

## NAVY NEWS WEEK 36-6

**7 September 2018**

### **Franco-British Scallop Dispute Flares Up**

August 30, 2018 by [Reuters](#)



French and British fishing boats collide during scrap in English Channel over scallop fishing rights, August 28, 2018 in this still image taken from a video. France 3 Caen/via REUTERS

by Geert De Clercq (Reuters) –

French and British fisherman pledged talks to quell a high-seas dispute over access to the scallop-rich seabed in the Baie de Seine after French vessels

chased their rivals out of the zone, hurling projectiles and insults. French vessels rammed British scallop dredgers on Tuesday off the coast of Normandy in an attack English fisherman Ciaran Cardell described as like “a scene out of Vietnam”. “They just came out and surrounded our fleet, throwing petrol bombs. It was mental,” said Cardell, a scallop fisherman from Cornwall who told Reuters his boat was attacked by about 15 French scallop fishing boats in international waters. The French are irritated that British fishermen are allowed to harvest scallops, a key earner for France’s Normandy region, throughout the year, while they are prevented from doing so during the summer. “This is well beyond legal behavior. We have asked the British government to intervene at a diplomatic level but also to provide protection for our vessels,” Barrie Deas, head of Britain’s fishermen’s organizations, told BBC radio. British environment minister Michael Gove said the UK boats were fishing legally. He told BBC television: “We can insist that the French, because they have a legal responsibility to ensure that we don’t have scenes like those we saw earlier this week, ensure that those waters – their territorial waters – are appropriately policed so that legal fishing activity can continue.” The head of Normandy’s fishing organization Dimitri Rogoff said the attack was spontaneous but acknowledged events spiraled out of control. He said he deplored the violence. “There should not be any brawling, that could end badly. Our main UK counterpart has proposed we hold talks quickly in France, we’ll receive a UK delegation in the coming days,” Rogoff said on Wednesday.

**“There will be none left”**

Scallops – known as Coquille Saint Jacques in France – are one of just a few species whose catch is governed by national rather than European Union regulation. France bans all scallop dredging between May 15 and October 1, but Britain allows its vessels to operate year-round. While British ships have no access to French territorial waters up to 12 nautical miles (22 km) off the coast, they can legally operate in the expansive Baie de Seine that stretches from Cherbourg to Dunkirk. After the row – dubbed the scallop wars – flared up five years ago, French and UK fishermen brokered yearly agreements that saw British fishermen limit their scallop dredging in the Baie de Seine in exchange for some French scallop permits. “But in the past two years, we feel our British partners do not want to negotiate, maybe because of Brexit,” Rogoff said. Rogoff said the root of the problem is different economic models. Normandy fishermen, he said, operate mainly small family-owned boats close to their own shores and sell the scallops live. The British fleet, he said, included company-owned “floating factories” which freeze and process the catch onboard. French fishermen argue that scallops should not be harvested in summer, when they reproduce. “If everybody dredges for scallops all year round, soon there will be none left,” Rogoff said.

Source: <https://gcaptain.com>

### **Navy assists Norwegian ship in pirate-infested Gulf of Aden**

[Press Trust of India](#) | New Delhi Last Updated at August 29, 2018 16:20 IST

Indian Naval ship ‘Teg’ assisted a Norwegian vessel with an all-Indian crew after its [port anchor](#) along with the entire 330 metres cable inadvertently slipped, thus restricting her speed and making it vulnerable in the pirate-infested Gulf of Aden, the [Navy](#) said today. On August 25, while patrolling in the Gulf of Aden, **INS Teg**, a warship of the Western Naval Command, received a call from a [Combined Task Force](#) aircraft for providing assistance to **MV Vela**, a Norwegian owned ship. “The vessel was in distress as her [Port Anchor](#) along with the entire 330 metres cable weighing approximately 42 tonnes had inadvertently slipped and was hanging into the sea. This had severely disabled the ship with her speed being restricted to 5-6 knots, thus making her vulnerable to [piracy](#) attacks, apart from being a navigational hazard for herself as well as for other ships in the dense shipping corridor,” the [Navy](#) said in a statement. **INS Teg** quickly dispatched a specialist team to carry out an assessment of the situation and provided assistance for recovery of the anchor and cable. The team was led by the ship’s [engineering officer](#) and other specialist officers, seamanship instructor, anchor chain cable specialist and [machinery](#) specialist. “Concerted efforts over three days finally resulted in the successful recovery of the anchor along

with the entire 330 metres of cable. This not only ensured onward safe voyage of **MV Vela**, which had to subsequently transit through the constricted waters of [Red Sea](#) and Suez Canal, but also averted a huge financial loss," the statement added.

Source: <https://www.business-standard.com>

## **HMS Prince Of Wales' Ops Room Ready For Use**

Tue, 28/08/2018 - 16:01



The second carrier in the Queen Elizabeth-class is due to be commissioned in 2020 (Image: PA).

The operations room of the [HMS Prince of Wales](#), the sister vessel of **HMS Queen Elizabeth**, is ready for 'flashing up' for the first time. The crew of **HMS**

**Prince of Wales** will use the room to look out for threats and track the movements of the carrier's F-35B jets and Merlin helicopters. This could be in a number of capacities, from intercepting hostile aircraft to striking land-based targets. Three Commando Merlin Mark 4 helicopters [joined HMS Queen Elizabeth last Monday](#) as part of **Exercise West Lant 18** - the journey to the US, ready to [begin flight trials](#). Engineers and technicians, alongside Royal Navy experts, have now made sure that all the equipment and cabling is in place and that computer systems are able to communicate the masses of data coming into the ship. Chief Petty Officer Greg Connor, the Ops Room manager, said allowing his team to move into the complex was "a momentous occasion". "This milestone represents the heart of the warfare fighting elements of the ship coming to fruition," he said. "The Warfare Department now has its sights firmly set on preparing the ship and team as more and more systems are brought online." Handing the compartment over to the ship's company was production manager



David Scott; he explained: "The operations complex has been over three years in the making for me - and much longer for others."

Crew will use the room to look out for threats (Image: Royal Navy).

"We had some of the best workforce available to us and with the team taking ownership of the area, we are able to deliver the compartments ahead of time and to a much higher standard than that previously achieved. "This demonstrates to all that we can step up to the toughest challenges on this project and that's credit to all those who have supported me." It's the latest key part of the ship to be finished and handed over to the crew to run; watches are now being run in the Ship Control Centre,

which oversees the marine engineering aspects of the carrier. More than 3,000 compartments of the ship have to be signed off before the carrier leaves her berth at Rosyth to undergo sea trials next year.

Source: <https://www.forces.net>

## **Rostec begins work on Indian aircraft carrier**

28th August 2018 - 13:30 GMT | by [The Shephard News Team](#)

Rostec's Technodinamika has begun installation supervision of marine hydraulic systems on the Indian Navy's **Vikramaditya** aircraft carrier. The GS-1MF and GS-3 marine hydraulic systems are used to refuel, clean and pressurise



aircraft and helicopter hydraulic systems which form part of the aircraft carrier's air-capable wing. Under the modernisation project, Technodinamika will carry out work to install equipment, commission and supervise sea trials of the vessel.



**Vikramaditya** is a deep modernisation of the **Admiral Gorshkov** aircraft carrier. It was designed to replace the **Viraat** carrier, which has reached the end of its service life. Igor Nasenkov, CEO of Technodinamika, said: 'Installation supervision of marine hydraulic systems at **Vikramaditya** is an important step in the upgrade of what is currently the most powerful aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy. 'The **Vikramaditya** project is extremely promising taking into account the long-term development programme of the Indian aircraft fleet, under which by 2027 it will

acquire two more ships.'

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

## USCG transfers decommissioned cutter to Sri Lanka

6th September 2018 - 11:30 GMT | by [The Shephard News Team](#)



The US Coast Guard (USCG) transferred the decommissioned high endurance cutter, the former **USCG Sherman**, to the Sri Lankan Navy at a ceremony in Honolulu on 27 August. The delivery also marks the ninth transfer under the Office of International Acquisition's Excess Defense Articles cutter transfer programme. The USCG, through its foreign military sales programme, is also providing \$12 million in equipment, technical assistance and overhaul work. This includes one small boat, various spares and tools and a maintenance, upgrade and training period in Honolulu, including a centre section overhaul and a generator overhaul before the ship

departs for Sri Lanka in February 2019. The high endurance cutters are being replaced in coast guard service by the national security cutters, six of which are already in service. Each high endurance cutter transfer helps the service avoid approximately \$12 million in disposal costs.

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

**This after Sri Lanka handed one of its main ports to China to use.**

## Staring Down the Asian Giant: The Pentagon's China Report and Beijing's Response

By [Samuel Siskind](#) · August 29, 2018

Several months ago, the Defense Department delivered to Congress its annual report on the "**Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China.**" The 145-page document recently began attracting the attention of global media. And for good reason. The China report is essentially a detailed description of the administration view of PRC as a major adversary, and what specific dangers it poses to US interests.

### **The Breakdown**

The report starts off by explaining the general strategic view of China's leadership over the recent period. According to DoD, for the better part of two decades, Beijing has been focused on building up the country in order to compete as a global power. Since 2002, Chinese leaders—including President Xi Jinping—have characterized the opening of the 21st century as a "*period of strategic opportunity.*" They assess that international conditions during this time facilitated domestic development and the expansion of China's "*comprehensive national power.*" The notion that the last eighteen years has been an opportune time for China—and indeed other United States adversaries as well—is not a new idea. Government analysts have long pointed to the War on Terror and other related conflicts as having taken up nearly all the US bandwidth on foreign policy. A pre-occupied America coupled with staggering economic growth (it was during this period that China firmly established itself as the second largest world economy) gave the country the means and circumstances to start

planning big. Seizing the opportunity, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) distilled several objectives into President Xi's "China's Dream of national rejuvenation to establish a powerful and prosperous China." The actual strategies to propel China into the future have been varied, although all present some type of combination of diplomatic and economic leverage. One important method has been establishing commercial interconnectivity in the region with Chinese infrastructure, embodied by the **"Belt and Road Initiative,"** or BRI. This project, incredible in size and scale, is intended to develop strong economic ties with other countries, "shape their interests to align with China's" and perhaps more importantly, to deter confrontation or criticism of China's approach to sensitive international issues. In this way, the Belt and Road project is a type of national insurance policy designed to insure cooperation from regional partners. Countries participating in BRI could develop economic dependence on Chinese capital, which China could then leverage to achieve its interests. For example, in July 2017, Sri Lanka and a Chinese state-owned enterprise (SOE) signed a 99-year lease for Hambantota Port, following similar deals in Piraeus, Greece, and Darwin, Australia. Of course this influence can be used not only to spread Chinese economic infrastructure, but also its military presence. The Chinese naval base in Djibouti, opened almost exactly a year ago, is a recent example. Which brings us to the main point that the Pentagon is interested in: China's overall military strength. According to the DoD report, all of China's projecting of power into different regions has been the primary motivation for building up its armed forces. After all, China requires the means of securing all the interests its investing in. Chinese military strategy documents highlight the specific areas of growth for the People's Liberation Army (PLA):

- A growing emphasis on the importance of maritime forces
- More advanced tools in the information/cyber domains
- Developing the ability for more effective offensive air operations and other "long-distance mobility attack
- Deploying military platforms in space

But developing specific capabilities is not the sum total of China's defense ventures. Perhaps more important is Beijing's renewal of the military's managerial approaches. In the Pentagon's words, the PLA is "undergoing the most comprehensive restructure in its history" to become a force capable of conducting complex joint operations. The PLA strives to be capable of fighting and winning "informatized local wars," a term referring to conflicts defined by real-time, data-networked command and control, and precision strike. Reforms seek to streamline command and control structures and improve jointness at all levels. The direction of military reforms has been highlighted not only by which projects policymakers are investing in, but also by what they are cutting. Significant personnel cuts have targeted PLA Army (PLAA) personnel and re-diverting resources into other areas like the Navy, Airforce, and cyber units. Efforts to make this image of China's military into a reality have been well underway. The Pentagon assesses China has already taken on several projects building space-based platforms. "Space operations are viewed as a key enabler of PLA campaigns aimed at countering third-party intervention." One of its current ventures is the development of a "real-time surveillance, reconnaissance, and warning system." China has increased the number and capabilities of its space systems, including various "communications and intelligence satellites." The report raises concerns about offensive systems as well, including counter-space weapons like kinetic-kill missiles, lasers and orbiting space robots. One of the single most interesting topics of the DoD report was in regards to China's Naval development. Last year, the Department [exposed](#) the shadowy People's Armed Forces Maritime Militia (PAFMM), the third Chinese sea force along with the Navy and Coast Guard. In this year's report, the Pentagon laid out how the PAFMM is used as an important tool for China in asserting control of disputed island areas in the South China Sea. As the report's accompanying [fact sheet](#) stipulated "China [...] is willing to employ coercive measures to advance its interests and mitigate other countries' opposition" and that China has conducted "coordinated PLA Navy (PLAN), China Coast Guard (CCG), and PAFMM" operations to this end. Training and planning to advance air capabilities in both range and efficiency are also reportedly underway. "Over the last three years, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has rapidly expanded its overwater bomber operating areas, gaining experience in critical maritime regions and likely training for strikes against US and allied targets," the report said.

### The Reception

Something that always needs to be taken into account when a government report on defense is published, is that Americans are not the only readers. The Chinese have access to the internet as well. Any congressional report on China is an advertisement to PRC on how policymakers view them. A response from Beijing was inevitable. Last week, the *China Daily*, a Communist Party-owned newspaper, [quoted](#) a spokesman for the Ministry of National Defense, Senior Colonel Wu Qian, who said the United States "misinterprets China's strategic intentions" with its military build up. Wu said China's military modernization is only aimed at "safeguarding its sovereignty and security, as well as world peace and stability, and the military reform, weapons development and cyberspace defense are justifiable and reasonable." Furthermore, Wu claimed that the whole institution of DoD's annual report on China "harms the mutual trust" between the US and PRC and fosters a "Cold War mentality" among US policymakers. "China has firmly taken the path of peaceful development and remained a contributor to world peace and international order," Senior Colonel Wu Qian said, and its military has borne considerable international peacekeeping and disaster relief responsibilities, earning "universal praise from the international community." While some of the assertions of Colonel Qian are debatable (take for instance the implication that China's military operations in the region have earned the country nothing but "international praise"), the general flavor of China's official response is clear. Beijing saw the latest DoD report, with its rough language and methodical layout of potential threats posed by China, as a clear signal: Washington has an eerie concern about China and will likely take more concrete steps to mitigate what it sees as long-term dangers emanating from the country. The last thing China needs now with its vision of regional expansion

and eventual dominance, is the United States becoming more of an obstacle than it already is. It would be overly simplistic to view the Ministry of Defense's statement as merely an equal reaction to being lambasted by the US. There is a very clear desire for rapprochement, even achieving some diplomatic accord. China is trying to reassure the US that they're not as dangerous as they think and hopes to create a "win-win" [sic] relationship with America.

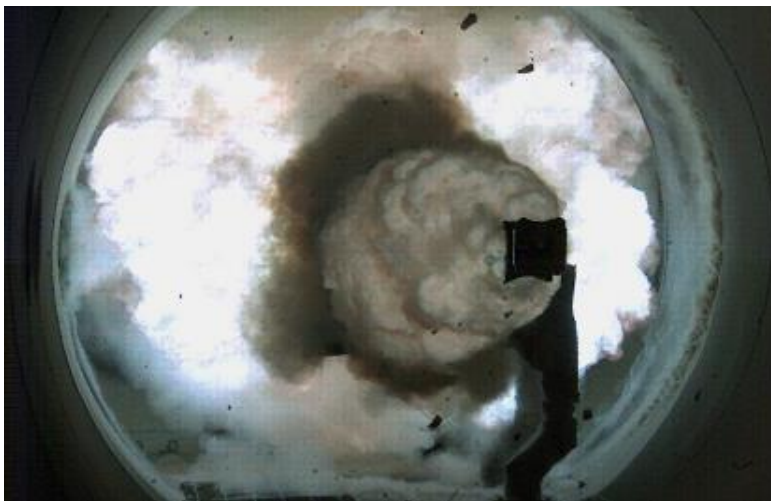
#### **The Road Ahead**

Whether the DoD report "misjudged" China's aims as Beijing claims, is yet to be determined. The question moving forward is: Does China actually care about staying on America's (Trump's) good side as their response strongly implies? Will they perhaps take steps to show their willingness to create that "win-win" scenario? Or will it be business as usual? Perhaps the administration will be able to test the waters, and see if Beijing is willing to partner with US interests in Asia and the broader region. The ongoing issues of the North Korean reconciliation and the future of Iran's economic isolation, for instance, are current experiments that can demonstrate whether or not China is willing to play ball. **Source:** <https://www.opslens.com>



The Uruguayan Navy vessel **ROU General Artigas** at anchor off Fish Hoek. **Photo: Louis Vosloo**

#### **Navy Making Room for Railguns in Next Warship, But No Extra Investments**



High-speed camera image of the Office of Naval Research Electromagnetic Railgun located at the Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division, firing a world-record setting 33 mega-joule shot in 2010. **Photo: NR Photo**

**THE PENTAGON** – The Navy's next large surface combatant will have all the space, weight and power margins the sea

service could need now and into the future to accommodate new weapons in development – but the director of surface warfare said the Navy would not accelerate weapons development to get them ready in time to outfit the new ships. Rear Adm. Ron Boxall, OPNAV N96, spoke to USNI News on Aug. 28, in his first interview on the Future Surface Combatant program since its initial capabilities document was signed out by leadership. Noting that the next large surface combatant would pull from some of the advances made with the Zumwalt-class destroyers (DDG-1000) – including potentially its integrated power system that could easily support laser guns, an electromagnetic railgun, powerful radars and other power-hungry technologies – Boxall told USNI News that the new large surface combatant represented an opportunity to put these technologies into the surface fleet whereas the legacy Arleigh Burke-class destroyers simply do not have the power and



cooling capacity to do so. *"We're just excited that we think we do have something that is expandable, has SWaP-C (space, weight, power and cooling) for the future. I think all of us were kind of a little bit nervous about the DDG Flight III and whether we'll have long-term ability to put future energy weapons on there, or the power that we need for directed energy, lasers, things like that,"* he said. But just because the new ship will be able to support energy weapons doesn't mean Boxall wants to accelerate energy weapons development to ensure they're ready to field on the first new ships. He said moving to the Future Surface Combatant in 2023 is an "aggressive timeline" and that at some point the Navy will have to *"snap the chalk line and say, this is what you have that's good enough to go on there"* – and if a technology isn't ready, it would wait for fielding in a later block buy of the ship. With the Navy already seeking a new hull to better support the Aegis Combat System and the AN/SPY-6(V) Air and Missile Defense radar – collectively called the DDG-51 Flight III capability – Boxall said he didn't want to force too many changes all at once. *"So I'm inclined to say, as long as we build it modularly, we're going to make those assessments in stride"* in terms of inserting in new weapons as they come through the development process, he said. *But I don't want to get too crazy about trying to accelerate new technology in the first of the class as we change hulls, which will hopefully be a hull that will be with us for a very long time."* This situation bodes well for the laser gun, which is about to begin a second phase of at-sea testing aboard an amphibious ship but has not been able to be installed yet on a surface combatant. The first iteration of the Laser Weapon System (LaWS) spent three years aboard the former amphibious ship turned afloat forward staging base **USS Ponce (AFSB(I)-15)**, being tested in the harsh and complex Persian Gulf maritime environment. When the Navy looked for a host for the next-generation LaWS, amphibious transport dock **USS Portland (LPD-27)** was chosen because it had the margins to support the laser gun that a destroyer simply didn't. *"A series of ship checks selected the LPD class over the Arleigh Burke-class destroyers (DDG-51) or amphibious assault ships after looking at cooling, power, air conditioning, space and weight margins and other factors,"* USNI News reported when the **Portland** announcement was made. So for something like the laser gun, which has already gone through the shipboard integration process and proven it can be successful in a maritime environment, the new large surface combatant represents a great opportunity for the technology: the laser guns could get out to sea on more ships, and therefore gain more operational experience and more lessons learned to guide future development of the weapon. But for a program like the railgun, the Future Surface Combatant program may not do anything to spur its development. The Office of Naval Research began an Innovative Naval Prototype program for electromagnetic railgun technology in 2005, and in 2012 ONR began a second phase that focused on getting the railgun ready for operational use – specifically, demonstrating a 10-shots-per-minute firing rate. Though the INP spans until 2020, it covers only the science and technology development portion of the program and cannot conduct the shipboard integration piece – engineering a gun mount that connects to the ship and its combat system; engineering a battery or other power system to support the railgun if the ship cannot supply sufficient power on its own; and marinising the system to withstand the saltwater, sand, wind and other conditions at sea. Several sources suggested to USNI News last year that railgun was struggling to gain support to make the transition from a research project to an acquisition program, and that if it were to get wrapped up in the Future Surface Combatant momentum then it may have an easier time getting funding for the gun mount and other integration efforts. Though ONR could not talk about the future of the railgun program, ONR Electromagnetic Railgun program officer Tom Boucher told USNI News in December 2017 that *"we have been working with our transition partner, PEO IWS (Program Executive Office for Integrated Warfare Systems), and the Staff of the Chief of Naval Operations to chart a path forward for the follow-on development of an integrated Railgun System. The Navy is continually assessing the maturation of key Railgun/ [high velocity projectile] system technologies and the associated schedule to deploy an operational capability on a ship. The results of land-based testing will guide future risk reduction demonstrations and inform system requirements and the timeline to a deployable system."* Asked about what it would take to get from today's railgun to a deployable system for a warship, Boucher said, *"in addition to our progress on hardware development we have also been working hard to reduce the size and weight of our system. We have increased energy density and improved the packaging of capacitors. We believe we have a system design basis that will allow a 32 MJ system to fit in a destroyer-sized hull right now without impacting other critical weapon systems, for instance the number of VLS cells available. ... The only significant issue remaining in creating an operationally useful system is development of a Railgun mount to support Railgun's installation in a ship. That work is normally conducted during the research and development phase by the acquisition community and requires a separate source of funding. There are no known show stoppers to the launcher and power system work being conducted by ONR. Rather, it will be an engineering effort to develop the mount."* The ONR INPs' *"goal is to develop and test a prototype railgun barrel that can fire a projectile with 32 mega joules muzzle energy, that has long bore life and is capable of being fired at 10 rounds per minute,"* Boucher said. *"Our current generation of Railgun launchers has already achieved our objective size and 32 MJ launch energy,"* and the bore life is already looking better than conventional guns and is set for even better performance in the future thanks to ongoing work with advanced materials. The last piece, the 10-rounds-a-minute rate, is still being worked on. It could not be achieved at the previous test facility because the launcher was not cooled, limiting it to just three shots in a row before it would need time to cool down. With a new test site stood up that has a thermal management system for the railgun, *"we expect to achieve 10 rounds per minute at 32 mega joules by the end of 2018."* ONR could not be reached this week to provide an update since the December 2017 comments Boucher provided. The Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act that was signed into law earlier this month added \$20 million to the Navy budget to *"accelerate Navy railgun development and prototyping,"* though it is unclear if this funding could cover any of the gun mount and integration work that ONR can't do under the scope of its INP program. The congressional

appropriators have not yet passed a 2019 spending plan, and that increase in railgun spending would not go into effect unless the appropriations bill also included the money. Boxall told USNI News this week that “we’ve made more progress putting lasers on ships than we have for putting a railgun [on a ship], because it’s not just about the gun, it’s about the power distribution and all those things. So those are exactly the things we’re looking at.” Though he said the Navy would not make a specific effort to accelerate railgun to match its development with that of the new surface combatant, he said the large surface combatant would be waiting for the railgun whenever it matures and is ready for shipboard operations. “When we design [the large surface combatant], we want to make sure we have the opportunity to put those in in a modular fashion. So if you’re going to put some whatever in the future, you’re going to put it in this space, and here’s the space and weight and power it should fit into. So we’re designing, we hope, for the future to build enough of that potential future power and weight to get what we think we need.”

Source: USNI News

## **Former US Intel Chief: Taiwan Should Practice Attacking China’s *Liaoning* Carrier**

22:28 29.08.2018



© AFP 2018 / STR

If China’s refurbished *Liaoning* aircraft carrier makes a voyage encircling Taiwan, leaders in Taipei should consider responding by conducting a simulated attack on the carrier, according to the

former US director of national intelligence. If the carrier sails around Taiwan, “Taiwanese forces should take advantage of its presence to conduct simulated attacks against the *Liaoning*, raising their own readiness and demonstrating the reality that the *Liaoning* is vulnerable under wartime conditions,” ret. US Navy Adm. Dennis Blair wrote in an August 22 post for Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA. Blair was the third director of national intelligence under former President Barack Obama. He served at the post before from January 2009 until May 2010 when he resigned in protest of bureaucratic hassles within the White House. The People’s Liberation Army-Navy’s *Liaoning* cruised around Taiwan in [March](#) and [last fall](#), Taiwanese officials said at the time. To be clear, China’s peacetime flights and sea missions near Japan and Taiwan have not been illegal. Once the perceived threats are registered, Japanese or Taiwanese aircraft generally mobilize, rendezvous with the Chinese aircraft or ships and then escort them through their Exclusive Economic Zones, Air Defense Identification Zones or territorial waters and airspace. The former presidential adviser said that Japanese and Taiwanese responses provide the PLA with an opportunity to gain intelligence insights about the two nations’ “*surveillance and reaction capabilities, insights that can be used to the PLA’s advantage in combat operations.*” While Washington may not be interested in seeing relations between Japan and China thaw, a Chinese researcher told Sputnik China earlier this year, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made a long-awaited visit to China in May. The two sides agreed to improve trade and financial relations, Sputnik reported, and about a week ago the two countries’ governments were reported to be considering the resumption of bilateral [currency swaps](#). With respect to Taiwan, Beijing has long considered administration over the island part of China’s political destiny. When reports surfaced in July that a US Marine contingency might be stationed at the new de facto US embassy in Taiwan, a Global Times op-ed toyed with the possibility of China launching an all-out [invasion](#) in retaliation. Beijing is not keen on such US personnel in Taiwan, the op-ed noted, depicting the deployment as a “*subversion of the one-China policy.*” Taiwan, under the presidency of Tsai Ing-wen, has refused to endorse the idea that the self-governing nation is in fact part of “*one China,*” and tensions have increased since she took office in 2016.

Source: <https://sputniknews.com>

## **What’s next for Indonesia’s Submarine Program?**

This week, reports surfaced about the fact that Indonesia had allocated funding for the procurement of another submarine. While the development itself is not surprising given the Southeast Asian state’s longstanding desire to boost its capabilities on this front, it nonetheless deserves attention amid the challenges Jakarta has faced in this respect as well as in its wider military modernization efforts more generally. As noted before, Indonesia, the world’s largest archipelagic state, once operated one of the more capable submarine forces in Asia, with 12 Whiskey-class submarines purchases from the Soviet Union back in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, however, it is woefully underequipped relatively speaking, with just two German-built Type 209 submarines along with two of the three South Korean submarines it ordered back in 2012 and received in 2017 and 2018 (the third is being constructed in Indonesia). Even taking into account that full order, with the Type 209s expected to be decommissioned soon, Indonesia would still be well short of the 12 submarines Indonesian defense officials have said the country needs to police its waters. While there have been attempts to address this significant gap over the

years with talk of the mulling of new submarine purchases from various sources, there has also been a recognition that Jakarta will probably remain far short of that 12 submarine requirement for years to come. This week, the Indonesian submarine program was in the headlines again with reports on Jakarta's plans to acquire what would now be considered its sixth submarine. Defense outlet IHS Jane's said that according to a document obtained by it on August 28 from the Indonesian defense ministry (KEMHAN) directorate for defense potential, the ministry has set aside a sum of 283.8 trillion rupiah (\$1.9 million) for the acquisition of a sixth submarine. Jane's said that the document indicated that funds, which were categorized as drawn from the Indonesian defense budget allocation for 2018, were generally for consultancy services related to the acquisition of the new submarine, including on how Indonesia's local industry can better benefit from the contract once it materializes in terms of aspects such as transfer of technology agreements. The fact that such funds have been allocated is in and of itself not surprising. Given that this is a priority acquisition for Indonesia and the country is still so far behind on acquiring even basic capabilities on this front, it makes sense that money has been earmarked for that purpose as part of its wider ongoing military modernization plans under the so-called Minimum Essential Force (MEF) blueprint. Yet, beyond this general point, without much more in the way of specifics, it is difficult to assess exactly what this means for where Jakarta is with respect to procuring future submarines. Given the manifold challenges that remain for Indonesian military modernization – from irregularities to interoperability to inadequate funding – details such as how contracts are managed, who the potential players might be, and what such fund allocations mean for wider trade-offs in defense planning, will be significant and meaningful indicators of how things proceed on this front. As of now, those details are yet to be made publicly available. But as they are, the specifics, along with broader developments on the defense side as well as notable political events – not least a presidential elections set to take place next April – will help us develop a relatively firmer understanding of where Jakarta is on this front.

Source: **The Diplomat**

### **US warship conducts exercise with Sri Lanka navy**

Aug 30, 2018 16:18 PM GMT+0530



ECONOMYNEXT –

A United States navy amphibious ship from the Seventh Fleet with marines on board has conducted a joint exercise with Sri Lanka's navy, the latest event in growing naval ties between the two countries. *"The exercise allowed the ships to improve each crews' knowledge and strengthen a wide variety of seamanship skills critical to operating throughout a free and open Indo-Pacific region,"* the United States Embassy in Colombo said in a statement. The amphibious transport dock **USS**

**Anchorage (LPD 23)** joined the Sri Lankan

naval ship **Suranimala**, a fast missile vessel, to conduct an exercise at sea on August 28, it said. **USS Anchorage**, with the embarked 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), had earlier called at the eastern port of Trincomalee on a scheduled port visit. During the exercise, multiple ships sailed in **formation** to practice communications and maneuvering procedures, the embassy said. In addition to the **Anchorage** and **Suranimala**, two landing craft air cushions (LCACs), one AH-1Z Cobra helicopter, and one UH-1Y Huey helicopter participated. *"The Sailors and Marines on the USS Anchorage were honored to work with our partners in the Sri Lankan navy during their port visit,"* said Rear Admiral Brad Cooper, Commander of the Amphibious Force U.S. 7th Fleet. *"The close teamwork we've seen in this visit, U.S.-Sri Lankan participation in multiple military exercises over the past year, and the hospital ship **USNS Mercy's** visit to Trincomalee in April reflect our mutual commitment to strengthening the relationship between the U.S. and Sri Lankan militaries."* For the Sailors aboard the **Anchorage**, it was also a chance to improve their skills with their Sri Lankan counterparts sailing alongside, the statement said. A part of a growing U.S.-Sri Lanka naval partnership, the at-sea exercise follows the **Anchorage's** theater security cooperation exercise conducted with the Sri Lankan Navy and Navy Marines, the Sri Lankan Navy's inaugural participation in the Rim of the Pacific (**RIMPAC**) exercise that concluded August 2, as well as the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (**CARAT**) Sri Lanka, held for the first time last year. *"The **Anchorage** team and I had an incredible time in Trincomalee and we are proud to be serving alongside the Sri Lankan Navy,"* said Captain Dennis Jacko, Commanding Officer of the USS Anchorage. *"Not only do we increase our proficiency in communications, but we continue to build on a strong and lasting partnership with the Sri Lankan Navy."*

Source: <https://economynext.com>

### **Despite tensions, China says navy chief plans to visit U.S. next month**

August 30, 2018 / 10:24 AM

BEIJING (Reuters) - China's defense ministry said on Thursday that navy chief Shen Jinlong plans to visit the United States in September, despite an escalating trade row that threatens to spill into other areas of tension between the two countries. The announcement the ministry's spokesman Wu Qian comes two months after U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis visited



Beijing. China said that visit yielded positive results, and Defense Minister Wei Fenghe has accepted an invitation to visit the United States before the end of the year. Speaking at a regular monthly news briefing, Wu said that Shen plans to visit the United States in the middle or towards the end of next month, to attend an international naval forum and also to pay a working visit to the country. He gave no other details. Ties between the two countries have been strained on a number of fronts in recent months. In May, the Pentagon withdrew an invitation to China to join a multinational naval exercise, citing China's military moves in the South China Sea. The U.S. decision upset Beijing and was raised during the visit by Mattis, Chinese officials said at the time. Beijing and Washington are also locked in a spiraling trade row that is threatening to worsen the relationship across the board, from cooperation on North Korea to the disputed South China Sea. U.S. backing for self-ruled Taiwan have also fueled China's suspicions in recent months, as the current U.S. administration has signaled fresh support towards the island that Beijing claims as its own. The navy has been a key part of President Xi Jinping's ambitious military modernization program that has rattled nerves around the region, though China says it has no hostile intent. Wu separately announced that the country's second aircraft carrier has begun its second round of sea tests, leaving from its base in the northern port city of Dalian, where it was built. China's Maritime Safety administration earlier on Thursday said an area of the northern part of the Yellow Sea off Dalian would be closed to shipping for military drills from Friday for a week-long period. The still-unnamed carrier, the first to be built domestically, was launched last year, but Chinese military experts have told state media it is not expected to enter service until 2020, once it has been fully kitted out and armed. Little is known about China's aircraft carrier program, which is a state secret. But the government has said the new carrier's design draws on experiences from the country's first carrier, the Liaoning, which was bought second-hand from Ukraine in 1998 and refitted in China.

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

## **India still wary of the Quad amid its own China 'reset'**

24 Aug 2018 | [Aakriti Bachhawat](#)



Image courtesy of [Narendra Modi](#) on Twitter

India has recently been called out for being the [weakest link](#) in the revitalised Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, a framework for cooperation involving three other democracies in the Indo-Pacific—Australia, Japan and the

US. One of the reasons that's been offered for India's perceived reticence on the Quad is its '[reset](#)' of relations with China after the [tense military standoff](#) between the two nations last year at the India–Bhutan–China border junction in Doklam. Given this, it's worth asking whether the [Wuhan summit](#) between Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi, which formalised the '[reset](#)' in April, was really a game-changer for India in the Indo-Pacific. The answer is 'no'. The conciliatory change in New Delhi's attitude to Beijing [that started in February](#) is nothing but tactical manoeuvring. India wants to maintain its [strategic autonomy](#) by hedging its bets on multiple partners. It's important to remember that the Modi government is [counting down to the 2019 general elections](#) and foreign policy is traditionally a non-issue at the ballots. New Delhi's offer of an olive branch to Beijing in the form of the reset is essentially an attempt to buy temporary peace to avoid another Doklam-like confrontation. That theory is further supported by [India's denial](#) of US claims that China has continued its activity on the Doklam plateau. The Modi government has also failed to put the proceedings of Wuhan on record, as is common practice. China and India must overcome some other hurdles for any reset to be worth its name. The two nuclear-armed states share a [long-running boundary dispute](#). Boundary transgressions by PLA troops are a routine feature, with regular [skirmishes](#) along the disputed '[Line of Actual Control](#)'. China's [all-weather friendship](#) with Pakistan is another source of friction with India. New Delhi remains concerned about Beijing's [increasing encroachment](#) on its strategic space, especially in the subcontinent and the Indian Ocean region, and is hiking foreign aid in response. China continues to make it difficult for India to join the [Nuclear Suppliers' Group](#) and gain a permanent seat on the [UN Security Council](#). India has also [deepened bilateral and trilateral defence and economic cooperation](#) with the Quad nations in the past few months. The announcement of Australia's exclusion from the Malabar naval exercises on the eve of the Wuhan summit [appeared to be meant to please Beijing](#). But New Delhi has been [consistent in its position on Australia's participation in Malabar](#), denying it participation or observer status for many years, in keeping with its traditional emphasis on preserving its strategic autonomy. Maintaining the status quo on [Malabar](#), given the attempt at a reset with China, seems logical from India's point of view, even though some may have found it [disappointing](#). On the other hand, India's bilateral naval drills with Australia, [AUSINDEX](#), and its participation in [Pitch Black 2018](#), the multi-nation air-defence exercise held in Darwin, are indications of New Delhi's openness to deepening military ties with Canberra. India has [continued its robust engagement](#) in '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial

dialogues and [trilateral security meetings](#) with Japan and the US. India is reportedly [close to signing](#) a military communications agreement with the US, after years of negotiations, which would increase interoperability between the armed forces of the two countries. And New Delhi and Tokyo have agreed to conduct their first [joint army exercises on counterterrorism](#) later this year and are on the verge of signing [a major logistics exchange and support agreement](#). India has entered into bilateral and trilateral infrastructure development partnerships with the US and Japan in the form of the [Asia–Africa Growth Corridor](#) and the [trilateral working group on infrastructure](#). It has also been [steadfast in its opposition](#) to China's Belt and Road Initiative since last year, citing Beijing's violation of territorial sovereignty norms and creation of unsustainable debt traps. Even though there were [rumours of New Delhi softening its stance](#) on the BRI earlier this year, in the context of the China reset, the Indian government has since [reaffirmed its objection](#) to the initiative. However, India's decision not to get involved in the US–Japan–Australia infrastructure trilateral [may be attributed](#) to its failure to unlink the concept of the Quad from its anti-China connotation. The first meeting of the rejuvenated Quad took place in [Manila in November 2017](#), shortly after India emerged from the Doklam crisis. Since then, New Delhi has embarked on its China 'reset' to avoid another confrontation and returned to the [holy grail](#) of India's foreign policy, maintaining strategic autonomy. India has also sought to engage with [Russia](#), [France](#) and [ASEAN](#), both to further its interests in the region and avoid confrontation in the run-up to an election. It's not clear yet whether India will end up embracing or rejecting the Quad. New Delhi seems unwilling so far to sign up to an arrangement with a larger agenda than a consultative forum. India's emphasis on multi-alignment, outlined in [Modi's speech at the Shangri-la Dialogue](#), means that it will [shun any initiative](#) that has a pronounced anti-China rhetoric and tenor. At the same time, New Delhi will never cosy up to China because of the unresolved structural issues. But that doesn't mean that India has rejected the concept of the Indo-Pacific. India's behaviour is consistent with its inclusive vision of the Indo-Pacific, in which it exercises strategic autonomy by emphasising a 'non-bloc' vision of security cooperation. The Quad's future and India's participation in it will depend on building an agenda that is compatible with New Delhi's multipolar and non-bloc approach to the Indo-Pacific.

**Author:** *Aakriti Bachhawat* is a research intern at ASPI.

**Source:** <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au>

### **Workhorses of the sea**



**Maersk Inventor** in a very wet **Aberdeen** Photo : Murdanie Macleod ©