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MSP PERSPECTIVES



The New U.S. Maritime Strategy: Some Regional Implications

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The new U.S. Maritime Strategy ["A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower: Forward, Engaged, Ready"](#), was released recently by the chiefs of America's "sea services" – the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps. The previous Maritime Strategy issued in 2007 gave considerable attention to maritime cooperation with friends and allies. It became the basis for the 1,000-ship Navy concept and the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative. The latest Strategy has similar sentiments, but they are not its cornerstone – rather it gives greater attention to threats, forward naval presence, and the concepts of deterrence, sea control and power projection. Overall it is much more militant document.

The Strategy is intended to reassure friends and allies of U.S. commitments and to give potential adversaries something to think about. It is also intended to justify the Navy's budget. It notes that the Navy's current budget submission will provide for more than 300 ships and a forward presence of about 120 ships by 2020, up from an average of 97 in 2014. 60 percent of these ships will be assigned to the Asia-Pacific region, including more Littoral Combat Ships and Ballistic-Missile-Defense (BMD) vessels. These plans add weight to the military dimensions of Washington's re-balance to Asia.

Unlike the 2007 Strategy, the words "trust" and "confidence" do not occur in the new document in a strategic context. While the Asia-Pacific region is characterised by high levels of strategic distrust, it would seem that the U.S. Navy is not much interested in trust- or confidence-building. There is nothing in the new Maritime Strategy that will ease the strategic distrust that exists at present between the U.S. and China. Both countries are talking past each other. The new Strategy does not help this situation. It risks adding to the security dilemma between the two countries.

As a small example of what might be possible with naval confidence-building, current U.S. regulations prohibiting the attendance of Chinese military officers at American military institutions and staff colleges, such as the Naval War College, might be relaxed. During his speech at the International Maritime Security Conference in Singapore in 2013, Admiral Wu Shengli, the Chief of the Chinese Navy, suggested more exchanges between the younger generation of military officers to help build trust and

understanding for the future. Current U.S. policy runs against that. Similarly, trust between the Chinese and U.S. navies was not helped recently when the U.S. Navy knocked back an invitation from China for a USN aircraft carrier to visit China while at the same time, entering into a joint arrangement with India to develop aircraft carrier technology.

Despite the rhetoric about a global network of like-minded navies, there is no reference in the latest Strategy to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the framework that provides for cooperation. Instead the references to "international waters" and "global commons" may be seen as an attempt to deny extended forms of coastal State jurisdiction allowed under UNCLOS. The seas of East Asia, for example, are not "international waters", or part of the "maritime commons". Rather they are the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the littoral States which have important rights and duties in those seas, as well as an obligation to cooperate in their management. The fact that the U.S. is not a party to UNCLOS remains a significant limitation on the ability it seeks to exercise leadership in the maritime domain.

The new Maritime Strategy may help to re-assure U.S. friends and allies in the region. It also provides justification for the naval budget in the face of sequestration and budgetary competition. However, with its clear focus on power projection and the ability to assert access to contested waters, it may also have the unwelcome consequence of adding to distrust between China and the U.S. and the security dilemma for both countries.

This item is based on a commentary in The Strategist published on 20 March 2015.

NAVAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY



JAPAN | 25 MARCH | REUTERS

Japanese navy gets biggest flat-top since WWII-era aircraft carriers

Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force on Wednesday took delivery of the biggest Japanese warship since World War Two, the Izumo, a helicopter carrier as big as the Imperial Navy aircraft carriers that battled the United States in the Pacific. The Izumo with a crew of 470 sailors is a highly visible example of how Japan is expanding the capability of its military to operate overseas and enters service as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe seeks lawmaker approval to loosen the restraints of Japan's pacifist post-war constitution.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 9 MARCH | WANTCHINATIMES

PLA official confirms 2nd aircraft carrier under construction

A People's Liberation Army Navy official has confirmed for the first time that China is building its second aircraft carrier, reports Duowei News, a US-based Chinese political news outlet. Ding Haichun, a deputy political commissar of the PLA Navy, acknowledged during an interview with Hong Kong media on March 8 that China's second aircraft carrier is currently under construction and will be more advanced than the country's first carrier, the Liaoning, which was retrofitted from the Soviet-era carrier Varyag and commissioned in September 2012.

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capabilities, but the Navy and the contractor might dismantle one to gain sub-building experience and study the manufacturing techniques, Minister of National Defense Kao Kuang-chi said yesterday.

[Full Report](#)

NEW ZEALAND | 11 MARCH | NAVAL-TECHNOLOGY.COM

NZDF receives three new Seasprite SH-2G(I) helicopters

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has received three new Seasprite SH-2G(I) helicopters from Kaman Aerospace at the Royal New Zealand Air Force Base Auckland. The delivery is part of a \$120m contract signed by Kaman and the New Zealand Ministry of Defence in May 2013 for the purchase of ten aircraft.

[Full Report](#)

TAIWAN | 10 MARCH | TAIPEI TIMES

Guppy-class subs under major renovation: Kao

The nation's two World War II-era submarines are undergoing major renovations to upgrade their

S. KOREA—UNITED STATES | 14 MARCH |
YONHAP NEWS AGENCY

U.S. hopes more littoral combat ships in S. Korea for regional peace

USS Fort Worth, one of the U.S. navy's newest littoral combat ships (LCS), has successfully completed joint training exercise with South Korea, and Washington hopes to host more LCSs to the region, the U.S. naval commander here said Saturday.

[Full Report](#)

SINGAPORE—MALAYSIA | 15 MARCH |
MARINELINK.COM

Singapore, Malaysia conduct maritime exercise

The Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) conducted a bilateral maritime exercise, reports Channel News Asia. The 12-day Exercise Malapura involved about 600 personnel from Singapore Navy and Malaysia.

[Full Report](#)

S. KOREA-UNITED STATES | 19 MARCH | YONHAP
NEWS AGENCY

S. Korea, U.S. Marines hold large-scale joint drill

Marines of South Korea and the United States are staging a large-scale command post exercise on and around the Korean Peninsula to check and further boost their joint combat capabilities, the Marine Corps here said Thursday.

[Full Report](#)

TAIWAN | 19 MARCH | CHINA POST

Taiwan Defense Ministry denies plans to buy new submarines from Russia

The R.O.C. armed forces have no plans to purchase submarines from Russia, the Ministry of National Defense (MND) said yesterday. In a released press statement, the MND said Taiwan's top priority is acquiring submarines from the United States.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 21 MARCH | BUSINESS STANDARD

Goa Shipyard to tie up with foreign yards to build MCMVs

After bagging the deal to build Mines Counter-Measures Vessels (MCMVs) for the Indian Navy, Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL) has decided to tie up with the foreign yards for the technology transfer required to create these high-tech ships.

[Full Report](#)



INDIA | 21 MARCH | SUNDAY GUARDIAN

India's first Scorpene submarine is now in water

This is the first good news for India's fast depleting submarine fleet in a long time. The first of the six Scorpene attack submarines being built at Mumbai's Mazagon Docks Ltd (MDL), under transfer of technology from France's DCNS, is now floating in the water.

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA | 21 MARCH | ANTARA NEWS

PT PAL to build submarine infrastructure in 2016

President Director of state-owned shipbuilding company PT PAL Indonesia M Firmansyah Arifin said it will build submarine infrastructure in 2016 before it builds submarines for the defense ministry. "First we will build infrastructure. With the infrastructure we could build more submarines in the future," Arifin said here on Saturday.

[Full Report](#)

MALAYSIA | 22 MARCH | FREE MALAYSIA TODAY
(BERNAMA)

Stealth corvettes for Navy by 2019

The Navy is expected to receive its first of six littoral combat ship Gowind-class corvettes in early 2019, according to the shipbuilder. The corvettes, which have low-detection stealth capabilities, would be among the most modern warships in the region.

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA—UNITED STATES | 22 MARCH |
ANTARA NEWS

Indonesian, US marines conduct shooting exercise

Members of Indonesian and US Marine Corps were involved in a shooting drill at the Baluran Marine

Combat Training Center in Karangtekok, Situbondo, East Java, on Sunday. The exercise involving the Indonesian Marine Corps Amphibious Reconnaissance Unit and the US Marsoc marine special unit was monitored by the commander of the exercise task force, Major Freddy Ardiansyah, operation staff office of the Marine Corps, Major Brian Iwan Prang and operations section officer Captain Aristoyudho.

[Full Report](#)

THAILAND | 25 MARCH | BANGKOK POST

Submarine plan resurfaces with backing from Prawit

A plan to buy submarines for the Royal Thai Navy is on again with strong backing from Defence Minister Prawit Wongsuwon who wants Thailand's fleet to be on par with neighbouring countries. The sub plan, which has surfaced periodically over the years, re-emerged when Gen Prawit on Wednesday said the country needed to equip its navy with submarines as part of efforts to modernise the armed forces.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 30 MARCH | DECCAN HERALD

Budget cut hits secret nuclear submarine base on east coast

Project Varsha, India's secret nuclear submarine base on the east coast, has received less than 15 per cent of its approved budget in the current fiscal, adversely affecting its development. Being constructed at Rambilli, near Vishakhapatnam, the base received a meagre Rs 26 crore in 2014-15 as against the budgetary allocation of Rs 197 crore, sources told Deccan Herald.

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MARITIME SECURITY AND SAFETY



Wikimedia Commons, U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Ed Early ([link](#))

SINGAPORE—MALAYSIA | 5 MARCH | ASIAONE (STRAITS TIMES)

Singapore, KL to step up military ties

SINGAPORE and Malaysia's defence ministers inked a letter of intent yesterday to step up military cooperation between the two countries. In a joint statement, Dr Ng Eng Hen and his counterpart, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, said they agreed to encourage more military-to-military exchanges, such as in the area of intelligence. This will address security concerns such as the threat of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria to the region, they added. Both militaries will also seek to work more closely in maritime security, the statement said.

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INDONESIA—PHILIPPINES | 2 MARCH | MARINELINK.COM

Hijacked Indonesian vessel found in Philippines

The hijacked Indonesian cargo ship Rehoboth has been found abandoned in waters off Mati town in Davao Oriental province off the southern Philippines coast, says the the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG). PCG spokesperson Armand Balilo said the PCG-Southeastern Mindanao district was informed that the M/T Rehoboth was found aground off Barangay Cabuaya. Four personnel from the local PCG district office were sent to verify the report.

[Full Report](#)

INDIAN OCEAN | 6 MARCH | SECURITY MIDDLE EAST

Shipping in the Indian Ocean is still at risk

Underestimating the security risk in the Indian Ocean could put ships in great danger once again, says maritime security company MAST Ltd. Gerry Northwood OBE, COO of MAST, said: "Whilst recent reports and incidents seem to be pointing to the Far East as the next piracy hotspot, the real security risk

to shipping remains within the Indian Ocean, which is being 'under-hyped' by some commentators."

[Full Report](#)

SEYCHELLES | 6 MARCH | SEYCHELLES NEWS AGENCY

'Solution to end piracy is on land': EU Naval Force anti-piracy commander

Piracy around the Horn of Africa, which affected container ships, fishing vessels and cruise ships traversing the strategically important location, has been significantly brought under control since its peak in 2009, with only two failed attempts in 2014 and no activity recorded thus far in 2015.

[Full Report](#)

UNITED STATES—VIETNAM | 8 MARCH | TUOI TRE NEWS

US helps Vietnam enhance maritime law enforcement; to provide 6 high-speed boats

The U.S. Embassy in Vietnam has selected "National Defense and Security" as the main theme of the joint activities Hanoi and Washington are going to conduct in March to expand their bilateral defense and

security cooperation, Major Thang “Jacky” Ly, Chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation, said at a press conference on Friday.

[Full Report](#)

SOUTHEAST ASIA | 9 MARCH | JAKARTA POST

Ships warned of theft in Malacca, Singapore straits

Commercial ships passing through the Malacca and Singapore straits have been warned to be alert for possible theft by local people and pirates while traversing Asia’s busiest straits. The Indonesian Navy’s Western Armada Sea Security Group (Guskamla Armabar) commander, Cmdr. Abdul Rasyid Kacong, said that based on information from seafarers, the straits were vulnerable to theft by locals using pancung (small wooden boats).

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA | 13 MARCH | CUSTOMS TODAY

Indonesian Navy gives 10 ships to Maritime Security Board for eradicating smuggling

The Indonesian Navy has planned to hand over 10 Navy Patrol ships (KAL) to the Maritime Security Board (Bakamla) by the end of this year. According to Navy chief of staff, Adm. Ade Supandi, said the 10 ships would require alterations before they could be used by Bakamla.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 19 MARCH | PUNJAB STAR NEWS

India remains vulnerable to another 26/11 style attack, says security expert

Far more needs to be done to ensure the effective surveillance of India’s coast, said the expert. Raising an alert on the security preparedness on the coastline, Rahul Roy Chaudhury, Senior Fellow for South Asia at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, Thursday said that India continues to remain highly vulnerable to another maritime terror attack like that of November 2008 in Mumbai.

[Full Report](#)

MALAYSIA | 21 MARCH | DEFENSE NEWS

Malaysia focuses on terror threats at LIMA

Speaking on the eve of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA) show, Malaysian Defense Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein had bad news for the world’s fighter manufacturers who are lining up to sell their product to replace the country’s MiG-29Ns.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 22 MARCH | ECONOMIC TIMES

Somali pirates shifting location towards India: Manohar Parrikar

Beaten back in their usual area of operations, Somali pirates are "shifting their location" towards India, but the country is watchful to deal with such threats, Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar today said. "Today's threats are not traditional. Somali pirates, after being neutralised by various countries' navies, are shifting their locations towards India."

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Wikimedia Commons, Rizuan ([link](#), [license](#))

MALAYSIA | 23 MARCH | SHEPHARD MEDIA

LIMA 2015: MMEA to double in size by 2022 says director general

The director general of the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) revealed his organisation is set to double in size by 2022. In an interview with Shephard at LIMA 2015, Adm Maritime Datuk Mohd Amdan bin Kurish said the MMEA currently has 5,318 approved billets, but this will expand to 10,700 personnel in the next seven years.

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA—JAPAN | 24 MARCH | ASIAONE (JAKARTA POST)

Indonesia, Japan to launch high-level maritime security forum

Japan and Indonesia agreed Monday to launch a high-level bilateral "maritime forum" to expand co-operation in ensuring security at sea and to increase Japan's assistance in building Indonesia's port infrastructure and coast guard capabilities.

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA | 26 MARCH | MARINELINK.COM

17 countries for maritime security training in Indonesia

Representatives from 17 countries would take part in the sixth Maritime Security Desktop Exercise that is scheduled to be held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia from

March 30 to April 1. The drill, dubbed "the 6th Maritime Security Desktop Exercise or MSDE" aims at strengthening coordination among the participating countries in combating crimes at sea at the region, said Edi Fernandi, head of Indonesian maritime security board.

[Full Report](#)

YEMEN | 26 MARCH | IHS MARITIME 360

US tightens vessel anti-terrorism scheme in Yemen

Armed guards will soon be required on US-bound vessels docked at Ash Shihr Terminal and the Port of Hodeidah in Yemen. The requirement is one of several security measures to be imposed on any US-bound commercial vessel that had visited the two ports within the vessel's last five port calls, according to a notice published in the US Federal Register on 25 March.

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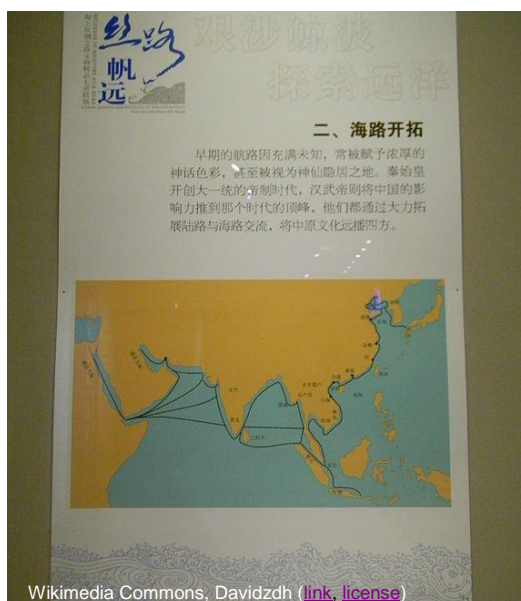
INDIA—SOUTHEAST ASIA | 29 MARCH | ECONOMIC TIMES

Government advises Indian ships to be 'extra cautious' in South East Asia

The government has asked Indian ships sailing in the Malacca Strait and South East Asia to be "extra cautious" and take necessary security steps in view of rising incidents of hijacking and robbery by pirates in the region.

[Full Report](#)

SHIPPING, PORTS AND THE MARITIME ECONOMY



ASIA | 29 MARCH | REUTERS

Xi: Trade between China and Silk Road nations to exceed \$2.5 trillion

China's President Xi Jinping said he hoped its annual trade with the countries involved in Beijing's plan to create a modern Silk Road would surpass \$2.5 trillion in a decade. Xi also pledged to protect the interests of foreign companies in China amid investors' rising concerns that Beijing is enacting policies that could hurt their businesses.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA—MIDDLE EAST | 5 MARCH | XINHUA

China to advance free trade talks with Arabs, Israel amid Silk Road initiatives

China vows to advance talks on free trade zones with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Israel, Premier Li Keqiang said here Thursday while delivering his government work report. The GCC, a regional political and economic alliance, includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

[Full Report](#)

vital shipping lanes through which much of its energy supplies and trade passes.

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SINGAPORE | 12 MARCH | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

Singapore boosts spending on maritime training

Singapore's government has boosted maritime sector spending with the announcement on Wednesday that it has allocated S\$65 million (\$47 million) to maritime training. The money will be devoted to the Maritime Cluster Fund for Manpower Development, an existing program run by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA).

[Full Report](#)

SOUTH ASIA | 12 MARCH | REUTERS

India in pacts to develop infrastructure in Mauritius, Seychelles

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has secured agreements to develop islands in Mauritius and Seychelles in an early success for his drive to wrest back influence in the Indian Ocean from China. China has invested millions of dollars in recent years building seaports and highways in countries stretching from the Maldives to Sri Lanka that lie on

THAILAND—INDONESIA—VIETNAM | 16 MARCH | BANGKOK POST

Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam seek three-way benefits

Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam are looking to strengthen three-way economic cooperation in anticipation of a surge in investment under the Asean

Economic Community (AEC). Cooperation would be built on separate strategic partnerships that Vietnam signed with Thailand and Indonesia last year during the term of the Yingluck Shinawatra government, according to representatives of the Indonesia-Thai Chamber of Commerce (INTCC).

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA—JAPAN | 24 MARCH | BANGKOK POST

Jokowi calls for more Japan investment

Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo called on Japanese companies Tuesday to boost investment in his country, with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations eager to bolster its infrastructure to advance regional connectivity.

[Full Report](#)

GLOBAL | 24 MARCH | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

Shippers want rigorous monitoring of alliances

The Global Shippers Forum (GSF) has called for a manageable but rigorous set of monitoring KPIs that can provide the required level of confidence to customers that ocean shipping alliances can deliver tangible benefits in terms of reduced costs, competitive ocean rates and improved services for shippers.

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA—CHINA | 25 MARCH | SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

Indonesia to throw open doors to Chinese investment

Indonesia is determined to open its doors to Chinese investments and significantly strengthen bilateral economic ties, even as it seeks clarity on China's vision of a Maritime Silk Road, President Joko Widodo said.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 25 MARCH | YAHOO NEWS (AFP)

China approves three more free-trade zones

China has given the go-ahead for three more free-trade zones, state media reported, despite the country's first project in Shanghai proving disappointing 18 months after its establishment. A meeting of the Communist Party's politburo hosted by President Xi Jinping on Tuesday approved zones in the southern province of Guangdong, eastern province of Fujian and northern city of Tianjin, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

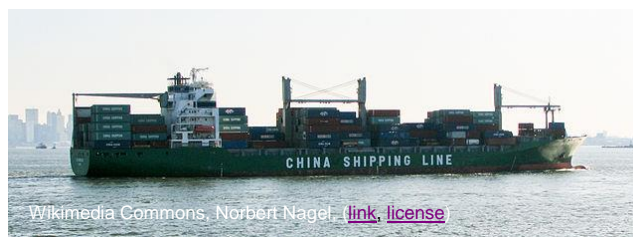
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THAILAND | 26 MARCH | BANGKOK POST (ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Thai Union Frozen cuts supplier after fishing slavery report

Thailand's biggest seafood company said it has cut ties with a supplier named in an Associated Press report after determining it might be involved with forced labour and other abuses. The statement by Thai Union Frozen Products follows a year-long investigation that linked severe abuses on Southeast Asian fishing trawlers to dinner tables in the US and around the world.

[Full Report](#)



CHINA | 26 MARCH | REUTERS

Beijing aid keeps China shipping lines in profit despite waterlogged market

As China's economic slowdown squeezes the global shipping industry, three of the country's biggest domestic cargo freighters likely skirted the losses that plagued international peers last year thanks to a five-fold jump in state subsidies.

[Full Report](#)

EAST AFRICA | 26 MARCH | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

East Africa looking for port developers

The leaders of five East African countries went on a charm offensive on Thursday to lure investors for a massive plan to upgrade infrastructure in the region that has made big hydrocarbon discoveries.

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA | 27 MARCH | THE JAKARTA POST

Jokowi's maritime highway vision takes shape

President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's vision to develop a modern maritime transport system, known as "maritime highways", is beginning to materialize with the daily operation of freighters connecting Sorong and Waisai in Papua.

[Full Report](#)

GLOBAL | 28 MARCH | REUTERS

More countries say to join China-backed AIIB investment bank

Russia, Australia and the Netherlands on Saturday became the latest three countries to say they plan to join the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), adding clout to an institution seen as enhancing China's regional and global influence.

[Full Report](#)

SOUTH ASIA | 30 MARCH | BANGKOK POST

Delhi's 'Act East' drive hits speed bumps

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office last year, one of his aims was to translate his predecessor's "Look East" policy into concrete "Act East" achievements. But two showpiece projects to link India with Asean are now stalled.

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