

## NAVY NEWS WEEK 15-5

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### BUSINESS Pirate Attacks To Spark Fresh War Surcharge In Nigeria

April 6, 2018 By YUSUF BABALOLA



Unabated pirate attacks on Nigeria-bound vessels has underscore continued maritime security failings in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG), LEADERSHIP has learnt. The attacks continued unabated despite several initiatives by the Nigerian Navy to tackle piracy in recent years. Recently, the region has seen a significant uptick in attacks in recent weeks, with vessels being attacked further west of Nigeria, indicative of the dynamic nature of piracy in the region. For instance, on 22nd of March, an unspecified number of pirates on a speedboat hijacked two fishing vessels 23 nm south of Lagos Port. The pirates boarded the vessels and

sailed to Benin waters, before returning the vessels while abducting two crew members. On the same day, another merchant vessel reported that it came under attack from two speedboats 53 nm southwest of Bonny at 2348 hours local time. However, shipping expert, Dr Kofi Mbia has stated that the surge in pirate activities could have a wrong impact on commercial trading in the shipping industry as it would affect the climate of confidence in trade and influence the rise in insurance premiums. Mbia, a former chief executive officer of the Ghana Shippers' Authority (GSA) warned of high insurance premiums over high pirate attacks. *"When your coast is infested with pirates then there is the tendency for insurance premiums to go up for vessels that are calling at your port because of the threat to the vessels and at the same time it affects the climate of confidence in trade. "Vessels must be able to move freely and navigate to and out of the port but whenever there are increase pirate attacks, there is the tendency for some vessels not to call on some particular ports because of fear of attack so indeed it affects commercial trading,"* he said. But, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), predicted cooperation amongst various government agencies as key to achieving maximum maritime security enforcement. This was the theme running through the latest national table-top exercise on maritime security, held in Lagos. Representatives from various government agencies which form the national implementation committee for the International ship and Port Facilities Security (ISPS) Code participated in the workshop. **Source:** <https://leadership.ng>

### ISS: Climate change is feeding armed conflict in Somalia

Written by ISS Africa, Friday, 06 April 2018



The blast that killed over 350 people and the double car bombing in Mogadishu last October have frustrated Somalia's efforts to build stability. For almost 30 years, the country has been tackling a combination of civil war, famine, desertification, piracy, political fragmentation and terrorism. Although the conflict has many underlying causes, one factor that remains poorly understood is climate change. In a country where, alongside war, six million people face starvation, understanding the role of climate change and its impact on patterns of drought – and developing innovative responses – is urgent. Since the resilience to climate consequences by government and society is limited, the ability of around 70% of Somalis to meet their basic needs depends heavily on a regular climate pattern. However, over the past decade climate change-related desertification has

expanded in Somalia, making the local population even more vulnerable. Climate change feeds armed conflict in Somalia in three ways: by exacerbating tensions between clans; boosting the ranks and role of terrorist groups, including al-Shabaab; and increasing migration. **First**, climate change sharpens disputes over already-scarce resources between warlords. While al-Shabaab has conquered large pieces of the country's territory, clan elders still wield considerable power, dominating the political system. In this sense, the severe droughts cause disruptions to water access, high rates of malnutrition, disease outbreaks and food insecurity. This leads to tension and even open disputes between clans. In a country facing such challenges, resources like food and water are not only a basic need, but also a source of power. **Second**, the relationship between the proliferation of illegal armed groups and the severe droughts in Somalia is evident in the case of al-Shabaab. The group has been successful in attracting young people who are affected by famine and food insecurity and who face no

job prospects. Those youth end up joining al-Shabaab in a bid to survive, finding no other option than to get involved with the extremist group. **Third**, migration has become more complex due to climate change. In 2016, at least one million Somalis were internally displaced, exposed to protection risks, discrimination and gender-based violence. Making the situation even worse, around 300 000 Somali refugees living in the Dadaab refugee complex – the world’s largest refugee camp, located in neighbouring Kenya – have faced heightened uncertainty since Kenya announced the compound will close. Although desertification perpetuates and expands the levels of violence in Somalia – with possible spill-overs into neighbouring states, as is already the case in Kenya – climate change has received relatively little attention when compared to anti-terrorism and security sector reform. Global and regional powers and international organisations have focused on fighting terrorism and piracy in the Horn of Africa. Most of the international community recognises the influence of human activity on the climate system and its severe consequences. These include shifts in rain patterns, increasing desertification, higher frequency and severity in tornados and hurricanes, temperature disturbance and frequent heat waves. But neither the Paris Agreement nor last November’s United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bonn, Germany, have addressed the links between climate change and armed conflicts. They also haven’t offered recommendations on how to build resilience in this area in fragile states. This is particularly worrisome because even a slight change in the global temperature is enough to provoke a set of weather calamities. Many developing and developed countries are implementing public policies to prevent, mitigate and adapt to climate change consequences. In most cases, governments and other stakeholders are able to tap into technical expertise, new technology, and relatively or highly stable societies. But conflict-affected countries, which are socially, politically and economically vulnerable, encounter considerable obstacles in addressing the effects of climate change. Instability, low state capacity and prioritising more immediate goals tend to sideline climate change issues. This is despite the fact that climate change exacerbates existing problems and intensifies violence, as in Somalia’s case. Given these obstacles, initiatives to adapt and mitigate consequences of climate change in fragile countries must be incorporated into approaches to prevent armed conflicts. These include the G7+ group of ‘*fragile states*’ and its effort to promote the United Nations’ Agenda 2030 in conflict-affected states, including through implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goal 16. This goal is dedicated to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all, and building accountable and effective institutions at all levels. A partnership between Somalia’s government, the UN Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility represents a promising yet somewhat isolated example. The goal of this partnership – the Enhancing Climate Resilience of the Vulnerable Communities and Ecosystems in Somalia initiative (2014-2019) – is to implement ecosystem-based drought and flood preparedness to adapt to extreme climate events. For example the project currently works with small-scale farmers in parts of Somalia, such as Puntland. Although the initiative is local, if it succeeds, efforts to scale up the response should be considered. International actors should also consider responses such as the transfer of agricultural technology capacity, whether through aid or south-south cooperation, to help farmers avoid losing their crops and livestock. Microcredit should be offered in order to help farmers keep productive land. Most African countries don’t have strong measures in place to adapt to climate change. Environmental initiatives must be taken into account in conflict prevention in Africa, as such initiatives could help decrease violence, as well as promote food security and development. While climate change requires a global response, local efforts are also needed in order to build resilience and improve living conditions in conflict-affected states.

*Written by Giovanna Kuele, Research Assistant, Igarapé Institute and Ana Cristina Miola, environmental lawyer and student, Natural Resources Management and Development Programme, University of Applied Sciences of Cologne, Germany*

Source: <http://www.defenceweb.co.za>

**This is not encouraging for overcoming the scourge of piracy in this part of the worlds.**

## **Destroyer Churchill deploys, Truman Strike Group up next**

**By: Mark D. Faram**



**USS Winston Churchill Photo : Tommy Bryceland – Scotland ©**

The guided missile destroyer **Winston Churchill** left Norfolk deploying on a scheduled trip to the 5th and 6th Fleets. “The ship is deploying as an independent deployer,” said Lt. Cmdr. Courtney Hillson, spokeswoman for Naval Surface Forces, Atlantic. Hillson said that officially a part of the **USS Abraham Lincoln Strike group**, the Churchill did train with the Truman

Carrier Strike Group by participating in last month's 28-day Composite Training Unit Exercise, the group's final exercise before being certified to deploy. The **Truman Carrier Strike Group** is expected to depart Norfolk sometime in the next couple weeks for 5th and 6th Fleet areas as well, however the Navy has yet to release the official departure date. The carrier Truman is being joined by European allies for an upcoming training exercise, and one will stick around for a deployment. The ship departed Pier 11 at Naval Station Norfolk, passing through the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel this morning after a send-off from family and friends, who braved bone chilling, 40-degree temperatures with 20-mph winds. The **Winston Churchill** is the only U.S. Navy warship named for a modern British hero, Navy officials say. Though it's the first lengthy deployment for the ship since 2015, the ship did visit the British Naval Base in Faslane, Scotland, in September after participating in combined operations with the Royal Navy.

**Source: Maasmd Maritime**



Australian's Navy second destroyer **Brisbane 41** is joined by sister ship **HMAS Hobart** as she departs the Osborne wharf during the second phase of sea trials, currently being undertaken off the South Australian coast **Photo : Australian Navy**

### **Tunisian Navy receives first of its new Damen MSOPV 1400 offshore patrol vessels**

**by: Mrityunjoy Mazumdar, Alameda - Jane's Navy International**

The Tunisian Navy has received the first of four new Damen-built Multi Service Offshore Patrol Vessel 1400 (MSOPV 1400) series offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) with a SeaAxe hullform. The lead vessel **Jugurtha**, departed its shipyard at Galati in Romania in early March and arrived at the main Tunisian naval base of Bizerte on 9 March, according to Automatic Identification System (AIS) data. Although Damen has refused to comment on this project, citing customer confidentiality, it is understood that Damen is building these ships in pairs. Steel-cutting for the lead pair of vessels – **Jugurtha** and **Syphax** – started on 13 December 2016.

**source: Jane's Navy International**

### **The impact of HMS Queen Elizabeth on British international relations**

**HMS Queen Elizabeth and her sister are symbols of national power due to their ability to project power and capability all over the world.**

This article is concerned with the cultural and symbolic significance of aircraft carriers in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, and in particular **HMS Queen Elizabeth**. The might and innovation of the Royal Navy are symbolised in its technological and strategic assets. For years, the Royal Navy has punched above its weight while, relatively speak, British power has declined. However, the creation of this supercarrier has rejuvenated the image of Britain as a Great Power, with global military reach. The UK already has the fifth largest military spending in the world, and this symbolism is seen in the supercarrier **HMS Queen Elizabeth**. The ship's former commanding officer, Captain Simon Petitt, pointed out that there is a lot of symbolism in modern warfare and that having a ship the size of **HMS Queen Elizabeth**, which will be the Navy's biggest ever, was significant. The sight of a heavily equipped 70,000 tonne carrier, which is almost 300 metres long, heading towards a potential enemy had a deterrent effect that is essential if the UK wants to project influence across the world Petitt claims. *"It is massively visible, you can range back in history and see the value of this. Everything from Nelson deterring Admiral Villeneuve from leaving Cadiz all the way to the big battleships of early 20th century, to what we are doing now. The Americans use it all the time. We currently haven't got this level of carrier capability. The bigger the capability the more influence you have to bear."* So great is the impact of larger vessels as a deterrent, they're often used as a geopolitical chess piece. American governments have, since the Second World War, moved aircraft carriers around to demonstrate American resolve. Increasingly international relations is being governed by the power and capabilities of navies worldwide. With the rise of China, as a revisionist power in the Asia-Pacific, European Powers, such as the United Kingdom have to show they can play a vital role with cutting-edge technologies. While the **Dreadnought** at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century embodied naval power, it was not until the Second World War, that the aircraft carrier became the symbol of power. As such, aircraft carriers symbolise a nation's power. It shows its ability to project its power and is an icon of power in this new technological age. During the Second World War, the United States proved that the aircraft carrier was the most important warship of all. Maritime doctrine during the Cold War was based on aircraft carriers and also submarine warfare. In the Post – Cold War world, we are witnessing the emergence of other nations such as Japan, China, and India investing in aircraft



carrier capabilities, while other nations like France, Britain and the United States, have invested money in retaining and advancing their capabilities. This is significant as all these nations place a premium on aircraft carriers. A modern aircraft carrier can carry a large amount of fuel and weapons anywhere in the world. It can be used for air support, destruction of enemy air defences and destruction of enemy ships. It flies the flag of the nation and is a formidable warship to be contended with. As such, it is a symbol of a Great Power and defines how a country views a nation which possesses such vessels. Let us discuss international relations and how an aircraft carrier can help bring about credibility to a nation. For a nation to deploy an aircraft carrier, it is a show of strength to other nations. It shows the ability of a nation, and its ability to project power and capability at a moment's notice. The display of sophisticated weaponry, aircraft, and the sheer size of the vessel is symbolic of power and capability. To put it simply, a nation's possession of a properly fitted out aircraft carrier helps cement its status as a great power. The cost of aircraft carriers run into the billions and this is no exception for the Royal Navy. However, while in the past (40 years!) Britain has based its power upon its smaller carriers such as the Invincible class, this new ship has a full flight deck with a lifespan of 50 years. While mini-carriers and amphibious landing craft can take on some of the roles of an aircraft carrier, the new **HMS Queen Elizabeth** symbolises the military might of Great Britain and its technological capabilities to other nations overseas. Its sheer and imposing size is to be marvelled at in relation to other Royal Navy aircraft carriers in the past. In conclusion, for a nation to spend billions on a supercarrier demonstrates resolve and its conception of itself as a major power in the world, able to create a technologically sophisticated warship which has a formidable power projection capabilities. Its power and significance in international relations should not be under-estimated when regarding the rise of other powers such as China. The UK is a global power, and has reach from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans.

**Source: UK Defence Journal**

## **US Navy, Pentagon Agree to Shock Test \$13 Billion Supercarrier**

**Shock trials for the U.S. Navy's newest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier will proceed as planned.**



U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan endorsed shock testing the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier **USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78)**, the lead of ship of the U.S. Navy's latest class of carriers, in a March 26 letter to Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain, Bloomberg reports this week. "We agree with your view that a test in normal sequence is more prudent and pragmatic," Shanahan writes. The U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Navy are now in agreement to shock test the carrier's key systems and assess how well they do under

combat conditions. "Good news from [Department of Defense] that they intend to shock test **USS Gerald R. Ford**," Senator John McCain tweeted on April 5. "Full ship shock trials before first deployment will help address concerns with reliability of unproven new technologies on board." Shock trials "which have been going on for many decades in the U.S. Navy, involve the detonation of underwater charges," I explained in February. "Depending on the outcome of the shock trials, design changes may be necessary prior to a ship assuming initial combat duty." James F. Geurts, assistant secretary of the Navy for research development and acquisition, announced last month that the service would drop its opposition to shock trials and delay the tests by at least six years in order to expedite the **USS Gerald R. Ford**'s operational deployment. The principal reason behind the service's push to delay any trials was the fear that it would cause additional delays to the operational deployment of the new aircraft carrier increasing the pressure on an already overstretched surface fleet. Rather than conducting shock trials with the **USS Gerald R. Ford**, the U.S. Navy initially suggested shock testing the **Ford**'s follow-on, the future Ford-class carrier **USS John F. Kennedy**, which is slated to be launched with a two-year delay in 2020. The cancellation of the shock trials were calculated to move up the combat deployment of the **Ford** by a year from 2022 to 2021. One of the reasons for the recent controversy surrounding the possible cancellation of the trials are the many new and largely untested systems installed aboard the **USS Gerald R. Ford**, as I explained previously. The **USS Gerald R. Ford**, commissioned in July 2017, is equipped with a host of new and untested technologies, including the carrier's two main turbine generators, a new dual-band radar system, advanced weapons elevators, and a new advanced arresting gear on the flight deck. (U.S. President Donald Trump objected to the installation of some of the new systems such as General Dynamics' new electromagnetic aircraft launch system aboard, as I reported in May 2017.) It is precisely the reliability of these new systems that the Pentagon's wants to thoroughly test. Total cost for the **USS Gerald R. Ford** are estimated at \$12.9 billion-the most expensive warship in the U.S. Navy's history.

**Source: The Diplomat**

**For the life of me I could not understand why the USN wanted to sip this important part taken a new vessel into operations, to confirm the ship's survivability. It creates confidence in all, being more imortant than rushing her into a deployment.**

## Turkish navy ship TCG *Gelibolu* reaches Karachi



The ship will participate in first Pakistan-Turkish navy exercise "TURGUT REIS-18".

**TCG *Gelibolu***, a Turkish Navy Oliver Hazard Perry Class Ship arrived Karachi on a four days goodwill visit. Ship was escorted into harbour by Pakistan Navy

Ship ***Aslat*** and was received with a warm welcome during an impressive reception at Pakistan Navy Dockyard Upon arrival, traditional tunes were played by Pakistan Navy band and waving of Pakistan-Turkey Flags. The ship was received by senior officers of Pakistan Navy and Turkish diplomatic officials. The visit of Turkish Navy Ship to Pakistan is manifestation of the strong bilateral ties between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Turkey. This visit will further strengthen the existing bonds of friendship between the two countries besides strengthening mutual cooperation. During the visit to Karachi, professional interactions, social activities, including wreath laying at Quaid's Mausoleum, were also held for the crew of **TCG *Gelibolu***. Vice Admiral Adnan Ozbal, Commander Turkish Naval Forces has also visited Pakistan concurrent to Turkish Navy Ship visit which signifies the importance of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Turkish Navies. This visit is of a special significance as on completion of port visit, first Pakistan Navy-Turkish Navy exercise named **TURGUT REIS-18** is also planned to improve interoperability between the two Navies and mutual professional gains.

Source: [dunyanews](#)

## Royal Thai Navy ships at Sri Lanka

Making a five-day training and goodwill visit, three Royal Thai Naval Ships arrived in Sri Lanka on Friday (06th April). The ships, **HTMS *Bangpakong***, ***Makutrajakumarn*** and ***Pattani*** were accorded a traditional welcome upon their arrival at the Colombo Port by the Sri Lanka Navy. During their stay in the island the Thai Naval personnel on-board the three visiting ships are scheduled to take part in a number of programmes including sports and cultural events organized by their local counterparts. The ships are set to leave the island today Monday (09th April).

Source: [Maasmond Maritime](#)

## Norway aims to order 3 coast guard vessels from Fincantieri's Vard

Norway plans to order three vessels for its coast guard from the Vard Langstein shipyard, the Ministry of Defence said in a statement on Friday. The 6.8 billion Norwegian crowns (\$869.44 million) contract is dependent on approval by parliament and on final negotiations with the supplier, the ministry added. The yard is part of the Vard group, majority owned by Italy's Fincantieri.

source: [Reuters Reporting by Terje Solsvik, editing by Camilla Knudsen](#)

## Australian steel companies sign contracts for RAN's Future Submarine programme

By : [Gabriel Dominguez, London - IHS Jane's Defence Weekly](#)

Australian steel makers Bisalloy and BlueScope have signed contracts with Naval Group Australia to produce up to 250 tonnes of specialised steel for the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN's) Future Submarine programme. "The steel produced will be tested to determine whether it meets the specification for the pressure hull of our new Future Submarines, which is an essential safety requirement," Minister for Defence Industry Christopher Pyne said in a 6 April statement, adding that during the past 12 months Naval Group has been working with Bisalloy and BlueScope to develop and qualify Australian steel to meet the specifications required for the submarines.

Source: [Maasmond Maritime](#)

## One dead in Italian navy helicopter crash

An Italian Navy helicopter crashed in the Mediterranean during a night-time training exercise, killing one, the navy said on Friday. Andrea Fazio, an experienced flight operator based in Catania, Sicily, died after the helicopter crashed into the sea and flipped onto its side as it prepared to land on a patrol boat, the navy said in a statement. Divers rushed to pull Fazio from the chopper but were unable to revive him. The four other crew members aboard the helicopter escaped without major injuries. The patrol boat was part of the "**Mare Sicuro**" (Secure Sea) navy operation in the central Mediterranean. It was launched in March 2015 to protect oil rigs and fishing boats from ruthless Libyan militias, as well as to combat people trafficking. The navy has also rescued thousands of migrants during its operations, either by taking them on board or by assisting other rescue ships. Their onboard helicopters often carry out emergency medical evacuation operations.

source: [The Local](#)

## Goa Shipyard looks abroad for minesweeper technology

Newton Sequeira | TNN | Updated: Apr 9, 2018, 07:16 IST



PANAJI: [Goa Shipyard](#) Limited (GSL) has started a fresh search for technology partners to help build 12 mine counter-measure vessels (MCMV) to fill the wide gap in the current fleet of the Indian [Navy's](#) minesweepers. The Vasco-based yard has issued an expression of interest (Eoi) requesting foreign shipyards to pre-qualify for the Rs 32,000-crore project. Speaking exclusively to TOI, chairman and managing director of GSL, Shekhar Mital confirmed that the defence public sector undertaking had floated a global Eoi, and was awaiting response from the shipyards with technology to construct minesweepers with single skin, non-stiffened hull. "We have floated the Eoi and we are waiting for responses. There is

a time frame for shipyards to respond and once we evaluate them, we will follow it with a request for proposal," Mital said.

### MINE HUNTING

- A minesweeper is a small naval warship designed to engage in clearing naval mines
- Minesweepers ensure waterways are maintained clear for safe shipping
- In January, TOI reported that final negotiations with Kangnam Corp, which were stuck for months, fell through
- The firm wanted deviations in conditions from the original tender



- Officials say the firm was also reluctant to share all the technology required for the project

TOI was the first to report that the ministry of defence had terminated negotiations with Kangnam Corp, a South Korean firm. [Defence ministry](#) sources suggested that very few countries have the expertise to build minesweepers with non-magnetic hulls and high-definition sonars, and minesweepers with the ability to conduct acoustic and magnetic sweeps to detect marooned and drifting mines. Other than Kangnam Corp, Italy's Intermarine and Sweden's [Saab Kockums](#) are some of the foreign shipyards that specialize in building mine counter-measure vessels. GSL will be participating in Defexpo 2018, Chennai and is expected to meet potential technology partners and foreign delegations that could

play a role in this critical project. Currently, the Indian Navy is left with just four ageing minesweepers to protect 14 ports around the country. Naval officials said that it could take another year for the discussions on technology transfer, which India is insisting upon, to be concluded. "We have to put majority of the infrastructure, expertise and planning into place to be able to start construction of the MCMVs by 2019," Mital said. Though GSL has taken up significant capacity augmentation, it would take more than two years for the first indigenously built minesweeper vessel to be in commissioned into the Indian Navy. This is India's third attempt to indigenously build and design mine counter-measure vessels using glass-reinforced plastic hulls. The earlier two attempts saw Kangnam Corp being selected as the technology partner but each time the discussions failed.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

## Trump administration grants license for Taiwan submarine project: report

Reuters Staff

April 7, 2018 / 7:58 PM / 4 days ago

**WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The Trump administration has approved the marketing license required for American manufacturers to sell technology to Taiwan that would allow for Taiwan to build indigenous submarine.**

The news agency said Taiwan Ministry of National Defense Chen Chung-chi confirmed that the U.S. Department of State had agreed to grant the license needed to sell the technology to Taiwan that it would need to build its own submarine.

The U.S. State Department declined to confirm the details of the news report. A State Department official said the agency continued to review Taiwan's defense needs and referred questions about specific procurement plans to Taiwanese authorities. "Our longstanding policy on defense sales to Taiwan has been consistent across seven different U.S. administrations," the official said. "This policy has contributed to the security of Taiwan and also supported the maintenance



of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.” Reporting by David Brunnstrom, Phil Stewart and Mike Stone; Writing by Dustin Volz  
 Source: <https://www.reuters.com>

## **Stealth frigates: India hopes to seal deal with Russia**

Newton Sequeira | TNN | Updated: Apr 9, 2018, 07:21 IST



PANAJI: India hopes to conclude price negotiations with Russia for the four Talwar-class stealth frigates for the Indian Navy on the sidelines of DefExpo 2018 so that the deal can be inked before the India-Russia annual summit later this year. While two stealth frigates - classified as [Project 11356](#) - will be built in Russia, the remaining guided-missile stealth frigates will be built at Goa Shipyard Limited ([GSL](#)) in collaboration with Russia. A meeting of the [Price Negotiation Committee \(PNC\)](#) was held in Moscow when defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman visited Russia earlier this month. “The Price Negotiation Committee for the project is in advanced stage of conclusion and

preparatory activities are in full swing to commence construction by 2020-21. A PNC meeting is scheduled at Chennai during the DefExpo itself, and we hope to arrive at a decision,” GSL chairman and managing director [Shekhar Mital](#) said.

### **ON THE HORIZON**



- India inked an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with Russia for four stealth frigates in 2016
- Two frigates will be built in Russia, while the rest will be

constructed at Goa Shipyard Limited in collaboration with Russia

- Construction likely to commence by 2020-21
- Indian Navy currently operates six Russian-built stealth frigates which were delivered between 2004 and 2013
- Goa Shipyard is also looking at a \$2 billion project to manufacture four Tamandaré-class corvettes for the Brazilian Navy

Mital has left for Chennai where he is expected to meet officials from Russia’s shipbuilding industry and the ministry of defence. India inked an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with Russia for the four frigates during a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the 2016 BRICS Summit. Russian delegations with officials from Yantar shipyard in Kaliningrad have already visited the Vasco-based shipyard to evaluate if the facilities available were sufficient to manufacture the two stealth frigates. After Russia gave the green light, the union ministry of defence nominated GSL for the project. “GSL has taken lot of initiatives for ‘Make in India’ and is always on the lookout to get most advanced and niche shipbuilding technology to India through collaboration or

transfer of technology,” Mital said. The navy currently operates six Russian-built stealth frigates which were delivered between 2004 and 2013.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

## **Crew of Argentine San Juan Submarine 'Endured Hours of Agony'**

Investigators said fires most likely spread throughout the stricken submarine, forcing the crew to battle the blaze. |

Published 6 April 2018



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Investigators said fires most likely spread throughout the stricken submarine, forcing the crew to battle the blaze in ferocious weather conditions.

The crew of **Argentina's** lost **ARA San Juan submarine** endured an excruciating two hours battling fires aboard the stricken vessel before it imploded at depth and sank, an **official investigation** has revealed. On November 15 last year, fire broke out in the battery tank located in the San Juan's bow. Water had entered through the sub's snorkel, triggering what was swiftly to become a fatal incident. Despite the influx of water, the vessel dove to a greater depth and attempted to continue the journey to its home naval base **Mar del Plata**, 400 kilometers south of the capital **Buenos Aires**. Investigators told the Nacion newspaper that the fires most likely spread throughout the stricken submarine, forcing the crew to battle the blaze in ferocious weather conditions. According to their report, the vessel eventually imploded – killing the 44 crew almost instantly and sinking into the depths. The investigating commission was formed by **Rear Admiral Adolfo Trama** and Alejandro Kenny, along with **Captain Jorge Bergallo**, father of crew member Jorge Ignacio Bergallo. The commission has also ruled out maintenance issues, rejecting claims the submarine was not seaworthy when it embarked on its ill-fated final voyage. **Source:** <https://www.telesurty.net>

## **Banking on old ties: To checkmate China, India needs indigenous AIP Technology**

— By Pravin Sawhney | Apr 07, 2018 11:05 am



File Photo of India's second Scorpene-class submarine, **Khanderi**.

The recent test-firing and operationalisation of Pakistan's submarine launched Cruise Missile (SLCM) Babur-III (which can be fired with both conventional and nuclear warheads) with a range of 450km has three

serious implications for India: operational (war-fighting), as sea-based deterrence, and strategic (in cahoots with People's Liberation Army Navy, PLAN). India would need to bolster its precariously depleted submarine arm to meet this enormous challenge with out-of-box ideas since the 30-year submarine plan approved in 1999 is out of sync with the existing realities. Submarines, after all, beat submarines. Babur-III missiles with conventional warheads are expected to be fitted on Pakistan Navy's three Agosta-90B class diesel-electric attack submarines (Khalid class) with Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) built by the French DCNS (new name, Naval Group). These joined service in 1999-2008. Coupled with the French Exocet anti-ship missiles, Babur-III will make Khalid submarines a potent war-fighting platform. Pakistan has also contracted for eight Chinese modified diesel-electric submarines with AIPs (to evade detection by remaining underwater for long) to be delivered by 2028. By the time the Gwadar port, which is the southern tip of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, gets converted into a military base, the two navies' conventional submarines would have acquired interoperability (to fight together on common mission) to dominate the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Aden through effective sea-denial capabilities. For sea-based deterrence, Pakistan is expected to acquire the Chinese improved Shang-class 093 type Submersible Ship Nuclear (SSN, referred to as nuclear attack submarines). These were spotted docked in Karachi harbour in May 2017. These could be fitted with Babur SLCMs, turning them into Pakistan's sea-based deterrence for second-strike capability. The versatile SSNs can perform a variety of tasks including hunting enemy SSNs/ diesel-electric submarines and tailing SSBNs (Ship Submersible Ballistic Nuclear or nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines); escorting carrier battle group; attacking amphibious task group; doing clandestine and intelligence gathering missions and so on. The SSNs, during peacetime, gather information which is useful in war, to include sea conditions, submarine probable areas, harbours and coastlines, traffic densities, warship characteristics with its habits and patterns of operations and the like. This is precisely what the Chinese SSNs have been doing in the Indian Ocean Region since 2008 under the garb of anti-piracy tasks in the Gulf of Aden. And this is what the Pakistani SSNs, working closely with China, would do. All this would, on the one hand, adversely impact upon India's strategic maritime aspirations which are unfolding through its Indo-Pacific ambitions in concert with the Quadrilateral nations, the Act East policy, BIMSTEC and India-ASEAN policies. On the other hand, it would strengthen China's One Belt One Road which traverses the same sea-route as the traditional sea lanes of communication. India would find it extremely difficult to match China/ Pakistan forays in its backyard since China, with its vibrant war-shipbuilding industry, excellent maintenance and medium-refit capabilities, and over 60 submarines amongst other assets, scores heavily over India in naval power. India has 13 diesel-electric submarines (nine Russian Kilo-class and four HDWs); one SSBN, INS Arihant commissioned in August 2016 (it has not done a single deterrent patrol), and the second SSBN, Arighat undergoing sea-trials; and one SSN, INS Chakra leased from Russia in 2012 for 10 years. Of the nine Kilo class submarines (all of Eighties vintage) not more than five are available operationally. Since India never bothered to set-up indigenous maintenance facilities for Kilo submarines in four decades, two of them are in Russia (with two more waiting) for medium refit and life extension certification for another 11 years. While Kilos are armed with excellent cruise missiles — 3M



14E land attack with 300km range and 3M 54E anti-ship with 220km range — the submarine technology is old. The 30-year submarine plan, which had envisaged six each submarines of western and Russian origin, followed by 12 indigenous submarines (from design to production), is woefully behind schedule. Six French Scorpene submarines built at MDL under Project 75, which are now expected to be delivered by 2022, too are old technology. The government is mulling over the possibility of three follow-on Scorpenes at MDL. With 14 changes (including AIP and better propulsion) that the navy wants, the next lot of Scorpenes, if it materialises, would be a mix of new and old technologies. The government meanwhile has taken two steps. One, it issued a Request for Information in 2017 for a new class of submarines. France and Russia are serious contenders in the programme to partner with Indian shipyard under Make in India to manufacture six submarines under Project 75I. The next programme, Project 76, which is supposed to make indigenous 12 state-of-art submarines, remains on the drawing board. And two, work on six indigenous SSNs under Make in India which was approved by the government in 2015, has reportedly begun. Keeping the uninspiring state of Indian war-shipbuilding in mind, it should be clear that India should seek French or Russian help (India has close ties with them) for expeditiously building diesel-electric submarines (under 75I and even 76) and SSNs. Both these countries with multiple linkages with India including a direct line to the Prime Minister's Office, are aware of Indian requirements and realities. Not for nothing, the navy chief, Admiral Sunil Lanba during his November 2017 visit to France was shown the Barracuda SSN, which also has a diesel-electric version. The big question with France is this: Will it share the nuclear-propulsion technology for SSNs with India? This and other doubts are not there with Russia. Moscow is helping India with its SSBNs (Arihant design came from there), has leased its SSNs (talks for another INS Chakra are at an advanced state), and has offered to help with the six indigenous SSNs including propulsion. According to top sources, Russia has offered joint design, joint prototype building, and transfer of technical documentation for serial production to nominated Indian shipyard under Make in India (to include BrahMos and DRDO's AIP installations) for both Project 75I and 76. If true, this should be considered as the out-of-box solution to make up submarines' deficiencies.

Source: <http://www.freepressjournal.in>

## **How China is quietly increasing its ability to wage war at sea**

**More intensive naval training is steadily improving the navy's combat readiness, writes Collin Koh**

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The People's Liberation Army Navy has been on a roll over the past month, staging successive air, naval and marine amphibious assault exercises across the Western Pacific. Most notably, a large naval deployment was observed on satellite imagery in late March – about 40 vessels including what appeared to be the aircraft carrier **Liaoning**. It was followed not far astern by a slightly smaller combat support ship, plus other vessels including submarines and two distinct three-aircraft aerial formations. Clearly, there should be no dispute among naval observers that the formation in which the fleet sailed amounted to what can be termed a photo and PR exercise. Some dismissed the manoeuvres as a propaganda exercise designed to flaunt the navy's muscle, but others cautioned this could imply the PLA Navy has intensified its peacetime combat readiness and training. Neither side is wrong, for both schools of thought encapsulate the meaning of gunboat diplomacy – the limited threat or use of naval force for the attainment of limited political objectives. Usually some form of photo opportunity is obligatory on major naval exercises and examples are bountiful. Examples include **Exercise Malabar** in July last year, with all three carriers of the US, Indian and Japanese navies sailing in formation with fighter jets blazing above, plus the Thailand-hosted Asean Multinational Naval Exercise late last year, to name just a few. The latest huge naval turnout in the South China Sea appears no different. But would it make sense for China to burn expensive fuel, taking so many warships and their crews away from other tasks, only to stage a photo op? Focusing on the apparent propaganda value of the manoeuvres solely based on the satellite pictures diverts one's attention away from a more pertinent phenomenon. That is, while much focus has been on the Chinese coastguard and fabled maritime militia in the South China Sea and in other East Asian maritime flashpoints involving China, the PLA Navy has been gradually improving its ability to fight in a high-intensity war. There is nothing radically new about this. The navy has been steadily building new ships over the years. Just over the past two years alone, over 40 new vessels were commissioned or launched. But combat capability does not just emanate from inducting new hardware. Clearly the navy understands the value of honing its combat readiness through intense training. While one could question the various other factors that contribute to combat readiness – for example, command and control protocols – the fact of the matter is that in recent years, corresponding with the rate of naval shipbuilding efforts, there has also been an upswing in the navy's training and exercise regimen. New hardware allows the fleet to maintain a higher level of readiness compared to using older ships simply because of reduced maintenance requirements. Suffice to say, for now the navy has the luxury of utilising its new-built fleet of vessels to intensify training – more sea time for its crews, which translates into more familiarity with operating their vessels under varying conditions and getting acquainted with the strengths and weaknesses of their combat systems. Until laggard maintenance schedules catch up eventually, which nobody can be certain of, one should assume that the navy will remain fixated with building a more proficient fleet capable of undertaking large-scale operations. Also noteworthy is the growing amount of inter-fleet coordination. This is also nothing new – the PLA Navy South Sea, East Sea and North Sea fleets have mobilised assets to train with each other in the past. What is different this time around and will be in the future is that such inter-fleet exchanges will take place on a larger scale thanks to new ships and equipment available. To add to that, the navy has also been honing its interoperability with both the coastguard and maritime militia. If one takes seriously the incessant exhortations from

Beijing's political elites to "train as you fight", large-scale naval manoeuvres similar to the one observed in late March would plausibly not be a one-off event, but represent a new normal, made possible only as the navy gains new capabilities and its personnel acquire new-found confidence. That could mean two things for peace and stability for the South China Sea and Southeast Asia. On the one hand, a more capable PLA Navy might contribute towards the promotion of defence diplomacy. On the other, a more capable and overconfident PLA Navy may serve more as a tool of coercion. A navy is such a flexible instrument for foreign policy that it can well perform either of these tasks. It depends on how the navy's political masters choose to utilise this capability. The increasing power of China's navy and its enhanced combat readiness should not be kept off everyone's radar. It remains a force with an increasingly large shadow, ready to weigh in at any point of confrontation at sea with Beijing's rivals. While not overexaggerating this threat, we should ignore this growing Chinese naval challenge at our peril.

**Koh Swee Lean Collin is a research fellow at the maritime security programme at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore**

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

### **New Philippine Navy frigates to start construction following design review**



Photo: HHI

The Philippine Navy's troubled frigate acquisition project is set to make headway after the navy's technical inspection and acceptance committee approved a design review for the two new vessels. According to Philippine media reports, the design review was approved March 23 while a ceremonial steel cutting to

mark the construction start is likely to take place on April 30 in South Korea, where the two ships will be built by Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI). The contract for frigate construction was awarded to HHI in October 2016. It was initially expected that the first of two ships could be delivered in 2020 but issues with the choice of a combat system supplier delayed the project by six months, possibly pushing the delivery timetable back. The controversy around the choice of a combat systems supplier even resulted in the ousting of former Philippine Navy chief Vice-Admiral Ronald Joseph Mercado. The former head of the Philippine naval forces was dismissed after questioning the previously-signed frigate contract as he insisted Dutch company Thales Tacticos should be selected over South Korea's Hanwha Systems. Hanwha Systems was previously known as Hanwha Thales and was renamed after Thales sold its 50 percent stake in the company in July 2016. Mercado's major concern about Hanwha Systems as the Philippine Navy frigate combat system supplier was the company's ability to integrate subsystems into the warships. The new frigates are expected to be a variant on Hyundai's own HDF-3000 FFX-I multipurpose frigate. According to specifications provided by Hyundai, the design features a length of 114m, a beam of 14m and a hull draught of 4m. They are designed as a smaller version of the Incheon-class frigate which is already in service with the Republic of Korea Navy. With a projected range of 4,500 nautical miles range at a cruising speed of 15 knots, the ships are to be operable up to Sea State 5.

Source: Naval Today

### **Workhorses of the sea**



The *levoli Ivory* -IMO 9703368- approaching Kiel-Canal locks at Brunsbüttel on April 5th, 2018. Photo: Michael Brakhage ©