

## **MARITIME NEWS – 05 DECEMBER 2016**



The **USS Franklin D Roosevelt** departing from Cape Town on 6 February 1967 after her controversial visit during which her crew were not allowed ashore by the US Navy. She departed a day earlier than planned. **Photo : Ian Shiffman**

### **Two sailors dead as Indian warship tips over during undocking**



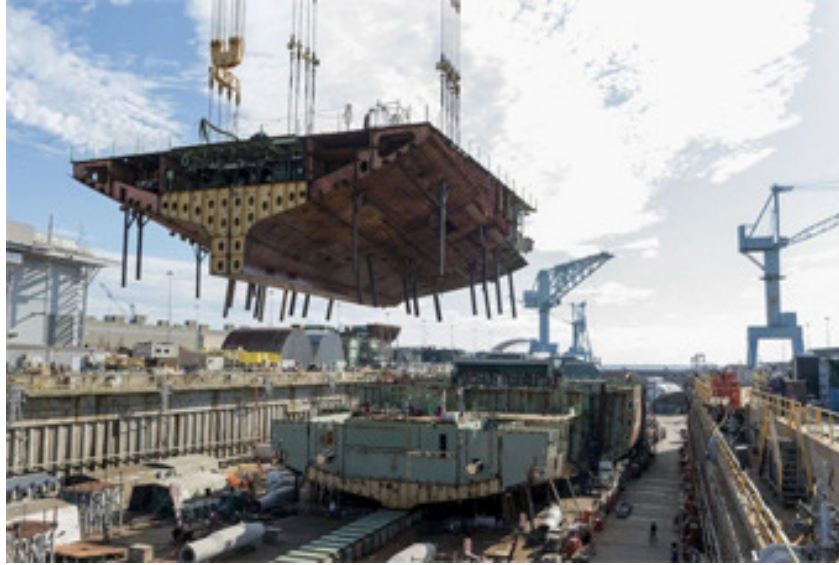
**INS Betwa** on her side in the dock. **Photo: Indian Navy**

India's prized warship **INS Betwa**, a guided missile frigate, tipped over and crashed to its side while undocking in Mumbai on Monday, in what the navy described as an "unprecedented and sad" incident. Two sailors have died while 14 others have been rescued with minor injuries. The 3,850-ton ship is lying on its side at the naval dockyard. It was docked for underwater repairs. Around 2 pm, while the ship was being returned to the water - a process that involves tipping it - the system snagged and the entire ship fell sideways. The main mast of the ship broke.

One of the sailors who died fell off the frigate and drowned while the second had been inside the ship when it tipped over. **INS Betwa** is an indigenously designed and built guided missile frigate of the Brahmaputra-class. The ship is 125 meters long and displaces 3,600 tonnes. It was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 2004. She is armed with Uran anti-ship missiles and surface-to-air missiles. **Source : NDTV**

***Very sad to see a warship in this state. Even sadder for sailors to lose their lives this way.***

## U.S. Navy Shipbuilders Ready for Trump's 350-Ship Expansion Plan



The future **John F. Kennedy** CVN 79 under construction at Huntington Ingalls Newport News Shipbuilding. **Photo by John Whalen/Huntington Ingalls**

The U.S. arms industry is ready and capable of boosting production of new ships if President-elect Donald Trump makes good his vow to expand the U.S. Navy to 350 ships, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral John Richardson told Reuters. Shifting the current target of 308 ships upwards would be "remarkably easy" as long as there is funding to pay the bill, the top uniformed Navy official said in an interview at the annual Reagan National Defense Forum in southern California.

"If it's resourced, it's a matter of working closely with the industrial base, and they definitely are ready to do that," he said, adding the only limiting factor would be hiring and training workers to build the new ships. "If I do not have that capacity, I can create it faster than you can appropriate the money," Mike Petters, chief executive of Huntington Ingalls Industries Inc, the largest U.S. military shipbuilder, said in a separate interview with Reuters. Trump promised during his U.S. election campaign to expand the Navy to 350 ships, although lawmakers and military officials caution that any such boost would require big increases in staffing, training, maintenance and infrastructure.

Richardson said the incoming administration could smooth the way toward the increase by submitting a supplemental budget for fiscal 2017, which ends Sept. 30. "It seems to me that if you want to get something done, you get started." All eyes are on the funding for an expansion under the shadow of sequestration, the self imposed U.S. spending cap. "The question is, can you get rid of sequestration, because that is going to cloud everybody's judgment on how fast do I invest, how fast do I build that capacity." Petters said.

Navy officials were still calculating how much it would cost to expand the Navy to 350 ships from around 290 now, but it would depend on the mix of ships and related costs. A supplemental budget request could include munitions, aircraft, and other equipment that can be bought on short notice, followed by later orders for submarines, destroyers, amphibious ships and potentially even carriers, Richardson said. "If you build those closer together, you get economic order quantities. The learning curve gets to be a much more relevant thing and the cost starts to drive down," he said. Building two carriers at a time would potentially save about \$1 billion, Petters said. **Source : Thomson Reuters.**

### Acquisition Chief: LCS Program 'Broke' the Navy

The Navy's littoral combat ship is costing taxpayers billions more than budgeted, failing survivability assessments, and may never live up to the original vision for the program, a panel of Navy and government oversight officials told the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday. The hearing, which focused on continued testing and acquisition of the small surface vessels, came at the close of a 12-month period in which five of the eight littoral combat ships in service have suffered major mechanical and engineering casualties. Navy officials have ordered dramatic program overhauls and reviews of ship employment and training in response to the breakdowns.

And despite the program's underperformance, costs continue to skyrocket, testified Paul Francis, managing director of acquisition and sourcing management at the Government Accountability Office. The ship's unit cost has more than

doubled from \$220 million to \$478 million apiece, and plans to conduct a "block buy" of 12 redesigned littoral combat ships, to be called frigates, will put taxpayers on the hook for nearly \$14 billion, he wrote in a GAO report released Thursday.



The littoral combat ships **USS Independence**, left, and **USS Coronado** operate in the Pacific Ocean in April 2014.

**Photo : U.S. Navy Photo**

"The miracle of LCS didn't happen," Francis told the Senate panel. "... Once the money wheel starts to turn, the business imperatives of budgets and contracts and ship construction take precedence over acquisition and oversight principles." In an era when other major-dollar acquisition programs such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and the Gerald R. Ford-class carrier have dominated headlines on account of delays and budget overruns, the sternest rebukes in Congress may be reserved for the embattled LCS program.

"The experience of LCS, it broke the Navy," said Sean Stackley, assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition. "... We have our program managers pretty much under a microscope right now, and we've taken things like cost and we've put cost into our requirements so that you don't get to ignore costs while you're chasing requirement. Just like speed, range, power and payload, if you start to infringe on the cost requirement that we put into our documents, you have to report to [Research, Development and Acquisition] and [the Chief of Naval Operations] just like you do if you infringe on one of the other requirements."

In prepared testimony for the hearing, the Pentagon's director of Operational Test and Evaluation, J. Michael Gilmore, gave a damning accounting of where the program stands, saying neither of the two LCS variants now being built by competing contractors is expected to be survivable in combat, a fact that undermines the whole concept of operations for the ship class.

Design failures also hobble the ship's effectiveness, he wrote in the 30-page document. The small crew size, he said, limited mission capabilities, combat endurance, and the ability of the crew to conduct major repairs without bringing in outside help. While a new crewing model introduced by the Navy in September will allow the ships to each focus on a single mission -- surface warfare, mine countermeasures, or asymmetric warfare -- Gilmore said his department does not yet have enough information to determine whether this approach will solve the problem.

In air warfare, he wrote, both ship variants lagged behind in testing, and it appeared unlikely that the LCS ultimately would be able to meet the Navy's air defense requirements. "The need for this testing is all the more acute given the recent (anti-ship cruise missile) attacks against Navy ships off the coast of Yemen," Gilmore wrote, citing a series of incidents in October that prompted the Arleigh-Burke Class Destroyer **Mason** to fire missiles in self-defense.

In shock trials this summer with the littoral combat ship **Milwaukee**, designed to test the ship's ability to withstand an attack and keep fighting, the Navy had planned to conduct a traditional "three-shot" shock trial, with controlled blasts maxing out at only two-thirds the required shock level for the ship's design. But the service stopped the trial after only two shots, Gilmore said, due to concerns that the third would "significantly damage substantial amounts of non-hardened equipment, thereby necessitating costly and lengthy repairs."

The **Milwaukee** was commissioned Nov. 21, 2015, and suffered a major engineering casualty less than a month later due to debris collection in the lube oil filter, requiring a 40-mile tow back to port. The only voice on the panel who

expressed unmixed optimism about the LCS was Vice Adm. Thomas Rowden, commander of Naval Surface Forces. He was grilled by committee chairman Sen. John McCain, an Arizona Republican, who asked him to take responsibility for the engineering casualties that had happened on his watch, at least several of which were the result of engineer error.

"Should you be in your job?" McCain demanded. "Yes sir, I believe I'm capable of fulfilling my responsibilities," Rowden replied. "What I did find was that training we had provided to the young men and women was insufficient. ... I think we're in a much better place moving forward. We are going to start holding people accountable." Pressed by the committee, Rowden said he believed the ships, deployed with sailors and Marines aboard, would hold up in combat. Gilmore disagreed. "You're never going to get from me, or anyone else, an honest, ironclad guarantee that the ships are going to perform the way people say they hope they will," he said. **Source : Military.com**

## **New controversy hits Israel sub deal over Iran link**

Israel was embroiled in fresh controversy on Sunday over its purchase of submarines from German company ThyssenKrupp after reports that the country's arch-enemy Iran holds a stake in the firm. The attorney general had already ordered police to look into allegations of improper conduct in the planned purchase of the submarines, and reports of Iran's link to the company have fuelled more criticism.

Israel sees Iran as its main enemy in the region, and suggestions that the Islamic republic would benefit from the Jewish state's defence purchases have made headlines. Media reported that Iranian holding company IFIC continues to own a 4.5 percent stake in the German firm.

"Israeli money, Iranian profits," a headline in the newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth said Sunday. ThyssenKrupp told AFP that IFIC owned around seven percent of the company until May 2003, when it fell below five percent, without providing details on the size of its current stake, if any. Reports at the time said the United States had pressured ThyssenKrupp to reduce Iran's stake to below five percent. The Iranian state's representative on the company's supervisory board was also removed.

Israel is reportedly negotiating to buy the three submarines at a combined price of 1.2 billion Euros (\$1.3 billion), to replace the oldest vessels in its existing Dolphin fleet, which began entering service in 1999. It already has five of the state-of-the-art German submarines, with a sixth due for delivery in 2017, Maariv newspaper reported. Last month, Israeli Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit ordered police to probe allegations of improper conduct by a confidant of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the planned purchase of the vessels.

Media reports have alleged a conflict of interest over the role played by the Netanyahu family lawyer, David Shimron, who also reportedly represents the Israeli agent of ThyssenKrupp. The German firm told AFP they require their partners to get approval when they hire subcontractors and that there has not been a request for such an approval from their Israeli representative Miki Ganor. They are conducting an internal investigation. Foreign military sources say the Dolphins can be equipped with missiles armed with nuclear warheads. Israel is believed to be the Middle East's sole if undeclared nuclear power, but refuses to confirm or deny that it has such weapons. **Source : The Maritime Executive**

## **Pakistan Navy ship to participate in Naval exercise in Turkey**

Pakistan Navy Ship, **PNS ALAMGIR (FFG 260)** with an embarked Z9 EC Helicopter on board, was visiting Aksaz Naval Base Marmaris harbour from November 19 to December 1. and in continuation the frigate was spotted passing the Bosphorus straits Northbound last Saturday early morning as seen below.

The **Alamgir** was participating in joint Turkish Navy Exercise Mavi Balina-16, a message received here from Ankara on said. The vessel is a multi-mission frigate and embarks a Z9EC helicopter. **PNS Alamgir** is the third ship named as ALAMGIR. It was commissioned on August 31, 2010 at Mayport Florida USA. **PNS Alamgir** is part of 25th Destroyer Squadron of Pakistan Navy. Mavi Balina is evolving into a common forum for both Western and Eastern nations, to share, discuss and propose solutions for Collaborative Maritime Security which is one of the critical contemporary maritime challenges.





The **PNS Alamgir** (FFG 260) ex **USS McInerney** (FFG-8), was second ship of the Oliver Hazard Perry class and commissioned in 1979 in the US Navy, decommissioned in 2010 and handed over to Pakistan on 31 August 2010

**Photo : Alper Böler**

**PNS Alamgir's** participation in this exercise will further strengthen existing bilateral relations of Pakistan Navy with the Turkish Navy and other participating navies. Reciprocatory visits of high level defence delegations, exchange training programmes and visits of naval units is a regular feature of Turkey-Pakistan defence relations. To further boost defence ties, Pakistan Navy is planning to organize the fifth multinational exercise AMAN-17 in February 2017 where more than 30 navies including Turkish Navy are expected to participate.

The Pakistan Navy is actively involved in maintaining peace and stability in the region – from Gulf of Aden to Gulf of Oman including North Arabian Sea. Pakistan Navy ships are vigorously operating and participating in all peace keeping missions. Pakistan Navy joined the Coalition Maritime Campaign Plan (CMCP) in 2003 and had commanded the Coalition Task Force-150 nine times. Due to Pakistan Navy's proactive stance and operations, not a single terrorism related incident has occurred in its area of operation. **Source: APP**

*Number of our readers have been aboard this vessel as in her previous life as USS McInerney she represented the US Navy or the Presidential Review on the SA Navy's 75 anniversary in 1997. Arriving late in the day we were suddenly inundated with requests for 'honey-suckers' and other services. It turned out that the Portreq had been sent to their Naval Attaché BUT as the SAN was not cleared to Confidential, he 'couldn't' release it to us!!!*

## **Another jet crashes attempting to land on Russian aircraft carrier**



**Photo: Russian Ministry of Defense**

A Russian SU-33 aircraft crashed on December 3 while attempting to land on the aircraft carrier **Admiral Kuznetsov**, according to a report by The Aviationist. The Russian Ministry of Defense has confirmed that the Su-33 fighter jet skidded off the dock after the arresting cable broke. The pilot sustained no injuries and was brought onboard the ship by rescuers, it added. This is the second jet the Russian Navy has lost since the start of the aircraft carrier's Mediterranean Sea flight operations. Less than three weeks ago, a MiG-29K crashed after running out of fuel while it was waiting for clearance to land.

A report has shown that the cause of the first incident was the main arresting cable that snapped after the second of three aircraft landed. The last MiG was directed not to land until the deck was cleared for landing. Russian engineers on the flight deck were not fast enough as the the aircraft's engines shut down after they stopped taking in fuel causing the aircraft to start rapidly decelerating and eventually forcing the pilot to eject. **Source : Naval Today**

## **HLNMS Tromp becomes first Op Atalanta ship ever to dock in Somalia**



**HNLMS Tromp** in Berbera, Somaliland. **Photo: Twitter/Commodore René Luyckx**

The Royal Netherlands Navy frigate and current flagship of the EU mission off the Horn of Africa became the first operation Atalanta warship to dock in either Somalia or Somaliland as the ship came alongside Berbera Port on Sunday, December 4. Onboard were EUCAP Nestor's head of operations, Chris Reynolds, EUNAVFOR force commander, Commodore Rene Luyckx and representatives from UNSOM's rule of law and security institutions group who all attended the Joint maritime security seminar (JMSS).

The JMSS, which was chaired by Somaliland's state minister for security at the ministry of interior, Mohamed Muse Dirie, was an opportunity to highlight the importance of international cooperation and collective effort to strengthen maritime security in the Gulf of Aden, with a focus on the need for effective training, resources and infrastructure, backed up by a sound legislative maritime framework. During the day approximately 50 delegates discussed Somaliland's maritime activities and future planning, with a focus on capacity building and legislative support.

Admiral Abdi Hersi from the Somaliland Coast Guard also gave a briefing on their recent activities and the challenges they face, particularly with regards to resources and training. Other Somaliland dignitaries included the Minister of Justice, the Chief Justice, Attorney-General, Immigration Commissioner, the Regional Governor, Berbera's Mayor and members of the international community.

This was the first time that an Operation Atalanta warship has berthed alongside Berbera. It was also the first time any warship docked there since 1986. "The seminar is a sign of the progress being made to strengthen maritime security of the Somali coast. While Operation Atalanta was recently extended for two years, we will continue to work with local actors, like the Somaliland Coast Guard, to help fully restore their ownership of maritime security." Commodore Luyckx commented.

***Note the cautionary anti-RPG protective barrier of containers. Not sure that shore leave will be granted there.***

## **READER COMMENT**

*I guess that there might be all sorts of counter claims following your news of **Statsraad Lehmkuhl's** remarkable achievement on the run back to Bergen. I am not intending to argue. Though I would like to mention Captain James Nicol (Bully) Forbes of the mid 1800's who in the ship **Marco Polo** of the Black Ball Line over the Mersey to Melbourne run averaged 336 nautical miles per day (14 knots). The story has it that he drove his ship so hard that he had to induce his crew not to ease sheets with a brace of pistols while claiming "Hell or Melbourne". He later did an even faster time on the Melbourne to Mersey run in the ship **Lightning**. I know that it is notoriously difficult to compare sailing ship records. But these amongst the best of the 'old days of sail' I think show how well **Statsraad Lehmkuhl** was sailed by the young ship's company under the command of co Captains Marcus Seidl and Jens Joachim Hiort to achieve the ship's recent record. BZ to them!*

***Quite an achievement but cannot challenge the record as the Boston Teapot Trophy is awarded annually by the Sail Training International for the longest distance sailed in 124 hours. I was in ARA Libertad in 1969 when we hoped to beat our own 1966 record for the 124 hour run. For five days we sprinted eastwards (but could barely stand up between decks) when all of a sudden the wind lost interest and Gorch Fock won the trophy that year! In 1966 Libertad broke the record for the North Atlantic crossing under sail – 2 058.6nm in 8 days and 12 hours which still stands. Out of interest, Libertad won the trophy in 1976, 1981, 1985, 1987, 1992, 1998, 2000 and 2007 but her 1966 distance remained the furthest, Statsraad Lehmkuhl won it in 2008 and again in 2010 with a then record of 1 443 nm. The vessel has to be manned by trainees to participate and dates only from 1964 and thus I am afraid history books don't count.***

**AGS**

