

## Featured *MSP Perspective*:



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The visit by Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the ruling Communist Party of Vietnam, to Japan in September produced a Joint Vision Statement on Japan-Vietnam Relations as well as the Memorandum on Cooperation between Coast Guard Agencies. Notably, Tokyo also promised more used patrol vessels to enhance Vietnam's civilian maritime law enforcement (CMLE) capacity. In view of the simmering South China Sea tensions, obtaining timely Japanese assistance has acquired a new sense of urgency for Vietnam. One recalls the Sino-Vietnamese standoff over the Chinese oil rig HYSY981 in waters off the disputed Paracel Islands back in May 2014, which lasted more than two months. It showed that both countries' CMLE agencies can be severely over-stretched. Future Sino-Vietnamese standoffs may still see CMLE agencies on the frontline. However, Vietnam finds itself unable to match the China Coast Guard (CCG) buildup. The material and manpower preponderance clearly lies on the Chinese side, given its vast size and resources.

For one thing, China has a colossal and way more developed shipbuilding industry that already produces a diverse range of military and CMLE vessels for domestic use. By contrast, the Vietnamese have been relying largely on foreign sources for its CMLE agencies while attempting to build up its domestic shipbuilding capacity at the same time. Cost is also an issue for the Vietnam. The Chinese can tap on cheaper domestic sources of labor and raw materials. Yet Hanoi has to rely more on foreign components. Diversifying sources would be the way to go if the long-term plan is for Vietnam to attain self-sufficiency in building its CMLE capabilities. In this regard, Japan is a promising candidate. Vietnam has been tapping on this avenue since July 2012, when Tokyo responded positively to Hanoi's re-quest for assistance to build CMLE capacity. This relationship burgeoned a year later when Tokyo reiterated

its commitment towards this cause, most significant of all being Abe's professed interest to consider supplying patrol vessels to Vietnam.

However, in late May 2014, Abe admitted at a National Diet session that Tokyo was unable to immediately supply used patrol vessels to Vietnam, because surveillance burden was increasing for the Japan Coast Guard (JCG). When Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida visited Vietnam in 30 July – 2 August 2014, he agreed to provide Vietnam with six second-hand vessels (all displacing 600-800 tons; two from the Fisheries Agency and four commercial fishing vessels) modified for patrol tasks. The ships were slated for delivery by end of 2014. But the first vessel was not delivered until early August 2015. This aid can be seen as a stop-gap measure, but one that showed how stretched the Japanese are in providing assets to foreign countries when they themselves are in need of capacity to deal with the East China Sea problems – not just the regular CCG forays into territorial waters surrounding the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, but also scores of intruding Chinese fishing vessels.

Naturally, the JCG's capacity requirements will have to take precedence. A consequence is that assistance to Vietnam's maritime security capacity-building will take time to reach its fullest potential, at least not until Tokyo satisfies its own needs in the face of rapidly-expanding CCG capacity. As such, while maritime security partnership with Japan is certainly important enough to cultivate, it is still prudent for Hanoi to not just further diversify its foreign maritime security partnerships in order to open more avenues for its CMLE capacity-building needs, but also devote concerted and sustained efforts into boosting its shipbuilding capacity.



Wikimedia Commons [link](#)

JAPAN | 18 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

## Japan enacts bills easing pacifist constitution's limits on military

Japan's parliament voted into law on Saturday a defense policy shift that could let troops fight overseas for the first time since 1945, a milestone in Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's push to loosen the limits of the pacifist constitution on the military.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 2 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

## Five Chinese ships in Bering Sea as Obama visits Alaska

Five Chinese Navy ships are sailing in international waters in the Bering Sea off Alaska, the Pentagon said on Wednesday, in an apparent first for China's military that came as U.S. President Barack Obama toured the U.S. state.

[Full Report](#)

AUSTRALIA | 3 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

## Australia keen to join India, U.S. naval drills

Australia wants to join India, the United States and Japan in joint naval exercises in the Indian Ocean, widening participation in multilateral drills as China's influence in the region grows.

[Full Report](#)

JAPAN-UNITED STATES | 3 SEPTEMBER | THE ASAHI SHIMBUN

## Japanese troops attack California island in training exercise with U.S. forces

In joint military exercises off southern California,

Japanese and U.S. troops are simulating the defense and reclaiming of remote islands.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 3 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

## China building two aircraft carriers: Taiwan defense ministry report

China is building two aircraft carriers that will be the same size as its sole carrier, a 60,000-tonne refurbished Soviet-era ship, according to a new Taiwanese Defence Ministry report on the capabilities of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

[Full Report](#)

TAIWAN | 3 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

## Taiwan to launch homegrown submarine plan with initial T\$3 billion budget

Taiwan has allocated T\$3 billion (\$92.55 million) over four years, beginning next year, to launch a long-awaited program for the island to build its own diesel-electric submarines.

[Full Report](#)

JAPAN | 4 SEPTEMBER | NIKKEI ASIAN REVIEW

### Japan plans tech-heavy maritime surveillance amid China fears

Looking to counter China's aggressive posturing in the East and South China seas, the Japanese government will draw up a basic plan for high-tech maritime surveillance by the end of this month, sources have said.

[Full Report](#)

BANGLADESH | 6 SEPTEMBER | THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS (BANGLADESH)

### 2 subs to join Navy fleet in mid-2016: PM

Vowing to build Bangladesh Navy as a most modern and strong force to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday said two submarines would join the Navy fleet in the middle of 2016.

[Full Report](#)

AUSTRALIA-INDIA | 14 SEPTEMBER | THE TIMES OF INDIA

### First bilateral maritime exercise between Australia and India commences

The first ever bilateral maritime exercise between Australia and India — AUSINDEX-15 — commenced in Vizag on Saturday.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 16 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

### China continued South China Sea reclamation despite halt claim: expert

China was carrying out land reclamation in contested waters of the South China Sea this month, more than four weeks after saying it had stopped such activity, a U.S. expert said on Tuesday, citing recent satellite images.

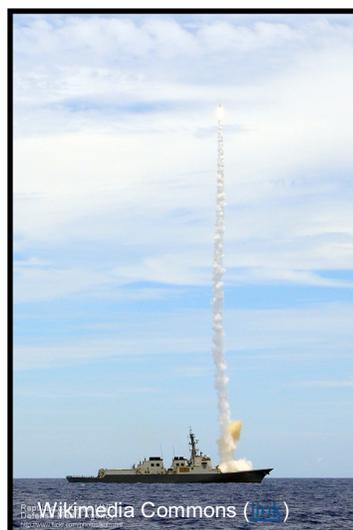
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SOUTH KOREA | 16 SEPTEMBER | YONHAP ENGLISH NEWS

### Aegis destroyer tasked with detecting N. Korea's possible rocket launch

A South Korean Aegis combat system-equipped destroyer, patrolling in the East Sea, has assumed the key mission of detecting North Korea's launch of a long-range rocket, government sources said.

[Full Report](#)



INDONESIA | 16 SEPTEMBER | ANTARA NEWS

### Indonesian military adds two thousand personnel to guard Natuna waters

The Indonesian military will deploy two thousand personnel to guard the waters of Natuna, Riau Islands, according to Defense Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA-MALAYSIA | 17 SEPTEMBER | PEOPLE'S DAILY ONLINE

### China, Malaysia hold first ever joint live-troop drill to boost defense ties

China and Malaysia will hold a joint military exercise from Sept. 17 to Sept. 22 in the Malacca Strait and its surrounding area.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA-UNITED STATES | 23 SEPTEMBER | INDIAN EXPRESS

### War Games In The Bay Of Bengal: India, US to step up Exercise Malabar

IN KEEPING with the India-US joint statement issued during US President Barack Obama's January visit, the two countries have finalised plans to increase their participation in maritime Exercise Malabar, to be held in the Bay of Bengal next month.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA-UNITED STATES | 25 SEPTEMBER | CHINA DAILY

### China, US seal defense agreements

China and the United States have signed annexes to two agreements regarding major military operations and naval and air force encounters.

[Full Report](#)



CHINA-UNITED STATES | 22 SEPTEMBER | THE WASHINGTON FREE BEACON

## Chinese jet in second near-collision with U.S. spy plane

A Chinese interceptor jet conducted a second dangerous pass near a U.S. surveillance aircraft over Asian waters—a week before a state visit to the United States by Chinese leader Xi Jinping that begins Tuesday.

[Full Report](#)

SINGAPORE | 1 SEPTEMBER | CHANNEL NEWSASIA

## Singapore Navy disrupts sea robbery, 3 arrested

The Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) disrupted a sea robbery on a Malaysian-flagged tugboat in the Singapore Strait on Tuesday (Sep 1).

[Full Report](#)

INDONESIA | 2 SEPTEMBER | THE JAKARTA POST

## Island in focus: Navy reveals mastermind of tanker hijacking

The Indonesian Navy's Western Fleet (Armabar) commander Rear Admiral Taufiqurrahman announced on Tuesday that the Navy had managed to identify the mastermind behind the recent hijacking of Malaysian-flagged oil vessel MT Orkim Harmony.

[Full Report](#)

MALAYSIA | 7 SEPTEMBER | BERNAMA

## MMEA poised to become top maritime agency by 2040

The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) is on course to become one of the world's best maritime agencies based on a long-term strategic plan drawn up until 2040, its director-general, Maritime Admiral Datuk Mohd Amdan Kurish said today.

[Full Report](#)

BRUNEI | 11 SEPTEMBER | BORNEO BULLETIN

## BSP conducts joint port security exercise with govt agencies

BRUNEI Shell Petroleum Company Sdn Bhd (BSP) conducted a joint exercise, prefixed "Exercise Belangkas 2015" with Government agencies on September 9 at the BSP Supply, Transport and Logistics (STL) Base in Muara.

[Full Report](#)

TAIWAN | 11 SEPTEMBER | FOCUS TAIWAN

## Taiwan contributes to maritime security effort in Somalia

Taiwan on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding with Oceans Beyond Piracy (OBP) that will allow for the establishment of a Maritime Communications Initiative, a new communications network to increase maritime safety along the Somali coast.

[Full Report](#)

MALAYSIA | 14 SEPTEMBER | THE BORNEO POST

## Increased surveillance around country's waters due to haze

The Marine Department of Malaysia has increased surveillance around the waters of the country to avoid any

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accidents involving commercial vessels due to the haze.

[Full Report](#)

JAPAN-VIETNAM | 15 SEPTEMBER | AL JAZEERA

### Japan pledges maritime security aid to Vietnam

Japan has promised Vietnam ships to strengthen its forces in the South China Sea, with the two nations describing large-scale land reclamation there as a threat to peace – a veiled reference to China.

[Full Report](#)

MALAYSIA | 16 SEPTEMBER | NEW STRAITS TIMES

### DILEMMA: Haze prevents fishermen from going out to sea

Scores of fishermen at Balok here, who could not go to sea because of the worsening haze, have been suffering a drop in income with some looking for odd-jobs to put food on the table.

[Full Report](#)

THAILAND-VIETNAM | 16 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

### Thai sea police claim 'self defence' after deadly Vietnam fishermen clash

Thai marine police said they opened fire on a Vietnamese fishing boat while trying to intercept another vessel in waters near Malaysia last week, a clash Vietnamese state media said killed a fisherman and wounded two others.

[Full Report](#)



INDONESIA | 17 SEPTEMBER | THE JAKARTA POST

### Minister urges using a range of laws to deal with illegal fishing

Indonesia's Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources Susi Pudjiastuti has urged law enforcers to implement all relevant laws to end the practice of illegal fishing in the country.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA-PAKISTAN | 19 SEPTEMBER | THE INDIAN EXPRESS

### India fisherman allegedly killed in Pakistan firing off Gujarat coast

An Indian fisherman was killed on Friday morning when his fishing trawler came under firing while operating near the notional International Maritime Boundary Line between India and Pakistan in the Arabian Sea.

[Full Report](#)

THAILAND | 24 SEPTEMBER | BANGKOK POST

### Put ex-sailors on fishing boats, IUU task force suggests

The Command Centre for Combating Illegal Fishing on Thursday proposed offering jobs on trawlers to recently discharged sailors as a way to prevent Thailand's seafood exports from being banned in the European Union.

[Full Report](#)

THE PHILIPPINES | 27 SEPTEMBER | THE PHILIPPINE STAR

### Philippines maritime law enforcement best in region – United States envoy

The Philippines' maritime police is better than any other maritime institution in the region, although the country has greater challenges since it is an archipelago, a top US official said.

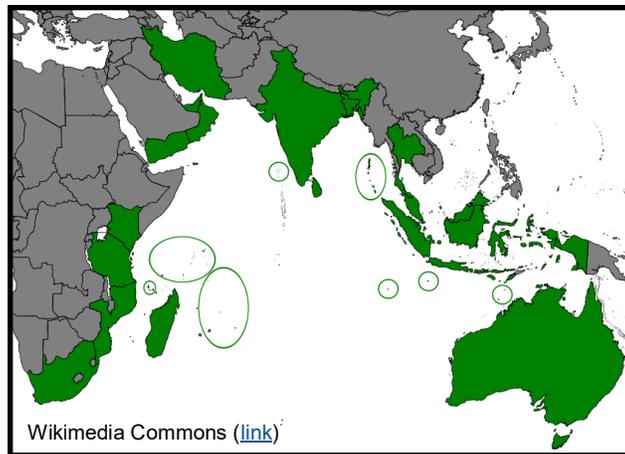
[Full Report](#)

AUSTRALIA-TIMOR LESTE | 28 SEPTEMBER | PLATTS

### Australia to 'vigorously defend' Timor-Leste pipeline claims

The Australian government will "vigorously defend" arbitration proceedings initiated by Timor-Leste in relation to their treaty, which determines jurisdiction over oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea.

[Full Report](#)



INDIAN OCEAN RIM | 4 SEPTEMBER | ALL AFRICA

## Mauritius: Blue Economy Conference Calls for Harnessing of Maritime Resources to Drive Economic Growth and Job Creation

The first Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Blue Economy Conference, which was on at Le Meridien Hotel in Pointe aux Piments on 2 and 3 September, concluded with the Mauritius Declaration on Blue Economy.

[Full Report](#)

SINGAPORE-UNITED KINGDOM | 1 SEPTEMBER | IHS MARITIME 360

## Sembcorp Marine wins \$1Bn North Sea job

Sembcorp Marine, the Singapore-listed offshore services provider, has won an over USD 1 billion engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract for the Culzean field development project in the North Sea.

[Full Report](#)

CAMEROON-CHINA-FRANCE | 2 SEPTEMBER | CHINA.ORG.CN

## Chinese-French consortium to run biggest deepwater port in Cameroon

A consortium made up two French companies, CMA CGM and Bollore Africa Logistics, and China Harbour, has won the concession to operate the 1.4 million teu Kribi container terminal in Cameroon.

[Full Report](#)

KOREA | 4 SEPTEMBER | YONHAP NEWS AGENCY

## S. Korea outpaced by China, Japan in Aug. shipbuilding orders

South Korean shipbuilders were outpaced by Chinese and Japanese rivals in terms of new orders in August, according to data compiled by global researcher Clarkson Research Services, amid deepening woes over their widening losses, stemming from the delivery of low-priced

ships and a delay in the construction of offshore facilities such as drill ships.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA-AFRICA | 7 SEPTEMBER | DAILY MIRROR

## Maersek Line expands India-Africa service

Maersk Line is upgrading its Middle East-South Africa-West Africa or Mesawa service by adding a direct call at Colombo.

[Full Report](#)

BANGLADESH-JAPAN | 11 SEPTEMBER | REUTERS

## Bangladesh favours Japan for port and power plant, in blow to China

Bangladesh may shelve an \$8 billion deepwater port project it has been negotiating with China, a government minister said on Thursday, as it looks to pursue a nearby facility financed by the Japanese instead.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA | 14 SEPTEMBER | SPLASH 24/7

## Guangzhou Port outlines massive expansion plans

Guangzhou government has released a new international shipping center development plan for 2015-2017.

[Full Report](#)

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CHINA | 18 SEPTEMBER | VIET NAM NEWS

### China eyes Maritime Silk Rd

Experts express that it would take China some time to work out the feasibility of the Maritime Silk Road, during the media forum held as part of the 12th China-ASEAN Expo, which opens today in Nanning.

[Full Report](#)

INDIA | 24 SEPTEMBER | IHS MARITIME 360

### India dumps 'archaic' shipping rules

India has begun to phase out archaic shipping rules and procedures in earnest, said Director-General of Shipping, Deepak Shetty during the INMEX SMM India 2015 Conference in Mumbai on 23 September.

[Full Report](#)

SINGAPORE | 25 SEPTEMBER CHANNEL NEWS ASIA

### MPA announces initiatives to promote maritime careers

The maritime sector will introduce fresh measures to attract Singaporeans to advance their careers and boost their skills in seafaring and shore-based areas, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) announced on Friday.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA-MALAYSIA | 26 SEPTEMBER | THE SUN DAILY

### Malaysia ready for port alliance with China: Liow

Ports in Malaysia are ready to form an alliance with ports in China as part of efforts to enhance trade between the two countries, said Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

[Full Report](#)

CHINA-NORTH KOREA | 26 SEPTEMBER | HELLENIC SHIPPING NEWS

### Bulk cargo and container shipping route links China, DPRK

A bulk cargo and container shipping route between Longkou port in Shandong in Eastern China and Nampo port in western DPRK, has been put into operation, focusing on caol import from DPRK and grocery export from China, authorities said on Friday.

[Full Report](#)

THE PHILIPPINES | 29 SEPTEMBER | THE MANILA TIMES

### 36 shipping lines scrap port congestion charges

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said on Tuesday that the majority of shipping lines have cancelled

the surcharges imposed during port congestion and there are only 11 shipping lines that are still imposing surcharges.

[Full Report](#)



INDONESIA | 29 SEPTEMBER | MARINELINK.COM

### Indonesia Expects \$34mIn in Shipbuilding Investments

Indonesia's Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM) head Franky Sibarani said that his office eyed Rp 500 billion (US\$34.03 million) of investment in the industry by year-end, after securing commitments from several ministries, institutions, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and private companies to absorb locally produced ships.

[Full Report](#)

RUSSIA | 30 SEPTEMBER | MARITIME EXECUTIVE

### Russia launches port deepening project

Russia is investing more than \$400 million in a Novorossiysk Seaport expansion and deepening project.

[Full Report](#)