



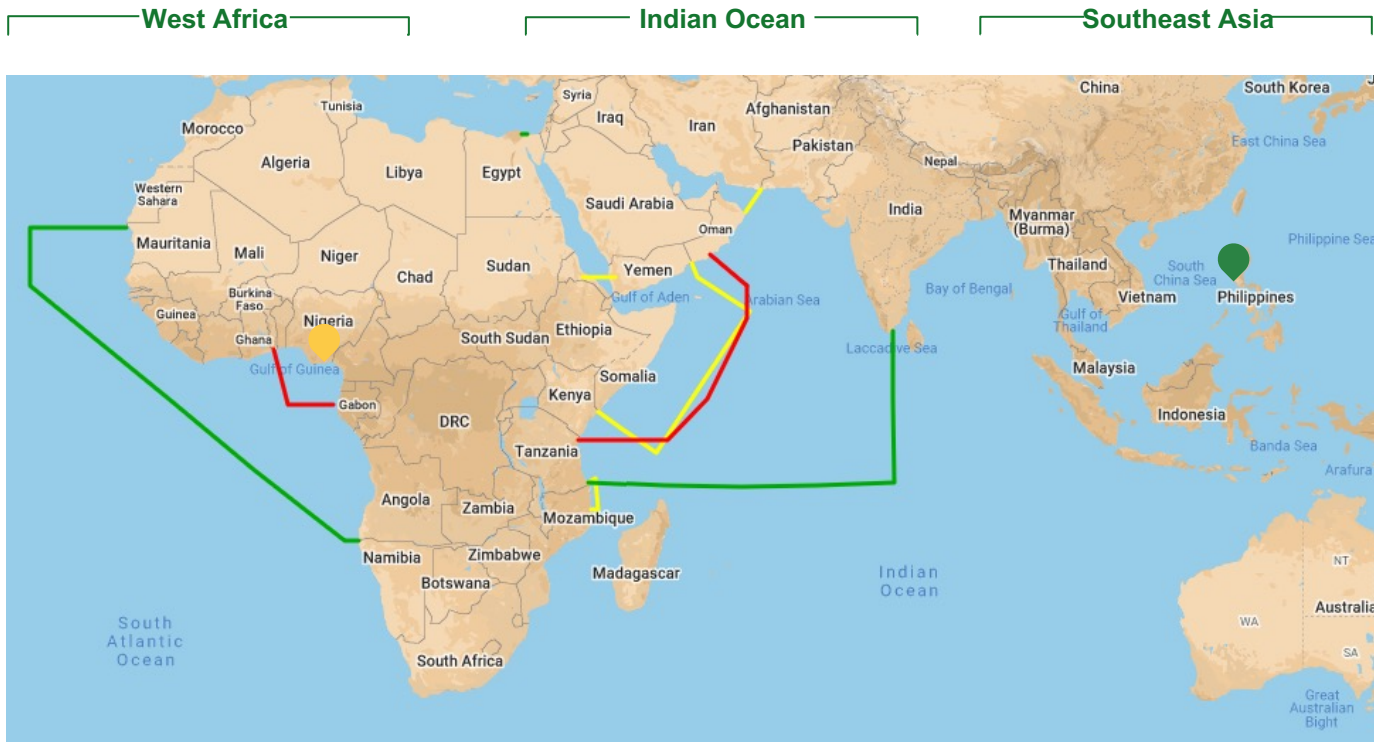
Maritime Threat Report

12-18 June 2021

DILIGENCE | DISCRETION | ADAPTABILITY

SF
GROUP

Global Overview – This Reporting Period



One incident was recorded outside the reporting period:

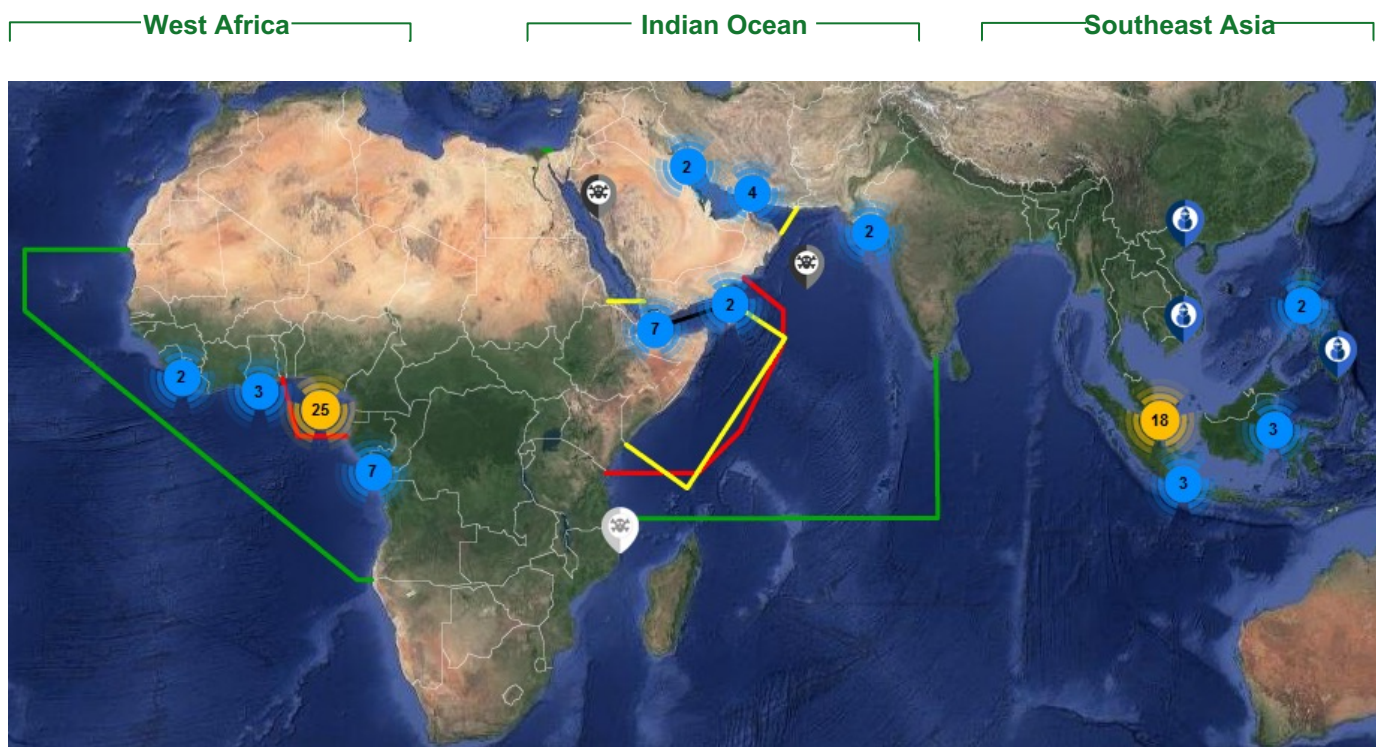
1 – Illegal Boarding

No incidents were recorded

One incident was recorded outside the reporting period:

1 – Robbery

Global Overview – 2021



37 incidents recorded:

- 11 – Robberies
- 9 – Illegal Boardings
- 9 – Suspicious Approaches/Activity
- 4 – Kidnappings
- 3 – Attacks
- 1 – Hijacking

20 incidents recorded:

- 9 – Suspicious Approaches/Activity
- 5 – Terrorist Attacks
- 3 – Robberies
- 3 – Illegal Boardings

29 incidents recorded:

- 17 – Robberies
- 11 – Illegal Boardings
- 1 – Suspicious Approach

Executive Summary

Indian Ocean

No maritime security incidents and one additional Naval exercise were recorded over the reporting period.

On 16th June, a live Naval firing practice was conducted in the Southern Red Sea approximately 20nm south-southwest of Jeddah.

Gulf of Guinea

One maritime security incident was recorded outside the reporting period.

On 29th May, an assailant armed with an edged weapon boarded a berthed OSV at Onne Port, offshore Nigeria, subsequently escaping following a raised alarm by an on-duty crew member.

Southeast Asia

One additional maritime security incident was recorded outside the reporting period.

On 09th June, an unknown number of perpetrators boarded an anchored container vessel at Manila Anchorage, offshore Philippines, stealing ship stores before escaping undetected.

Indian Ocean - Analysis

Within the reporting period:

NIL

Outside the reporting period:

NIL

Analysis

No additional maritime security incidents were recorded in the Indian Ocean seas areas over the reporting period, with the total number of incidents documented in the region thus far in 2021 remaining at 20. One additional Naval live firing exercise was announced during the week under review on 16th June, which extended until 1800hrs local time (1500hrs UTC) in an area approximately 20 nautical miles South-Southwest of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in the Southern Red Sea. The 16th June announcement marked the fortieth such exercise confirmed by the United Kingdom Trade Organisation (UKMTO) since January 2021, the majority of which were conducted off the Pakistani coastline by various international Navies.

PMSA officials seize five Chinese trawlers over IUU fishing

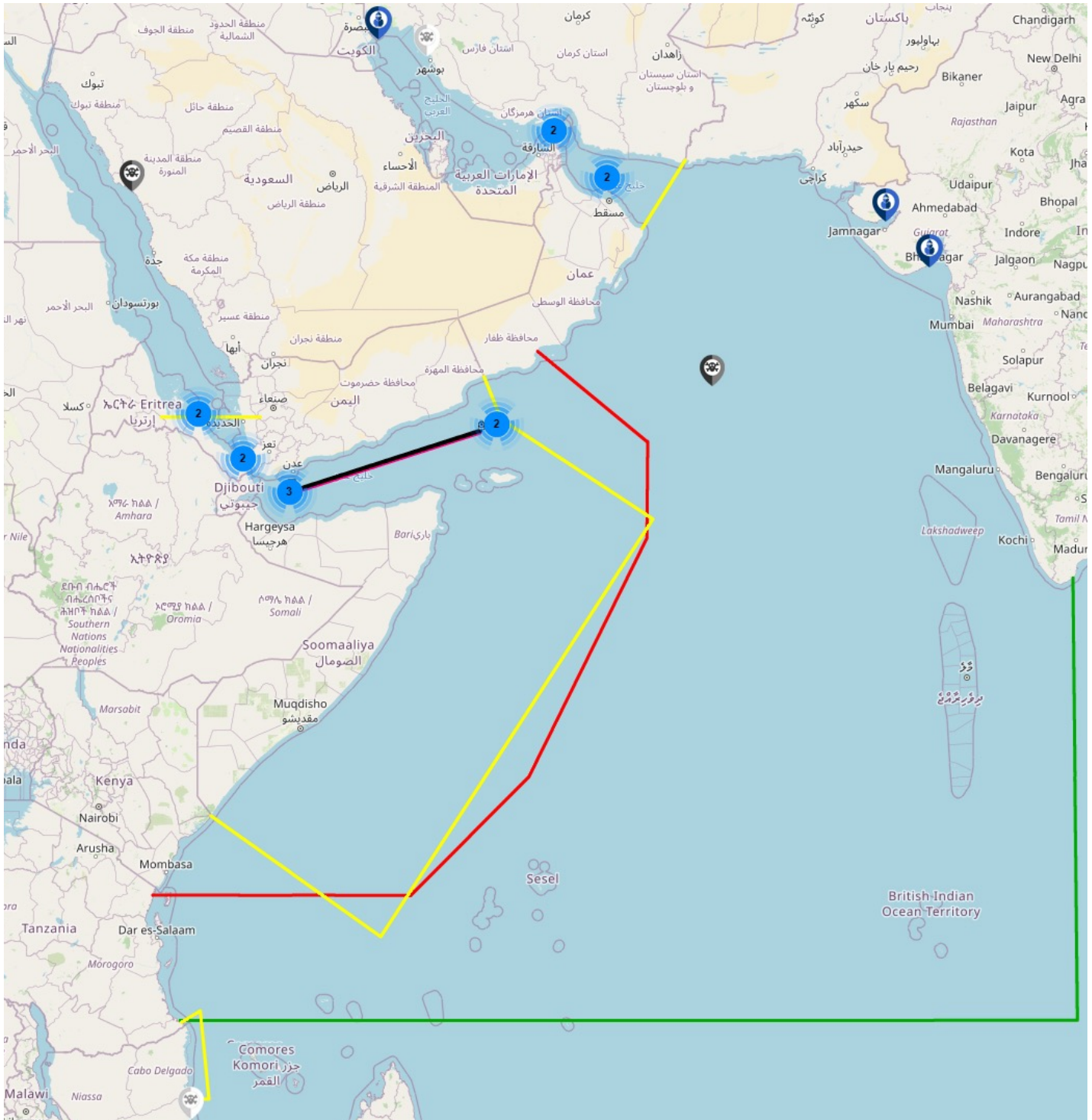
On 14th June, officials from the Pakistani Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) and local government fisheries announced that they had seized five Chinese fishing trawlers near Gwadar Port, Balochistan Province. The unnamed trawlers had reportedly entered Pakistani territorial waters around Gwadar Port without permission, prompting the interception by PMSA officials. However, it is noted that prior to the 14th June operation, local fishermen's union representatives had repeatedly voiced complaints over Chinese-flagged vessels engaging in illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Astala area of Pasni, located approximately 120 kilometres East of Gwadar, releasing video footage of the trawlers on social media, which prompted significant public outrage from members of civil society in the area.

Notably, the intercepted Chinese vessels are alleged by fishermen to be factory ships, processing and packaging all collected fish in

order to sell it on foreign markets and thereby threatening the livelihoods of up to 20,000 artisanal fishermen in the Gwadar area by depleting local fishing grounds. On 11th June, Syed Ali Haider Zaidi, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, had warned that deep sea trawling remains banned within Pakistani waters and that he had initiated an inquiry into reports of foreign fishing vessels operating near Gwadar Port. Government officials further noted that they had not granted licenses to any Chinese fishing trawlers to operate within Pakistani waters. Local media reports cited Chinese officials denying the allegations, claiming instead that the five seized trawlers had entered Pakistani territorial waters under duress, due to adverse weather conditions they had experienced at sea.

It is reminded that Gwadar Port is a key element of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) infrastructure project, which itself is part of China's global "Belt and Road Initiative", increasing the strategic importance of the Port city. At the same time, IUU fishing and its detrimental effect on onshore socio-economic conditions has repeatedly been identified as a key factor spurring various forms of maritime crime, including piracy in the case of Somalia. In particular, it is reminded that Ports and Anchorage areas along the West Coast of India have recorded two robberies targeting commercial vessels off Gujarat State in 2021 thus far. Given their rudimentary knowledge of vessels and navigation of small craft, the possibility of former fishermen engaging in similar acts of opportunistic crime against vessels in Pakistani waters in the medium term cannot be dismissed.

Indian Ocean – Incident Map 2021



RED: High-Risk Area (HRA) as designated by [MSCHOA](#)

GREEN: Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA) as designated by [MSCHOA](#)

YELLOW: [JWC](#) Listed Areas

Gulf of Guinea - Analysis

Within the reporting period:

NIL

Outside the reporting period:

29th June – Illegal Boarding – OSV (details withheld) – Onne Port – Offshore Nigeria – 04° 41.7 N / 007° 10.02 E – 0355 LT/ 0255 UTC

Incident Summary

29th May – An assailant armed with an edged weapon boarded a berthed offshore support vessel (OSV) at Onne Port, offshore Nigeria, at approximately 0355hrs local time (0255hrs UTC), and attempted to steal a hose coupling when sighted by an on-duty crew member. An alarm was subsequently raised, prompting the perpetrator to jump overboard and escape on board a canoe with an unknown number of persons on board (POB). The crew and vessel were reported as safe.

Analysis

During the week under review, no additional maritime security incidents were recorded, while one incident was recorded outside the reporting period on 29th May, at Onne Port, offshore Nigeria, in Zone E. This marks the eighteenth incident to have occurred within the Zone in 2021 thus far and the fourteenth incident recorded at a Port or Anchorage within the region over the same time period, although this figure is assessed to significantly underestimate the real level of low-impact crimes taking place at seaports across the Gulf of Guinea largely due to underreporting. Luanda Anchorage currently accounts for the single largest share of incidents (4), followed equally by the Anchorages and Ports of Point-Noire, Onne, and Monrovia (2), with Banana, Douala, Tema, and Takoradi each having recorded one incident each in the first half of 2021. It is reminded that Takoradi constituted the majority of recorded maritime security incidents (13) at Ports and Anchorages in 2020, followed by Luanda (8) and Lagos (7).

The 29th May illegal boarding is assessed to have been an attempted robbery and follows a previously recorded incident at the Port on 27th May 2021, in which a single unidentified perpetrator was sighted on board a berthed MV (details withheld) and escaped following a raised alarm by an on-duty crew member. Beyond the close temporal and spatial proximity of the two

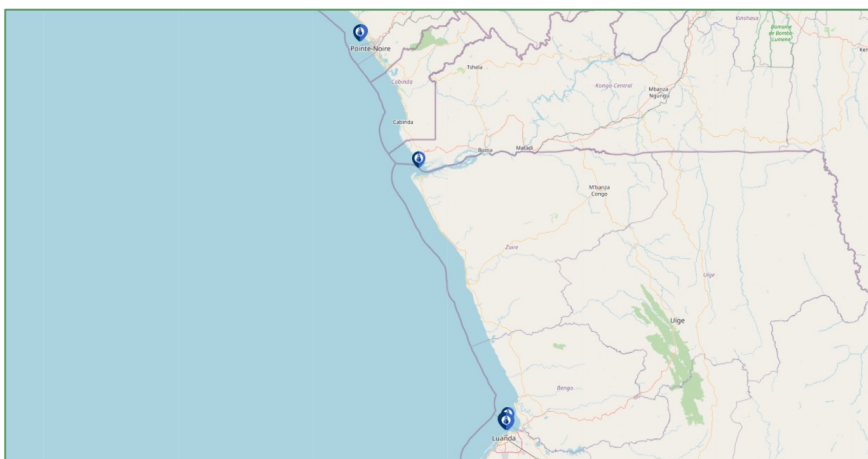
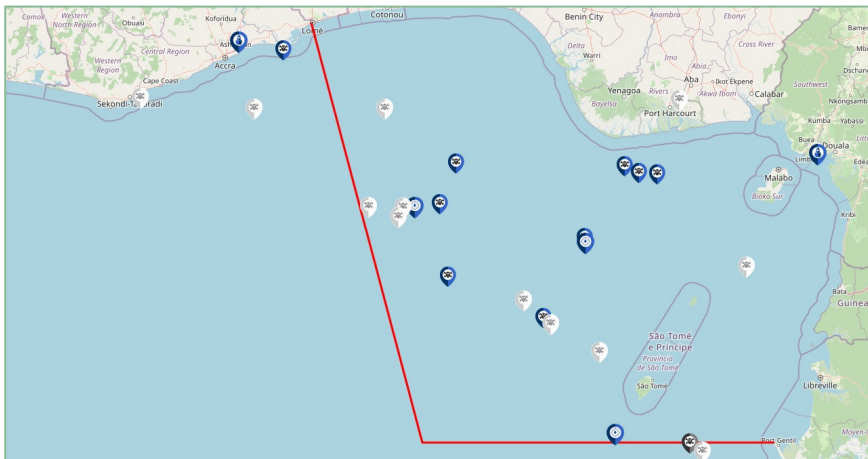
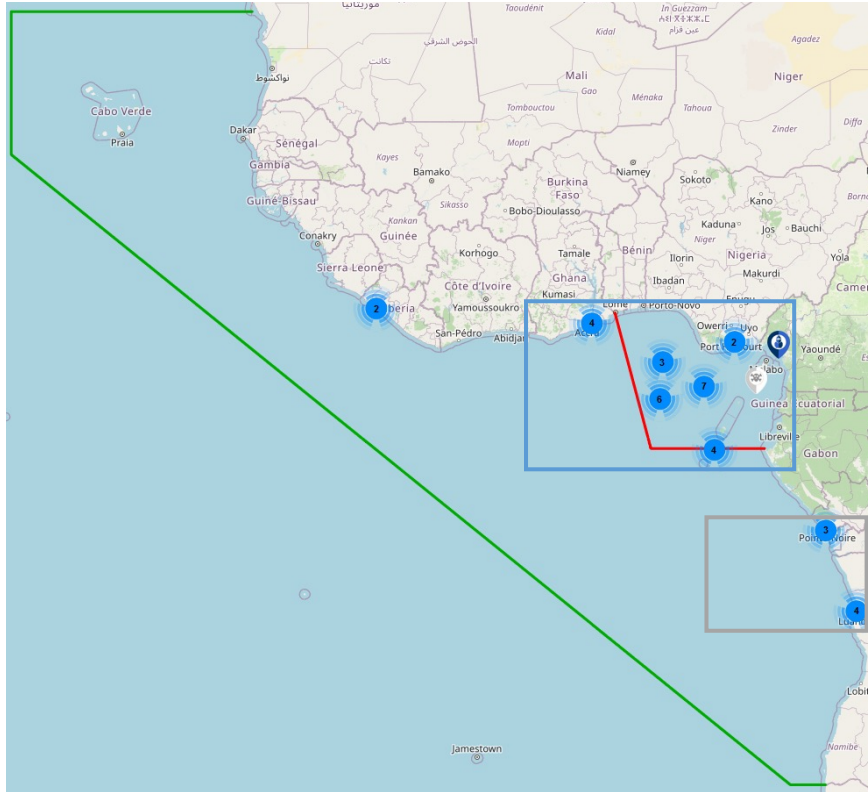
recorded incidents, several other similarities can be noted, including the employed modus operandi of the assailant(s) such as the use of a canoe to approach the berthed vessels as well as the timing of the two operations which occurred during early morning hours (0355hrs and 0420hrs local time, respectively) under cover of darkness to facilitate the boarding of the targeted vessels undetected. While only one perpetrator was sighted on board the vessels by on-duty crew members in either incident, the presence of other assailants on board the canoes acting as support personnel or lookouts remains a distinct possibility, as suggested by information received related to the more recent of the two attempted robberies.

The alertness of the crew in both incidents prevented the assailants from conducting successful robberies and as well as may have preempted a more violent encounter had the perpetrators been able to access more interior areas where additional crew members may have been present, resulting in a higher likelihood for confrontation. Furthermore, it remains conceivable that the two attempted robberies were conducted by the same group of criminals based in Onne, with additional vessels likely targeted over the same time period. Due to the low severity of such incidents, underreporting of robberies and attempted robberies – particularly those where the perpetrators manage to board and disembark the vessels unnoticed – remains endemic across the region. Masters and crew members are advised to report any maritime security-related incident to nearby relevant authorities as well as to the Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG) monitoring body, which contributes to the region's broader information sharing mechanisms.

Gulf of Guinea – Incident Map Outside Reporting Period



Gulf of Guinea – Incident Map 2021



Southeast Asia – Analysis

Within the reporting period:

NIL

Outside the reporting period:

09th June – Robbery – MV (details withheld)–
Manila Anchorage – Offshore Philippines –
South China Sea – 14° 33 N / 120° 55 E –
2330 LT / 1530 UTC

Incident Summary

09th June – An unknown number of perpetrators boarded an anchored container vessel (details withheld) at Manila Anchorage, offshore Philippines, at approximately 2330hrs local time (1530hrs UTC), stealing ship stores before escaping undetected. The crew and vessel were reported as safe.

Analysis

One additional maritime security incident was recorded in the Southeast Asian seas areas outside the week under review, with the total number of incidents recorded in the region in 2021 thus far rising to 29. Of the total number of recorded incidents, those classified as robberies (17) make up the largest majority, while the remaining 37 per cent of incidents are classified as illegal boardings.

In continuation of the trend of low-impact incidents being recorded in the region, the additional maritime security incident recorded on 09th June was classified as a low-impact robbery. It was reported that an unknown number of perpetrators had boarded an anchored container vessel (details withheld) at Manila Anchorage, offshore Philippines, successfully stealing ship stores before fleeing unnoticed.

Marking the second such occurrence at the Manila Anchorage in 2021 thus far, the nature of the incident remains largely opportunistic as the assailants were observed to be petty criminals targeting easily portable items while none of the crew members were harmed. It is reminded that an escalation of violence during such incidents remains a possibility should crewmembers attempt to engage such malcontents. Further, the ease with which the perpetrators were able to flee the vessel unnoticed during the robbery is again illustrative of the need for seafarers to employ effective countermeasures against all types of high and low-impact threats while traversing or

anchored in the region and to exercise heightened vigilance.

The waters offshore Philippines experiences a relatively lower threat of sea piracy as compared to major Ports and Anchorages in the waters offshore Indonesia, the Singapore Strait, as well in the Sulu Sea and Celebes Sea areas that in the past have been identified as a hotspot for maritime attacks by the Philippines-based Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), who have previously conducted armed attacks, kidnappings and hijackings.

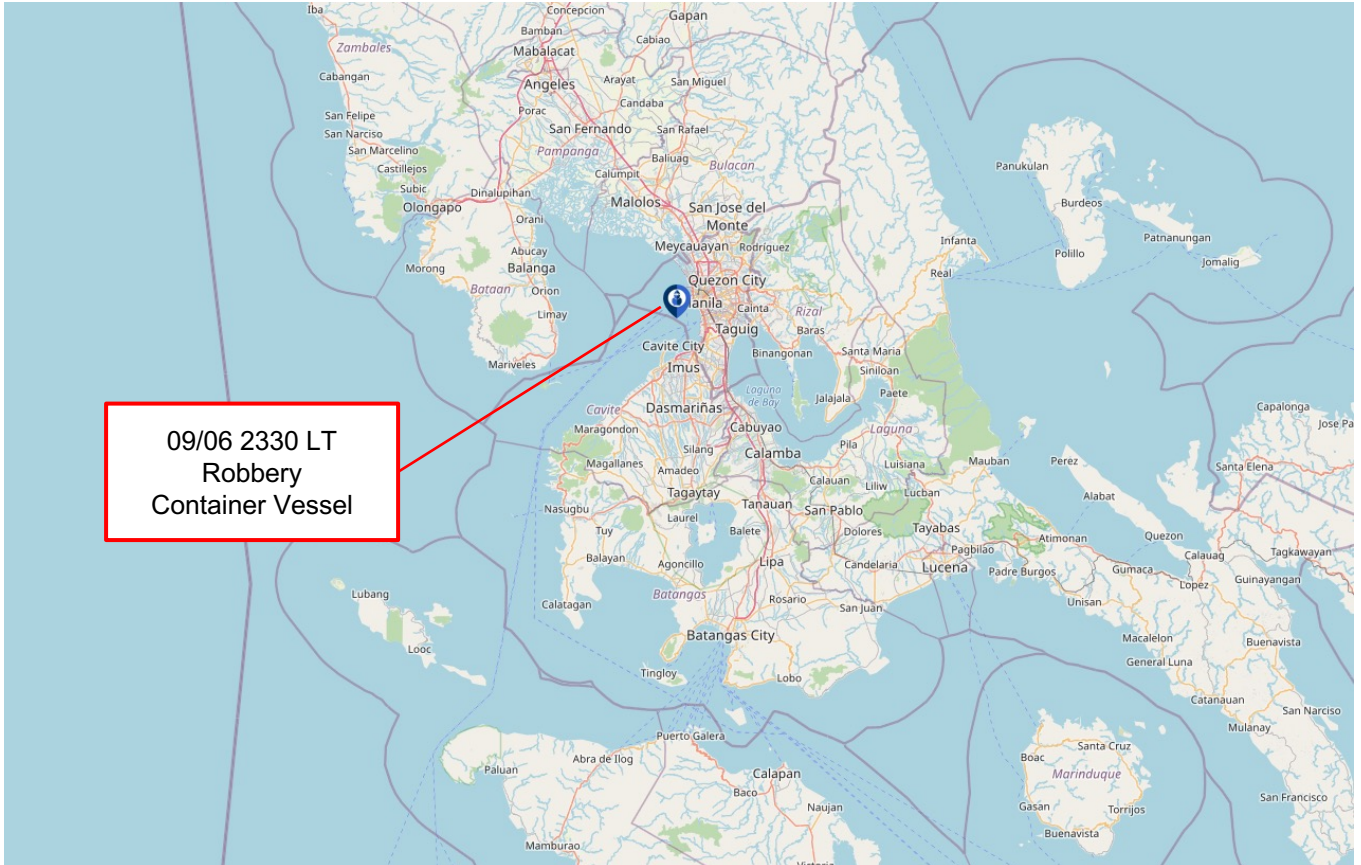
China deploys largest mission to Taiwan in response to US Navy drills

As tensions in the South China Sea have intensified over recent weeks, the United States (US) conducted a maritime security carrier exercise in the disputed waters. On 15th June, the US Navy deployed the aircraft carrier USS RONALD REGAN that was accompanied by the guided-missile cruiser USS SHILOH and the guided-missile destroyer USS HALSEY. The drills included a series of Naval strike exercises and coordinated tactical training between maritime and air force assets.

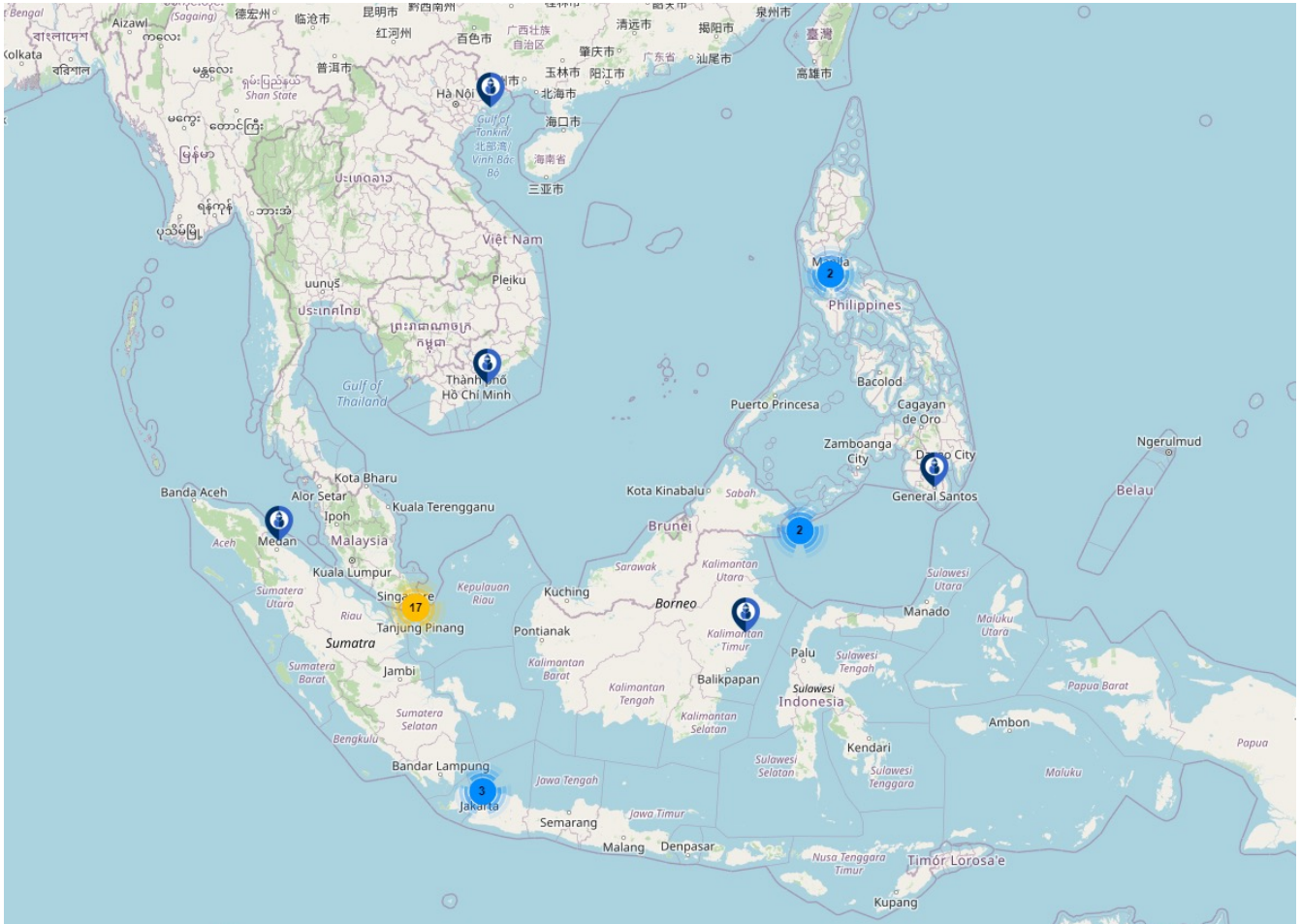
Following the exercise, on 16th June, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) deployed a reported 28 warplanes into Taiwan's air defence identification zone (ADIZ) over the waters between Taiwan and Pratas Island.

The move was characterised as warning from China to the US whose relations in regards to developments in the South China Sea remain strained, notably ahead of the 17th June Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) virtual meeting calling for an imminent conclusion to deliberations of the maritime code of conduct (COC) in the South China Sea.

Southeast Asia – Incident Map Outside Reporting Period



Southeast Asia – Incident Map 2021



Significant Maritime Stories

Nigerian and Ghanaian Navies strategise on enhancing GoG security

The Nigerian Navy (NN) Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Awwal Gambo, and his Ghanaian counterpart, Rear Admiral Issah Adam Yakubu, signed a cooperation agreement on 11th June to conduct joint operations to combat piracy and maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region.

The meeting between the two Chiefs of Naval Staff was held at the NN Headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria. Speaking after the session, Vice Admiral Gambo stated that the bilateral engagement would foster increased collaboration on devising strategies to address maritime insecurity in line with the Cooperative Maritime Security Framework, as outlined in the 2013 Yaoundé Protocol.

Rear Admiral Yakubu noted that Ghana had proposed an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Naval task force, coupled with a joint maritime security architecture, to effectively counter maritime threats in the GoG. Moreover, Rear Admiral Yakubu advocated for the establishment of 'Transit Corridors' in the region, where joint Naval patrols can be conducted and commercial vessels of West African States can proceed to anchor to receive assistance.

Bodies of 25 migrants recovered off Southern Yemen

On 14th June, up to 25 bodies were recovered after a boat carrying between 160 and 200 migrants capsized approximately ten nautical miles off Ras al-Ara, located in the Lahij Governorate in Southern Yemen. Citing information given by unidentified Yemeni smugglers and local fishermen, Jalil Ahmed Ali of the Lahij Provincial Authority stated that the boat overturned around 13th June and that the victims appeared to be of African origin.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

confirmed initial reports on the incident, but indicated that it was still establishing exact details, including the number and whereabouts of any survivors or further victims. In recent months, dozens of migrants have drowned in the Bab el Mandeb Strait between Djibouti and Yemen during attempted crossings.

Two new vessels enter Iranian Navy

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani announced in a speech that a "major task" had been achieved, as the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy (NEDAJA) inducted two new domestically-manufactured Naval vessels – the Moudge-class destroyer DENA (75) and minesweeper SHAHIN (M111) – into its fleet. The delivery of both vessels by the Ministry of Defence followed an earlier announcement by Tehran on 10th June that it had deployed a squadron of vessels into the Atlantic Ocean in order to reinforce Iran's maritime capabilities.

Both vessels, which are reported to be able to sail up to 7,560 nautical miles into open ocean and require no docking in foreign ports, were commissioned during an induction ceremony at the Port of Bandar Abbas in the Persian Gulf, which was attended by Naval and Army officials. The DERNA, built through the "Mowj Project", is understood to be equipped with a helicopter landing zone, anti-jamming capabilities as well as weapons systems designed to target aerial and underwater threats, including a fire control system that can allegedly track up to 40 targets and engage with five enemy assets simultaneously. The SHAHIN, meanwhile, is described as a 33m-long flagship minesweeper, fitted with a high-tech navigation system capable of detecting and neutralising various Naval mines.



Islamic Republic of Iran Navy minesweeper
SHAHIN (M111)

Image of the Week



Group of migrants enroute to Europe intercepted by Libyan Coast Guard during a search-and-rescue (SAR) operation in the Mediterranean Sea, offshore Libya, on 13th June (Source: Twitter)

Appendix

1. Seven-Day Lunar Forecast

[Moon Phases Open Source Calendar](#)

The next full moon will occur on 24th June.

2. Indian Ocean Meteorological and Lunar Outlook

<http://www.buoyweather.com/map/somalia-to-tanzania>

For further meteorological information, please request access to meteorological software from the officer on watch. If it is not available, then SF advises that one requests a copy of the Brown's Almanac from the Bridge. This document contains a guide on how to use it.

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