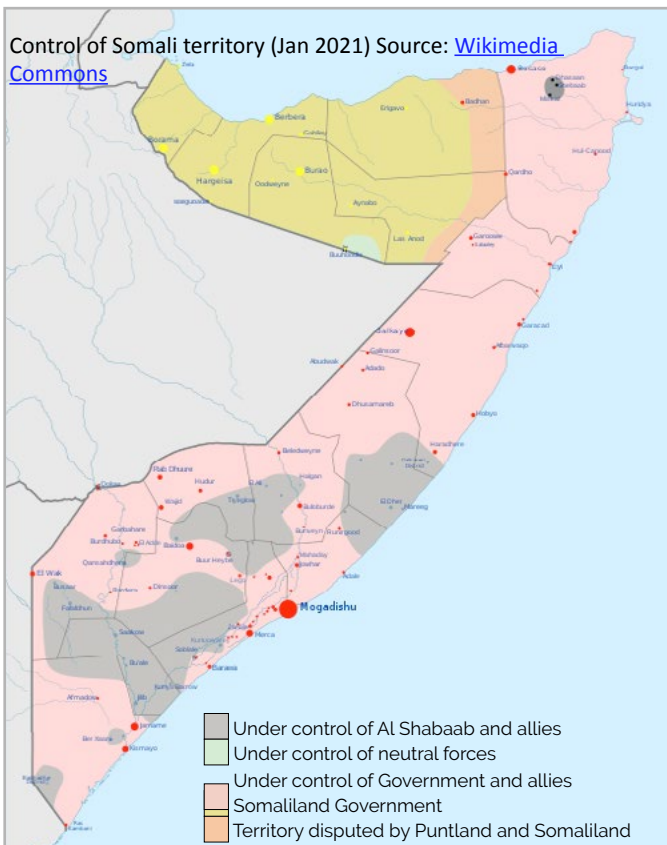
Analysis

On 8th February 2021, the Council of Presidential Candidates announced that they no longer recognise Mohamed as the President of Somalia since his constitutional term in office expired on 8th February without any agreement on the path toward elections to replace him. James Swan, the Special Representative and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia, confirmed that the electoral implementation tensions had been compounded by questions over the legitimacy of Mohamed's mandate following the expiry of his constitutional term in office, and that the growing political tensions threatened Somalia's State-building progress and even security. He encouraged Somalia's political leaders to "pull back from confrontation and avoid risky winner-take-all tactics". Over the past 6 weeks there have been numerous attacks against politicians, including former high ranking ministers and leaders, and attacks on journalists in Somalia. Specifically, Amnesty International has called on the Somali authorities to bring an end to the arbitrary arrest and persecution of journalists in Puntland.

Given the blatant disregard for the constitution by the current President, Somalia's political future as a nation state remains uncertain. Indeed, regional fragmentation may once again be on the cards, and this can only be to the benefit of Al Shabaab terrorists as well as criminal organisations who may be interested at some point in a return to piracy in the Indian Ocean.

Threat Assessment

There is a risk that complacency in some quarters has seen a reduction in PMSC presence in these waters that could result in a piracy success. A lack of adherence to BMP5 protocol, particularly not maintaining a safe distance off the coast, has increased risks to shipping. Merchant vessels would be wise to maintain the same distance from the coast, particularly ensuring that the Socotra Gap isn't taken. All vessels are advised to update risk assessments and register with UKMTO/MSCHOA prior to entering the Indian Ocean High Risk Area (HRA).



Yemen

Regional media report that two Houthi 'booby-trapped boats' were destroyed in the Red Sea this week. Coalition forces intercepted the vessels near the coastal area of As-Salif, in Hodeidah Governorate, and they were neutralised. The UAE has condemned the attempt by Houthis to disrupt shipping in the region. While the Houthis have used SVBIEDs in the past, this is the first reported incident in some months.

Houthi execute nine men amid international outcry

Al Jazeera reported on Sept. 18th that Houthi rebels had executed nine men convicted of being involved in the killing of Saleh al-Sammad, the Houthi's top civilian leader, who died in an air strike conducted by Saudi coalition forces in Hodeidah in 2018. The pro-rebel Saba news agency said on Saturday the nine were shot by a firing squad at a square in the Yemen capital. They were among 17 people convicted of involvement in his killing by a Houthi court, Al Jazeera reported.

Protests in Taiz over currency crisis

Middle East Monitor reported on Sept. 19th that locals staged a protest in Taiz to express ongoing frustration at the plunge in local currency values. This has led to an increase in prices and shop closures, MEM reported. Protesters blamed Houthi rebels, the Southern Transitional Council and the Yemen government for the situation, and protesters called for urgent government intervention to stop the currency's collapse and to provide oil derivatives and basic materials.

At Least 50 Killed in Yemen Clashes

Defence Post reported on on Sept. 16th that at least 50 Houthis and pro-government troops had been killed in fighting in AL-Bayda last week. "A colonel and 19 other loyalists were killed in the past 24 hours in fighting with the Houthi insurgents in AL-Bayda ditrict," a government military official said. He added that some 30 Houthi rebels had been killed during the operation. The Houthi leadership rarely mentions its casualty figures.

Saudi forces prevent drone attack on Jizan

Reuters reported on Sept. 17th that Saudi forces had intercepted four explosive-laded drones deployed by Houthi forces and intended to disrupt Aramco oil facilities in Jizan. A rocket was also destroyed during the attempted attack, OilPrice wrote. Houthi rebels have repeatedly targeted Saudi oil infrastructure in recent months.

Yemen asks GCC to support deteriorating economy

Middle East Monitor reported on Sept. 17th that Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak, Yemen's Foreign Minister, had called on the Gulf

Cooperation Council (GCC) to provide economic support to the country and assist with its economy. "We are suffering from an economic catastrophe and a deterioration in the economic and social development indicators in Yemen," the minister said at the 149th Ministerial Council session of the GCC held in the Saudi capital Riyadh, MEM reported.

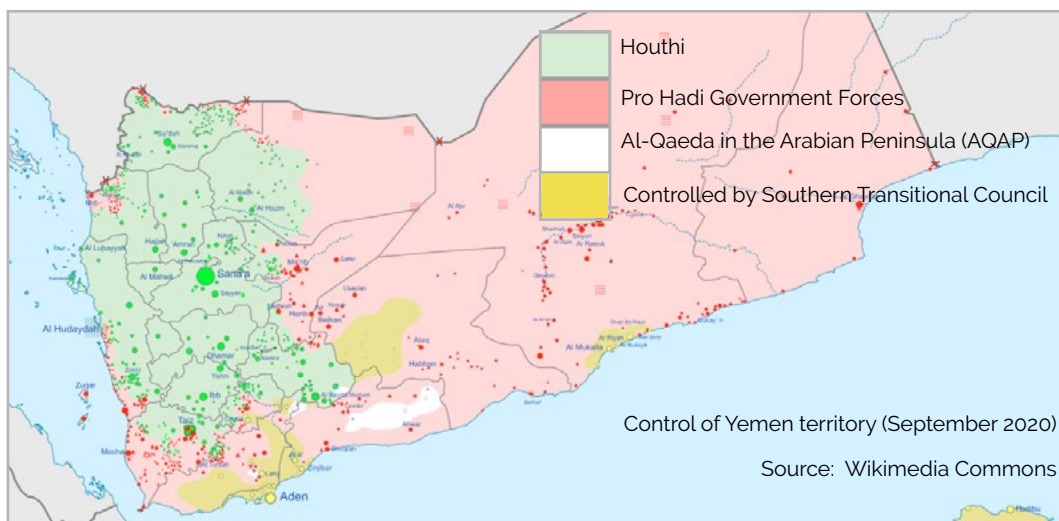
Yemen health system faces collapse as funding declines

A report from the World Bank suggests that due to a lack of external funding, years of conflict leading to institutional collapse, the Yemen health system is at serious risk of collapse. External financing for health peaked at \$605 million in 2018. It then fell to \$370 million the next year and has continued its precipitous fall, Devex.com reported on Sept. 17th.

Yemen president renews support to UN-led effort to end war in Yemen

In his first meeting with new UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Hans Grundberg, Yemen President, Adeb Rabbo Mansour Hadi, reiterated his government's support to the UN-brokered peace efforts. Hadi urged the international community to put an end to threats to maritime safety and navigation in the Red Sea posed by the Houthis, Arab News reported on Sept. 16th, citing the placement of naval mines by the rebel group. The president also urged Houthis to cease the shelling of vital civilian facilities such as Mocha port and their resistance to maintaining the floating oil tanker SAFER.

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



South East Asia

Amid the political fallout caused by last week's nuclear submarine deal between Australia, the US and UK, China has reportedly refused permission for a German frigate to make a port call at Shanghai. The South China Morning Post reported on Sept. 17th that the FGS Bayern, on a six-month deployment to the region, had been refused entry but that it was unlikely to damage German-China relations in the long term.

Incidents:

1. Cyprus-flagged bulk carrier boarded by five robbers armed with guns and knives at 0245 LT in position 01:17.2N - 104:19.9E, approx 5.8nm North of Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, Indonesia (Eastbound TSS). Robbers sighted in vicinity of the engine room. Alarm raised and search conducted with no confrontation between crew and robbers. Master reported incident to local authorities. Nothing reported stolen. Robbers escaped. Reported (ReCAAP) 18 Sept.

2. Underway Singapore-flagged bulk carrier boarded by three robbers at 2250 LT in position 01:16.92N - 104:19E, approx 6nm off Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, Indonesia (Eastbound TSS). Second and fourth engineers spotted the robbers in the boiler area adjacent the steering gear room exit door. On being discovered, the robbers fled towards the poop deck. Alarm raised, crew mustered, deck lights switched on and search conducted. Master reported incident to authorities. Crew safe and nothing stolen. Reported (ReCAAP) 17 Sept.

3. Four robbers armed with knives boarded Singapore-flagged product tanker underway at 2015 UTC in position 01:15.42N - 103:23.94E, around 3nm SSW of Pulau Kukup, Johor, Malaysia. Duty oiler saw the robbers trying to enter the engine room, and raised the alarm. All deck lights switched on, PA announcement made, and crew mustered. Seeing the crew alertness, the robbers escaped in their boat with two accomplices. VTIS informed. A search was made throughout the tanker. Nothing reported stolen. Reported (IMB) 12 Sept.

Indonesia adds patrols after detecting ships in South China Sea

Al Jazeera reported on Sept. 17th that the Indonesian Navy had deployed five vessels and a maritime patrol aircraft to the Natuna Sea, after Chinese and US Navy vessels were sighted nearby. Although the vessels 'had not caused any disturbance',

the Navy had responded. Indonesian Navy western fleet commander Arsyad Abdullah told Al Jazeera that "The Navy's position on the North Natuna Sea is very firm in protecting national interests within the Indonesian jurisdiction in accordance with national law and international law that have been ratified so that there is no tolerance for any violations in the North Natuna Sea."

Thai navy intercepts fishing boat turned illegal fuel tanker

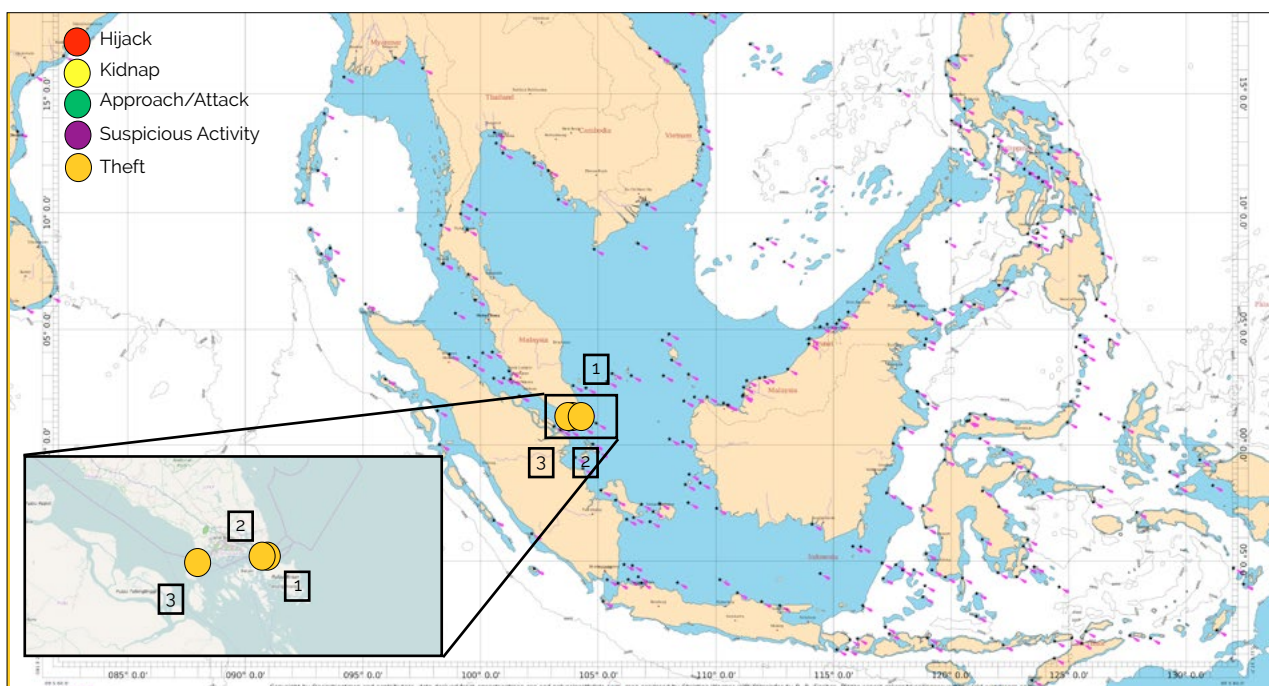
The Royal Thai Navy has seized a fishing boat being used as an illegal tanker in an operation on Sept. 15th. The modified boat was transporting some 50,000 litres of untaxed diesel when it was stopped off Rayong, the Pattaya Mail reported. Five crew were arrested in the operation.

Suspected ASG financier killed in Sulu shootout

The Philippine News Agency reported on Sept. 17th that one of the country's most wanted terrorists had been killed in a gunfight with government forces in Sulu on Friday. Aldasir Makumbong, also known as Alsimar Mangumah, was believed to be one of Abu Sayyaf's top financiers and died of wounds received during the shoot-out with security forces sent to arrest him.

MMEA foils drug smuggling attempt in Kota Tinggi waters

The Malay Mail reported on Sept. 17th that the MMEA had prevented an attempt to smuggle what was believed to be crystal methamphetamine from the country, by sea, in an operation in the waters of Tanjung Setapa last Wednesday. The MMEA noticed two fibreglass vessels acting suspiciously and deployed a patrol boat to investigate. Seeing the approach, the smugglers abandoned one boat and fled in the other, which escaped into Indonesian waters. Some six kilos of meth were recovered from the abandoned boat.



European Waters

ITV News reported on Saturday 18th that at least 655 migrants had crossed the English Channel that week, a slight drop on the previous week. Border Force vessels had been in action throughout the week, intercepting migrant boats just off Dover. Dan O'Mahoney, Clandestine Channel Threat Commander, said earlier this week: "This unacceptable rise in dangerous crossings is being driven by criminal gangs and a surge in illegal migration across Europe. We're determined to target the criminals at every level, so far, we have secured nearly 300 arrests, 65 convictions and prevented more than 10,000 migrant attempts," ITV News reported.

134 illegal migrants rescued off Libyan coast: UN refugee agency

UNHCR reported that 134 migrants had been rescued by Libyan naval and Coast Guard vessels on Monday 20th. "Last night, 134 persons were disembarked at Azzawiya Oil Refinery after being rescued or intercepted at sea," tweeted the UN refugee agency, saying that the agency and the International Rescue Committee were present at the disembarkation to provide urgent assistance to survivors, Xinhua reported.

More than 185 migrants rescued, calls for EU to prevent Mediterranean deaths

InfoMigrants reported on Sept. 20th that NGO rescue vessels had saved some 185 migrants in the Mediterranean. Nearly 130 people, including several children, were rescued from the Mediterranean at the weekend by the Ocean Viking, a former cargo vessel. The ship, operated by the charity SOS Mediterranee, carried out four separate rescue operations on September 18 and 19, taking a total of 129 migrants on board, the website said. Human rights campaigners have demanded action from the EU to stop migrant deaths in the Mediterranean. On Saturday several thousand people joined a demonstration forming a 'human chain' – holding a colored ribbon instead of hands – which was meant to stretch from the North Sea to Italy, InfoMigrants said.

Greece opens new migrant holding camp on island amid tougher policy

Reuters reported on Sept. 19th that Greece has opened a new migrant holding centre on the island of Samos, near Turkey. While the prison-like appearance of the centre has been criticised by aid groups, Greece says that the camp will hopefully return dignity to those who stay there. Around 450 people are expected to occupy the new camp.

French coastguard rescues 91 migrants amid surge in Channel crossings

The National News wrote on Sept. 16th that French authorities had intercepted and rescued 91 migrants who got into difficulties as they attempted to cross the English Channel to reach the UK on Wednesday 15th. Two lifeboats, a French Coast Guard cruiser and a tug were involved in the rescue mission to save migrants in four vessels, the newspaper wrote. The occupants were from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran and the incident occurred off Boulogne and Dunkirk. The migrants were escorted to Calais for processing.

More than 400 people cross Channel in three days

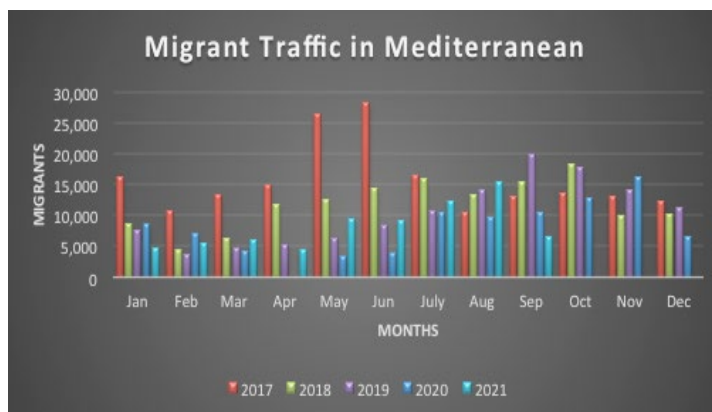
More than 400 migrants have crossed the English Channel in three days, the Home Office has confirmed. On Wednesday 15th, 85 people made the crossing, followed by 222 on Thursday and 174 on Friday. The French authorities stopped 267 people from making the crossing in nine boats over the same period, a Home Office spokesman said. More than 15,100 people have reached the UK in small boats this year. About 8,400 people made the crossing in 2020, four times greater than 2019, BBC News reported.

Moroccan families demand safe return of detained migrants

Hundreds of Moroccan nationals are being held in inhumane conditions in Libyan detention centers, a human rights group reports. The families are urging the Moroccan government to intervene, InfoMigrants reported on Monday 20th. The migrants are being held in detention centres in the West of Libya, according to a NGO. The migrants are being kept in "difficult humanitarian conditions," without adequate food or clean drinking water, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor said in a statement last week.

Spain rescues six boats off the Canaries

A report in Majorca Daily Bulletin on Sept. 16th said that rescuers had rushed to save an unspecified number of migrants in six boats off the Canary Islands and Tenerife last Wednesday (15th). On Tuesday last week, some 355 people in 11 boats arrived in Lanzarote and Gran Canaria, placing further strain on Spain's migrant resources. Data from the Spanish government shows that over 9,000 migrants have arrived by sea in the Canaries archipelago by the end of August, more than double the figure for 2020. Spanish authorities expect the number of crossings to increase in the coming weeks, as people smugglers attempt to move as many people as possible before weather changes and sea states worsen.



Migrant crossings 2017-2021. Source: [UNHRC](#)

The current migrant smuggling situation

According to the latest UNHCR figures, over 6500 migrants have made the Mediterranean crossing so far in September, suggesting figures could well get close to August's year high. Fortunately, there have been no casualty reports in the last week. The English Channel remains a significant migrant crossing hot spot, with large numbers making the crossing yet again in the past week. With diplomatic relations between the UK and France still strained, it will be interesting to see how the two nations respond to the continuing crisis in the coming weeks.

Libya

Forces loyal to LNA leader, Khalifa Haftar, have been involved in heavy fighting with former allies from Chad, the Arab Weekly reported on Sept. 17th. Chadian rebels who took shelter in southern Libya reportedly clashed with LNA forces who had launched an operation against them in the towns of Tamsah and Tarbo, close to the border with Chad. There are concerns that the fighting could further destabilise the Sahel, Arab Weekly reported. Reuters additionally reported that Haftar's forces had reported the loss of two helicopters in a crash in the region on Sunday.

France to hold summit on Libya

France 24 reported on Tuesday 21st that France will hold an international conference on Libya on November 12th, just a month before Libya's planned elections. France, like many allies and countries in the region, is calling for the elections to be held as planned and for foreign mercenaries to leave Libya. Meanwhile, the Tripoli-based High Council of State has called for the election to be postponed for at least a year, owing to a lack of consensus on the electoral law.

Sudanese authorities confiscate a shipment of weapons smuggled from Libya

In an interesting twist to news on Sept. 21st that Sudan had prevented a coup, on Sept. 18th, it was reported that a shipment of weapons smuggled from Libya had been seized by the country. Sudanese Rapid Support Forces (RSF) announced that they had foiled an attempt to smuggle a shipment of weapons and explosives and arrested four individuals, amongst them foreigners, from a gang involved in illegal arms trade with Libya, the Libya Observer reported.

Libya-Tunisia border reopens after Covid closure

After a mild diplomatic spat about the reasoning behind its closure, the border between Libya and Tunisia has re-opened, France 24 reported on Sept. 17th. On the Libyan side, more than a hundred empty cargo trucks were waiting to cross and load up with Tunisian imports, particularly food. Tunisian products have been largely absent from Libyan shelves since the border was closed. The border was closed on July 8th following an increase in cases of Covid-19.

Russia blocking UN's mission in Libya, diplomats say

Middle East Monitor reported on Sept. 17th that the UN's political mission to Libya was being blocked by Russia, which threatened unity in the country ahead of December's planned elections. Russia vetoed a UN resolution drafted by the UK, on the removal of foreign troops from the country. Apparently, Russia was unhappy with the way the resolution was worded, MEM reported.

Egypt's Sisi meets with Dbeibah, pushes for elections in Libya

Arab Weekly reported on Sept. 16th that President al-Sisi of Egypt had met with Libya's interim prime minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah for talks. The meeting came just days after al-Sisi met with Khalifa Haftar, who is currently doing his best to ensure he can run in the presidential elections in Libya. Sisi "stressed the importance of the upcoming Libyan elections in respecting and activating the free will of the ... Libyan people," a presidency statement said. The trip also saw agreement on a number of cooperation agreements between Egypt and Libya, Reuters also reported.

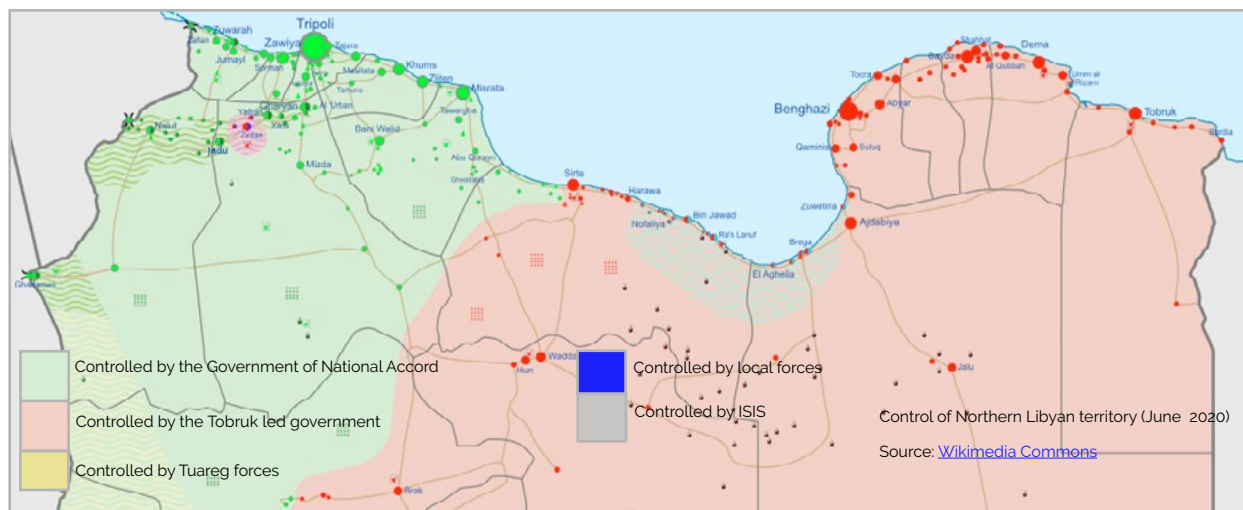
Libya's NOC says Es Sider and Ras Lanuf oil blockades have ended

Reuters reported on Sept. 16th that the blockades at two key export terminals in Libya had finally ended, after significant disruption to NOC output. NOC told Reuters that operations at both terminals had now returned to normal, in news that will be welcomed by the country's economy, which relies heavily on oil revenue. In other news, the NOC has opened a new office in London, according to a report by Bloomberg on Sept. 21st.

Libya receives new shipment of AZ Covid-19 vaccines

The World Health Organisation reported on Wednesday 15th that Libya had taken delivery of 117,600 doses of the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine from Italy. "Today, the Government of Italy provided Libya with a shipment of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines shipped to Mitiga Airport in Tripoli in cooperation with the COVAX Facility," WHO tweeted. Although reported cases of the virus in Libya have fallen, the country recently launched a huge vaccine drive for anyone over the age of 18.

To read MAST's Libyan Country report on MASTOPEDIA, [please click here](#).





Central and South America

Nothing significant to report.

Incidents:

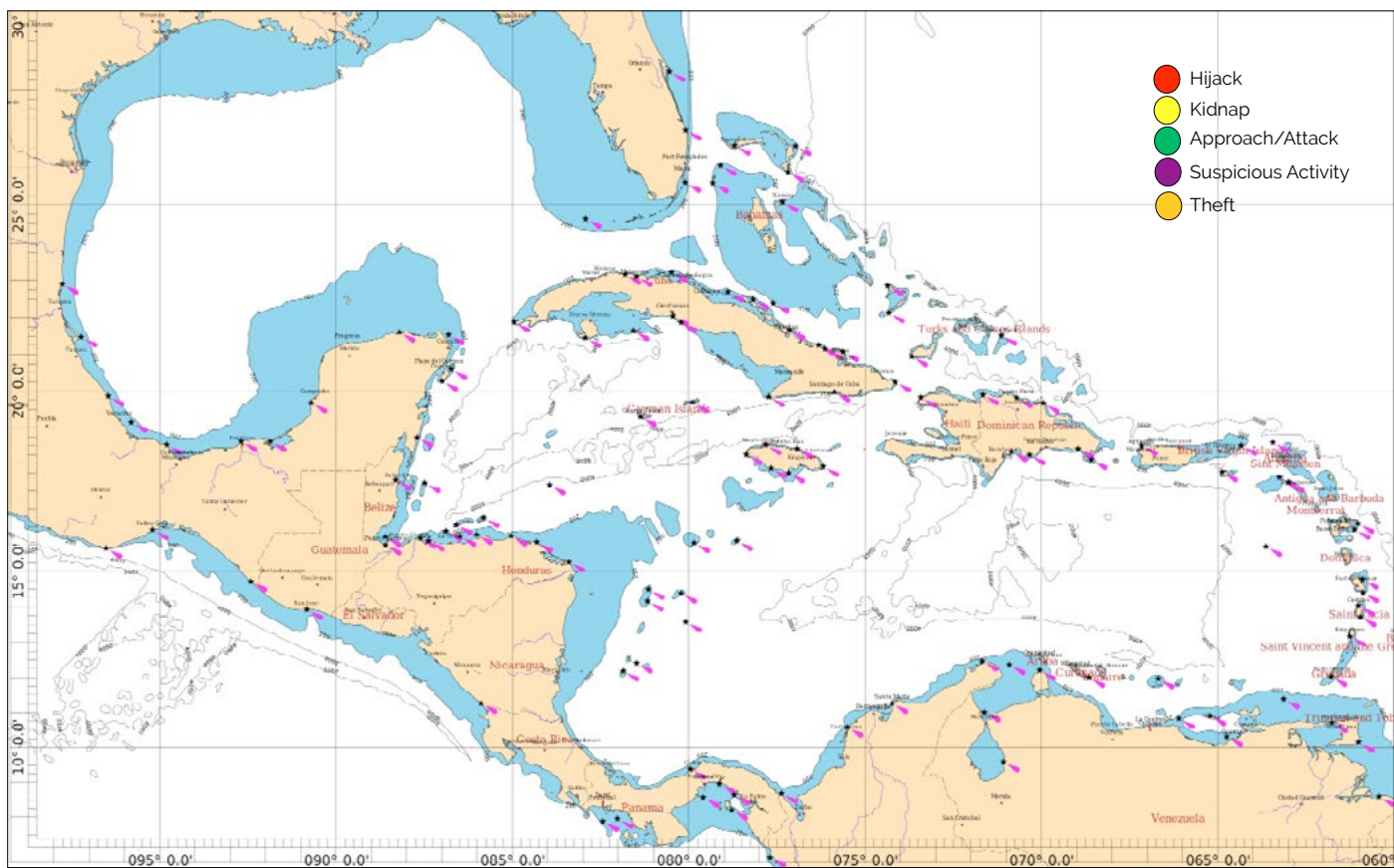
1. Duty crew onboard anchored Liberia-flagged product tanker noticed around four robbers armed with knives on the forecastle deck at 0025 UTC in position 11:59.90S - 077:11.90W, Callao Anchorage, Peru. Alarm raised and crew mustered. Upon hearing the alarm and seeing the crew alertness, the robbers escaped with stolen ship's stores. TRAMAR port control was informed, and a coast guard patrol boat searched the waters around the tanker. Reported (IMB) 15 Sept. (Not shown on chart).

2. Unnoticed, robbers boarded anchored Antigua and Barbuda-flagged container ship and escaped with stolen ship's stores. The theft was noticed by the duty crew during routine rounds at 1200 UTC in position 12:01.23S - 077:11.02W, Callao Anchorage, Peru. Reported (IMB) 13 Sept. (Not shown on chart).

- Potential stowage areas such as rudder shafts are denied as far as possible, and/or routinely searched.
- Access points are closely monitored by a vigilant watch for the duration of the vessel's call at port.

Standing advice:

The repercussions of a vessel being caught acting as a mule with drugs stowed will depend on the type, amount and national laws, but may be disruptive and costly. When and if operating in these areas, especially Columbia and Peru, it is advised that:





Severe Weather Warnings

Warnings detailed on this page are from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and are issued by respective Regional Specialised Metrological Centres, Tropical Cyclone Centres or National Meteorological Services. For further information on severe weather warnings please click [here](#).

Nothing significant to report.

Note: The forecasts are correct as of the day before publication. For latest updates please follow the provided links.