

# **MONTHLY MARITIME SECURITY UPDATE**

**Feb 2024**



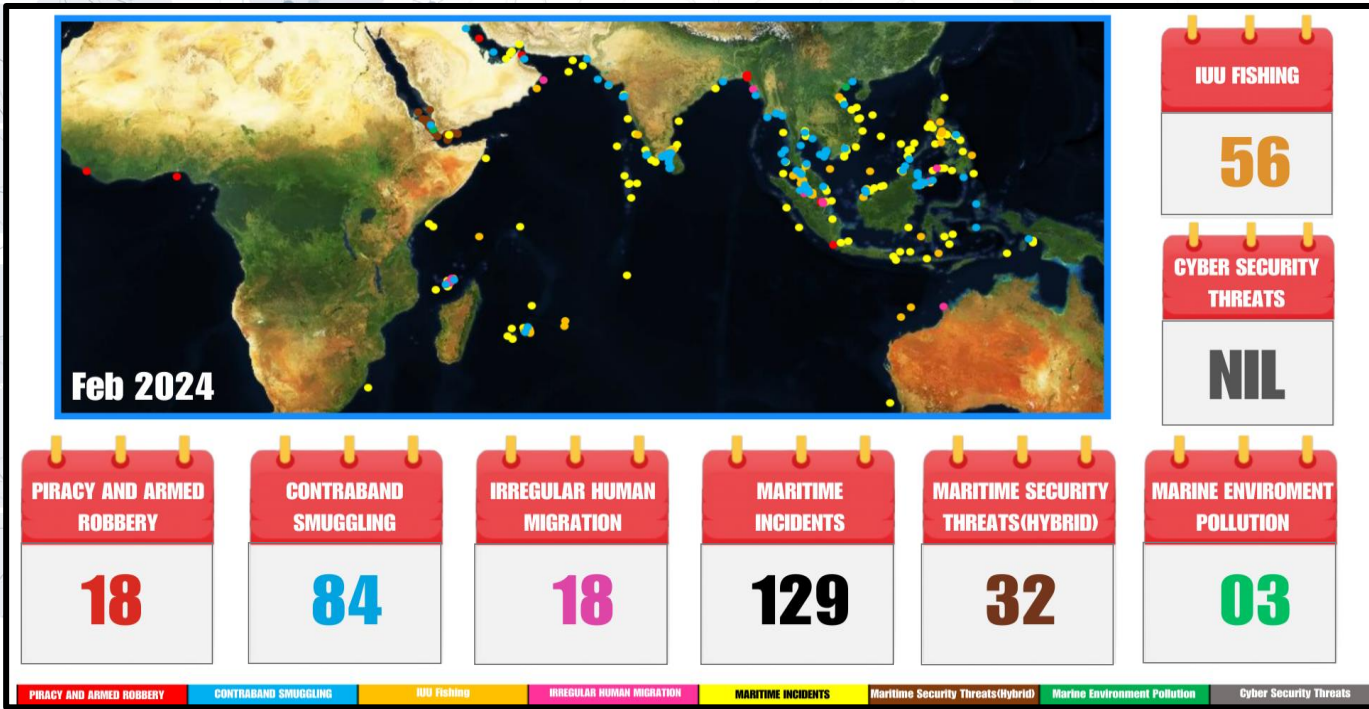
**INFORMATION FUSION CENTRE  
INDIAN OCEAN REGION**

## Disclaimer

Information collated in the IFC-IOR's reports have been derived from various internal and external linkages such as partner nations, other maritime stakeholders, agencies and open sources. The report aims to undertake analysis of incidents by establishing trends and anomalies to ensure safety and security of mariners and seafarers. While due care and effort has been taken to ensure veracity of data, due diligence may be exercised for subsequent usage of information contained therein. The positions of incidents depicted in some cases may be approximate or indicative. IFC-IOR requests and seeks assistance of all stakeholders to report incidents in the region to undertake accurate predictive and prescriptive analysis so as to build a comprehensive picture of existing threats in the maritime domain. The information contained in the report and the analysis thereon, is not reflective of the views of the Government of India or Indian Navy in any manner.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## Overview

The Centre monitors, records and analyses maritime security incidents in nine categories: piracy and armed robbery, contraband smuggling, Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing, Irregular Human Migration (IHM), maritime incidents (MI), maritime security threats (hybrid), cyber security, marine environmental pollution and climate change and security. **A total of 340 maritime safety and security incidents were recorded in Feb 24 in the IOR.**

### Piracy and Armed Robbery

18 incidents of piracy and armed robbery (actual and attempted) were monitored in Feb 24, compared to 36 incidents last month. Sea thefts/ robberies continue to be the most frequently reported incidents. No hijacking of dhows/ fishing vessels was monitored in Feb 24.

### Contraband Smuggling

84 contraband smuggling incidents were monitored in Feb 24, a similar trend to that in Jan 24 (80). Seizures of small boats carrying drugs off the Indian Coast and weapons seizure off Thailand were the significant events in Feb 24.

### IUU Fishing

56 IUU fishing incidents were recorded in Feb 24, compared to 60 in Jan 24. Coordinated illegal fishing activities of local and foreign fishermen in South East Asia were the notable events in Feb 24.

### IHM

18 incidents were recorded in Feb 24, compared to 12 in Jan 24. These involved 732 migrants and 38 smugglers/ traffickers. No migrant fatalities or missing individuals were reported in this month.

### Maritime Incidents

129 maritime incidents were recorded by the Centre for Feb 24, compared to 151 incidents in Jan 24. Mechanical failures and MEDEVAC were the most frequently reported incidents.

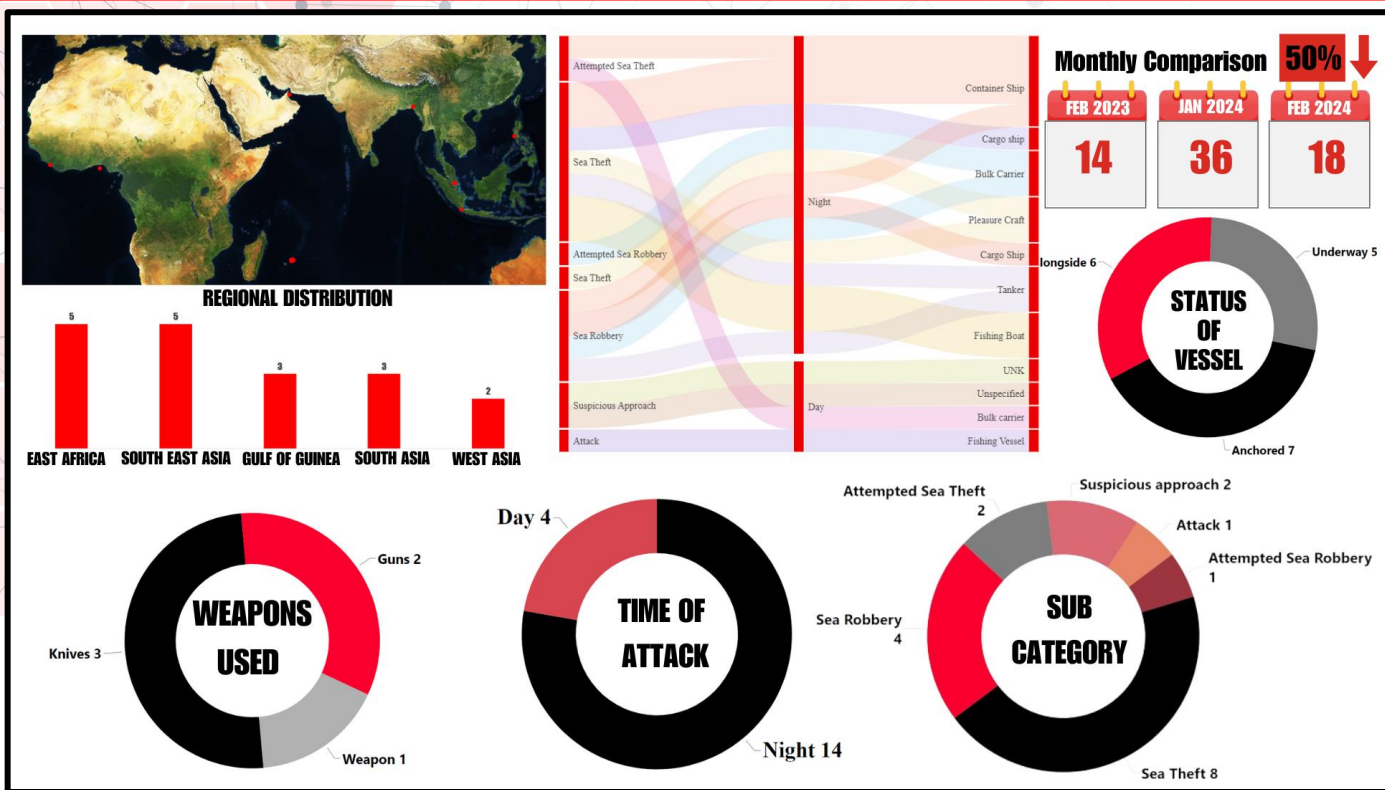
### Maritime Security Threats (Hybrid)

32 maritime security threats (hybrid) incidents were recorded by the Centre during the month, almost similar to Jan 24 (34). Southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden continue to witness missile and drone attacks. **RUBYMAR is the first vessel to have been lost in the recent wave of attacks.**

### Marine Environment Pollution

Three separate incidents of marine environmental pollution were monitored in South East Asia, South Asia and West Asia in Feb 24.

# PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY



## Overview

18 incidents of piracy and armed robbery (actual and attempted) were monitored in Feb 24, a significant decrease compared to 36 incidents last month. Sea thefts (08), followed by sea robbery (04), suspicious approach (02), attempted sea theft (02), attempted sea robbery (01) and attack (01) were the reported incidents under this category. The detailed analysis of the subcategories and regional analysis is elucidated in the succeeding paragraphs.

### Sea Thefts/ Robberies

Sea thefts and robberies (15) (actual/ attempted) accounted for the majority of the overall piracy and armed robbery incidents in Feb 24. Most of the incidents were reported on anchored vessels (07) followed by vessels alongside (06) and underway (02). All incidents were reported during dark hours except for one incident, which was reported during daytime at Dumai anchorage, Indonesia. The number of perpetrators involved in these incidents varied from a minimum of two to a maximum of ten. Items such as spare parts, ropes, ship's items,

unmanned pleasure crafts, fishing boats, etc., were reportedly stolen in these incidents.

### Hijack and Kidnap

Nil incident of hijack and kidnap were monitored during Feb 24. The prevailing political, economic, and security situation in a few countries of East Africa has given rise to conducive circumstances for the resurgence of piracy. The analysis of incidents in the last three months indicates a possibility of at least three Pirate Actions Groups (PAGs) operating off the coast of Somalia. Vessels are advised to remain vigilant and follow the SOPs mentioned in the BMP 5 and BMP WA.

### Suspicious Approaches

Two suspicious approaches were reported in Feb 24 compared to five in Jan 24. Incidents were mainly reported on vessels underway and during dark hours in West Asia.

### Attack

One incident of attack was reported onboard a fishing vessel *AL AMIN*. A suspicious skiff with 07-08 perpetrators approached the fishing vessel and fired weapons. No damage to the vessel or injury to the crew was reported.



# PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY

## Regional Distribution

**South East Asia** accounted for five incidents, compared to eight in Jan 24. Six sea robberies/thefts, both actual and attempted were reported in this region. All incidents were reported during dark hours except one incident which was reported during day time. Knives and guns were the choice of weapons of the perpetrators. The perpetrators were monitored stealing the ship's item such as engine spares and crew's mobile phones. No injury to the crew members was reported in these incidents.

**South Asia** accounted for three incidents, sea robbery (02) and attempted sea theft (01). All incidents were reported on vessels at anchor. The perpetrators were monitored stealing the ship's items. In a one of the incidents, the perpetrators tied up a duty crew member and stole ship's items. No crew injury or vessel damage was reported in these incidents.

**East Africa** accounted for five sea theft incidents, a significant decrease compared to Jan 24 (17). Two incidents each were reported on pleasure crafts and fishing boats anchored off Mauritius. The perpetrators were monitored stealing unmanned pleasure crafts, unmanned fishing boats and the ship's items. No incident of hijacking of dhows/fishing vessel was reported in Feb 24. The analysis of past incidents indicates that the perpetrators have likely used the hijacked dhows as motherships in attacking/ hijacking other vessels. Vessels are advised to exercise extreme caution, remain vigilant and maintain strict anti-piracy watch and measures, especially whilst transiting off the Somalia coast.

**West Asia** accounted for two suspicious approach incidents compared to one incident in Jan 24. Piracy and armed robbery continues to remain low in West Asia. However, the maritime security threats (hybrid) incidents in this region continue to present a major threat in this region and are covered in the latter part of this report.

**Gulf of Guinea** accounted for three sea theft incidents, compared to six incidents in Jan 24. Container vessels (02) and tanker (01) were the targeted vessels. All incidents of sea theft were reported alongside except one incident reported at anchorage off Monrovia. The perpetrators were monitored stealing the ship's item such as paint boxes, ropes, etc.

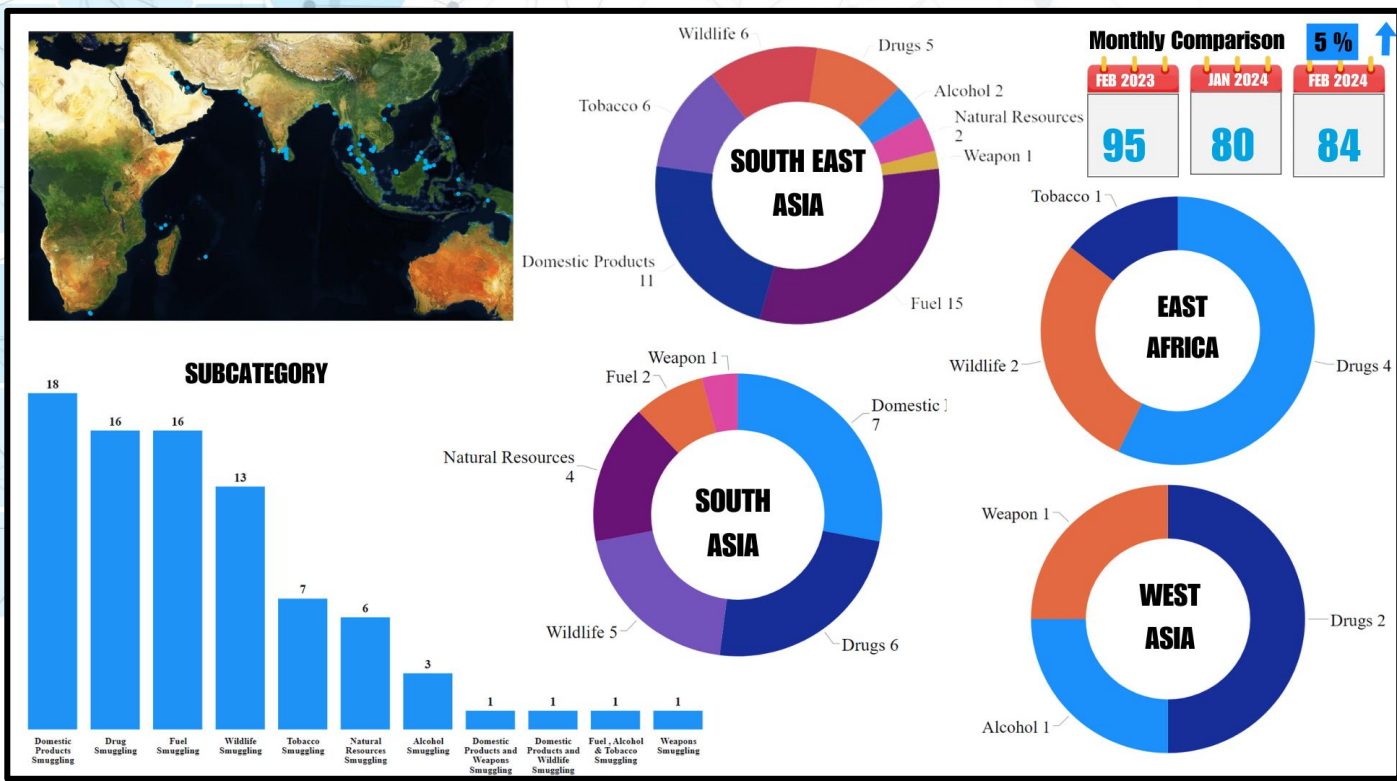
## Significant Incident

*On 16 Feb 24, an incident of sea robbery was reported onboard a Liberia flagged container ship at Chattogram anchorage, Bangladesh. Four perpetrators armed with knives and other weapons boarded the vessel while at anchor. The ship's crew raised an alarm resulting in perpetrators to escape. Ship's items were stolen from the aft stores. No injury to the crew or damage to the vessel was reported.*



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# CONTRABAND SMUGGLING



## Overview

84 incidents of contraband smuggling were monitored in Feb 24 compared to 80 incidents Jan 24. Domestic products (18), followed by fuel (17), Drugs (17), wildlife (13), tobacco (07), natural resources (06), alcohol (03) and weapons (03) smuggling were the most frequently reported incidents.

## Analysis of Incidents

### Drugs

17 drug seizures were recorded in Feb 24, a 35% decrease as compared to Jan 24 (26 incidents). 11 of these incidents were reported inside ports and harbours. The seizures in ports/ harbours included 158 kg of methamphetamine, 89 kg of cannabis, 50 kg of heroin, 01 kg of hashish, 1,243 ecstasy pills, 175 psychotropic pills, 2,12,000 narcotic pills, 6,79,000 sleeping pills, 11,012 synthetic pills and 53,000 capsules of pregabalin. The remaining six incidents were reported at sea, involving the seizure of 3089 kg of cannabis, 3084 kg of meth-

amphetamine and 25 kg of morphine.

### Domestic Products

18 incidents of domestic product smuggling were recorded this month, compared to ten incidents in Jan 24. The products seized in these incidents involved a shipment of firecrackers, cooking oil, cosmetics, food products, clothes, general goods, sleeping pills, diving cylinders, rice, detergent, frozen meat, mobile phones, wheat seed, PVC powder, rubber sheets and tapioca starch.

### Wildlife

13 incidents of wildlife smuggling were recorded in Feb 24 compared to ten incidents in Jan 24. The species seized were abalones, birds, sea cucumbers, clam seeds, sea horses, conch shells, shrimp seeds, peacock tails and shellfish.

### Tobacco

07 incidents of tobacco smuggling were recorded in Feb 24 compared to nine incidents in Jan 24. A total of 13,544 kgs of cigarettes were seized in these incidents.



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# CONTRABAND SMUGGLING

## Fuel

17 incidents of fuel smuggling were recorded compared to ten incidents in the last month. These incidents involved the seizure of approximately 744 kl of diesel and 12 kl of petrol.

## Natural Resources

Six incidents of natural resources smuggling were recorded, a significant increase compared to Jan 24 (03). The seizures involved 5648 kg of kendu leaves, 4 kg of gold, 180 cubic meters of sand and 100 pieces of wood (protected mangrove trees).

## Alcohol

Three incidents of alcohol smuggling were recorded in Feb 24. A total of 9,824 litres of liquor were seized in these incidents.

## Weapons

Three incidents of weapon smuggling were recorded. Law enforcement agencies seized ammunition, magazines, explosives, guns, AK-47 rifles and missile components in these incidents.

## Regional Distribution

**East Africa** accounted for seven incidents of contraband smuggling. Four incidents of drugs, two incidents of wildlife and one incident of tobacco smuggling were monitored in this region.

**West Asia** accounted for four incidents of contraband smuggling. Drugs (02) and one incident each of alcohol and weapon smuggling incidents were monitored in this region.

**South Asia** accounted for 25 incidents of contraband smuggling. Domestic products (07), drugs (06), wildlife (05), natural resources (04), fuel (02) and weapon (01) smuggling incidents were monitored in this region.

**South East Asia** accounted for 48 incidents of contraband smuggling. Fuel (15), domestic products (11), drugs (05), wildlife and tobacco (06 each), alcohol and natural resources (02 each) and weapon (01) smuggling incidents were monitored in this region.

## Significant Incidents

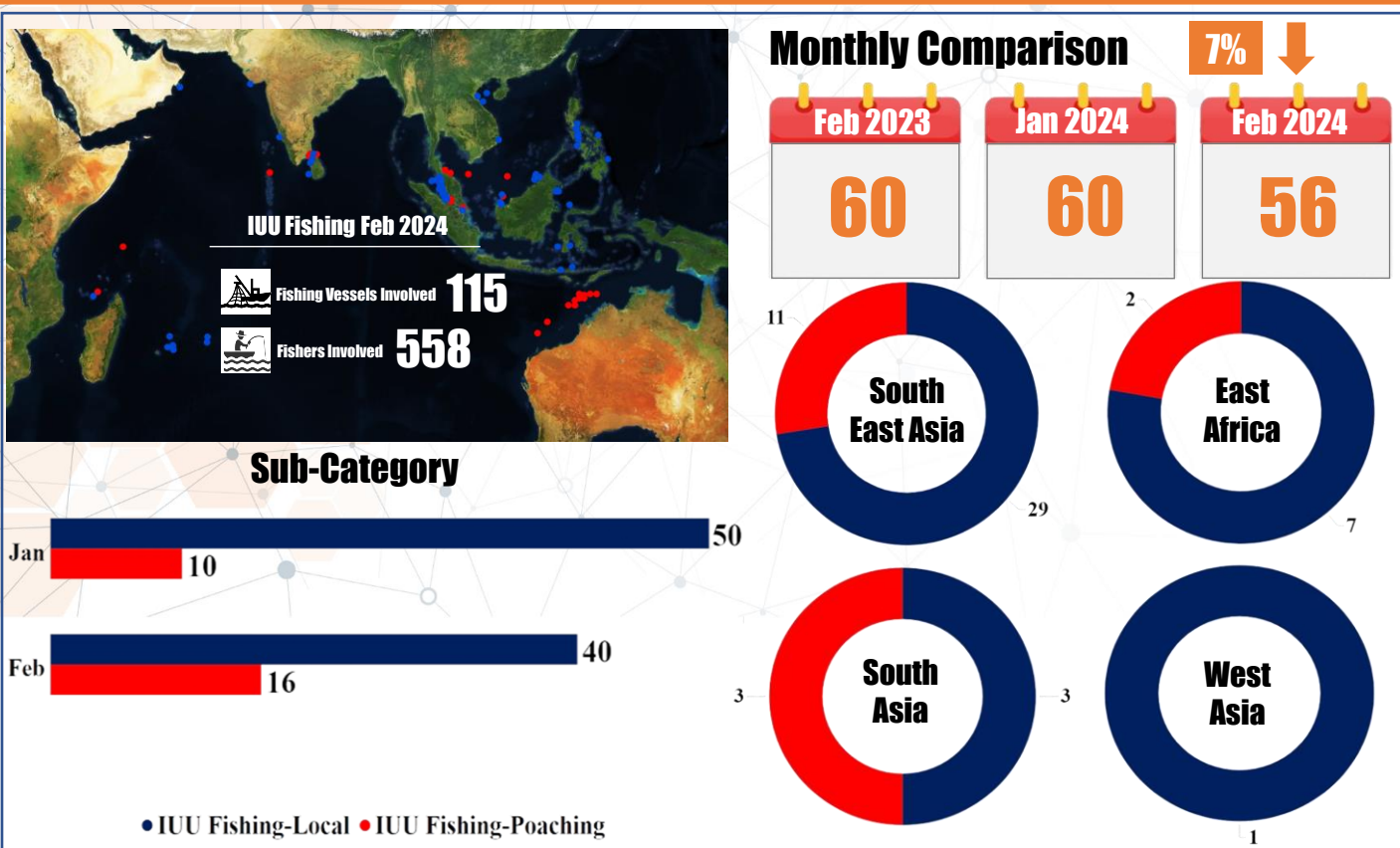
✓ On 09 Feb 24, Thailand authorities apprehended one suspect and seized a fibre boat with 2 M16 rifles, 8 AK47 rifles, two 30-round M16 magazines, 45 AK47 magazines, 1,440 rounds of AK47 ammunition, local currency and one mobile phone at Bo. Lek beach, Thailand.

✓ On 27 Feb 24, in a coordinated operation at sea, the Indian Navy and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) apprehended a suspicious vessel carrying almost 3,300 kgs contraband (3089 kgs charas, 158 kgs methamphetamine and 25 kgs morphine). Based on intelligence inputs received from the Indian Navy's maritime surveillance aircraft which were corroborated with inputs from the NCB, a mission-deployed Indian Navy warship was pressed into action to intercept a suspicious dhow enroute to the Indian waters with sizeable contraband. Indian Navy units successfully located, tracked and intercepted the suspicious boat at sea. The boarding operations on the dhow resulted in the largest seizure of narcotics, in quantity, in recent times. Subsequently, the boat was towed by the warship to a nearest Indian port, suspects were apprehended and the contraband was seized by the law enforcement agencies.



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# ILLEGAL UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING



## Overview

56 IUU fishing incidents were recorded in Feb 24 compared to 60 incidents in Jan 24. Among these, 40 incidents were local and 16 incidents were of poaching. The total illegal fish catch recorded was 1,286 kgs with Malaysian authorities seizing 1,000 kg. A seizure of approximately 274 m of banned nets was also reported off Mauritius.

**Poaching.** 16 incidents of poaching involving foreign fishing vessels were recorded compared to 10 incidents in Jan 24. The foreign fishing vessels were involved in illegal fishing in the country's waters. A few instances of foreign fishing vessels and fishermen being assisted by the local fishermen/ fishing vessels were also monitored during Feb 24. 302 fishermen were apprehended and 43 boats were seized by the authorities.

## Analysis of Incidents

**Local IUU Fishing.** 40 incidents of local IUU fishing were recorded in Feb 24 compared to 50 incidents in Jan 24. These incidents involved violations of fishing licenses by local fishermen, illegal fishing techniques, banned fishing methods, use of blast fishing, etc. 256 fishermen were apprehended and 72 boats were seized by the authorities.

## Regional Distribution

**South East Asia.** 40 incidents of IUU fishing were reported in this region during Feb 24 compared to 50 incidents in Jan 24. 29 incidents were of local IUU fishing and 11 of poaching. These incidents were recorded in the waters of Malaysia (24), Philippines (07), Australia (04), Indonesia (03), Vietnam and Thailand (01 each). A total of 77 boats were seized and 321 fishermen were apprehended.



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# ILLEGAL UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING

**South Asia.** Six incidents of IUU fishing were reported in this region during Feb 24 compared to eight incidents in Jan 24. An equal number of local IUU fishing and poaching were monitored during this month. These incidents were recorded in the waters of Sri Lanka (04) and two incidents off India. A total of 16 boats were seized and 62 fishermen apprehended in this region.

**East Africa.** 09 incidents of IUU fishing were reported in this region during Feb 24 compared to three incidents in Jan 24. 07 incidents were of local IUU fishing and two of poaching. These incidents were reported in the waters of Mauritius (07) and (01) each Seychelles and Mayotte.

**West Asia.** One incident of local IUU fishing off Oman was monitored. A total of five illegal fishing nets with rings were seized by the law enforcement agencies.

## Significant Incident

*On 28 Feb 24, Indonesian authorities seized a foreign fishing boat and apprehended four fishermen involved in poaching off Indonesian waters. The investigation revealed that the fishing vessel was involved in illegal fishing. The vessel evaded detection by blending with local traffic and received assistance from local fishermen in monitoring patrol boat movements. Furthermore, the fishing vessel was also involved in transferring/selling the illegal fish catch to other fishing vessels and dealers at sea once the fish catch was full. The fishing vessel's illegal activities have incurred a total loss of USD 5,787.*



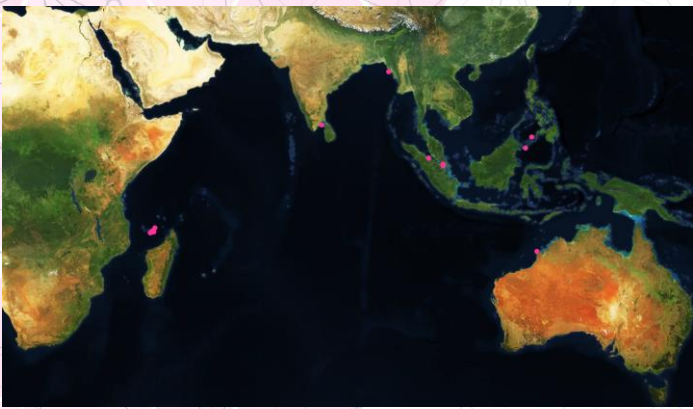
## Fishing Bans Monitored

Region	Duration	Remarks
Philippines	15 Nov 23 – 15 Feb 24	Sardine
Mauritius	01 Dec 23 – 31 Mar 24	Lobster
Oman	01 Dec 23 – 31 Aug 24	Shrimp

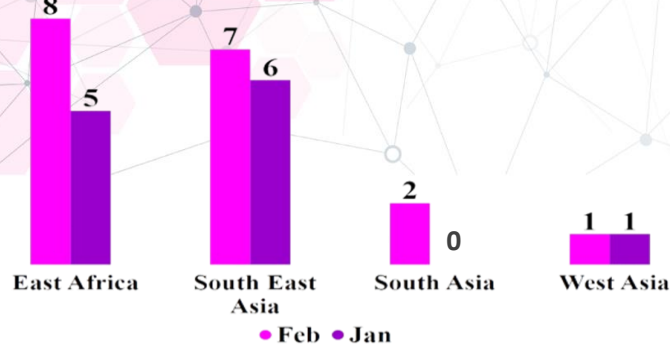


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# IRREGULAR HUMAN MIGRATION

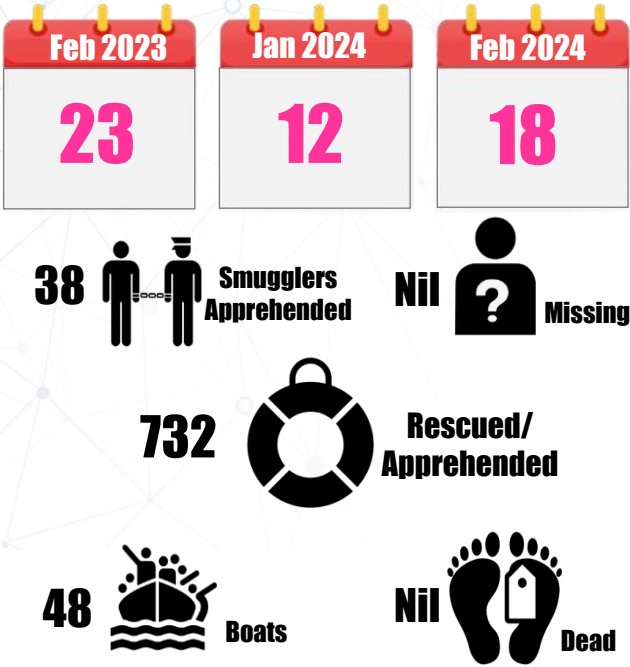


Regional Distribution



## Monthly Comparison

50% ↑



## Overview

18 incidents were recorded in Feb 24 compared to 12 incidents in Jan 24. These involved 732 migrants and 38 smugglers/ traffickers. No migrant fatalities and individuals were reported missing in this month.

## Regional Distribution

**East Africa.** The region witnessed eight incidents of irregular human migration compared to five in Jan 24. The kwassa-kwassa (small boat) remains the chosen mode of transport for migrants in this region. All the incidents involved migrants from Comoros attempting to enter Mayotte illegally, except for one incident, which involved a group of 40 migrants from Somalia onboard a dhow. This dhow was successfully intercepted by the French authorities in the territorial waters of Mayotte. Law enforcement agencies seized a total of 42 boats, apprehended 36 smugglers and rescued 595 migrants in Feb 24.

**West Asia.** One incident of irregular human migration was reported. On 26 Feb 24, Oman authorities seized a boat off South Sharqiyah, Oman and rescued three irregular migrants.

**South East Asia.** The region witnessed seven incidents of irregular human migration; a similar trend as compared to Jan 24 (06). Malaysia (03), Indonesia (02), Australia (01) and Philippines (01) were the destination countries for the migrants in this region. Law enforcement agencies seized a total of four boats, apprehended two smugglers and rescued 91 migrants in Feb 24.

**South Asia.** Two incidents of irregular human migration were reported in Feb 24 compared to no incidents in Jan 24. Myanmar and India were the destination countries for the migrants in this region. Law enforcement agencies seized one boat and rescued 43 migrants in Feb 24.



# IRREGULAR HUMAN MIGRATION

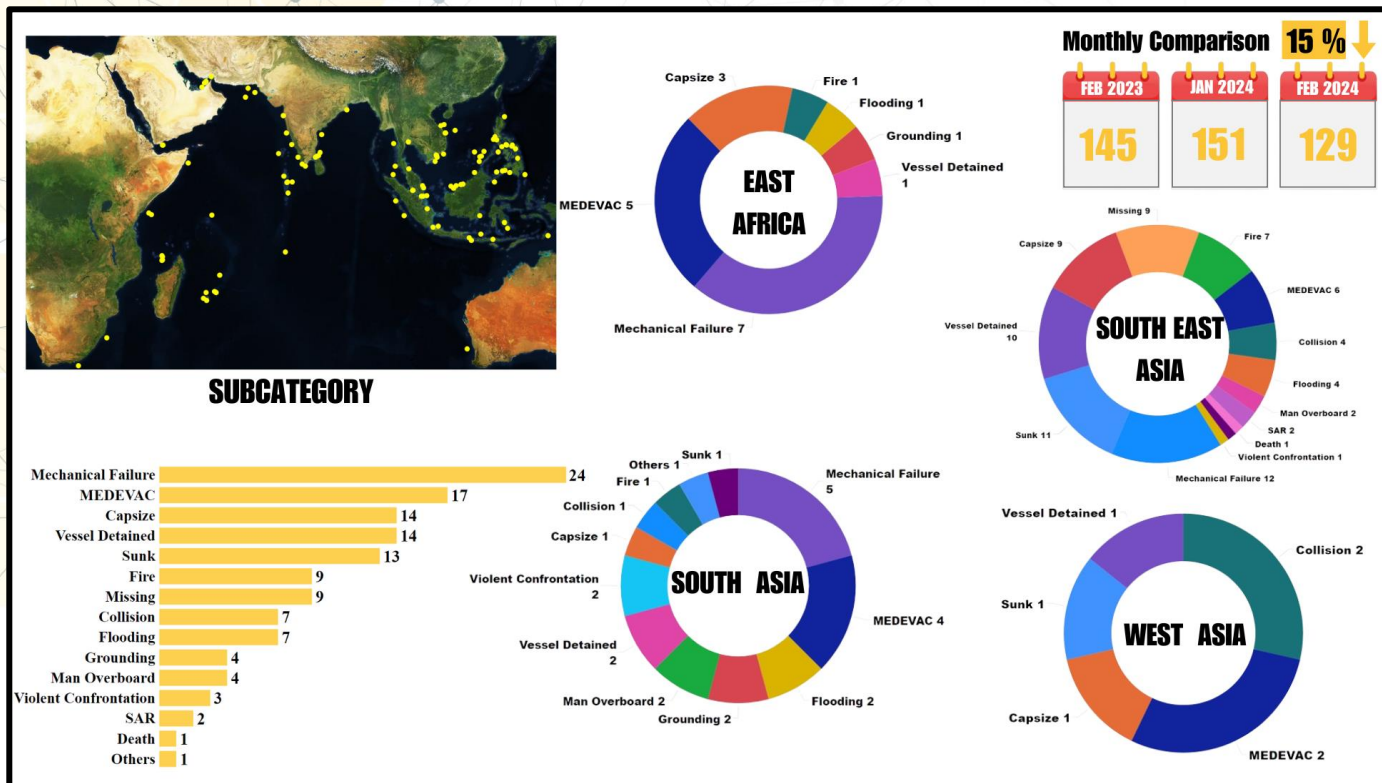
## Migration Trends



Region	No. Of Incidents	Rescued/ Apprehended	Smugglers Apprehended	Boats Involved
East Africa	08	595	36	42
West Asia	01	03	Nil	01
South East Asia	07	91	02	04
South Asia	02	43	Nil	01



# MARITIME INCIDENTS



## Overview

129 maritime incidents were recorded by the Centre in Feb 24. Mechanical failure (24) constituted the highest number of reported incidents, followed by, MEDEVAC (17), vessels detained (14), capsizing (14), sinking of vessels (13), fire (09) and missing (09).

## Analysis of Incidents

**Mechanical Failures.** 24 mechanical failure incidents were recorded on fishing vessels, passenger ships, pleasure crafts, sailing yachts, tugs and tankers. The majority of incidents during this month were reported due to engine failure. In most incidents, the ship's crew addressed the defects, but in a few cases, vessels sought assistance from local authorities. Regular inspections, timely repairs and following recommended operating procedures can significantly reduce the risk of mechanical issues.

**Vessel detained.** 14 incidents of vessels being detained were monitored in Feb 24, compared to 28 incidents in Jan 24. The majority of the vessels failed to comply with the requirements of international maritime conventions, such as the non-availability of SOLAS equipment, non-compliance with MARPOL regulations, not having relevant documentation etc.

**MEDEVAC and SAR.** 17 MEDEVAC and 02 SAR incidents were recorded in Feb 24. Most of the incidents of MEDEVAC involved crew members being evacuated from tankers, passenger vessels, container ships and cargo vessels. A few (08) incidents also involved crew members being evacuated from fishing vessels and small boats.

**Capsize and Sinking of Vessels.** 14 incidents of capsize and 13 incidents of sinking were recorded, a similar trend as compared to 28 incidents in Jan 24. Most of the incidents involved fishing vessels. One loss of life was monitored during Feb 24 in these incidents.



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# MARITIME INCIDENTS

**Fire and Flooding.** 16 incidents of fire and flooding were recorded in Feb 24. Cause of fire included explosions, fire in machinery/ engine room compartment, electrical fires caused by short circuits and non-compliance with standard operating procedures (SOPs) during fuel transfer.

**Man overboard, Death and Missing.** 14 incidents were recorded in Feb 24, in which a total of 06 lives were lost, 14 individuals went missing and 11 individuals were rescued.

**Violent Confrontation.** Three incidents of violent confrontation were reported in Feb 24. The analysis of these incidents highlights that these confrontations were predominantly between fishing groups and fishing vessels. No injuries to the fishermen were reported, however, one fishermen lost his life in one of the incidents.

**West Asia** accounted for 07 maritime incidents compared to 12 incidents in Jan 24. Two incidents each of collision and MEDEVAC, one incident each of vessels detained, capsized and sunk were the reported incidents in this region.

**South Asia** with 24 incidents witnessed a similar trend as compared to Jan 24 (22 incidents). Five incidents of mechanical failure, four incidents of MEDEVAC, two each of man overboard, vessel detained, flooding, violent confrontation and grounding, one each of capsized, fire, collision, sunk and others were the reported incidents in this region.

**South East Asia** accounted for 79 incidents compared to 96 incidents in Jan 24. These included mechanical failure (12), sunk (11), vessel detained (10), capsized (09), missing (09), fire (07), MEDEVAC (06), flooding (04), collision (04), man overboard (02) SAR (02), one incident each of violent confrontation, grounding, and death.

## Regional Distribution

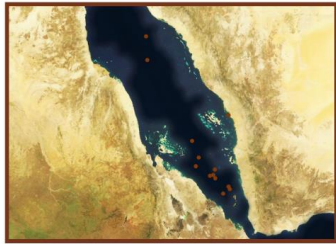
**East Africa** accounted for 19 incidents. Mechanical failure (07) followed by MEDEVAC (05), capsized (03) and one incident each of grounding, flooding, vessel detained and fire were the reported incidents in this region.



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# MARITIME SECURITY THREATS (HYBRID)

Off Hodehiah (14)



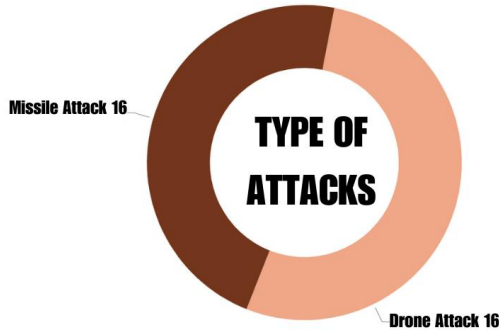
Off Mocha (07)



Gulf of Aden (11)



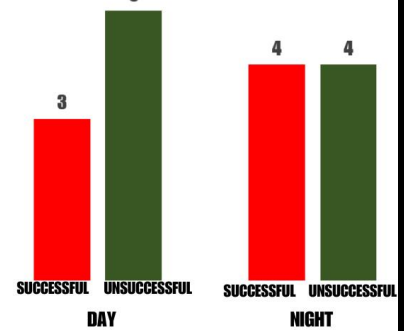
SUBCATEGORY



DRONE ATTACK



MISSILE ATTACK



## Overview

32 maritime security threats (hybrid) incidents were recorded by the Centre in Feb 24, a similar trend compared to Jan 24.

### Location of Incidents

The incidents related to drone and missile attacks by non-state actors were monitored mainly off Hodehiah, Mocha, Bab-el-Mandeb and the western parts of the Gulf of Aden. The positional analysis of the attacks indicates that the area between 12° N 047° E and 16° N 041° E witnessed drone and missile attacks in Feb 24. The non-state actors continue to target Israel-owned, operated and managed vessels. In addition, the non-state actors have also targeted vessels whose companies are engaged in Israeli trade or who have worked with Israel-affiliated companies. Also, a few incidents of drone/ missile attacks were monitored on US and UK-flagged vessels. In a few instances, vessels resorted to AIS messaging, indicating their non-affiliation with Israel.

### Drone Attacks

16 drone attacks were monitored in Feb 24, similar to Jan 24 (08). Ten of these were reported during dark hours. In the majority (08) of the incidents, international forces operating in the area were successful in shooting down the drones. Of these incidents, one drone attack on MV *Navis Fortuna* was successful causing damage to the vessel. No injury to the crew was, however, reported.

### Missile Attacks

16 missile attacks were monitored in Feb 24, compared to 12 attacks in Jan 24. Equal number of incidents (08) were monitored during the day and night time. 07 of the 16 incidents of missile attacks were successful inflicting damages to the targeted vessel. In 02 incidents, the missiles were reportedly engaged and brought down by international forces. In one of the attack, minor injury one to the crew member was reported during this month.



# MARITIME SECURITY THREATS (HYBRID)

## Significant Incident

On 18 Feb 24, two anti-ship ballistic missiles were fired towards the Belize flagged bulk carrier RUBYMAR (IMO: 9138898) about 35 nm S of Al Mukha, Yemen. The vessel was en-route to Bulgaria from Khorfakkan in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and carrying 41,000 tons of fertilizer. One of the missiles hit the vessel between engine room and hold 5, causing it to stop, and the second missile hit the stern of the vessel. After the attack, the crew dropped anchor and abandoned the ship;. Subsequently being rescued by a Singapore-flagged container ship, LOBIVIA and disembarked at the port of Djibouti. The vessel continued drifting northward until it sank on 02 Mar 24 causing a 29 km oil slick.

The sunken bulk carrier presents a subsurface impact risk to other ships transiting the busy shipping lanes of the waterway. However, team mandated by the United Nations highlighted the fact

that “At this stage, there is no immediate danger, the vessel is on the sea bed, the hull is in relatively good shape. The fertiliser is in its storage compartment and there is no trace at the moment of this product being released into the sea. Furthermore, if any of the fertiliser were to seep out, it would dump a huge amount of nitrate into the water, causing massive algae blooms which would choke marine life. However, water has probably filtered into the hull and the cargo. The fertiliser will be wet and so will dissolve very slowly in very low concentrations, with a restricted effect on the marine environment.”

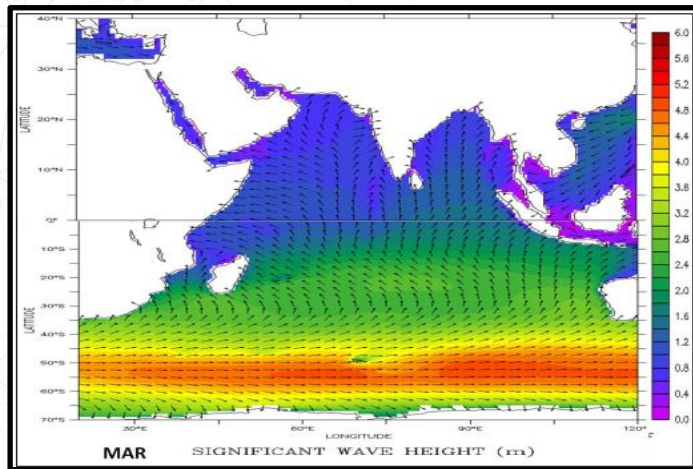
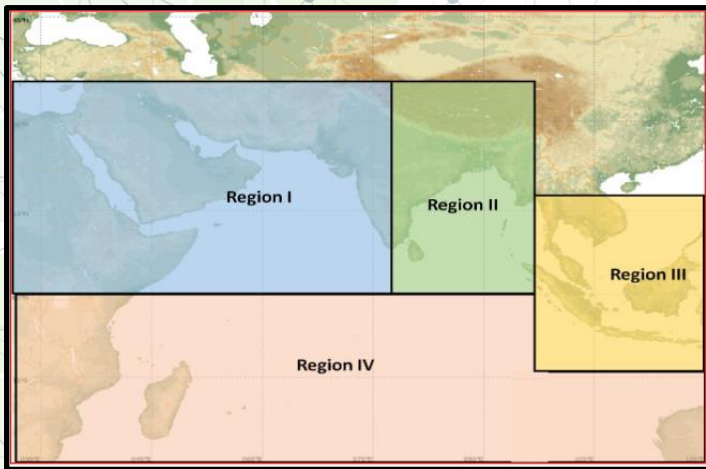
**RUBYMAR is the first vessel lost since the non-state actors began targeting commercial ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden commencing November last year.**



Image Source: REUTERS



# WEATHER FORECAST – MAR 24



**Region I: Arabian Sea (AS).** March is the first month of pre-monsoon season and fair weather prevails over most parts of the sea area. Semi-permanent high-pressure cells over the Arabian Sea are a characteristic feature of the month. Thunderstorm activity over sea area starts in the second half of the month and the occurrence increases gradually till the onset of South West Monsoon. Formation of cyclonic storms over the Arabian Sea in this month is rare.

**Region II: Bay of Bengal.** Fair weather generally prevails over most parts of the Bay of Bengal, and during this month, the possibility of the formation of tropical cyclones is very low. Due to the northward shifting of Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), a few disturbances are generally seen south of the Bay of Bengal. The mean SST in the Bay of Bengal reaches a minimum of 26 to 27°C in March. Calm to smooth sea prevails over most parts of the Bay of Bengal region.

**Region III: Southeast Asia.** During March, the average pressure distribution at mean sea level varies to the order of 02 - 04 hpa from north to south. In general, isolated localised thunderstorms/ showers over Sumatra island and Straits of Malacca occur due to convective activity over the region. The swell waves from NE direction with 0.5 – 1.5 m height and SST between 28° - 29°C can be observed during this month. Tropical cyclones are least frequent in the month of March but rarely originate as remnants from west Pacific systems.

**Region IV: South Indian Ocean.** During this month, the MSLP over central parts of the Southern IOR is about 1020 hpa and gradually decreases outwards. High-pressure area shifts towards the west and is generally seen in-between 30°- 40°S and 60°-120°E. Tropical disturbances are relatively rare during the autumn months in south IOR.

**Note.** The above weather report is also published on the IFC-IOR website and available at the link below for download and reference.

[https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/ifc-ior/static/data/reports/weather/IFC IOR Weather Forecast Mar 2024.pdf](https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/ifc-ior/static/data/reports/weather/IFC%20IOR%20Weather%20Forecast%20Mar%202024.pdf)



## **IMPACT OF LONGLINE AND TROLLING VESSELS ON TUNA : MALDIVES ILO PERSPECTIVE**

- **Maj Nadeem Hassan, Maldives ILO**

Fishing holds paramount importance for the Maldives serving as a cornerstone of the nation's economy, culture, and sustenance. Tuna, in particular, is a vital catch and plays a pivotal role in sustaining livelihoods for many Maldivians as it provides employment opportunities and serves as a key source of income for the local fishing communities. Moreover, the Maldives' tuna industry contributes significantly to the nation's export revenue and bolsters its economic resilience. The sustainable management of tuna resources in the Maldives is crucial to maintaining the marine ecosystem's delicate balance, ensuring the fishery's long-term viability. As global demand for tuna continues to rise, the responsible and sustainable practices adopted by Maldivian fishermen are essential not only for the country's economic prosperity but also for preserving the health of the ocean and securing a valuable food source for people worldwide.

### **Traditional Fishing Technique**

- *The Maldives boasts a nearly millennium-old tradition of pole-and-line tuna fishing. This method relies on live bait resources where fishers utilise live bait to attract and capture tuna. The line and pole method of fishing employed by Maldives fishermen reflects a traditional and sustainable approach to harvesting marine resources in the rich waters of the Indian Ocean.*
- *The live bait pole and line fishery encompass two distinct operations: catching live bait and subsequent catching of tuna utilizing the live bait. Live bait fishing is conducted in lagoons and from the atoll's basin employing uncomplicated lift nets. Tuna fishing, on the other hand, takes place in the open ocean beyond the atolls utilizing a pole and line approach.*
- *Traditionally, the pole and line fishing process is initiated with live bait fishing conducted in the early morning. A straightforward cotton lift net, rigged on four long poles from the side of the MASDHONI (a Maldivian fishing boat) is utilized for this purpose. Scraped fish paste is often employed as bait to attract schools over the net. Once an adequate amount of bait is accumulated over the net, it is swiftly hauled back, and the captured fish are transferred into the flooded wells, also known as bait holds, of the MASDHONI. Maintaining water circulation within the bait wells is achieved by passing sea water through drain outlets at the bottom of the vessel. Notably, pole-and-line fishers contribute 80 - 90 % of all tuna landings throughout the Maldives. This traditional fishing practice not only sustains local livelihoods but also ensures the conservation of marine ecosystems by promoting responsible fishing practices in the Maldives contributing to the preservation of their delicate aquatic environment.*

# ARTICLES OF INTEREST

## Impact of Longline and Trolling Vessels on Tuna Stocks

Tunas are also captured by trolling and longline vessels. Longline fishing vessels operate beyond and in close proximity to the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ ) of Maldives. These vessels specifically target bigeye and large yellowfin. The impact of industrial fishing fleets on tuna species off the Maldives has been a matter of growing concern for the local fishermen. Large-scale industrial fishing fleets have led to overfishing, depleting tuna population and disrupting the delicate balance of the marine ecosystem. These fleets, equipped with advanced technology and extensive fishing gear, often catch tuna indiscriminately, including juvenile and breeding individuals, further jeopardizing the sustainability of tuna stocks. The Maldivian fishermen, who heavily rely on tuna for their livelihoods, face increased competition and economic challenges. Additionally, the ecological consequences of overfishing extend beyond tuna species, affecting the broader marine ecosystem and the delicate balance that sustains the region's unique biodiversity. Therefore, sustainable fishing practices and international cooperation to mitigate the adverse impacts of industrial fishing fleets on the tuna species off the Maldives and preserve the health of the marine environment is strongly recommended.

## Conclusion

Historically, Maldivian pole and line tuna fishers faced minimal challenges given the abundant tuna population in the waters surrounding the Maldives. However, a noticeable decline in tuna catches and escalating fuel costs associated with operating large vessels have prompted numerous fishers to discontinue their maritime activities. Furthermore, the heightened demand for live bait stocks has led to local depletion during certain seasons, hindering fishers' ability to embark on fishing expeditions. In addition, the presence of longline and trolling vessels is not only affecting the local fishing community but also is having a cascading effect on the economy of Maldives.



*Image Source: Maldives Fisheries*



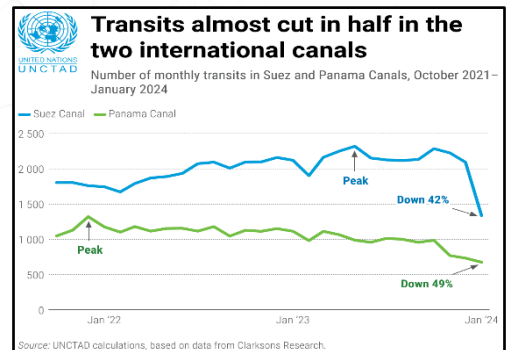
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## IMPACT TO GLOBAL TRADE OF DISRUPTION OF SHIPPING ROUTES IN THE RED SEA, BLACK SEA AND PANAMA CANAL

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its report, *Navigating Troubled Waters. The Impact on Global Trade of the Disruption of the Red Sea, Black Sea and Panama Canal Shipping Routes* highlights the impact of global trade due to the disruption of critical shipping routes. Highlights of the report are enumerated below: -

### ➤ Disrupting the world's major arteries.

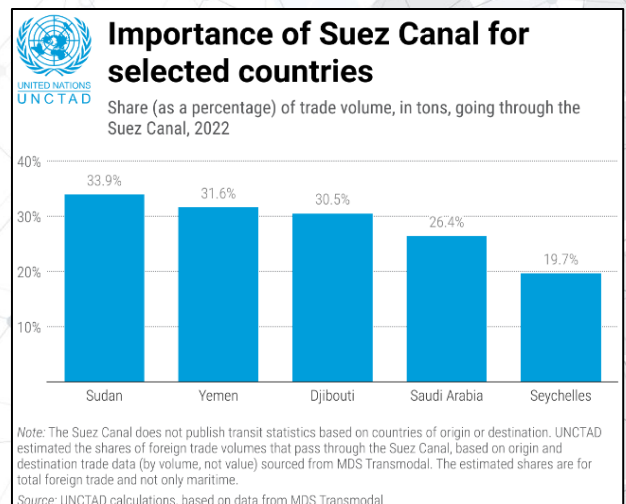
- ❑ As a result of the recent attacks on shipping, the Red Sea maritime trade routes through the Suez Canal have been severely disrupted, further impacting the global trade landscape. This development comes on top of ongoing disruptions in the Black Sea due to the war in Ukraine, which has led to changes in oil and grain trade routes, altering established patterns. In addition, the Panama Canal, a key artery connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, faces another problem: falling water levels. **This has raised concerns about the long-term resilience of global supply chains, highlighting the fragility of the global trade infrastructure.**



- ❑ UNCTAD estimates that transits through the Suez Canal have declined by **42 %** from their peak. With major players in the shipping sector temporarily suspending transits through the Suez Canal, weekly container ship transits fell by 67%, and container capacity, tanker transits and gas carriers saw significant declines. At the same time, the total number of transits through the Panama Canal has dropped by 49% from its peak.

### ➤ Cost Uncertainty

- ❑ Since November 2023, the increase in average spot freight rates for containers has recorded the largest weekly increase on record, at US\$500 in the last week of December. This trend has continued.



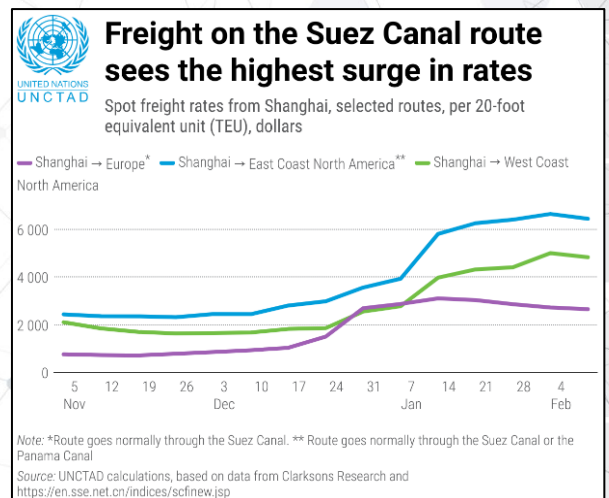
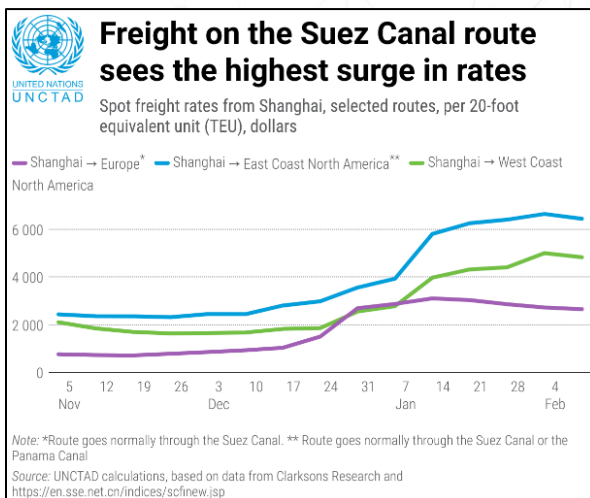
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- ❑ Average spot rates for container shipments from Shanghai have more than doubled since the beginning of December (+122%). They have tripled to Europe (+256%) and are even above average (+162%) to the west coast of the United States, although they do not pass through Suez.
- ❑ Ships avoid the Suez and Panama Canal and seek alternative routes. This combination results in longer distances travelled by goods, increased trade costs and higher insurance premiums.
- ❑ The foreign trade of several East African countries is heavily dependent on the Suez Canal. About 31 per cent of Djibouti's foreign trade flows through the Suez Canal. For Kenya, this share is 15% and for Tanzania 10%. Among East African countries, Sudan's foreign trade is the most dependent on the Suez Canal, with about 34% of its trade volume passing through the canal.

## ➤ Soaring Prices

- ❑ UNCTAD highlights the potentially far-reaching economic consequences of prolonged disruptions to container shipping, threatening global supply chains and potentially delaying deliveries, leading to higher costs and inflation. Consumers will fully feel the impact of rising freight rates within a year.
- ❑ In addition, energy prices are skyrocketing due to the interruption of gas transits, which directly impacts energy supply and prices, especially in Europe. The crisis could impact global food prices, with longer distances and rising freight rates likely to lead to higher costs.
- ❑ Disruptions to grain shipments from Europe, Russia and Ukraine are jeopardising global food security, affecting consumers and lowering prices paid to producers.



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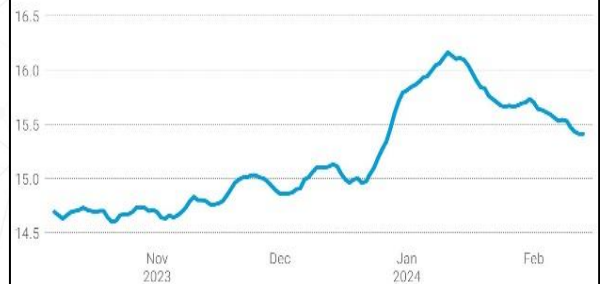
## ➤ Impact on Climate

- ❑ *For over a decade, the shipping industry has embraced reduced speeds to lower fuel costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, disruptions on crucial trade routes like the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, coupled with factors affecting the Panama Canal and the Black Sea, are leading to increased speed of ships to maintain schedules, leading to increased fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.*
- ❑ *UNCTAD estimates that the increase in fuel consumption resulting from longer distances and increased speed could lead to a 70 per cent increase in greenhouse gas emissions for round trips*



### **Spiking vessel sailing speed at the start of the Red Sea crisis and easing in early 2024**

In knots, seven-day moving average, 7 October 2023–13 February 2024



Note: Container vessels above 13500 20-foot equivalent units (TEU)  
Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on data from Marine Benchmark

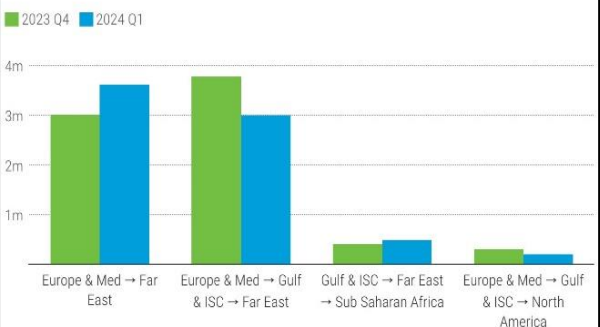
## ➤ Pressure on developing economies

- ❑ *Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to these disruptions.*
- ❑ *The organization emphasises the urgent need for rapid adaptation of the shipping industry and strong international cooperation to manage the rapid reshaping of global trade.*
- ❑ *The current challenges underscore the exposure of global trade to geopolitical tensions and climate-related issues, which requires collective efforts to find sustainable solutions, primarily to support countries most vulnerable to these shocks.*



### **Companies are rerouting their ships to avoid the Middle East**

Fleet deployment, 2023 Q3 and 2024 Q1, 20-foot equivalent units (TEU)



Note: The figure presents selected routes, where a significant percentage change in fleet deployment is seen.  
Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on data from MDS Transmodal.

Source: UNCTAD



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## **COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE STANDARDS OF TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS (STCW) CONVENTION AND CODE**

The 10th session of the IMO's Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW 10) was conducted from 05-09 Feb 24. A comprehensive revision of the STCW Convention and Code was initiated to address experiences, emerging challenges and technological advancements. The key takeaways of the session are elucidated in this article.

### ➤ **Review of the STCW Convention and Code.**

- ❑ *HTW 10 progressed a comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code to address inconsistencies and to improve the provisions based on experiences and new technologies.*
- ❑ *A two-step methodology for the comprehensive review was agreed. The first step will be an in-depth review of the entire Convention and Code, including issues related to outdated training requirements, emerging technologies, digitalization, cybersecurity awareness and psychological safety. The next step will be a revision of the Convention and Code as a result of the gaps identified. HTW 10 also agreed on a road map for the work, targeting completion in late 2027.*
- ❑ *The methodology and the road map will be submitted to Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) 108 in May 2024 for approval. In addition, an inter-sessional Working Group meeting will be held before HTW 11 in 2025, subject to approval by MSC 108 and Council 132.*

### ➤ **Training for seafarers on ships using alternative fuels**

- ❑ *The decarbonization of shipping may entail the need for relevant training standards and requirements for seafarers to handle new types of marine fuels and technologies.*
- ❑ *HTW 10 agreed that training provisions for seafarers on ships using alternative fuels, including battery-powered ships, should be developed in parallel with the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code. The work is expected to be initiated at HTW 11 in 2025, subject to approval by MSC 108 in May 2024.*

### ➤ **STCW Online Database - Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) module**

- ❑ *HTW 10 agreed to establish a new module in the IMO's online information database -GISIS for a trial period to make information on recognition of STCW certificates and the "certificate verification facility" available to all stakeholders. The initiative is a response to reports on fraudulent STCW certificates and endorsements.*



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## Model training courses

- ❑ *IMO model courses intend to assist instructors in developing training programmes for seafarers as per the International Convention of Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978. The model courses are subject to regular review to ensure that they are consistent with the current IMO instruments and reflect best practices and modern technologies.*
- ❑ *HTW 10 validated the following two model courses:*
  - ❑ *“Operational use of integrated bridge systems including integrated navigational systems”.*
  - ❑ *“Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) tanker cargo and ballast handling simulator”*
- ❑ *Amongst the next model courses planned for validation is the model course on “Personal safety and social responsibilities”, which will incorporate the new competencies to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault.*

**Source: IMO**



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# VISIT AT IFC-IOR



*Visit of RAdm Jean Marc Durandau, Head of Foreign Relations, French Navy - 06 Feb 24*

## EVENTS



*MILAN-24: Vishakhapatnam – 19 - 24 Feb 24*



*Launch of IFC-IOR Annual Report 23 in MILAN-24 at Vishakhapatnam – 22 Feb 24*

\*\*\* End of Report \*\*\*



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