

NAVY NEWS WEEK 11-1

11 March 2018

Sri Lanka Navy ships *Samudura* and *Suranimala* leave for India to attend MILAN 2018



Sri Lanka Navy's Offshore Patrol Vessels, **SLNS *Samudera*** and **SLNS *Suranimala*** have left for India from the port of Trincomalee on Friday to attend a congregation of littoral navies; popularly known as MILAN conducted biennially by Indian Navy. A host of senior naval officers including Deputy Area Commander Eastern Naval Area, Commodore Merrill Sudarshana was present on the occasion of ships' departure. Deputy Area Commander extended best wishes to the Commanding Officers and crew members of the two ships on tour. The touring ships

comprising a crew of 284 naval personnel including 27 officers and 06 Midshipmen are scheduled to arrive at Visakhapatnam port, India on 06 March. MILAN 2018 is being held at Port Blair from 06 March to 13 March 2018. With the underlying theme of 'Friendship across the Seas', MILAN 2018 will witness a diverse mix of professional exercises and seminars, social events and sporting fixtures. The interactions during MILAN encompass sharing of views and ideas on maritime good - order and enhancing regional cooperation for combating unlawful activities at sea. The two Sri Lanka Navy ships are expected to return home on completion of tour events on the 14th of this month. **Source: Maasmond Maritime**

Polish shipyard cuts first steel for Swedish Navy ship

Poland's Nauta Shipyard today cut the first steel for the Swedish Navy's SIGINT ship, officially beginning the production phase of the vessel. The ceremony was also attended by officials from Saab, which awarded the ship construction contract to the Nauta Shipyard, a part of the Polish Armaments Group (PGZ), in 2017. This important milestone is fully on track with the project schedule for the ship, which is to be built in Poland and fitted out in Sweden for delivery to the Swedish Navy. It follows intense cooperation between Saab and the Nauta Shipyard, supported by Poland's MMC ship design and marine consulting company. The entire construction process has been positively appraised by the Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), which signed a contract with Saab for the design, construction and delivery of the Swedish SIGINT vessel. While the ship will be constructed, launched and tested in Poland, it will sail to Saab's shipyard in Karlskrona for additional fitting and installation. *"The steel cutting ceremony marks the successful completion of the ship design stage and the beginning of production work. This contract for a special purpose ship, a key asset in any Naval portfolio, is very important from the point of view of the end user, the Swedish Navy and requires special handling from the shipyard doing the work. We remain in daily contact with Nauta and we are pleased the work is progressing according to plan,"* says Jyrki Kujansuu, Vice President, Poland and Baltic States at Saab *"We were originally chosen by Saab as a trusted partner in shipbuilding after a long selection process. Similar to our Swedish partner we are happy to have performed the first steel cutting for the ship. We can now progress on to full-scale production,"* says Adam Potrykus, Vice-president of The Board of the Nauta Shipyard. **source: marinelog**

Spanish navy captain dies in Antarctica after falling overboard

Body of 53-year-old Javier Montojo Salazar recovered from sea near Livingstone Island

[Sam Jones](#) in Madrid Sun 4 Mar 2018 10.49 GMT Last modified on Mon 5 Mar 2018 11.35 GMT



Javier Montojo Salazar pictured in Antarctica Photograph: Spanish Defence Ministry Handout/EPA

The commander of a Spanish navy research ship has died in [Antarctica](#) after apparently falling overboard. Javier Montojo

Salazar, captain of the frigate [Hespérides](#), disappeared on Friday night when the ship was near the [Juan Carlos 1 research base](#) on Livingstone Island. Spain's ministry of defence said a search and rescue operation was launched using "all available resources" but the body of the 53-year-old sailor was recovered from the sea six hours later. "The captain's remains are on the ship, which is bound for Ushuaia, in Argentina, from where he will be repatriated," the ministry said [in a statement](#) on Saturday. "His family has been informed and is being supported by a team of navy personnel." The government said its thoughts were with Montojo's family. "My condolences to the family and colleagues of Javier Montojo Salazar, the captain of the oceanographic research vessel Hespérides who died in Antarctica," [said the Spanish prime minister, Mariano Rajoy](#). "Sad news." The defence minister, María Dolores de Cospedal, also [offered her condolences on Twitter](#). "Very sad news about the death of Captain Javier Montojo Salazar," she wrote. "All my love and support to his family and colleagues. May he rest in peace." The **Hespérides**, which was launched in 1990, has a reinforced hull to allow it to operate in Antarctic and Arctic waters. It has been used in numerous research operations, covering more than 300,000 nautical miles and hosting more than 1,000 foreign researchers. [Spain](#) has operated the Juan Carlos 1 research base since 1981. The facility, which helps support scientific research projects, is only staffed in the Antarctic summer, from mid-November to the beginning of March. It lies 20 nautical miles from Spain's Gabriel de Castilla army base on Deception Island.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com>

PLA garrison holds joint exercise with French navy frigate outside Hong Kong waters

Drill meant to 'raise defence capability' of troops stationed in city

UPDATED : Saturday, 03 March, 2018, 11:17pm



The People's Liberation Army garrison in Hong Kong conducted a joint exercise with the French military – its first with foreign forces – according to a state media report on Saturday. The drill was held outside local waters with the [navy frigate Vendémiaire](#), which arrived in the city on Monday and Friday. The operation was meant to "raise the defence capability of the troops stationed in Hong Kong", state broadcaster CCTV reported. In addition to the maritime drill, crew aboard the Vendémiaire and members of the Hong Kong garrison interacted

and visited one another's vessels, it was also reported. Jean-Maurice Ripert, the French ambassador to China, earlier flew in from Beijing for a welcome dinner with the PLA. He revealed the joint exercise to local news outlet *HK01* after it spotted five mainland officers departing the frigate on Monday. Ripert said the drill comprised search and rescue operations as well as communication exercises. It took place on Friday after **Vendémiaire** had left Hong Kong waters. *The PLA Hong Kong garrison is responsible for carrying out rescue operations in case of maritime disasters*, military commentator Leung Kwok-leung said, describing the joint exercise as appropriate. "As it was not conducted in Victoria Harbour, it was not that controversial." The PLA Hong Kong garrison is responsible for carrying out rescue operations in case of maritime disasters Leung Kwok-leung, military commentator Last June, Feng Wei, deputy director of Beijing's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, said the Chinese army's local troops would [play a bigger role](#) in boosting the city's patriotism, as the garrison celebrated the [20th anniversary](#) of both its establishment and the 1997 handover. During the celebrations, President [Xi Jinping inspected 20 squads](#) of the garrison in the city's biggest military parade since the transfer of British rule. A rare PLA navy show was later staged in Hong Kong waters. The public were given a chance to explore the [Liaoning](#), a refitted former Soviet carrier that Beijing bought from a Ukrainian shipyard in 1998. Hong Kong police had no comment about the recent drill, noting it was conducted outside local waters. The French frigate berthed in Kennedy Town, and an open day was held on Tuesday. Based in Nouméa in New Caledonia, a French territory in the southwest Pacific Ocean, the Vendémiaire is now on a three-month Asian mission that includes sailings to [Indonesia](#), [South Korea](#), mainland China and Guam.

Source: <http://www.scmp.com>

U.S. aircraft carrier to make historic port call in Vietnam

By Daniel Uriá | March 4, 2018 at 2:10 PM

March 4 (UPI) -- A United States aircraft carrier will make a port call in Vietnam for the first time since the end of the Vietnam War on Monday. The **USS Carl Vinson** and its contingent of 5,000 sailors and aviators are expected to [anchor the 95,000-ton carrier](#) 2 nautical miles off the port of Danang. During the four-day port call, U.S. sailors will play basketball and soccer with Vietnamese counterparts in addition to visiting an orphanage and a center for victims of Agent Orange, the toxic chemical compound used by the US during the conflict to destroy jungle and forest. "It's a pretty big and historic step, since a carrier has not been here for 40 years," Rear Adm. John V. Fuller, commander of the Carl Vinson strike group, [told the New York Times](#). "We hope to continue the same issue that we've always had and that's to promote security, stability and

prosperity in the region." The **Carl Vinson** has spent the past month deployed in the South China Sea where six governments, including Vietnam and China, hold competing claims over various features of the maritime region.



The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier **USS Carl Vinson** is scheduled to anchor near Vietnam for a four-day port call Monday, the first since the end of the Vietnam War. Photo by MC2 Z.A. Landers/U.S. Navy/UPI | License Photo

Its visit to Vietnam comes amid concerns in the capital about China's efforts to militarize disputed islands, which [received](#)

[support](#) from fellow members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in January. "Hanoi's agreement to the aircraft carrier visit demonstrates Vietnam's anxiety about what China will do next in the South China Sea," Murray Hiebert of the Southeast Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies said to The New York Times. "The U.S. is virtually the last man standing to which Hanoi can look for support in the South China Sea dispute." The United States holds no claims to the South China Sea, but has regularly deployed military vessels and planes near Chinese-controlled islands in the area with the goal of fostering economic growth that has occurred in the region since the end of World War II. "It's a stable environment where you have the ability to actually foment economic growth," Fuller said. "I think we've helped create the environment that has allowed for the 70 years of growth." Source: <https://www.upi.com>



PHILIPPINE SEA (Feb. 28, 2018) Cmdr. Leroy Mitchell, commanding officer of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer **USS Benfold (DDG 65)**, and Ensign Nancy Smith, from Asheville, North Carolina observe as Japanese Maritime Self-defense Force Akizuki-class destroyer **JS Fuyuzuki (DD 118)** sails alongside during a close quarters maneuvering exercise. **USS Benfold** is forward-deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Benjamin Dobbs/ Released)

China says defence budget to rise to \$173bn

2018-03-05 06:12

AP Associated Press



Chinese naval soldiers (File, AP)

Beijing - China's defence budget will rise 8% to 1.1 trillion yuan (\$173 billion, 2 trillion rand) this year as the country is preparing to launch its second aircraft carrier, integrating stealth fighters into its air force and fielding an array of advanced missiles able to attack air and sea targets at vast distances. The figure released in a report on Monday to the ceremonial

National People's Congress is an increase from last year, when finance ministry officials told the Associated Press the budget was rising 7% to 1.044 trillion yuan (\$151 billion). Years of double-digit percentage growth have given China the world's second-largest defence budget after the United States, which is in a class of its own with a proposed budget of \$716 billion for next year. "We will stick to the Chinese path in strengthening our armed forces, advance all aspects of military training and war preparedness," Premier Li Keqiang said as he read a report to nearly 3 000 delegates at the Great Hall of the People. The armed forces will "firmly and resolutely safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests", Li said.

2 million troops

China has the world's largest military by number of personnel, but Li said the country had "basically completed" the target of reducing the size of the armed forces by 300 000 troops. That would leave the military at around 2 million troops. But China's defence spending as a share of GDP and the budget remains lower than that of other major nations, Zhang Yesui, a spokesperson for the legislature, said on Sunday. Analysts don't consider China's publicly announced defence spending to be entirely accurate since defence equipment projects account for a significant amount of "off book" expenditures. Much of China's energies have been focused on what is known as anti-access/area denial, or A2/AD operations that seek to scare the US Navy and other forces far from China's shores. China's navy has been training rigorously on the Liaoning aircraft carrier, which was bought from Ukraine and heavily refurbished. In April, it launched a 50 000-ton carrier built entirely on its own based on the Ukrainian model. It will join the improved Type 093B Shang class nuclear-powered attack submarine equipped with anti-ship missiles - considered only slightly inferior to the US Navy's mainstay Los Angeles class boats - and the Type 055 guided-missile destroyers at the forefront of China's naval technology. Such vessels stand to alter the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific where the US Navy has long been dominant and regional rivals such as Japan and India are stepping up their presence. Most navy ships already have anti-ship cruise missiles with longer ranges than those of their US counterparts.

'Leaner and meaner'

China's navy is also relying on numerical superiority to boost its influence.

All three of China's sea forces; the navy, coast guard and maritime militia, are the largest of their types by number of ships, allowing them to "maintain presence and influence in vital seas," according to Andrew S. Erickson of the US Naval War College's China Maritime Studies Institute. All three fleets are growing "leaner and meaner" due to a greater emphasis on technical sophistication, Erickson writes, adding that the US also anticipates facing a Chinese submarine fleet twice its number, though less technologically advanced. In the air, China last month said it had begun equipping combat units with its J-20 stealth fighter jet, the country's answer to fifth-generation jets such as the U.S. F-22 and F-35. No less impressive is China's missile technology, particularly the DF-21D built to take out an aircraft carrier while underway, and a new air-to-air missile with a range of some 400 km that could attack assets such as early warning aircraft and refuelling tankers crucial to US Air Force operations. In a further display of sophistication, China in early February said it successfully tested a mid-course anti-missile defence system, deploying similar technology to that used to destroy a defunct Chinese satellite in 2007.

Source: <https://www.news24.com>

New alliance could emerge in Indo-Pacific

The French "Jeanne d'Arc" naval task force, integrated by British personnel and units, is heading for East Asia and the South Pacific. Paris and London say this five-month deployment is aimed at improving maritime cooperation between their navies. In reality, it can be read as a new initiative by the two European countries to support the United States in its freedom of navigation operations in the region against China's military activism. France and Britain are busy stepping up their naval presence in the Indo-Pacific area. The annual Jeanne d'Arc training and patrol mission sees the Royal Navy's participation for the second year in a row. The task group consists of the Mistral-class helicopter assault ship **Dixmude** and the La Fayette-class frigate **Surcouf**. Two Royal Navy's Wildcat helicopters contribute to the task force's flying force, which also comprises two French Gazelles and two Spanish Cougars. French Navy personnel are supported by 40 Royal Navy and Royal Marine troops, 50 US Marines and a small Spanish crew. Another French naval group is returning home from a deployment in the Indian Ocean. The Mistral-class amphibious assault ship **Tonnerre** and the Horizon-class air defense destroyer **Chevalier** recently concluded drills with the US Navy off the coast of Djibouti as part of the "Bois Belleau 100"



mission. Further, the French frigate **Vendémiaire** visited Japan and trained with the local navy last month.

The **HMS Sutherland** in Melbourne : Photo : Dale E.Crisp (c)

It also conducted joint exercises with US and Canadian naval vessels. A British warship is also already embarked on an

Indo-Pacific tour. The Royal Navy has its **HMS Sutherland**, a Type 23 anti-submarine frigate, stationed in Australia, where

it will participate in the “Ocean Explorer” war game with the local fleet. It will sail into the South China Sea on its way back home. As well, the frigate **HMS Argyll** will be sent to East Asia to take part in joint exercises with the Japanese navy later in the year. The Jeanne d’Arc convoy fleet will sail as far east as New Caledonia and French Polynesia, two French overseas territories in the South Pacific. It will make port visits to Jakarta, Bali, Darwin, Saigon and Singapore, and train with regional navies and US naval forces. France and the United Kingdom contend that their engagement in the Indo-Pacific arena is guided by an interest in maintaining a rules-based international order. It is worth noting that the French-led task force will dock in countries at odds with China. Indeed Indonesia, Australia and Vietnam question Beijing’s claims to the South China Sea, though with varying degrees of intensity and for different reasons. Singapore is not a claimant to the disputed area, yet it is bolstering its security partnership with the US and India, which side with the Southeast Asian nations challenging Chinese territorial demands. China is always critical of naval operations in the South China Sea by non-regional actors. France and the United Kingdom contend that their engagement in the Indo-Pacific arena is guided by an interest in maintaining a rules-based international order. The two permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are also committed to safeguarding their systems of alliances and partnerships in the vast region. For instance, France is discussing with India the finalization of a logistic agreement that would allow French and Indian military forces to gain access to each other’s bases – Delhi signed a similar deal with Washington last year. For its part, Britain has berthing rights and a defense staff office in Singapore. Both London and Paris are deepening military cooperation with Japan and Australia too. Behind France’s and UK’s growing deployment in the Indian Ocean and Pacific waters, however, there is conceivably an effort to help the US keep China in check. In a nuanced manner, Paris and London are starting to denounce Beijing’s geopolitical expansion, which is now perceived on European soil as well. In this respect, the prospective Quadrilateral (Quad) alliance among the United States, India, Japan and Australia to counter China’s military assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific space could be extended to France and Britain. The “Quad plus two” scheme, with the addition of British and French naval assets, has a notable potential, given that the military units of these six countries could operate in an interoperable way from the Red Sea and East Africa all the way to the Pacific Rim. Despite its increasing military and geopolitical capabilities, this is a concrete challenge for China.

source : Asia times

Japan May Buy US F-35B Jets for Its First Aircraft Carrier - Defence Minister

Japanese media reported earlier that the Defence Ministry had been redesigning its helicopter carrier into the country's first aircraft carrier, capable of accommodating US F-35B aircraft.



The Japanese Ministry of Defence is considering purchasing US F-35B fighter jets to deploy on the country's **JS Izumo** helicopter carrier, Minister of Defence Itsunori Onodera said Friday during hearings of the budget commission of the House of Councillors. "The ministry is studying whether F-35B fighter jets can use the deck of **JS Izumo**," Onodera said, adding that no decision on the issue has been

concluded yet. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who also took part in the hearings, said that the government wasn't considering the issue of remodelling the country's helicopter carriers into aircraft carriers, but noted that it was "necessary to search for an increase in the effectiveness of marine aviation, regarding both – the current capabilities and the purchase of new technologies." According to earlier media reports, Japan was considering the creation of the country's first aircraft carriers on the base of **JS Izumo** helicopter carrier. The spending on the project will be included in the country's 2019 defence budget, while the vessel will be put into operation in 2020. **JS Izumo**, as well as another Japanese helicopter carrier the **JS Kaga**, are already primed for F-35B operations, even though the country still hasn't decided on the purchase of the jets. A Japanese official recently confirmed that the purchase of 25 F-35As – the jet's traditional runway variant – is in the pipeline but a decision on F-35B aircraft has not been reached yet.

Source: Sputnik News

This could well cause some heartburn in Beijing.

Royal Navy top brass drug test ship's entire crew after five sailors' coke-fuelled bender

A group of sailors from HMS **Scott** went on a bender in Plymouth and suspicions were raised they had taken cocaine

4th March 2018, 2:22 am



NAVY chiefs ordered drug tests for an entire ship's crew after five sailors went on a cocaine-fuelled payday bender. The group were partying last month when [suspicions were raised they were taking the Class A drug](#). Random testing showed the five positive results, all from able seamen on **HMS Scott** and they are likely to be kicked out. Sources said they went out in Plymouth where survey ship **HMS Scott** is docked for maintenance. Random testing showed the five positive results, all from able seamen. They are almost certain to be kicked out. Commanders are awaiting follow-up tests for all 73 crew. A source, said: *"There's shock among top brass. This is a total no-no. To find five guys all testing*

positive is mad. "It is just not compatible with service life." Insiders confirmed disciplinary procedures have been launched. They stressed drug use among service personnel is lower than the rest of the population. A [Royal Navy spokesman](#) said: *"We do not tolerate the misuse of drugs by service personnel. Those found to have fallen short of our standards face being discharged from service."*

Source: <https://www.thesun.co.uk>



BOSPHORUS STRAIT (Mar 3, 2018) The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer **USS Carney (DDG 64)** transits the the Bosphorus Strait. **Carney**, forward-deployed to Rota, Spain, is on its fourth patrol in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of regional allies and partners, and U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class James R. Turner/Released)

We Now Know Why Russia Wants a 100-Megaton Nuclear Torpedo

[Sebastien Roblin](#)

March 2, 2018



In a speech on March 1, 2018, Russian president Vladimir Putin detailed a half-dozen "invincible" new Russian weapons under development, which he assured would give his nation the ability to launch "unstoppable" nuclear attacks on the United States. The speech, which was met with cheers by the audience, was accompanied by a [video presentation](#) that included an animation of a separating nuclear warheads raining down on Florida, apparently in the vicinity of President Trump's retreat in Mar-a-Lago. The bellicose rhetoric is surely intended to rally political support for Putin's reelection on March 18, as well a reflection of Moscow's own insecurity, stemming from fears that new U.S. ballistic-missile defenses may

eventually render Russia's nuclear deterrence ineffective. Putin pointedly highlighted new systems that would circumvent BMD capabilities such as long-range cruise missiles and a hypersonic glide vehicle. Perhaps the most novel of the weapons Putin described was an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle codenamed Status Six or *Kanyon*—basically a long-range nuclear-armed drone torpedo that does not rely on remote guidance. Development on the weapon predates the fall of

the Soviet Union. For years there had been some debate as to whether there was real substance to the program, but the emerging consensus is that the new nuclear torpedo is quite real. In September 2015, the Pentagon included the Status Six in its nuclear posture review. Just two months later, Russian media [“accidentally” leaked](#) an image detailing the weapon’s performance, and a prototype weapon was reportedly tested in December 2016. Putin’s speech largely spelled out capabilities for the torpedo in line with what had previously been claimed. Supposedly the *Kanyon* carries an enormous one-hundred-megaton nuclear warhead which could be launched at a coastal city (think New York or Los Angeles) or a fleet at sea. The resulting underwater detonation could create an apocalyptic five-hundred-meter-high tsunami wave of irradiated water that would contaminate anything it fails to smash into oblivion. The huge torpedoes would be mounted on older [Oscar-class](#) or newer Yasen-class nuclear-powered attack submarines. However, the subs wouldn’t have to get very close to hostile shores if the claimed range of 6,200 miles is accurate. The Status Six would supposedly be capable of diving as deep as one thousand meters under the sea, and tearing through the water at fifty-six knots. For comparison, few military submarines are designed to dive deeper than five hundred meters. Furthermore, current U.S. Navy Mark 48 torpedoes have a speed of fifty-five knots, making interception unlikely. NATO lacks antisubmarine weapons designed to intercept a target so fast and deep. Putin also claimed that the Status Six would be highly stealthy and undetectable. However, according to a submarine officer [interviewed by Dave Majumdar](#), a torpedo heavy enough to carry a hundred-megaton warhead would likely be quite noisy. Thus, the *Kanyon* seems more likely to be very difficult to hit rather than impossible to detect.

The Cold War Nuke That Almost Blew Up the Caribbean

Russia’s renewed interest in nuclear torpedoes represents a full circle of sorts. When the Soviet Union developed its first nuclear warheads, its longest-range delivery system was the [Tu-4, a reverse-engineered B-29 bomber](#). But the Tu-4 could not fly far enough to hit most of the continental United States. Instead, Moscow considered using submarines to attack coastal cities and naval bases with a nuclear torpedo. The concept resulted in the huge T-15, which measured 1,550 millimeters in diameter (nearly three times the diameter of a standard heavyweight torpedo) and weighed forty tons. But the Russian Navy never liked the concept, and the design’s flaws meant that it was not operationally deployed. Instead, the Soviet Navy developed the standard-sized 533-millimeter T-5 nuclear torpedo for use against naval targets. Instead of directly hitting enemy warships, the idea was for the nuclear blast to capsize and irradiate two or three enemy vessels in one fell swoop—or knock out a lone enemy submarine underwater without having to ascertain its exact location. You can see a recording of a Soviet nuclear torpedo test [here](#) for an idea of what it would look like. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, the captain of the Soviet submarine B-59 actually [ordered the firing of a T-5 at U.S. ships](#)—only to be countermanded by his onboard superior officer, the storied Vasili Arkhipov. Thus, the little-known nuclear torpedo almost triggered an apocalyptic conflict without even giving Khrushchev or Kennedy a chance to intervene. The United States developed its own nuclear antiship torpedo, the wire-guided Mark 45 ASTOR, but eventually phased out the weapon in favor of more effective conventional torpedoes.

Russia’s Submarine Doomsday Weapon

The *Kanyon* project is descended from the earlier T-15. But what exactly is the purpose of the intercontinental submarine torpedo, when Russia already has hundreds of nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)? Yes, the United States’ Ground-based Midcourse Defense system [may be capable](#) of defending against a limited attack by less sophisticated ICBMs—but it surely cannot protect against Russia’s vast arsenal of more sophisticated weapons that deploy decoys, engage in evasive maneuvers and separate into multiple-reentry vehicles (MIRVs). However, Michael Kofman, an expert on the Russian military and researcher at CNA corporation, argues that’s not looking far enough ahead. *“Missile defense may intercept a large percentage of a second [retaliatory] strike arsenal, not today, but 20–30 years from now. Countries don’t think about today, they think about where technology is going based on investment and development. The US is pouring billions into missile defense. [Adversaries] are thinking about the credibility of their deterrent much further down the line.”* The T-15 was conceived as a first-strike weapon designed to secure victory in a nuclear war. In Kofman’s view, Status 6 has a fundamentally different purpose: it is a third-strike weapon, designed to inflict unacceptable damage even in the event that an American first strike degrades Russia’s ability to retaliate with ICBMs. In other words, even if the United States could mitigate Russia’s missiles through a combination of preemptive attack and ballistic-missile defenses to absorb whatever survives, its drone nuclear torpedoes could still wipe out large coastal cities, even if only a few days after the missile barrage. Some analysts have noted that it would be difficult for Russia to reliably maintain remote control a drone submarine designed for such long-distance missions, particularly at its reported maximum diving depth. What if Russia decided to call off the nuclear torpedo strike, or wished to use them as a sort of ticking time bomb to influence negotiations? [This article](#) by defense writer Robert Farley reviews some of the limitations imposed by using an AUV in a strategic role, as does the earlier piece by Dave Majumdar. However, Kofman argues that remote control is not the point of a strategic weapon like the Status 6, and that the technology behind it need not be particularly exotic. *“This is not an adjustable counterforce weapon, and as Putin advertised, it is meant to be very deep diving, which tells you that nobody will be talking to it once it is launched. However, hitting fixed targets the size of cities is about the simplest thing to do these days. Los Angeles doesn’t move very much. The only issue to work out for such a weapon is navigation, and waypoints, but that doesn’t strike me as a particularly difficult.”* Some analysts still hold that the Status Six may instead be intended as an antiship weapon—indeed, the video presentation by Putin showed the torpedo wiping out a U.S. carrier task force, before switching to animation depicting an attack on a metropolis—or that it even may be a multipurpose platform with applications in underwater reconnaissance missions. However, the prominence which the weapon system has been showcased in

Russian media leave little doubt that Moscow intends for the Status Six to be noted abroad, so as to enhance Russia's deterrence. The United States may attempt to develop new torpedoes and improved undersea surveillance technology in an attempt to develop an undersea counterpart to its ballistic-missile defenses. However, as has proven the case with ballistic-missile defense, it is generally cheaper and easier to ramp up the capabilities of offensive weapons than to develop defenses to counter them. Therefore, the Status Six project may simply represent the latest layer to the long-standing reality that any nuclear exchange would impose unacceptable costs on *both* participants, regardless of whether there is a "victor" or not. However, there is already alarming evidence that national leaders might overestimate or misunderstand defensive capabilities, whether or not those defenses could reliably defend against a city-destroying attack. Indeed, Moscow's fascination with new nuclear-weapons systems appear to stem from its fears that without a reliable nuclear second-strike capability, it will be "not listened to," to quote Putin's words. "I suspect that they are worried what a combination of non-kinetic and kinetic means could do to their nuclear deterrent," Kofman wrote me, "and they perhaps lack confidence that it is sufficient. Ultimately, powers struggle to know how much is enough."

Sébastien Roblin holds a master's degree in conflict resolution from Georgetown University and served as a university instructor for the Peace Corps in China. He has also worked in education, editing and refugee resettlement in France and the United States. He currently writes on security and military history for [War Is Boring](#).

Image: Wikimedia Commons

Source: <http://nationalinterest.org>

Navy's first modern frigates to act as anti-air platforms

By Priam Nepomuceno February 26, 2018, 2:19 pm

MANILA -- Once completed and delivered fully functional in 2020, the two missile-armed frigates contracted from Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI), will serve as the Navy's first anti-air missile platform. This was the response of Philippine Navy flag-officer-in-command Rear Admiral Robert Empedrad when asked if the PN has any "anti-access or area capability" during the Senate hearing on the Frigate Acquisition Project (FAP) last week. "In the current inventory of the PN, we don't have capability for aerial denial. Wala pa tayong (We do not have) anti-air missile capability na ship that can hit an incoming aerial object. But except for our frigates supposedly kung ma-deliver (once delivered), ito lang iyong (this will only be the) first time that we will have that capability for aerial denial," he added. The frigates, now being built by HHI, will be armed with weapons capable of neutralizing surface, sub-surface and air threats aside from capable of electronic warfare. The above-mentioned ships have a contract of PHP18 billion, including their weapons systems and munitions. In the FAP hearing, issues concerning the brand of combat management system to be installed were discussed. (PNA)

Source: <http://www.pna.gov.ph>

GE to deliver propulsion system for Chilean Navy Antarctic icebreaker



Photo: GE

Chilean ASMAR Shipyards has contracted GE's Marine Solutions to deliver a complete marine propulsion system for the Chilean Navy's new Antarctic icebreaking Polar-class vessel. It will replace the retired icebreaker to continue the navy's Antarctic expedition for search and

rescue missions, scientific research, logistic support and resupplying bases in the Chilean Antarctic Territory. The 110-meter long vessel will receive diesel electric propulsion, GE's diesel engine, a complete propulsion shaft line and propeller, a tunnel thruster, SeaLyte Dynamic Positioning (DP) and a vessel automation system. The vessel has received Lloyd's Register PC 5 polar class notation and with an installed power of 14.5 megawatts, it will be capable of breaking 1 meter of ice at 3 knots. "The ice-going capabilities require the machinery aboard the vessel, such as the main propulsion, to be highly robust to ensure the safety and the survivability of the vessel. That is not all. Given the vessel's specific mission profile, we are also looking for clean propulsion technology that will meet the requirement of the highly stringent environment regulations in the Antarctic area. GE's one-stop solution is the answer to all these challenges," said Lieutenant Commander Jorge Maldonado, project manager for the Chilean Navy. As explained by GE, its marine IMO Tier 3 diesel engine reduces key emissions up to 70 percent and provides a less complex solution compared to urea-based selective catalytic reduction (SCR) systems, as it does not require any additional on-board SCR equipment or storage provisions for urea as well as no dockside support infrastructure for urea storage and processing.

Source: Naval Today

Shipbuilders Worried About Navy Plan for 1 LCS in 2019 Ahead of Frigate Transition

By: Megan Eckstein

The Navy's plan to buy just one Littoral Combat Ship in Fiscal Year 2019 has the two LCS shipbuilders uneasy, just a year before the program is set to transition to a guided-missile frigate and downselect to a single contractor. Last year Navy leadership was vocal about the need to maintain a three-a-year minimum LCS acquisition rate until the next-generation frigate transition to ensure both builders remained viable competitors for the upcoming frigate work. But a year later, new leadership is confident in the single-ship purchase – which would leave one builder without a 2019 ship at all. “There will be 21 LCSs under construction or planned for award across two shipbuilders,” Navy spokesman Capt. Danny Hernandez told USNI News. That 21-ship figure includes two LCSs the Navy requested in FY 2018 and the one in 2019, though the FY 2018 purchase has not been finalized yet due to Congress not passing a defense appropriations bill. “This provides a sufficient workload, allowing both shipbuilders to maintain stability and be competitive for the FFG(X) award in FY 2020. Additionally, the budget requests for ‘18 and ‘19 will meet the LCS component (32) of the Navy’s requirement for 52 Small Surface Combatants (SSC) as outlined in the 2016 Force Structure Assessment,” he added. The Navy previously planned to buy 52 LCSs but then broke up the Small Surface Combatant requirement into 32 LCSs and 20 follow-on frigates. Ahead of the Navy buying its first frigates in FY 2020, five companies are working with the Navy on maturing their designs – and three of the five have ties to the current LCS production lines. Austal USA is pitching a derivative of its Independence-variant LCS, Lockheed Martin and subcontractor Fincantieri Marine are pitching a derivative of the Freedom-class LCS, and Fincantieri as the prime contractor and Lockheed Martin as the subcontractor are pitching the Italian FREMM design. Disrupting hot production lines, therefore, could put the LCS builders at a disadvantage or risk the Navy starting the frigate program with less-than-optimal efficiency. Given that having a hot production line is part of Austal's and Lockheed Martin's pitch in the frigate contest, they worry that the Navy buying just one ship in 2019 puts that at risk for them just ahead of a frigate downselect. “Funding one LCS in the FY19 budget is not sufficient to support the Shipbuilding Industrial Base. Austal is efficiently delivering on average four ships per year to the Navy (two LCS and two EPF). Any reduction in volume would negatively impact the shipbuilding industrial base, including our suppliers (local and national), as well as the ability to efficiently transition to Frigate,” Austal USA told USNI News this week in a statement. “Austal stands ready with capacity now to efficiently build the Navy our nation needs while being able to support an aggressive growth plan to a 355 ship fleet.” “Over the past 10 years, the Freedom-variant industry team invested over \$120 million to modernize the shipyard, hire more than 1,000 people and train a new workforce. This private investment optimized the shipyard for serial production at a rate of two Littoral Combat Ships per year. At this rate, our current production backlog is insufficient to maintain the employment and efficiency levels required for our team to remain competitive for Frigate,” Lockheed Martin told USNI News in a statement. “If additional LCSs are not awarded in 2018 and 2019, the Freedom-variant LCS serial production line will experience a gap in construction, which would negatively impact the trained workforce and reduce the efficiencies that make both Lockheed Martin and Fincantieri’s FFG(X) offerings so compelling to U.S. Navy. Keeping LCS production stable is vital to preserving our shipyard workforce and efficient production at all stages of the construction process.” Hernandez told USNI News that, though he couldn’t comment on private conversations between the shipbuilders and Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition James Geurts, “I can tell you Mr. Geurts speaks with industry members on a regular basis and he believes there is sufficient workload to sustain the industrial base. Navy leadership recognizes the critical nature of maintaining the shipbuilding industrial base while transitioning from LCS to the Frigate. The LCSs in our budget plan allows Navy to mature the Frigate design, better understand the cost drivers across the various design options and also preserves viability of the current small surface combatant industrial base in the near term, allowing them to be competitive for the Frigate design in FY-20.” Navy officials in recent years have stressed the need for continuous, predictable work at shipyards to maintain hot production lines that meet or exceed cost and schedule goals. Whatever the size of the backlog of work, officials have warned, not putting new ships on contract can still disrupt the supply chain and production line and create cost and schedule consequences. Program Executive Officer for LCS Rear Adm. John Neagley told USNI News last year that three LCSs a year – one and a half per year per shipyard – was the minimum buying rate needed to keep the production lines healthy ahead of the frigate transition. “It’s like building a house. You have guys who do the foundation, and you have guys that’ll hang the drywall. So if you don’t have ships coming in for the guys who do the foundation, then those guys have to go find other work. So it’s not only the timing and the number of the ships but it’s the sequencing of work that provides the efficiency. The shipyards invested to do two ships a year on six-month centers, and so about one-and-a-half is an efficient build for me. Below that, we can certainly build ships, but I would expect to see impact to schedule and cost,” Neagley said. Last year the Pentagon requested just one LCS in its 2018 request but the next day added in a second hull. Lawmakers pushed back – especially the Wisconsin and Alabama delegations – and the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act ultimately included three LCSs. It is unclear yet, though, if the Navy will be able to buy all three, since an FY 2018 appropriations bill is still pending. Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc.) wrote to President Donald Trump last spring, warning that “including fewer than three LCS in your FY18 budget request would result in layoffs of highly-skilled manufacturing workers in the Midwest beginning next summer. ... Only one LCS in FY18 could result in up to 800 layoffs at the shipyard, or 36 percent of the workforce, and a total of 1,850 jobs lost across the state.” “Layoffs of this magnitude would have dire impacts on the ability of the Marinette shipyard and supply chain to compete for the Navy’s Frigate, which will soon follow the LCS,” Baldwin continued “That would result in reduced competition in the Frigate acquisition, driving up costs to the taxpayer, and harm to our national security by undercutting the strength of our domestic industrial base.”

Source: USNI

Damen Shipyards strong contender for big German naval order

The chance that **Damen Shipyards**, the largest shipyard in the Netherlands, will land a €3.5bn order to build four advanced frigates for the German navy has increased significantly, the *Financieele Dagblad* reported on Friday. Earlier this week, the Gorinchem-based shipbuilder was one of three yards in the running for the MKS 180 frigates, the paper said. But on Thursday afternoon the German business paper *Handelsblatt* said one of the other contenders, the 'ultra-German' consortium made up of ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems and Bremen-based shipyard Lürssen, had dropped out of the bidding. According to *Handelsblatt* the German government doubted that ThyssenKrupp and Larsen had the technical capacity to build the ships. The move automatically increased Damen's chances to win the order for the multi-purpose combat ships. Damen is working on the project with Hamburg shipyard Blohm + Voss. In addition to Damen, German Naval Yards of Kiel, working with Britain's BAE Systems, is in the running. GNY is owned by French-Lebanese businessman Iskandar Safa. The order calls for four frigates with an option on a further two. It is the German navy's largest order for some time. **source : Dutchnews**

INSV Tarini to return to Goa soon as naval ship with all-woman crew reaches last leg of voyage in Cape Town

INSV Tarini has an all-woman crew, led by Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi, and is on her maiden voyage, the last leg of which is Cape Town.

By : [Vanilla Sharma](#)

Mar 3, 2018 15:33 IST



The Indian Navy's sailing boat INSV Tarini, with an all-women crew entered Cape Town (South Africa). IANS

The Indian Navy Sailing Vessel (**INSV Tarini**), led by an all-woman crew, docked at a port in Cape Town in South Africa on Friday, March 2. This is the vessel's maiden voyage and Cape Town

is the last leg of the journey. In a first, INSV Tarini has an all-woman crew led by Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi, with members Lieutenant Commanders Pratibha Jamwal, P Swathi, and Lieutenants S Vijaya Devi, B Aishwarya and Payal Gupta. The vessel docked at Fremantle in Australia, Lyttleton in New Zealand, and Port Stanley in Falklands, before reaching Cape Town. Speaking of the initiative, the Indian Navy said that this would empower women to attain their full potential. *"The expedition titled Navika Sagar Parikrama, is in consonance with the national policy to empower women to attain their full potential. It also aims to showcase Nari Shakti on the world platform and help in transforming societal attitudes and mindset towards women in India by raising visibility of their participation in challenging environs,"* the navy said in a statement, according to the Press Trust of India. The crew members have been collecting data on marine pollution and studying meteorological, ocean and wave data throughout the expedition. Apart from that, they have also been interacting with children at various places and promoting ocean sailing. INSV Tarini's journey has not been easy and the crew has reportedly had to deal with bad weather during navigation with rough seas and extreme temperatures. It has passed through the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic oceans until now, witnessing winds of over 60 knots and waves as high as seven metres.

Indian Navy Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini Fact File

1. *The vessel is the second sailboat of the Indian Navy and was built at the Aquarius Shipyard in Goa.*
2. *The vessel is very similar to the navy's first boat INSV Mhadei, which has been in service for eight years and has travelled over 115,000 nautical miles until now.*
3. *INSV Tarini completed her sea trials on January 30, 2017.*
4. *She was commissioned to Indian Navy on February 18, 2017 as INSV Tarini, named after the Tara Tarini temple in Odisha.*
5. *The boat is 56 feet in length and has six sails, including a mainsail, genoa, stay, downwind and storm sail. The mast is about 25 metres tall.*

While the journey may have been tough, training for it wasn't easy either. They were trained to deal with all kinds of crisis right from the breakdown of equipment and extreme temperatures to emergencies like a crew member sustaining an injury. To familiarize themselves with the kind of situations they might face, the team sailed around 20,000 nautical miles onboard **INSV Mhadei** and **Tarini** to Mauritius as well. To keep themselves occupied, the crew also was asked to take along laptops, DVDs and books and were warned that they would have to survive on dry ration as **INSV Tarini** does not have

refrigeration facility. The crew is said to have begun the journey with 600 litres of water, with an RO plant onboard that could provide about 30 litres of water an hour.

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.co.in>

INSV Tarini was flagged-off from Goa by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on September 10 and has until now travelled 17,500 nautical miles. The vessel is expected to leave Cape Town on March 14, reaching Goa in April.

Workhorses of the sea



ShipName: MAERSK INVENTOR, location: Singapore, Anchorage Date: 01-03-2018

photo: Piet Sinke www.maasmondmaantime.com/fo

The Stingray class subsea support vessel ***Maersk Inventor*** anchored off Singapore Photo : Piet Sinke (c)