(U) WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report, 27 January – 24 February 2021

24 February 2021

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1. (U) Scope Note

(U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) message provides information on threats to merchant vessels, the shipping industry, and other maritime stakeholders worldwide in the last 30 days. This report is produced primarily to inform merchant mariners and naval forces.

2. (U) Warnings and Advisories:

A. **(U) MARAD Advisory 2021-003-Southern Mediterranean Sea near coastal Libya-Violence Due to Regional Conflict.** Advisory posted on 10 February 2021. The ongoing conflict in Libya continues to pose a potential risk to U.S.-flagged commercial vessels transiting near coastal Libya. Threats may come from a variety of different sources including, but not limited to: missiles, rockets, artillery, mines, small arms, aircraft, and unmanned aerial vehicles. Vessels operating in this area are advised to review security measures, ensure AIS is transmitting always (except when transmitting creates a threat to the safety or security of the ship or where a security incident is imminent, consistent with provisions of SOLAS and U.S. law), and monitor VHF Channel 16. Vessels at anchor, operating in restricted maneuvering environments, or proceeding at slow speeds should be especially vigilant. To afford best protection in the region, U.S.-flagged commercial vessels are encouraged to check in with the NATO Shipping Center upon entering the Mediterranean Sea. In the event of any incident or suspicious activity, call the NATO Shipping Center and activate the Ship Security Alert System immediately. Mariners are also encouraged to review the "Central Mediterranean" section of the NATO Shipping Center website at https://mc.nato.int/nsc/operations/news/2020/threat-to-commercial-shipping-operating-in-the-mediterranean-2. For maritime industry questions about this advisory, contact GMCC@uscg.mil. Supplemental information may also be found on the MARAD Office of Maritime Security website at: https://go.usa.gov/xUKsb. Cancellation of Prior Advisories: This message cancels U.S. Maritime Advisory 2020-014 and this Advisory will automatically expire on 9 August 2021.

3. (U) **Summary:**

A. (U) INDONESIA: On 21 February, robbers boarded a barge under tow in the Singapore Strait eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme.

B. (U) ENGLAND: On 19 February, authorities in Portsmouth International Port announced that they had seized 2.3 tons of cocaine hidden among a shipment of bananas arriving from Colombia.

C. (U) NORTH ARABIAN SEA: On 18 February, Combined Task Force 150 announced that one of its assets had boarded two dhows in a 36-hour period and seized a total of 2,145 kilograms of illegal drugs, including heroin and methamphetamines.

D. (U) BANGLADESH: On 18 February, criminals kidnapped two fishermen. Two days later, seven criminals were arrested by local coast guard forces in Hatia Upazila in Noakhali district.

E. (U) COLOMBIA: On 13 February, five robbers boarded a container vessel under pilotage in the Magdalena River Passage.

F. (U) PERU: On 12 February, a robber boarded an anchored tanker at Callao Anchorage.

G. (U) NIGERIA: On 9 February, pirates in speedboats abducted at least six people near the Kpoma/Odioma and Nembe/Brass waterways in Bayelsa State.

4. (U) **Details: Monthly Incidents by Region**

(U) This section lists reports of active violence against shipping, credible threats to shipping, or the potential for a situation to develop into a direct threat to shipping over the last 30 days. Every effort is made to ensure that incidents are not double-counted. In the event that double-counting is detected, or an incident is later found to be different than initially reported, an explanation of the cancellation of the inaccurate report will be made in at least one message prior to dropping the erroneous report.

A. (U) **NORTH AMERICA:** No current incidents to report.

B. (U) **CENTRAL AMERICA – CARIBBEAN – SOUTH AMERICA:**

Figure 1. Central America – Caribbean – South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) COLOMBIA: On 13 February, five robbers boarded a container ship under pilotage in the Magdalena River Passage near position 1101N – 074:4E. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered inside the accommodation area. The pilot notified port authorities. The robbers made their escape with stolen items of ship's property after seeing the alerted crew. The container vessel was requested to anchor in order to allow the coast guard to board and conduct an investigation. (Clearwater Dynamics)

2. (U) PERU: On 12 February, a robber boarded an anchored tanker at Callao Anchorage, near position 12:00S – 07711W. A duty crewman spotted a robber armed with a knife. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered. Upon hearing the alarm, the robber made his escape in a small wooden boat. One mooring rope was reported stolen. All crew were reported safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

3. (U) ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: On 31 January, robbers boarded a catamaran anchored in Falmouth Harbour. The captain found the salon door of the catamaran half open. Upon walking into the aft cockpit a man was found boarding a kayak just under the hoisted tender. The captain confronted the man to ask his business. No reply was heard, when asked again the man said he was fishing as he paddled away. Wet footprints were found in the salon and at the top of the stairs leading to each hull where persons were sleeping. A review of the yacht's contents was conducted and nothing was found missing. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

4. (U) ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: On 31 January, a second event occurred where robbers boarded a sailing yacht also anchored in Falmouth Harbour. The crew found the salon floor soaked in sea water and cash missing from the top of the chart table. No other items were taken. A police report was made. (www.safetyandsecuritynet.org)

D. (U) **NORTHERN EUROPE – BALTIC:**

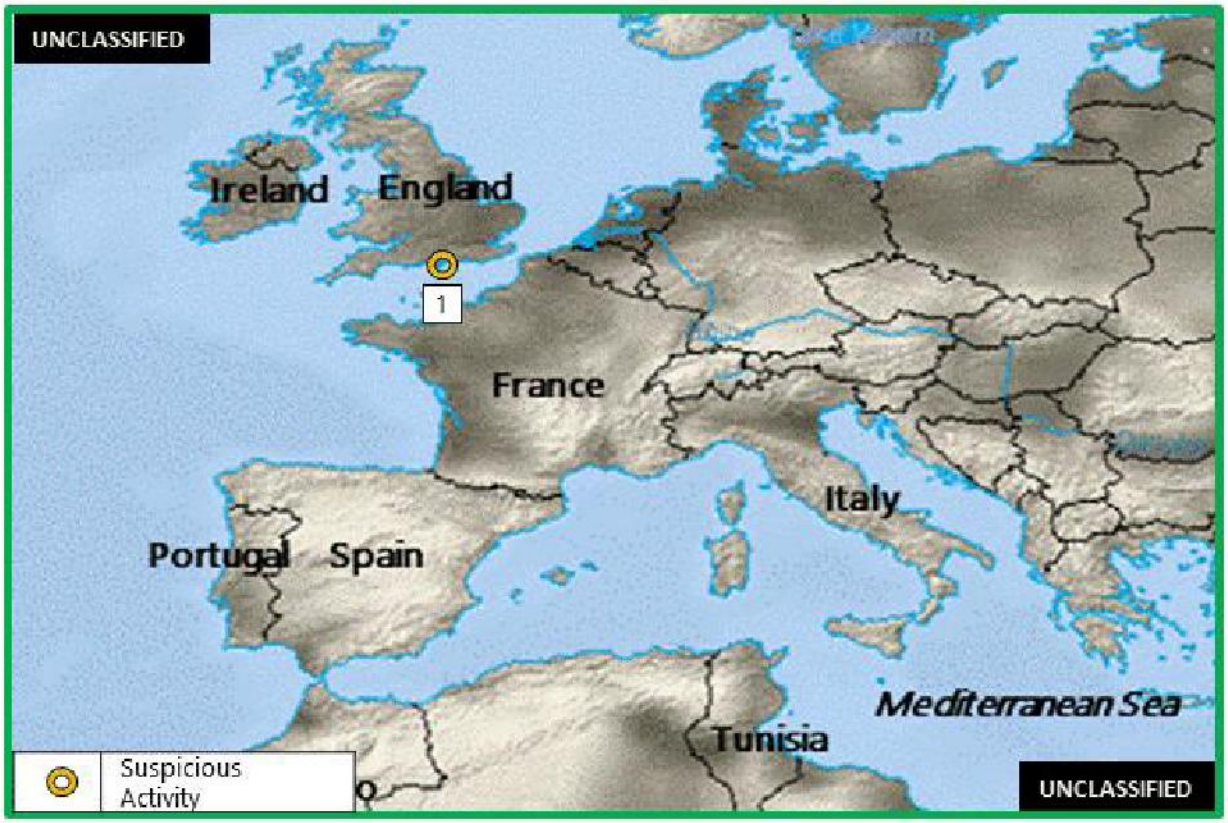


Figure 2. Northern Europe – Baltic Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) ENGLAND: On 19 February, authorities in Portsmouth International Port announced that they had seized 2.3 tons of cocaine hidden among a shipment of bananas arriving from Colombia. (Reuters)

E. (U) **MEDITERRANEAN – BLACK SEA:** No current incidents to report.

F. (U) **WEST AFRICA:**

Figure 3. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 9 February, pirates in speedboats abducted at least six people near the Kpoma/Odioma and Nembe/Brass waterways in Bayelsa State. (www.garda.com)

2. (U) NIGERIA: On 12 February, pirates released 15 crew members from the Liberia-flagged containership MOZART who were kidnapped on 23 January while underway from Lagos to Cape Town, South Africa. (www.gcaptain.com; www.hellenicshippingnews.com)

3. (U) CONGO: On 9 February, robbers boarded a container vessel at Pointe Noire Anchorage Area, near position 04:43S – 011:45E. During routine rounds a duty crewman spotted three robbers, one armed with a knife. The alarm was then raised and the robbers escaped. Upon a search of the vessel, it was found that one blue polypropylene line was missing from a mooring station. (Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 9 February, pirates boarded the Panama-flagged tanker MARIA E approximately 113 NM northwest of Neves, Sao Tome and Principe, near position 01:35N – 005:07E in the Joint Development Zone along the maritime Nigeria – Sao Tome and Principe border. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)

5. (U) GULF OF GUINEA: On 8 February, crew onboard the drifting Bahamas-flagged tanker SEAKING saw a mother vessel launching a skiff with four persons, which approached the tanker at high speed approximately 56 NM southwest of Sao Tome island. Master raised the alarm, increased speed, took evasive maneuvers and non-essential crew mustered in the citadel. The skiff managed to come alongside the vessel but due to the hardening measures taken by the master, the boarding was avoided. Crew and tanker reported safe. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global; www.defenceweb.co.za)

6. (U) EQUATORIAL GUINEA: On 7 February, pirates hijacked the Gabon-flagged fishing vessel LIAN PENG YU 809 approximately 45 NM northeast of Pagalu Island. The ship was carrying a mixed crew of Chinese, Indonesian, and Gabonese nationals. The pirates kidnapped 10 of the 14 crew onboard when they left the ship. The Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG) have confirmed that the hijacked fishing vessel is now being used as a mothership in the area of other incidents reported on 8 February and remains a threat to merchant shipping in the area. The vessel is a tuna fishing vessel with a blue hull and white superstructure. (www.observador.pt; MDAT-GOG; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)

7. (U) SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE: On 6 February, pirates boarded the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker SEA PHANTOM about 50 NM north-northeast from Principe Island, near position 02:00N – 008:15E. Alert crew noticed the pirates and retreated into the citadel. The pirates damaged communication and navigation equipment. Upon hearing of the incident the IMB PRC immediately alerted and liaised with regional authorities including a Portuguese Navy warship. Crew attempted to navigate the tanker to rendezvous with dispatched Cameroonian and Equatorial Guinean patrol boats. The ship reached the port of Malabo, in Equatorial Guinea, on the afternoon of 7 February. All crew reported safe. (IMB; Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global; ThemaNews; www.maritime-executive.com; www.defenceweb.co.za)

8. (U) NIGERIA: On 4 February, a container ship was approached while underway approximately 63 NM southwest of Bonny, Nigeria, near position 03:31N – 006:31E. One speedboat with up to seven persons onboard came to within 1 NM of the container ship before aborting the approach. No ladders or weapons were sighted. The vessel and crew are reported as safe. (Clearwater Dynamics)

9. (U) GHANA: On 1 February, robbers boarded a bulk carrier anchored at Tema Anchorage. A duty crewman on routine rounds found that eight sounding pipe plugs had been stolen. The robbers boarded the vessel unnoticed. (Clearwater Dynamics)

10. (U) GHANA: On 30 January, pirates boarded the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier ROWAYTON EAGLE approximately 200 NM southeast of Accra. The crew mustered in the citadel. After failing to breach the citadel, the pirates left. The vessel subsequently was joined by a Nigerian Security Escort Vessel and escorted into Nigerian waters. (Clearwater Dynamics; www.gcaptain.com; Dryad Global)

11. (U) NIGERIA: On 30 January, kidnappers released six Ukrainian sailors, kidnapped from Cameroon-flagged bulk carrier STEVIA on 16 December 2020, after 45 days in captivity. (www.yenisafak.com/en; Clearwater Dynamics)

12. (U) NIGERIA: On 29 January, kidnappers released five sailors, abducted from Cameroon-flagged general cargo ship CAP SAINT GEORGES on 10 December 2020, after 50 days in captivity. (Clearwater Dynamics; Dryad Global)

G. (U) **ARABIAN GULF:**

1. (U) SAUDI ARABIA: On 29 January, customs authorities announced they had seized 14.4 million Captagon pills hidden in a shipment of wood panels in King Abdul Aziz Port. (www.arabnews.com)

H. (U) INDIAN OCEAN – EAST AFRICA – RED SEA:

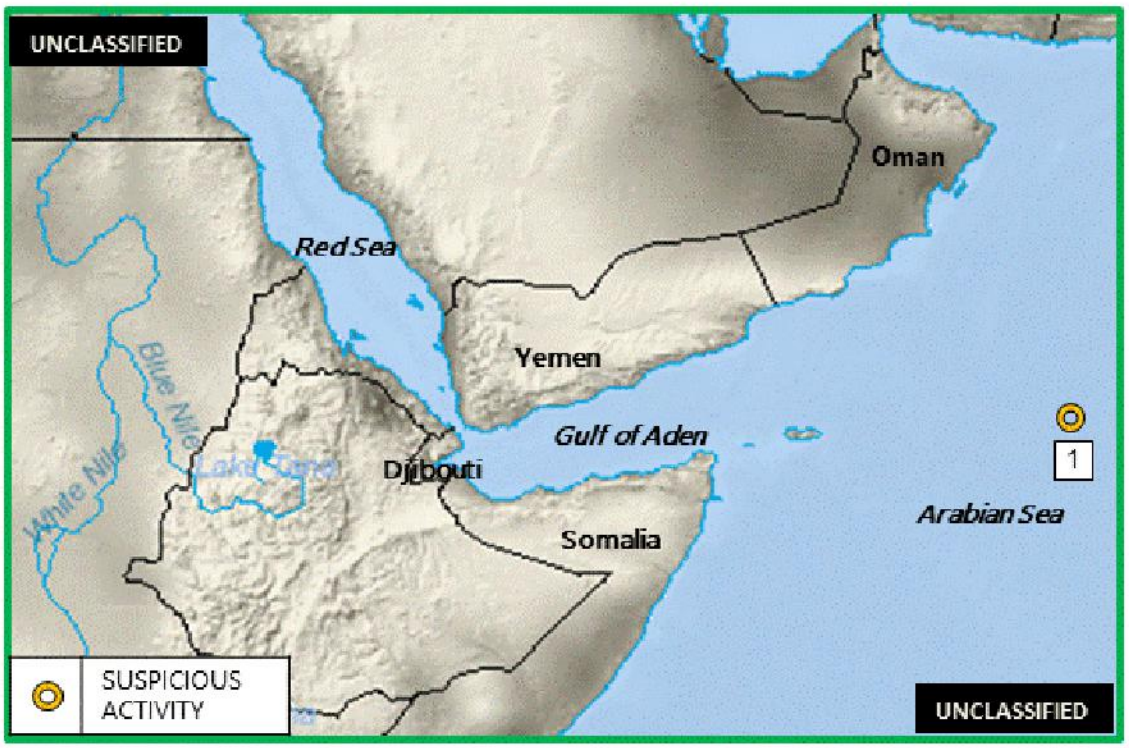


Figure 4. Indian Ocean – East Africa – Red Sea Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NORTH ARABIAN SEA: On 18 February, Combined Task Force 150 announced that one of its assets had boarded two dhows in a 36-hour period and seized a total of 2,145 kilograms of illegal drugs, including heroin and methamphetamines. The leader of the second boarding team commented, "Everywhere we looked onboard there were suspicious packages." (www.maritime-executive.com)

I. (U) **EAST ASIA** – **SOUTHEAST ASIA:**

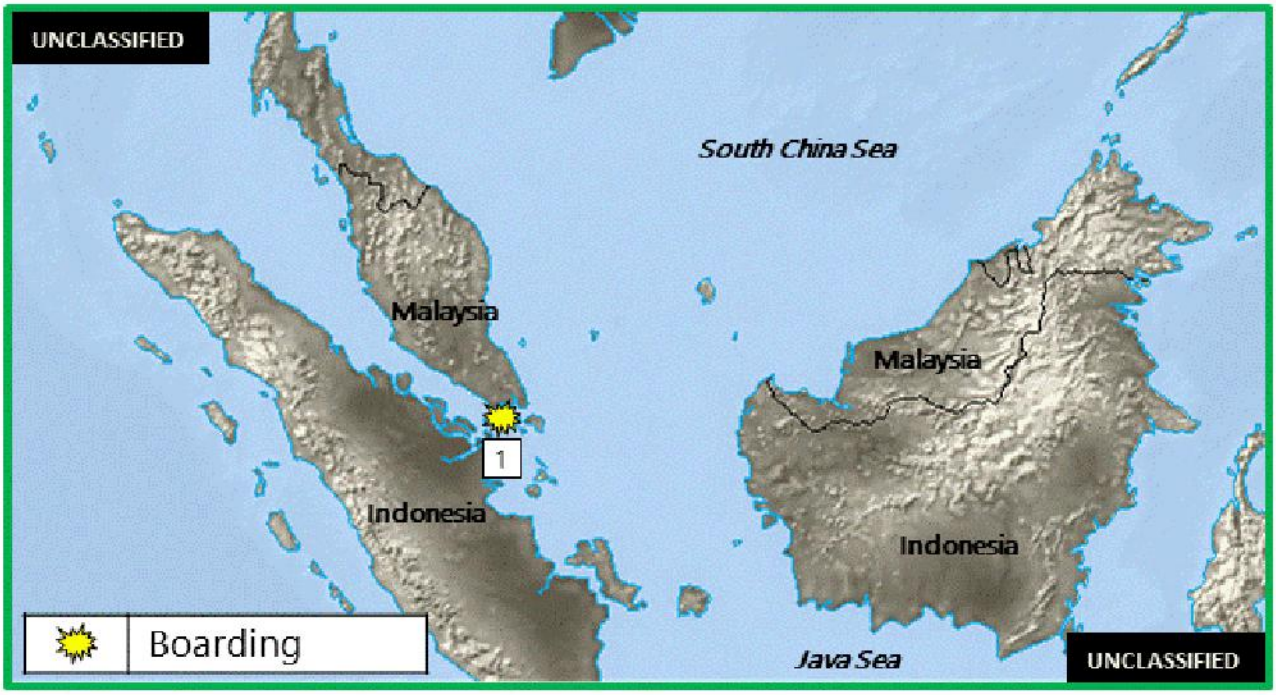


Figure 5. East Asia – Southeast Asia Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) INDONESIA: On 21 February, robbers boarded the barge LIMAU 133 under tow by Malaysia-flagged tug DANUM 50 in the Singapore Strait eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:09N – 103:49E. Two small crafts were spotted alongside the barge by an Indonesian Navy patrol vessel. Three robbers were onboard the barge, passing stolen items to two further perpetrators in the small crafts. The patrol vessel intervened, which resulted in the five perpetrators being arrested, the two small crafts seized, and 150 kilograms of steel wire recovered. (Clearwater Dynamics; ReCAAP)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 February, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged container ship ALS JUVENTUS while the ship was berthed at the Port of Jakarta, near position 06:05S – 105:53E. The Third Officer reported that the padlock hinge for the passageway door leading to the engine room was broken. There was no sign of any perpetrators on board or nearby. Spare parts for auxiliary engine were reported missing. The incident was reported to the ship's Company Security Officer. (ReCAAP)

3. (U) SINGAPORE: On 9 February, two robbers boarded a barge being towed by China-flagged tug boat NING HAI TUO in the eastbound lane of the Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:05N – 103:34E. When the robbers realized they had been spotted by the crew of the tug, they made their escape with some shackles stolen from the barge. The incident was reported to both the Singapore Coast Guard and the Republic of Singapore Navy's Maritime Security Force as well as the Indonesian authorities. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

4. (U) INDONESIA: On 31 January, two robbers boarded the Bahamas-flagged LNG tanker SURAYA AKI while anchored in Belawan Anchorage, near position 03:56N – 098:45E. Both the shipping company and the Belawan Vessel Traffic Information System were informed and all crew retreated to the citadel. Indonesian marine police were dispatched to the tanker and conducted a full search, which confirmed the robbers had escaped with items of ship's stores. (ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

5. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 30 January, two robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged container ship KOTA NEBULA while anchored at General Santos City, near position 06:56N – 125:09E. The perpetrators were sighted on the

starboard lifeboat deck. The general alarm was raised. All crew was notified of the perpetrators and their location via the PA system. The crew proceeded to the starboard lifeboat deck. The perpetrators jumped into the water and fled in a small motor boat. The crew was not injured. A search was conducted, and two nozzles and two fire hydrant caps were reported missing. (ReCAAP)

6. (U) INDONESIA: On 29 January, three robbers armed with knives, boarded the Liberia-flagged general cargo ship VANTAGE WAVE approximately 5.8 NM northwest of Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait Traffic Separation Scheme, near position 01:16N – 104:18E. A search of the ship was conducted. Nothing was stolen and the crew was safe. Singapore, Malaysian, and Indonesian authorities were notified. (IMB; ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

7. (U) INDONESIA: On 28 January, ten robbers armed with knives, boarded the Liberia-flagged bulk carrier ELVIA approximately 6 NM northwest of Tanjung Pergam, Bintan Island, in the eastbound lane of the Singapore Strait, near position 01:16N – 104:16E. A search of the ship was conducted. Nothing was stolen and the crew was safe. Singapore, Malaysian, and Indonesian authorities were notified. (IMB; ReCAAP; Clearwater Dynamics)

J. (U) **INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:**

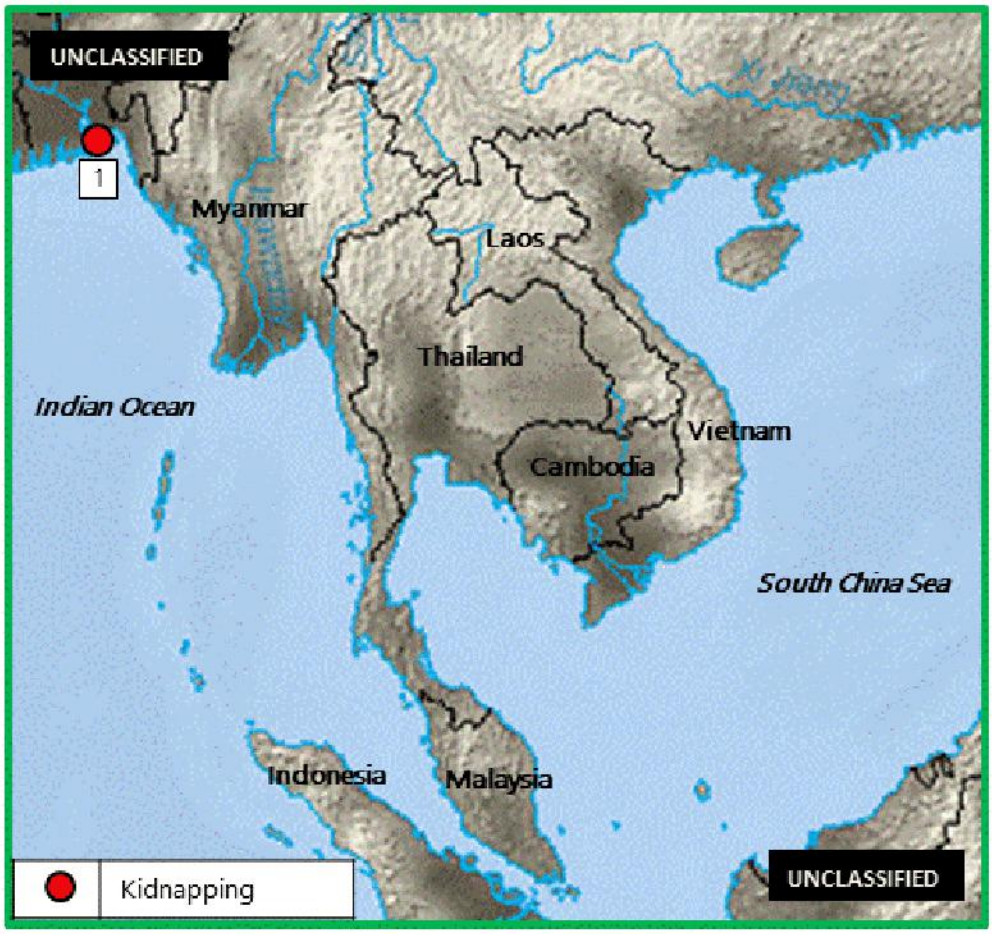


Figure 6. Indian Subcontinent Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) BANGLADESH: On 18 February, criminals kidnapped two fishermen. Two days later, seven criminals were arrested by local coast guard forces in Hatia Upazila in Noakhali district. These criminals reportedly received a ransom payment for the fishermen. (www.observerbd.com)

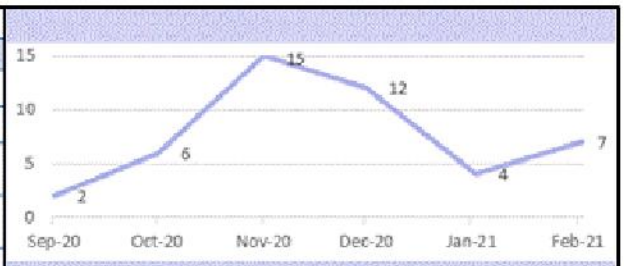
2. (U) INDIA: On 29 January, robbers boarded a tanker anchored off Kandla Anchorage, near position 22:55N – 070:10E. A duty crewman spotted three robbers boarding the vessel. The alarm was raised, which resulted in the perpetrators escaping empty-handed. (Clearwater Dynamics)

K. (U) **AUSTRALIA** – **NEW ZEALAND** – **PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

5. (U) **Appendix A: Piracy and Armed Robbery at Sea Statistics and Trends**

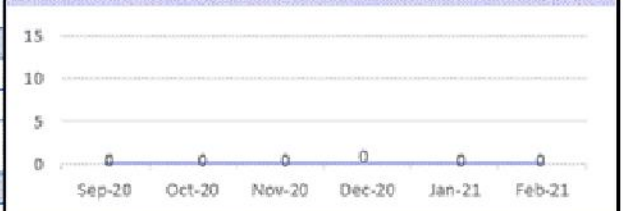
(U) Gulf of Guinea

Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	2	6	4	1	0
Kidnappings	30	28	32	27	2
Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination	0	4	2	3	1
Attacks/Attempted Boardings	35	44	39	25	3
Boardings	53	64	55	42	5
Total	**120**	**146**	**132**	**98**	**11**



(U) Horn of Africa

Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	2	0	0	0	0
Kidnappings	1	0	0	0	0
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	3	2	2	2	0
Total	**6**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**0**



(U) Southeast Asia

Event	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hijackings	3	1	0	0	0
Kidnappings	4	3	4	1	0
Attacks, Boardings and Attempts	95	80	92	95	9
Total	**102**	**84**	**96**	**96**	**9**

6. (U) **Appendix B: Definitions and Sourcing**

A. (U) **Definitions:** In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, we use the following definitions to describe a range of criminal antishipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis.

- (U) **Attempted Boarding** – Close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat.
- (U) **Blocking** – Hampering safe navigation, docking, or undocking of a vessel as a means of protest.
- (U) **Boarding** – Unauthorized embarkation of a vessel by persons not part of its complement without successfully taking control of the vessel.
- (U) **Fired Upon** – Weapons discharged at or toward a vessel.
- (U) **Hijacking** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement.
- (U) **Kidnapping** – Unauthorized forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel from it.

- (U) **Hijacking/Kidnapping Combination** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement who forcefully remove crew members from vessel when disembarking.

- (U) **Robbery** – Theft from a vessel or from persons aboard the vessel.

- (U) **Suspicious Approach** – All other unexplained activity in close proximity of an unknown vessel.

B. (U) **Sourcing:** ONI derives information in this report primarily from government agencies, piracy reporting centers, maritime security companies, and open press.

(U) **ICOD:** 24 February 2021

(U) The Weekly Piracy Update (WPU) and Worldwide Threat to Shipping reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intelligence Portal: https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/