

FORUM



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Multilateral Approaches to Trafficking,
Terrorism and Territorial Conflicts

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ABOUT THE COVER:

Soldiers participate in the multilateral military exercise known as Cobra Gold, at Sattahip Royal Thai Marine Corps Base in Chonburi, Thailand, in February 2017.

REUTERS



Dear Readers,

Welcome to
*Indo-Asia-
Pacific Defense*

FORUM's third-quarter edition for 2017, which highlights strategic interests in the region.

The current state of shifting global dynamics reinforces the need for nations to leverage complementary interests to enhance economic stability, better share resources, and

increase regional and global security for the long term. By aligning regional and transregional strategic interests, nations can propel cooperation and security.

This issue sheds light on the need for continued and increased security cooperation by examining the counterterrorism tactics of nations anticipating the return of foreign fighters associated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Governments across the Indo-Asia-Pacific region have gotten ahead of the security challenge by identifying vulnerabilities and creating policies that address the threat.

Economic, political and military power shifts across the Indo-Asia-Pacific region have the potential to simultaneously drive much-needed cooperation and produce unwanted conflict. However, by creating strong military alliances and partnerships, nations can reduce friction and ensure long-term regional stability.

The Royal New Zealand Navy provides examples of such successful collaboration in this edition of *FORUM* by demonstrating how it overcomes geographic challenges and forges partnerships with like-minded allies to maintain not only regional, but also global, stability.

Global defense and geopolitical concerns in the Indo-Asia-Pacific increasingly result in the evolution of relationships essential for stability. Cooperating on strategic interests can yield mutually beneficial relationships between two or more parties. Evolving threats allow for new opportunities for synergy.

I hope you find this edition insightful and thought-provoking, and I welcome your comments. Please contact the *FORUM* staff at iapdf@iapdforum.com with your perspectives.

All the best,

HARRY B. HARRIS, JR.
Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, U.S. Pacific Command

IAPD **FORUM**

Strategic Interests

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Join the Discussion

We want to hear from YOU!

Indo-Asia-Pacific Defense FORUM caters to military and security personnel in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. A product of U.S. Pacific Command, the quarterly magazine provides high-quality, in-depth content on topics that impact security efforts across the region — from counterterrorism to international cooperation and natural disasters.

FORUM provokes thoughtful discussions and encourages a healthy exchange of ideas. Submit articles, pictures, topics for discussion or other comments to us ONLINE or at:

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FORUM

Exploring the issues that impact so many lives

Largest Cocaine Bust on Record



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A major cocaine ring has been dismantled in joint operations with Tahiti, Australian police said in late 2016, with a record 1.1 metric tons of cocaine worth hundreds of millions of dollars seized. Police listed 600 kilograms of cocaine intercepted by the French Navy off Tahiti, 500 kilograms seized on Christmas Day in Sydney and 32 kilograms of heroin in Fiji — all destined for the Australian market.

“The size of that seizure collectively — 1.1 metric tons — makes it the largest cocaine seizure in Australian law enforcement history,” said Australian Federal Police Acting Assistant Commissioner Chris Sheehan.

The street value of the cocaine, shipped from South America to the South Pacific, was estimated at U.S. \$260 million. Agence France-Presse

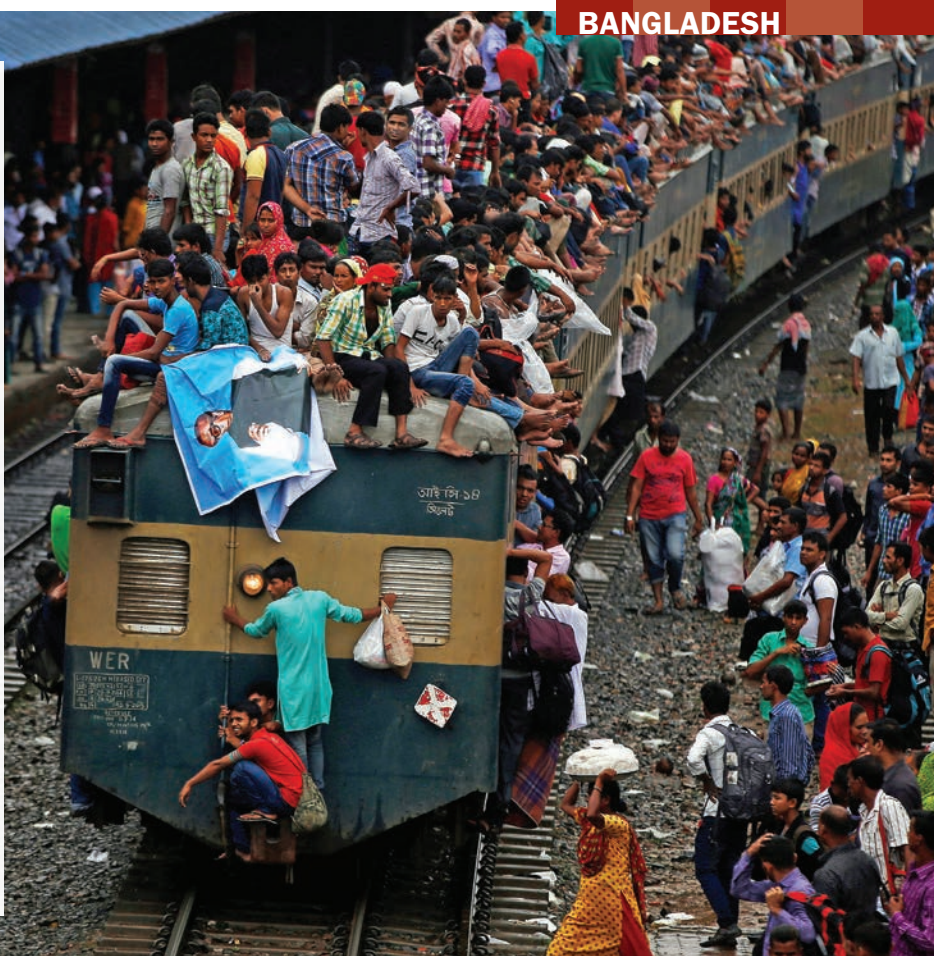
BANGLADESH

HISTORIC RAILWAY DEAL INKED

Bangladesh signed a deal with Britain’s DP Rail in late 2016 to develop a U.S. \$7.5 billion rail track, the biggest ever railway project in the country. The 240-kilometer rail track will run between Dhaka and Payra port, a planned new deep sea port capable of handling large container ships with capacity for 8,000 containers or 120,000 metric tons of cargo.

DP Rail will finance the project railway, Railway Minister Mujibul Haque told reporters after the signing of a memorandum of understanding.

Under the terms of the deal, DP Rail has the exclusive right to develop plans to design, finance, build and operate the railway, the company said in a statement. Reuters



CHINA

Toughening Vehicle Emission Standards



China will require all light vehicles to adhere to tougher new “China VI” emission standards by the middle of 2020, according to a notice published by environment regulators in December 2016.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection said all sales and registrations of light vehicles will have to comply with the new standards — which are based on ones used in Europe and the United States — by July 1, 2020.

Carmakers will have to improve the catalytic converters, fuel injection and the structure of the engine’s combustion chamber to meet the new standards, the ministry said.

All vehicles on China’s roads are obliged to meet the previous China V emission standard by the end of 2017.

Vehicle emissions were responsible for more than 30 percent of Beijing’s concentrations of small, breathable particles known as PM2.5, according to a 2014 study by the city’s environmental protection bureau.

The ministry said the implementation of progressively stronger fuel standards since 2001 had reduced pollutants per vehicle unit by more than 90 percent. Reuters

INDONESIA

INDONESIA CREATES AGENCY TO COMBAT FAKE NEWS

Indonesia is setting up an agency that will tackle fake news after a flood of untrue stories on social media, an official said in January 2017. Those stories include claims China was waging biological warfare against the country using contaminated chili seeds. The new cyber agency will also seek to protect state institutions from hackers, said presidential spokesman Johan Budi.

Security Affairs Minister Wiranto said the move was necessary to combat a flood of news on social media that was “slandrous, fake, misleading and spread hate.”

“Freedom [of speech] is a right in a democracy, but there is also an obligation to obey the law,” he said.

Officials said the agency would monitor news circulating online to check for false stories. It will be overseen by the Security Ministry and will work alongside other government agencies, they said, without giving further details.

The idea for the agency came after President Joko Widodo declared his intention at a cabinet meeting

in December 2016 to combat fake news in a country where people are rapidly getting online for the first time, with more than 130 million out of 255 million inhabitants now estimated to be internet users.

One of the most high-profile cases in recent times was a false claim circulating on social media in December 2016 that Beijing was seeking to wage biological warfare against Indonesia, after a true story that four Chinese citizens were arrested for using imported chili seeds infected with bacteria on a farm south of Jakarta.

The Chinese Embassy in Jakarta was forced to issue a statement saying that the reports were “misleading and have caused great concerns.” Agence France-Presse





**Interpol's
Secretary-
General
Jurgén Stock
recommends
using biometric
technology to
fight terrorists
worldwide.**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



INTERPOL: Use biometric data to find extremist fighters

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Interpol urged all countries in November 2016 to obtain biometric data from fighters for the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and other extremist groups to help law enforcement track them down, especially when they return home.

Interpol Secretary-General Jurgen Stock said in an interview that the international police organization only has biometric data — fingerprints, DNA, iris scans and the like — for about 10 percent of the 9,000 foreign terrorist fighters in its database.

Stock said Interpol is helping countries to develop biometric technology not only to identify fighters from extremist groups but criminals as well.

He cited the 2016 case of a French police station attacked by a terrorist who had traveled across Europe using 20 different identities — something that could have been thwarted with biometric data.

Stock said there are an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 foreign terrorist fighters from almost all over the world — and about 15,000 from more than 100 countries remain mainly in Syria and Iraq.

With 9,000 names in the Interpol database, this means that about 6,000 of the extremist fighters are not on an international register where they could be tracked, which Stock said is a “serious gap.”

He said the database grew rapidly when it started in 2013 with just 12 files and will hopefully continue to add names and biometric data. The Interpol chief went to the United

Nations from the organization’s headquarters in Lyon, France, to speak to the General Assembly, which adopted a resolution expanding Interpol’s cooperation with the U.N.

Stock called the internet “a virtual university of terrorism,” where extremist groups attract and radicalize would-be fighters and where information on building or buying bombs and explosives is readily available.

“The threat level with regard to international terrorism is unprecedented,” he said, with international terrorists moving to short-term actions using simpler methods such as knives, axes and, in the deadly attack in Nice, France, on July 15, 2016, a truck.

“We are fighting a terrorist network or an organized crime network with a law enforcement network,” he said.

The fight is not easy, Stock said, because of legal issues that differ in various countries, including the sharing of information and the difficulties in ensuring that relevant data gets to police, border guards and other officials who need it.

He said the increasing use of encrypted websites by extremist groups is also posing “a huge challenge” to law enforcement authorities trying to conduct surveillance or track fighters and potential terrorists.

The dark net has also become a major trading place for weapons and explosives used by terrorists, Stock said.

“Investigations into the dark net are not impossible, of course,” he said. “We are developing our tools, but it creates a challenge.” Stock also said Interpol is cooperating with industry on new tools “to make sure that there’s no safe haven for terrorists or criminals.”



A Honduran police officer scans the iris of a Nepali citizen who entered the country illegally.



TURNING**POINT**

Nations shift counterterrorism tactics in anticipation of returning foreign fighters who continue their allegiance to the Islamic State

FORUM STAFF

FORUM ILLUSTRATION

Combined efforts of international forces to successfully weaken the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and ultimately extinguish its stronghold on cities in the Middle East give anti-terrorism activists reason to celebrate. It also represents a turning point in strategies for countering violent extremism across the Indo-Asia-Pacific and abroad as governments prepare for the yet unknown aftereffects of foreign fighters returning to their homelands.

“The prospective collapse of Islamic State’s ‘caliphate’ is likely to increase the number of foreign fighters leaving its territory. More generally, the foreign fighter fallout from the years of conflict in Syria and Iraq will echo that of previous conflicts such as Afghanistan and Bosnia,” according to “Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq: The Day After,” an analysis authored by counterterrorism experts Lydia Khalil and Rodger Shanahan and published in September 2016 by the Australia-based Lowy Institute for International Policy. “The fighters who survive and escape will be just as ideologically motivated as those that emerged from Afghanistan and Bosnia, but will be more operationally experienced, have more lethal skills and be better networked than their predecessors.”

Not all those returning will have an interest in continuing their quest, but the real possibility that even the slightest percentage of foreign fighters intend

to foster the next generation of global jihadists means that governments must be ready to combat such efforts.

“It is critically important that international security agencies understand the networks that these individuals have formed, the routes they intend to use to leave Syria and Iraq and their intentions once they have left the battlefield,” Khalil and Shanahan wrote. “This will require a more coordinated international response rather than just multiple national approaches. This should include common legislative action regarding the treatment of foreign fighters, greater intelligence and border control coordination and cooperation and a greater focus on the foreign fighter issue within existing multilateral counterterrorist groupings.”

STYMIED ENLISTMENT

At the peak of recruitment in 2015, ISIS saw 2,000 foreign fighters cross the Turkey-Syria border each month — a number that had dwindled to as few as 50 as 2016 neared an end, according to U.S. intelligence data, *The Washington Post* newspaper reported in September 2016. The decline in appeal has robbed ISIS of momentum it once generated to declare the rebirth of a bold and powerful Islamic empire.

The shift sets the stage for conversations on national security.

“The prospective collapse of Islamic State’s ‘caliphate’ is likely to increase the number of foreign fighters leaving its territory. More generally, the foreign fighter fallout from the years of conflict in Syria and Iraq will echo that of previous conflicts such as Afghanistan and Bosnia.”

— Lydia Khalil and Rodger Shanahan, counterterrorism experts



Filipino troops regain control of a town seized by an ISIS-inspired militant group in March 2016.

GETTY IMAGES



Members of an Indonesian police bomb squad examine the surrounding area where a suicide bomber blew himself up at the local police headquarters in Solo, Central Java, Indonesia, in July 2016. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Estimates of the number of Southeast Asians who have joined ISIS in the Middle East vary between 700 and 1,000, a miniscule figure in a region of over 600 million people. Australian officials place their number of nationals who joined the fight at 110, and Prime Minister Malcolm has called their anticipated return a “very live concern.”

“We are resolutely, remorselessly focused on keeping Australians safe, and we pay very close attention to the Australians that may seek to return from the conflict zone in Syria,” Turnbull said, according to news.com.au.

Australia has already experienced the return of some foreign fighters, but there hasn’t been enough evidence to charge them with a crime — at least not yet, Shanahan told news.com.au.

“These guys will have to be watched. You’re going to have to have a good look at these guys very closely for a long time,” Shanahan told news.com.au. Authorities “will have to take a long-term view of this because at some stage, the conflict in Syria is going to be over and it’ll be more likely to get evidence that could lead to prosecutions. So you should never ever put a time frame on jihadi activity.”

The Australian Parliament has already tightened laws to deal with the fallout. Australians returning from Iraq and Syria could be placed under special terrorist control orders. That means someone could be required to wear a tracking device or live at a certain location. Australia’s law also means someone could be ordered to leave the country and be banned. In addition, Australia also wants to keep convicted terrorists in jail if the government believes they remain a threat.

“Once IS [the Islamic State] is finished, it’s not going to be the end of the problem. These people are going to splinter to a wide range of places and Australians are going to travel to a wide range of places,” Shanahan told news.com.au. “We’re going to have to have a long-term commitment to cooperation in counterterrorism strategies with other countries. It’s not a problem that’s going to go away.”

VIGILANCE WARRANTED

There are more than 240 million Muslims in Southeast Asia who account for about 42 percent of the region’s population. Southeast Asia has proved to be one of the most successful areas of recruitment for ISIS, experts say. Governments there have long recognized the

vulnerability of their citizens to propaganda and have worked tirelessly for years with allies like the United States to counter radicalization, but recent years have seen an uptick in the success of extremist propaganda.

“We have more activity among jihadi groups than at any time in the last 10 years,” said Sidney Jones, director of the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, according to an opinion column by David Ignatius in *The Washington Post* titled, “Southeast Asia could be a haven for displaced Islamic State fighters.”

Between 500 and 600 Indonesians and about 100 Malaysians traveled to Iraq and Syria to join ISIS, according to *The Washington Post*. In 2015, Malaysia reported that at least 70 of its former military members had joined the fight.

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) sought to address questions about terrorism and the effect of returning foreign fighters on Southeast Asia’s security during the June 2016 IISS Shangri-La Dialogue.

“How serious is the current terrorist threat in the region? How does it compare with the threat from Jemaah Islamiyah in the region 10 or 15 years ago? Do we really know how many Southeast Asians have gone to the Middle East to fight? How dangerous, really, is the threat from returning fighters? And what of regional states’ responses?” Tim Huxley, executive director of IISS-Asia asked panelists — which included a military representative from the Philippines and Malaysia — during the conference. “Are they doing everything that might be ideal in terms of strengthening interagency whole-of-government approaches to counterterrorism? Are they exchanging enough intelligence and the right type of intelligence among themselves, and with external partners such as Australia, the U.S. and with European and Middle Eastern states? And perhaps, most significantly in the context of this session and this dialogue, what is the proper role of the armed forces in counterterrorism in this region?”

Despite Malaysia’s history of engaging religious extremism and radicalization, the country has shown great concern about the development of ISIS within its borders, Gen. Tan Sri Dato’ Sri (Dr.) Zulkifeli bin Mohd Zin, former chief of Defence Force of the Malaysian Armed Forces, said during the conference.

“The Malaysian Armed Forces has adopted the policy of strong interagency cooperation and pragmatic multilateral collaboration while adopting soft and hard approaches,” the general said. “In this sense, the measures taken are, firstly, developing strong interregional collaboration with the armed forces of ASEAN [the Association of Southeast Asian Nations] member states through the exchange of information and building of capacities.”

In January 2016, Malaysia organized its first international conference on deradicalization and countering violent extremism. The Malaysian government and military have collaborated to establish a digital

countermessaging center, “which wages war of ideas through the resourceful lines of persuasion among the various target groups,” the general said. Malaysia’s prime minister also established the Global Movement of Moderates, a group aimed at countering jihadi terrorism as the government promotes the practices of moderation in the realm of religion.

“The measures taken by the Malaysian government have been very effective and successful, as we are able to stem the influence of Daesh [ISIS] in the country. Similarly, I believe that there must be a concerted and



Australian officers stand guard at a Melbourne court in May 2016 as a police van arrives with five men who planned to join ISIS. GETTY IMAGES

comprehensive initiative or effort by all ASEAN member states to detect, erase and monitor the sources of funding for the Katibah Nusuntara [a Southeast Asian military unit within ISIS composed of Malaysian speakers] from ASEAN member countries,” the Malaysian general said, noting Malaysia’s introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Foreign Fighters Act to better empower the enforcement agencies in combating the threat of terrorism. “That said, however, it is undeniable that Daesh [ISIS] will seek more innovative and unconventional means or methods to spread terror in this region. For that, enhancing cooperation is not an option but a necessity to ensure security, stability and the preservation of human security.”

For Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda, vice chief of staff for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, ISIS represents one of the “more serious and pressing security issues of our time.”

During the 2016 Shangri-La Dialogue, Miranda, who was acting chief of staff at the time, called the tri-border maritime area encompassing the Sulu and Sulawesi seas a “critical area of cooperation.” The porous area remains largely ungoverned, he said, and has become a preferred nautical highway for national

The CSIS commission outlined a strategy to prevent and counter violent extremism (CVE) that encompasses activities that are CVE-specific and those that are CVE-relevant. Among the recommendations:

- **Strengthen resistance to extremist ideologies**

Forge a new global partnership around education reform and expand efforts to enhance respect for religious diversity to stem the spread of intolerance and reinforce community resilience to extremist narratives.

- **Invest in community-led prevention**

Enable civil society efforts to detect and disrupt radicalization and recruitment and rehabilitate and reintegrate those who have succumbed to extremist ideologies and narratives.

- **Saturate the global marketplace of ideas**

Mobilize technology companies, the entertainment industry, community leaders, religious voices and others to compete with and overtake violent extremists' narratives in virtual and real spaces.

- **Align policies and values**

Put human rights at the center of [countering violent extremism] and ensure ... engagement with foreign partners [to] advance the rule of law, dignity and justice.

- **Deploy military and law enforcement tools**

Build a new force capability and coalition to quickly dislodge terrorist groups that control territory, avert and respond to immediate threats, weaken violent extremists' projection of strength and protect security.

criminals, militants and extremists.

"This area needs patrolling and policing, but this cannot be done by one country alone. It calls for regional and national cooperation," Miranda said. "Thankfully, the governments of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines have responded to this call and decided to act."

In May 2016, the foreign ministers and chiefs of defense forces of these respective countries signed a joint declaration on the immediate measures to address security issues in the maritime areas of concern.

Social media cooperation and the use of information and communication technology present another area needing cooperation to combat ISIS and its supporters, Miranda said.

"We understand now that their control of media content through which they conduct their cyber jihad, similar to the ungoverned maritime space, the open sites, the electronic boards and the potential cyber sanctuaries in the internet, must be painstakingly trolled for terrorist content by all concerned governments, agencies, multinational organizations, administrators and special units," Miranda said. "The sophistication of our cyber technologies should be brought to bear wherever the terrorists might be hiding. The capacities of our agencies for intelligence and surveillance, and even social advocacy, must be coordinated to initiate sustained or provide dedicated follow-on actions to constantly discredit jihadist claims, and altogether take out the air from them with no blogs made, no column inches given and no prisoners taken."

TARGETING ROOT CAUSES

Ticking time bombs. That's how some international leaders describe the returning foreign fighter population.

Philippine Marines aboard an armored personnel carrier and a truck guard a highway in Sulu province in Mindanao, a known refuge for Islamic militants, in February 2017. GETTY IMAGES





Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, in blue shirt, talks with Australian troops during breakfast at Camp Baird while visiting Iraq in January 2016.

REUTERS

Others say the fuse was lit long before ISIS became appealing and that as governments prepare to deal with the looming threat of a terrorist attack or continued recruitment efforts by these returning bad actors, addressing the root cause of such ideology must remain part of the conversation.

“Historically, efforts to counter extremist ideologies and narratives have been reactive. Rather than anticipating emerging threats, appropriate resources and expertise are often deployed after the fact,” according to “Turning Point: A New Comprehensive Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism,” a report published in November 2016 by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) based on findings of a commission chaired by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta. “Military force and law enforcement approaches can play a vital role in slowing violent extremists’ momentum and loosening their grip on territory, but extremist ideologies — and the

long-term, generational threat they represent — will not be defeated on the battlefield.”

“Governments bear the primary responsibility for taking action against offending individuals, or organizations or institutions within their borders,” the CSIS commission report stated. “If the host country does not take concrete steps to rein in nefarious actors, the international community should consider punitive measures such as freezing of assets, visa and travel bans and criminal actions for material support to terrorist activity.”

As foreign fighters filter back to their places of origin, preventing further radicalization and recruitment will require mobilization of national and international powers, including military and law enforcement tools, the CSIS report said. In addition, CSIS suggested, nations must build a coalition to detect and deter foreign fighters, degrade, defeat and dismantle their strategic communications infrastructure and create a response mechanism that protects civilians. □



A member of the Malaysian military stands guard outside a shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur.

C O U N T E R T E R R O R I S M *in Malaysia*

INHIBITING VIOLENT EXTREMISM REQUIRES A HOLISTIC APPROACH
TO ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES AND IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

ELINA NOOR

PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

During the past three years, the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) have arrested more than 250 people for terrorist-related offenses. In 2016 alone, there were 115 arrests, a 40 percent increase from the 82 arrests in 2015. In 2014, there were 59 arrests and just four in 2013. Police also thwarted 14 attempted attacks during this period. One, however, escaped the dragnet in July 2016, when a hand grenade was tossed into a nightclub outside Kuala Lumpur, injuring eight people. Although police initially dismissed it as a terror incident, they later confirmed the bombing was the first Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)-linked attack in the country.

While much of the terrorist landscape in Malaysia in recent years has been focused on ISIS — also known as Daesh — and its cohorts in Syria

and Iraq, the terrorist threat itself is almost as old as the country. Apart from the communist terrorists who held the country in an official state of emergency for a total of three decades during two periods since independence in 1957, the RMP have also monitored the presence of numerous other terrorist groups whose causes run the ideological gamut. These range from separatist groups such as the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam and Babar Khalsa International to regional ones such as Darul Islam and Jemaah Islamiyah.

What ISIS and groups like it represent is an evolution in the terrorist threat environment. In Malaysia, this is evident in four unfolding trends: a widened appeal across demographics, suicide terrorism, autonomy and a relatively abbreviated recruitment process.



Soldiers guard a major downtown shopping area in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



A Malaysian police task force demonstrates how to subdue terrorists during an exercise at the 59th National Day celebrations in Kuala Lumpur.



Malaysia's landmark Petronas Twin Towers illuminate the night skyline.

Afghanistan in the 1980s and Bosnia in the 1990s drew Malaysian male fighters, but Syria has also appealed to women and families. Of more than 60 known Malaysians who traveled to Syria and are still alive, 12 are women and 17 are children (nine are boys and eight are girls). Whole families have uprooted themselves and traveled to Syria in an imagined tradition of the *hijrah*, the journey of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad. They envision the promise of a puritanical land and an impending resurrection of the golden age of Islam. That ISIS, in particular, has captured actual territory in Syria and Iraq and governed those areas has lent credence to pretensions of a viable state.

As of January 2017, approximately 20 Malaysian militants had died in Syria. This number will no doubt rise with time. What is extraordinary, however, is that there have already been nine Malaysian suicide bombers. Given the deeply ingrained religious and cultural taboos surrounding suicide, willingly seeking out death by suicide marks a consequential breach of those taboos and a psychological leap of faith for these Malaysian Muslims. Part of this willingness has reportedly arisen out of desperation. With reports of discrimination and non-Arab/non-Caucasian fighters being relegated to menial housekeeping tasks, Malaysians there have felt compelled to prove their worth with the ultimate sacrifice. Another explanation is that these individuals genuinely believe in — or, at least, hope — that their actions will count as martyrdom, guaranteeing an afterlife in paradise rather than twin acts of murder and pointless suicide.

SOLO ACTORS

Malaysian police consider the threat posed by autonomous actors to be more dangerous than that by ISIS as an organized group. This point is illustrated by several attempts by individuals in 2016 to carry out the mandate of ISIS in Malaysia, including a teenager who used a knife to take a woman hostage in a supermarket. It is unclear, however, just how many of these actors were inspired by ISIS and how many were directly ordered by the group. A video by Katibah Nusantara, the Malay-speaking arm of ISIS, was rereleased in 2016 from a few years prior to agitate for more single-individual attacks, essentially sowing the seeds of chaos.

COUNTERMESSAGING

Like many governments elsewhere, Malaysia has struggled to counter the message of groups like ISIS, in substance and in reach. In May 2015, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also Minister of Home Affairs, reported to Parliament that 75 percent of the more than 100 people arrested had been recruited through social media. Many of them were first-time offenders. An overwhelming majority of Malaysian militants in Syria — 95 percent — were recruited through social media. The oath of allegiance — *bai'ah* — used to be administered in person, but now it can be done online and remotely through chat applications.

Although Southeast Asia was initially slow to respond to these messages, there have since been a number of promising startup counternarrative efforts, including the touted Regional Digital Counter-Messaging

Communication Centre (RDC3) in Malaysia. It's too early to assess such initiatives, but governments that run countermessaging initiatives are handicapped by a trust deficit with their target audience. Counternarratives, after all, hinge on the credibility of their message and messenger. While governments must be seen to be countering terrorism, there is a strong argument to be made that counternarratives should be focused on operational aspects such as law enforcement as well as the institutional task of governing.

TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS

Technology has proven to help radicalization occur faster than before, but terrorists are not created overnight. The online networks that prod an individual into action are almost always cultivated by a complex ecosystem offline that weaves personal experiences with external grievances. Detainee information in Malaysia shows that there is no single profile of a terrorist. Those inspired by ISIS come from different professional, educational and demographic backgrounds. They range in age from 15 to older than 50. They are mechanics, military personnel, religious clerics, senior government officials, pop stars and documentary makers. Some are hardened longtime militants whose commitment extends to the Afghan days. Others are driven by a sense of purpose, adventure, the search for redemption or a combination of all. Many are aggrieved by injustice, whether at home or abroad. Technology merely amplifies these deeper undertones of — often political — dissatisfaction.

Ahmad Salman Rahim, perhaps Malaysia's most visible militant online until he went dark and then was killed in Syria in early 2016, was deeply resentful of political developments in the country and of oppression of fellow Muslims in Burma, Palestine and elsewhere. He attempted to travel to 11 countries to redress these injustices firsthand before finally arriving in Syria. Rather than aligning himself with any particular faction in Syria, he saw himself as a freelance mercenary of God.

Malaysia's experience with terrorist groups shows clearly that, whether cast in terms of ethnonationalism or religion, all these groups have sought to provoke political change through violence. Because the drivers of radicalization, extremism and terrorism are structural and superficial, any effective strategy must recruit a range of stakeholders within government and society at large. Crucially, it must address real and perceived political failings. Very often, counterterrorism strategy is reactive rather than reflective. Like the proverbial disease, it is no doubt easier to manage and treat the symptoms rather than its cause. In recent times, a shift in linguistic emphasis in favor of the term preventing violent extremism suggests a comprehensive and holistic strategy to address root causes. This is the

right approach, but the choice of terminology arguably matters less in this case than the actual and effective implementation of that strategy.

Where language does matter, however, is in casting the nature of the beast. As much as its definition continues to be debated, at its core, terrorism is a violent and criminal means of political change. It is this political characteristic that distinguishes it from other criminal offenses. As a crime, it should be prosecuted first and foremost through law enforcement and intelligence measures, not militarily as a war. As a political problem, it requires a widely political solution.

There is no doubt religion has been co-opted into terrorism, but its role is only symptomatic. Unless religion is the cause of terrorism — and it is not — then it should not be made the sole or even primary solution. Re-characterizing the current wave of terrorism as religious — whether by terming it radical Islamic terrorism, referring to ISIS-styled militants as “jihadists,” or unthinkingly attributing the Malay phrase “mati jihad” (loosely translated to mean martyr or literally “death by/in jihad”) to suicide bombers — is problematic on many levels. It is also a sure way to guarantee unending problems and violence in the future. It pushes religion to the front and center of terrorism rather than acknowledging structural weaknesses of governance. The latter obliges governments to confront some uncomfortable truths and perceptions, of which there is understandably little interest to do. Reframing terrorism in religious terms is also a lazy and intellectually dishonest way of asking difficult questions about society: Why do individuals and families choose to upend their lives of comfort to exist in a much harsher environment? Why do youths choose death over life? Is it because they long for themselves and for others what many of us naturally do — an effective and functioning state that administers justice without fear or favor? Is it because in being sold the false advertisement of a utopia, they are failed by a system that discourages critical thinking and intellectual rigor and that instead rewards unquestioning loyalty to any figure of authority, credible or not? Finally, viewing terrorism through a religious lens also leads to policies of division and exclusion.

ISIS arose and metastasized out of a political vacuum just as al-Qaida did before it. These groups have proven to be adept at evolving in the face of existential challenges to their survival. Regardless of the form they take in the future, the key is an effective response and institutional bulwark against their ideology. There is not one approach, given the many different drivers of terrorism in Malaysia, Southeast Asia and the rest of the world. The search for answers requires governments to ask questions that foster an environment where people generate ideas to create change. □

EYES ON THE WATER



MALAYSIA EMPLOYS SEA BASES TO GUARD AGAINST TERROR THREATS

FORUM STAFF | PHOTOS COURTESY ROYAL MALAYSIAN NAVY

They came by motorboat — about 235 militants, some armed — from a Sulu archipelago in the southern Philippines with their sights on taking over part of Sabah, Malaysia, an area formerly known as North Borneo.

What is now referred to as the Lahad Datu standoff of 2013 exacted a heavy toll on the militants and Malaysian security forces. It also triggered a new way of thinking about how Malaysia should defend itself against terror threats from the sea.

The attempted takeover by the Royal Security Forces of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo on February 11, 2013, caught Malaysia and the Philippines by surprise, according to an analysis by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington, D.C., think tank. It also led to an innovative solution by the Malaysian military — the creation of fixed and mobile sea bases to stop threats before they reach shore.

The Malaysian government teamed with private companies to reconfigure a decommissioned oil rig and cargo ships into sea bases, which serve as forward operating posts for military personnel. They also serve as launch points for high-speed interceptor boats, patrol boats, helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles.

Adm. Kamarulzaman Ahmad Badaruddin, chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, told *FORUM*, “If you’ve got a situation or any challenge, you have to look at all of these challenges and turn them into opportunities. This is a very innovative approach to addressing some of the capability gaps.”

The invasion that triggered the sea basing project started when Jamalul Kiram III, one of the claimants to the throne of the Sulu sultanate, tried to assert an unresolved territorial claim of the Philippines to eastern Sabah in Malaysia.

Once alerted to the threat, Malaysian security forces surrounded the village of Tanduo in Lahad

Datu and, after weeks of failed negotiations, routed the militants. Once the standoff was over, 56 militants, six civilians and 10 members of the Malaysian security forces were killed.

The conflict illuminated the fact that the maritime domain of eastern Sabah — a rugged, 1,733-kilometer coastline east of Malaysia encompassing more than 53,000 square kilometers of water — needed security protection 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, Kamarulzaman said.

Security threats today are more multifaceted than they were in the days of the Lahad Datu standoff.

Kamarulzaman explained that the influence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has spread throughout the southern Philippines, inspiring organizations that include the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and the Raja Solaiman Movement to threaten the region’s security and to operate off Malaysia’s coasts.

ASG fighters, who have engaged in numerous kidnappings for ransom in the waters east of Malaysia, have pledged their allegiance to ISIS, Kamarulzaman noted. “That brings the terrorism factor into the domain, and something we have to be very concerned about,” he said.



Adm. Kamarulzaman Ahmad Badaruddin, chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy

In addition to the creation of sea bases, Malaysia is working with Indonesia and the Philippines on coordinated sea patrols. “They [ASG] are using any opportunity to kidnap for ransom,” he said, “but we have a high level of confidence and trust between the nations. The discussions are occurring at the highest levels to figure out how to operationalize this concept.”

As for stationing military personnel in the water as a first line of defense, the admiral said a public-private partnership was formed with the Malaysian oil giant Petronas, which funded the project.

The Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) worked with Petronas to retrofit a decommissioned oil rig and two container ships to create sea bases named Sharifah Roziah, Tun Azizan and Bunga Mas 5.

The sea bases have surprising capacity. One mobile sea base — the converted cargo ship Tun Azizan, for example — can accommodate 99 crew and has sleeping quarters, a laundry room, food storage, a communications room, power generation, a freshwater drinking supply and room for military equipment.

The Tun Azizan was named after the late Tun Azizan Zainul Abidin, former chief executive officer and president of Petronas. The oil rig sea base, which is a fixed platform, was named after the late Tun Sharifah Rodziah, third wife of the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, the first prime minister of Malaysia.

The radar-equipped sea bases have multiple functions, according to documents supplied by the Royal Malaysian Navy.

- **Command and control:** The platforms serve as command and control centers to coordinate military operations. With the assistance of helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles and interceptor boats, they can block terrorists or pirates from infiltrating the territorial waters of Malaysia.
- **Logistical support:** The sea bases can be used not only by the MAF but also by other police and government agencies. They are used for refueling boats and helicopters, medical services, medical evacuations and even for providing a comfortable place for Sailors to get a meal and rest.



The converted cargo ship Tun Azizan can hold 99 crew and has sleeping quarters, a laundry room, food storage, a communications room and a freshwater drinking supply.

- **Deterrence:** The presence of sea bases provides visible deterrence against terror threats.

Petronas and one of its subsidiaries, the Malaysia International Shipping Corp. (MISC), funded the retrofitting of the cargo ships and oil rig and the staffing of the sea bases. Crews on the converted container ships are from the shipping company. They receive training from the military and become auxiliary crews of the Royal Malaysian Navy, Kamarulzaman said.

He said the investments yield dividends for the companies. First, Petronas and MISC have an interest in protecting their investments — ships and oil rigs — and the sea bases safeguard those. There is also an added personnel benefit, he said.

“They realize over time that their crews become more disciplined” with uniforms and military training, he said. “They become more patriotic because they feel like they are contributing to national security.”

The companies contribute to the welfare of their businesses, the admiral added, and Malaysia gets a work force “free of charge.”

The bases aren’t exclusively used by the military, however. They can be accessed by marine police, customs officials and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, for example. “This [sea basing concept] brings people together,” the admiral said. “It breaks barriers, breaks silos. It’s very exciting, and we are happy with the outcome.”

Perhaps the biggest benefit is improved response time. “We need to respond more quickly to threats,” the admiral said.

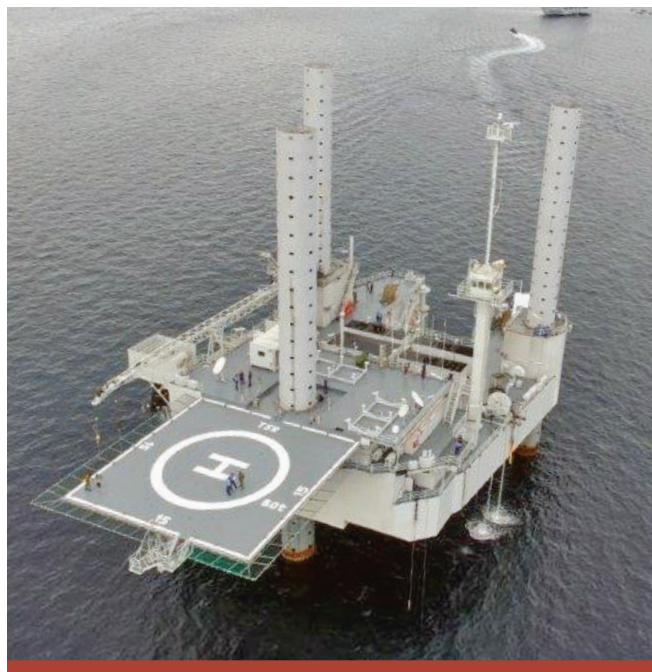
NEW METHODS, OLD CONCEPT

While Malaysia’s privately funded sea bases have blazed new frontiers in modern military planning, the concept of creating bases at sea is more than a century old.

In a report published by the U.S. Naval War College in 2011, retired U.S. Navy Capt. Sam J. Tangredi wrote that U.S. forces have been using sea bases since the Navy became a global force at the turn of the last century. “The World War II ‘fleet train’ [auxiliaries, oilers and supply ships that replenished the combatant ships at sea] that provided the U.S. battle fleet with such unprecedented range and freedom of action” could be considered sea bases, since they allowed the fleet to resupply at sea or in isolated anchorages, wrote Tangredi, who at the time was regional director of the consulting firm Strategic Insight Ltd.

The U.S. military has long used surface ships for resupply and to support aircraft and strike systems, such as Tomahawk cruise missile systems.

What’s new in Malaysia is that the country enlisted a private company to pay for and staff the bases and that the bases weren’t originally created for that purpose. Defense Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said in a report published by the *Daily Express* newspaper in Malaysia that other countries could potentially replicate his model.



This decommissioned oil rig was converted into a fixed sea base capable of launching boats and helicopters. The Malaysian oil giant Petronas donated the rig and funded the conversion.

“We used assets which are no longer in use, such as the Petronas’ unused platform and upgraded by Petronas,” he told the *Daily Express*. “The cost to build and repair was borne by the company. The implementation of the sea basing is an out-of-the-box approach, a fruit of my own initiative, and it was the first such approach in the world, which is now a model of defense for other countries.”

Kamarulzaman said other countries have inquired about how Malaysia established its sea bases. It helps, he said, to have such a well-funded partner. Petronas, for example, was established in 1974 and is ranked among the largest corporations in the world by *Fortune* magazine.

“We are pushing people to work together,” he said. “There has been a lot of interest about how we are doing this.”

The sea bases are part of a broader security apparatus called the Eastern Sabah Security Command, which was established in March 2013 after the Lahad Datu standoff.

The strengthening of security forces on and off the eastern coast of Malaysia has already paid dividends. On December 5, 2016, security forces killed three alleged kidnappers and arrested two others in a shootout near Palau Gaya, Semporna.

The prime minister attributed the killings and captures to tactical shifts and to his country’s beefed-up commitment to protecting the residents of eastern Sabah. “We hope this will serve as a warning that we are very serious and will use every means possible to safeguard the people in Sabah, particularly in the east coast,” Prime Minister Najib Razak said, according to freemalaysiatoday.com. □

INTERNATIONAL PEER PRESSURE

GREENPEACE CASE RESEMBLES SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE

FORUM STAFF | PHOTOS BY REUTERS

They became known as the Arctic 30, a crew of Greenpeace activists and a few journalists who landed in a Russian jail after two of them tried to scale an oil drilling platform during a 2013 protest.

Their tale — spiced with international intrigue, an arbitration court ruling and worldwide condemnation toward their captors — bears similarities to China's court case in the South China Sea, legal scholars say.

International tribunals ruled against Russia and China in their respective cases. Both major powers refused to participate in the legal proceedings, and both received worldwide criticism.

While China's future with its neighbors remains an unfolding story, lessons from the case of the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise illustrate that international law carries weight, even when world powers seem to ignore it, experts say.

"The lack of enforcement mechanisms in international law does not mean that there are no costs to non-compliance," asserted authors Lan Nguyen and Truong Minh Vu in an article for the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "The few instances in which states openly defied a court or arbitral tribunal's decisions have mostly involved great powers. But even in those cases, decisions that were initially ignored were eventually complied with to a certain extent."

Nguyen is a lecturer and researcher of international law at the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam in Hanoi. Vu is director of the Center for International Studies at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

AN ICY STANDOFF

A case study for looking at how international legal rulings can pressure powerful countries into resolving disputes began in the ice-cold waters of the Barents Sea north of Russia.

Greenpeace International used the Arctic Sunrise ship on September 18, 2013, to stage a protest of

Russian offshore drilling. With 30 people aboard, the Arctic Sunrise launched five inflatable boats, which approached a drilling platform.

Two Greenpeace activists scaled the side of the rig but were repelled by water cannons, according to a case summary from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS). Meanwhile, the Russian Coast Guard vessel Ladoga launched two inflatable boats to intercept the protesters.

Although the Arctic Sunrise tried evasive maneuvers, a Russian helicopter landed on the vessel on September 19, 2013. Shortly afterward, the Russians towed the ship to the northern port city of Murmansk.

Once there, the 30 people on board were arrested and charged with the criminal offense of piracy. Authorities later downgraded the charges to hooliganism, and the Russians also seized the Dutch-flagged ship.

The jailing of the activists sparked an international firestorm.

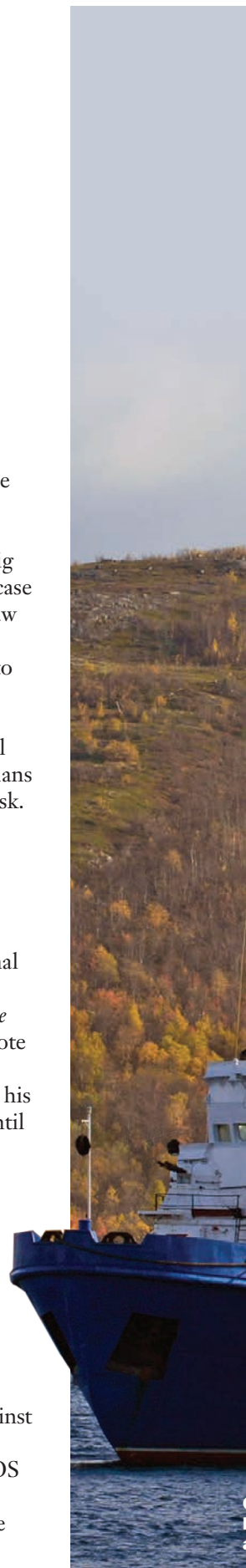
In his book, *My Adventures in Protecting the Future of Our Planet*, Arctic Sunrise Capt. Peter Willcox wrote that he received "Free the Arctic 30" greeting cards from 8-year-old children in Africa. He didn't realize his detention had generated such a worldwide outcry until he was out from behind jail bars.

"It's an amazing feeling to realize that hundreds of 'Free the Arctic 30' protests demanding your release have taken place in dozens of countries around the world," Willcox wrote. "Words can't describe it, so I won't try. The bottom line is that the international reaction makes me believe that what Greenpeace is doing is deeply appreciated and important."

BAD OPTICS

The headlines took on an even more critical tone against Russia once the international tribunal got involved.

The government of the Netherlands asked ITLOS to find that Russia violated international law by establishing a 3-nautical-mile safety zone around the drilling platform and that it detained the crew and



While China's future with its neighbors remains an unfolding story, lessons from the case of the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise illustrate that international law carries weight, even when world powers seem to ignore it.



Officials towed the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise to Murmansk, Russia, in September 2013 after Russian authorities arrested activists who attempted to scale an oil drilling platform.



Greenpeace activists hold pictures showing the 30 people arrested in Russia over a protest against oil drilling. The demonstration occurred at the 19th conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Warsaw in November 2013.

seized the Arctic Sunrise without the consent of the Netherlands. On November 22, 2013, the tribunal issued an order calling for the immediate release of the Arctic Sunrise and the Arctic 30.

ITLOS said Russia had no evidence to conclude that relevant Russian laws were being broken that would allow it to board the ship. The tribunal also had no reason to believe the ship was engaged in terrorist acts, which would have given the Russians a legal basis to board and possibly seize the vessel.

The Arctic 30 were not freed immediately, so the Greenpeace publicity machine grew louder by the day.

“Thousands of people had protested in front of numerous Russian embassies,” Willcox wrote. “Letters from statesmen, world leaders, religious leaders, celebrities, actors and media figures from every corner of the globe joined in the effort to release us. It’s an impressive list, and it’s not just the length of the list that’s amazing, it’s the breadth of it: 12 Nobel Prize winners. Paul McCartney. The Pope. Madonna. (It’s not too often that the Pope and Madonna are in agreement on anything!)”

The Russians released the Arctic 30 a week after the tribunal’s ruling and after the crew had spent about two months in jail. The Russian government, however, never acknowledged the ITLOS ruling as legitimate. The captain and crew were released as part of a general amnesty bill passed by lawmakers.

“On the whole, we are seriously concerned by the fact that this judgment actually encourages maritime protests which are far from being peaceful and which create impediments for absolutely lawful activities in the exclusive economic zone and on the continental shelf, and thereby violate the lawful rights of individuals and littoral states,” said Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova, according to Interfax news agency.

Greenpeace eventually got its ship back, too. The Russians released it from the port city in June 2014.

The Russians, in essence, accommodated the ITLOS ruling without acknowledging it, said Professor Peter Dutton, director of the China Maritime Studies Institute at the U.S. Naval War College. “They found a way through their own domestic institutions to achieve the same result,” Dutton told *FORUM*. The manner in which the Russians complied, Dutton said, allowed them to “preserve their dignity as a great power” while gaining control over how the ruling was accommodated.

POTENTIAL FOR PARALLEL PATHS

Russia’s path toward compliance could be a possible — if not predictable — path for China to take in its legal battles over maritime disputes in the South China Sea, Dutton said.

An arbitration panel at The Hague sided with the Philippines when it challenged China’s attempt to control



French actress Marion Cotillard, right, and Greenpeace activists protest inside a mock prison cell to lobby for the release of the Arctic Sunrise crew.

vast areas of water and shoals in the South China Sea. China also has built artificial islands in the sea and equipped them with military facilities.

The arbitration panel said China has no legal basis for its expansive claim to sovereignty over waters in the South China Sea and that China also caused irreparable harm to the marine environment by constructing artificial islands.

Dutton believes China's relationships with its neighbors — Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also have claims to the energy-rich waters — could hinge on whether it eventually respects the legal decision.

"China has the option of accommodating the opinion by bringing its claims into alignment with it and by becoming more cooperative with parties in the region," Dutton said. He said that water resources could be jointly managed, adding that it's a "decades-old idea but a good one."

Other scholars also point to the Arctic Sunrise case as a possible parallel. Law Professor Jerome A. Cohen wrote in June 2016 that China and the Philippines could take into account the arbitration ruling in their negotiations without formally mentioning it.

Cohen, an adjunct senior fellow for Asia at the Council on Foreign Relations, wrote that India served as a role model for how "great powers should accept the

decision of an expert panel of independent arbitrators" in its dispute with Bangladesh over the Bay of Bengal.

In July 2014, a United Nations arbitration panel at The Hague awarded to Bangladesh about four-fifths of a disputed area in the Bay of Bengal encompassing 19,467 square kilometers. The ruling opened the way for energy exploration and settled a long-running territorial dispute between Bangladesh and India. Both countries promised to abide by the decision.

The triangular Bay of Bengal is important for shipping and fishing and has substantial oil and mineral reserves.

Rather than decrying the ruling as illegitimate, India's Foreign Ministry released a statement that said the decision would "further enhance mutual understanding and goodwill" between the neighbors "by bringing to closure a long-pending issue."

While China has continually criticized the South China Sea ruling and refused to acknowledge its legitimacy, Cohen wrote that China could come into compliance and save face by taking a more low-key approach.

For China, saving face is "crucial, of course," he wrote. "But with every Beijing propaganda blast, it will become harder to save."

A decision by China to accommodate the decision, Dutton said, will only help China in the long run. "They have really done generational damage to their relationships with Southeast Asian states," he said. □

Countering *Human* TRAFFICKING

The Indo-Asia-Pacific region has improved prosecution, protection and prevention efforts, but many challenges remain

FORUM STAFF

An earthquake ravaged Nepal on April 25, 2015, killing 9,000 people and leaving more than 600,000 families without homes or means to make a living. Preying on the devastated, newly vulnerable population, human traffickers moved in, according to a report by the Public Radio International website, www.pri.org. Under nefarious pretenses, “a man marries one woman and sends her abroad, then marries another woman and sends her away,” explained Sunita Bhukhaju, who operates Partnership Nepal, a local nongovernmental organization.

“After the earthquake, [trafficking] is increasing by the day,” she said. Soon, “the office might close, so there won’t be anyone to stop them” because their funding was due to run out, Bhukhaju told Public Radio International in November 2016.

Families who face economic hardship after natural disasters make easy targets for human traffickers, experts say. Nepal police and activists estimate trafficking has increased as much as 20 percent in the aftermath of the quake. Without much hope, “many are sold into a global network that includes the dance bars of Kenya, the brothels and



Lalee Kolhi, a freed bonded laborer turned activist, sits at her home on the outskirts of Hyderabad in Pakistan's Sindh province. She worked for more than 20 years for a landlord in slave-like conditions. REUTERS



Myint Naing, a former slave fisherman, rests at a government hostel in Yangon, Burma. He spent more than two decades in Indonesia after being enslaved on Thai fishing boats.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

underground organ clinics of India, ‘paper marriages’ of South Korea and China, home-cleaning services in the Middle East, slave labor in South

Asia and smuggling rings at the Mexico-U.S. border,” Public Radio International reported.

Trafficking and forced labor are growing problems across the Indo-Asia-Pacific. The 2016 Global Slavery Index estimated that more than 30.4 million people were enslaved in the Asia-Pacific region (includes Pakistan and Afghanistan), which is more than two-thirds of the people entrapped worldwide in modern slavery. That number includes trafficking and forced labor. “Trafficking in persons” and “human trafficking” have been used as umbrella terms for the act of recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing or obtaining a person for compelled labor or commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud or coercion, according to the U.S. State Department definition. In 2016, more than 18.3 million people were living in slavery in India and more than 11.8 million were in member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Over 11.7 million people are victims of forced labor in the Indo-Asia-Pacific, according to the United Nations International Labor Organization. Males and females of all ages, including children, are used as slave laborers for domestic work, construction and the seafood industry. In Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for instance, experts estimate that more than 28,000 children work as domestic slaves, according to a report

by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Companies often use forced labor in Southeast Asia’s seafood industry, according to media reports. Workers fall prey to debt bondage, passport seizure and fake job offers, and end up facing abuse and wrongful detainment aboard fishing vessels, widespread media accounts have revealed in recent years.

“The high prevalence of modern slavery in the region reflects the reality that many countries in Asia provide low-skilled labor for the production stage of global supply chains for various industries including food production, garments and technology,” wrote the authors of the 2016 Global Slavery Index, an annual study of worldwide slavery conditions published by the Walk Free Foundation.

Although the prevalence of natural disasters in the region contributes to the conditions that increase peoples’ susceptibility to human trafficking and forced labor, other factors such as armed conflict, religious persecution and racial discrimination also impact the situation. Poverty, lack of employment, economic underdevelopment, poor education and a lack of rule of law in source countries also contribute, according to “Australia and the Anti-Trafficking Regime in Southeast Asia,” a November 2016 report released by the Lowy Institute for International Policy, an Australian think tank, and written by Jiyoung Song, director of its Migration and Border Policy Project. Corruption of government officials and a lack of police training also contribute, Song wrote.

“Vulnerability to modern slavery is affected by a complex interaction of factors related to the presence

or absence of protection and respect for rights, physical safety and security, access to the necessities of life such as food, water and health care, and patterns of migration, displacement and conflict,” explained the authors of the 2016 Global Slavery Index, which also ranks countries by relative vulnerability. In the extended Indo-Asia-Pacific region, Afghanistan, Brunei, Burma, China, India, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Thailand, round out the top 10 at-risk nations, according to the index.

Although progress has been made to counter human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery in the Indo-Asia-Pacific, much work remains, especially in ASEAN nations, because the risks continue to evolve and expand in the region and globally. Virtual trafficking — trafficking created, simulated or carried on by means of a computer or computer network, which often involves children — is an emerging type of this crime. Many experts look to multilateral engagement as a key part of effective anti-trafficking endeavors.

The 2016 “Trafficking in Persons Report,” published by the U.S. Department of State, reveals that no country in the Indo-Asia-Pacific has what it considers an excellent record of fighting human trafficking and that many countries need to do much more to keep pace with traffickers as economies rapidly develop and populations grow. The report authors put Burma, the Marshall Islands, North Korea, Papua New Guinea and Uzbekistan in the lowest ranking tier (red on p. 35 map) for their policy responses to human trafficking — essentially, they are not making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards defined by the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act, which was enacted in 2000 to combat human trafficking worldwide and domestically by assisting in coordinating such efforts. Meanwhile, Brunei, China, Kiribati, Laos, Maldives, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Tonga fall in its second lowest tier or watch list (orange), which mean although these nations are making efforts, trafficking remains a significant problem and may even be increasing there.

However, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea have done the most in the region to curb trafficking and fall in the report’s top tier (green) of countries, which means their governments fully meet the minimum standards of the act.

Multilateral Countermeasures

The 2000 U.N. Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, known as the Palermo Protocol, initiated the international effort to combat human trafficking. The protocol is a multilateral treaty against transnational organized crime. Since then various multilateral organizations have increased efforts to fight trafficking by combining their member states’ expertise and resources to break down trafficking networks and empower vulnerable populations. Multilateral forums also provide a way for member states, nongovernmental

organizations (NGOs), the private sector and survivors to share lessons learned and develop innovative solutions to address new and emerging issues related to human trafficking.

For example, the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime soon followed in 2002 to set up a stronger framework for fighting trafficking in Southeast Asia. Since then, the members of ASEAN, with the exception of Laos, have toughened laws to counter trafficking. Moreover,



Two prostitutes live near the red light district of Moroseneng in Klakah Rejo in Indonesia. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

the laws of Brunei, Cambodia, Singapore and Vietnam could still be strengthened, Song wrote in the 2016 Lowy Institute study.

Australia has shown the strongest government response to modern slavery in the region since the Palermo Protocol was established and in recent years has become increasingly multilateral in its approach. In August 2013, Australia launched the U.S. \$50 million Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons to build capacity of governments in the region for criminal justice responses. It mainly targets source countries such as Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam. Australia also established bilateral agreements with many ASEAN countries on human trafficking.

ASEAN members are moving toward signing and ratifying the U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children as a supplement to the Palermo Protocol. In 2015, ASEAN adopted the ASEAN Convention



PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT AGENCY BUREAU of IMMIGRATION

Prohibits these practices by any individual, entity, licensee or holder of authority:

- To charge or accept, directly or indirectly, any amount greater than that specified in the schedule of allowable fees prescribed by the secretary of labor, or to make a worker pay any amount greater than that actually received by him as a loan or advance.
- To furnish or publish any false notice or information or document in relation to recruitment or employment.
- To give any false notice, testimony, information or document or commit any act of misrepresentation for the purpose of securing a license or authority under this code.
- To induce or attempt to induce a worker already employed to quit his employment in order to offer him to another unless the transfer is designed to liberate the worker from oppressive terms and conditions of employment.
- To influence or to attempt to influence any person or entity not to employ any worker who has not applied for employment through his agency.
- To engage in the recruitment or placement of workers in jobs harmful to public health or morality or to the dignity of the Republic of the Philippines.
- To obstruct or attempt to obstruct inspection by the secretary of labor or by his duly authorized representatives.
- To fail to file reports on the status of employment, placement vacancies, remittance of foreign exchange earnings, separation from jobs, departures and such other matters or information as may be required by the secretary of labor.
- To substitute or alter employment contracts approved and verified by the department of labor from the time of actual signing thereof by the parties up to and including the periods of expiration of the same without the approval of the secretary of labor.
- To become an officer or member of the board of any corporation engaged in travel agency or to be engaged directly or indirectly in the management of a travel agency.
- To withhold or deny travel documents from applicant workers before departure for monetary or financial considerations other than those authorized under this code and its implementing rules and regulations.

Against Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children. To date, Cambodia, Singapore and Thailand have ratified it, and more member nations are expected to follow suit, including Indonesia. Six of the 10 member countries must adopt it for it to be enforced.

In January 2017, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced a new regional program to combat human trafficking in Asia. USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia's five-year, U.S. \$21.5 million USAID Asia Counter Trafficking in Persons program will support ASEAN member states as they implement the convention and take steps to stem the demand and supply for trafficked people, the *Nation* magazine reported. At first, the program will address the problem in the Lower Mekong countries of Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam and then reach to other ASEAN member states, South Asia, and destination countries in East Asia and the Gulf states. USAID and Winrock International, a U.S.-based development organization, will work with Asian governments, civil society organizations, government social services, law enforcement and health care providers in the region to counter human trafficking in Asia, according to a USAID statement. Ongoing USAID activities to combat human trafficking in Asia include three programs in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Nepal, according to the *Nation*.

Innovative Solutions

Countries in the region are also tackling specific components of human trafficking. In March 2016, 13 Indo-Asia-Pacific nations, including Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea, endorsed the Kathmandu Declaration to end child marriage in South Asia. The minimum age for marriage is now lower than 18, according to the Kathmandu Declaration. Many steps remain to make this a reality, but India, Bangladesh and Nepal are making progress by developing national strategies.

Governments and the private sector, often through partnership agreements, are using other successful innovations. Interpol provides its 190 member countries with resources to combat transnational crime, including human trafficking. When requested, Interpol, for instance, publishes lists of people who present a public danger on the basis of past criminal history.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Agency organizes community seminars and forums for prospective migrant workers to advise them on illegal practices (see sidebar) and to help them identify illegal labor recruiters and human traffickers. The agency's Bureau of Immigration issues guidelines on departures for people traveling

abroad and has established rules for inspectors to identify potential victims of trafficking before they leave the country.

Meanwhile, Manav Sansadhan Evam Mahila Vikas Sansthan, an Indian NGO that has worked for decades with communities in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh to eradicate forced and bonded labor, developed a community empowerment model to assist vulnerable populations, which decreased trafficking in the area over a four-year period, according to a 2016 Harvard University study, “When We Raise Our Voice: The Challenge of Eradicating Labor Exploitation.” Another Indian NGO engaged with journalists to raise awareness of human trafficking within minority and marginalized communities through a 2015 pilot program, according to a U.S. State Department report. “The organization trained journalists on how to better report cases of human trafficking, including bonded labor, for their audiences. These efforts aimed to better inform people in remote communities who may only get news in their local language, and may not often see reporting on human trafficking,” the U.S. State Department said. Moreover, “reporters uncovered human trafficking cases within their own communities and increased attention on the role of state government and police in prevention efforts,” the report said.

The number of successful rescue operations continues to increase. In India, police and activists have teamed up with a project called Operation Smile, which provides facial reconstruction surgery to children, to free children from forced labor. “Over 2,000 children have been rescued from Hyderabad alone since 2015, and the numbers in each drive have gradually been declining,” Mohammed Imtiaz Raheem, Hyderabad district’s child protection officer, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. In 2015, the U.N. International Labor Organization estimated that, of the 168 million child workers worldwide (people 5-17 years of age), 7.5 million are in India, Reuters reported, but many NGOs contend the real figure is up to 60 million. About half of child laborers work in agriculture and a quarter in manufacturing, according to the U.N. agency.

“We are investigating the nexus between the employers and the traffickers,” said Swathi Lakra, a police commissioner in Hyderabad, after the rescue of 200 more children in January 2017 from a brick kiln on the outskirts of the city, according to Reuters. “In many cases, parents are only too willing to send their children for work, which works well for the traffickers.”

Similarly, officials in countries plagued by forced labor have rescued an increasing number of trafficked fishermen. In 2015, Indonesia authorities with help from the International Organization for Migration, freed 2,000 fishermen and returned them to their home countries and revoked the licenses of the companies who used their work.



Burmese men, who were forced to work for little or no pay on Indonesian fishing boats, arrive at Yangon International Airport. REUTERS

Future Directions

In the 26 years since the introduction of the Palermo Protocol, the international push to combat trafficking has improved prevention, prosecution and protection efforts, yet significant challenges remain, experts contend.

“Despite sustained anti-trafficking efforts, millions of individuals are bound by mental, physical, and financial coercion and manipulation by traffickers who exploit their vulnerabilities for profit. Whether they are victims of sex or labor trafficking, the suffering of these individuals is unconscionable,” the authors of the 2016 “Trafficking in Persons” report wrote. “Governments must work in partnership with NGOs, survivors, community and religious leaders, and the private sector to study vulnerable populations and develop targeted strategies to prevent and address the factors that drive modern slavery in their communities. Without prevention, governments are left to respond to the consequences of human trafficking without coming any nearer to seeing its end.”

In general, victims need to be better protected, and more work must be done to help reintegrate them back into communities, other experts argue. For example, “within ASEAN states significant gaps remain in the implementation of legislation and policies to combat trafficking, especially in relation to victim protection and sustainable return,” Song asserted in the Lowy Institute report.

Multilateral cooperation and partnerships between internal and external stakeholders can raise awareness, share knowledge and develop and implement new and better solutions. Although prevention efforts are often difficult to quantify, they can be successfully executed with broad-based support from all sectors of society, many policy experts and advocates contend. □



Human Trafficking in the Indo-Asia-Pacific Tier Placements

- **TIER 1:**
Countries whose governments fully meet the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards.
- **TIER 2:**
Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to meet those standards.
- **TIER 2 WATCH LIST:**
Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to meet those standards AND:
 - a) The **absolute number of victims** of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing;
 - b) There is a **failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts** to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year, including increased investigations, prosecutions, and convictions of trafficking crimes, increased assistance to victims, and decreasing evidence of complicity in severe forms of trafficking by government officials; or
 - c) The determination that a country is making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards was based on commitments **by the country to take additional future steps over the next year.**
- **TIER 3:**
Countries whose governments do not fully meet the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

SOURCE: 2016 "Trafficking in Persons Report," U.S. Department of State

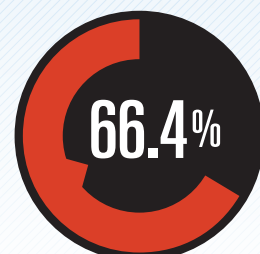
Indo-Asia-Pacific Region

Estimated Number Enslaved:

30,435,300

**REGIONAL
PROPORTION**

of Global Number:



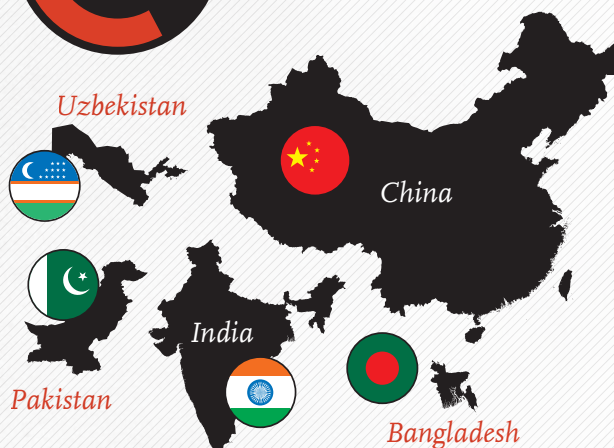
FORUM ILLUSTRATION

SOURCE: 2016 Global Slavery Index website (www.globalslaveryindex.org)

Estimated number of people in
MODERN SLAVERY WORLDWIDE:
45.8 MILLION



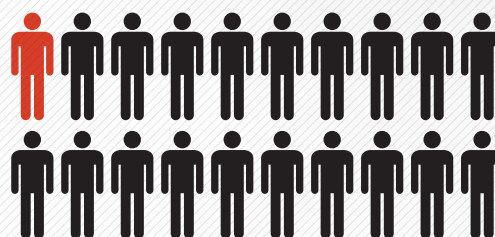
of those in slavery are in
FIVE COUNTRIES:



In 2016, North Korea
had the highest estimated
proportion of modern
slavery by population,
with nearly



1 in 20 North Koreans estimated
to be in modern slavery.



*“Pervasive evidence exists that citizens are
subjected to state-sanctioned forced labor,
including forced labor as political prisoners
and as workers on overseas contracts.”*

Top 10 countries
with the largest
estimated absolute
numbers of people
in modern slavery
include some of
the world's most
populous countries.

The countries, in order
of highest number of
slaves, are:

- INDIA**
- CHINA**
- PAKISTAN**
- BANGLADESH**
- UZBEKISTAN**
- NORTH KOREA**
- RUSSIA**
- NIGERIA**
- THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**
- INDONESIA**

HIGHEST PROPORTION OF POPULATION LIVING IN MODERN SLAVERY

Rank	Country	Estimated % of population in modern slavery	Estimated number of people in modern slavery	Population
1	NORTH KOREA	4.373 %	1,100,000	25,155,000
2	Cambodia	1.648 %	256,800	15,578,000
3	INDIA	1.403 %	18,354,700	1,311,051,000
4	PAKISTAN	1.130 %	2,134,900	188,925,000
4	Afghanistan	1.130 %	367,600	32,527,000
5	Burma	0.956 %	515,100	53,897,000
6	BANGLADESH	0.951 %	1,531,300	160,996,000
7	Nepal	0.823 %	234,600	28,514,000
8	Brunei	0.805 %	3,400	423,000
9	Thailand	0.626 %	425,500	67,959,000
10	Papua New Guinea	0.620 %	47,200	7,619,000
11	Malaysia	0.425 %	128,800	30,331,000
12	South Korea	0.404 %	204,900	50,672,000
12	Hong Kong	0.404 %	29,500	7,287,000
13	Philippines	0.398 %	401,000	100,699,000
14	Laos	0.295 %	20,000	6,802,000
14	Mongolia	0.295 %	8,700	2,959,000
15	INDONESIA	0.286 %	736,100	257,564,000
15	Timor-Leste	0.286 %	13,500	1,235,000
16	CHINA	0.247 %	3,388,400	1,371,738,000
17	Japan	0.228 %	290,200	127,046,000
17	Taiwan	0.228 %	53,600	23,476,640
18	Sri Lanka	0.221 %	45,900	20,781,000
19	Singapore	0.165 %	9,200	5,563,000
20	Vietnam	0.152 %	139,300	91,519,000
21	Australia	0.018 %	4,300	23,772,000
21	New Zealand	0.018 %	800	4,552,000

SOURCE: 2016 Global Slavery Index website (www.globalslaveryindex.org)



STOPPING TRAFFICKING

Chinese meth gangs AT THE SOURCE
propel Philippines' drug crisis

REUTERS

It was around 10 a.m. when the raid on the Philippine pig farm began on September 22, 2016. Accompanied by fire and sanitation officials, a police team entered the compound at the foot of the extinct volcano Mount Arayat, north of Manila, on the pretext of conducting a safety inspection.

They didn't find any pigs. What they did uncover, in a hangar larger than a football field, was a raised platform supporting a diesel generator, an industrial chiller and distillation equipment — all for the production of the highly addictive drug methamphetamine. The industrial-size laboratory, the police report said, was capable of producing at least 200 kilograms of meth a day. At the time, a kilogram of meth had a street value of U.S. \$120,000.

Philippine law enforcement authorities had been alerted to the farm by locals who reported spotting vehicles with “Chinese-

looking men” entering at night and leaving before dawn. During the raid, police arrested Hong Wenzheng, a 39-year-old Chinese national from Fujian province who is now in prison awaiting trial. Four other men believed to be Chinese nationals escaped and are the target of a manhunt.

The incident points to an uncomfortable truth for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte as he wages his war on drugs: The problem he's fighting is largely made in China, the country he is embracing as a potential ally at the expense of longstanding ties with the United States.



The arrest of Hong, who has pleaded not guilty, added to the ranks of Chinese nationals arrested in the Philippines on narcotics charges. Of 77 foreign nationals arrested for meth-related drug offenses between January 2015 and mid-August 2016, nearly two-thirds were Chinese and almost a quarter were Taiwan or Hong Kong residents, according to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

Known in the trade as “cooks” and “chemists,” meth production experts from China are flown into the Philippines by drug syndicates to work at labs like the one at Mount Arayat. China isn’t only a source of methamphetamine expertise — it is also the biggest source of meth and the precursor chemicals used to produce the synthetic drug that are being smuggled into the Philippines, according to local drug enforcement officials.

“It’s safe to say that the majority of the meth we have comes from China,” said PDEA spokesman Derrick Carreon.

WARMING TO CHINA

China’s dominant role in the Philippine meth trade has not dissuaded President Duterte from cozying up to Beijing, even as he declares drugs to be his country’s greatest scourge. Duterte is waging a brutal anti-narcotics campaign that killed more than 8,000 people and led to the arrest of more than 48,000 during the first eight months of the campaign. Police are investigating several thousand more deaths.

During a trip to Beijing in October 2016, the Philippine president announced alignment with China, casting doubt on the almost seven-decade alliance between Washington and Manila. The pivot to Beijing has bewildered some drug-control officials at home, who say China’s leaders have provided little help over the years in stemming the flow of drugs into the Philippines.

“It seems there’s very little action on the part of the government of China,” said Richard Fadullon, senior deputy state prosecutor and chairman of the drugs task force at the Philippines’ Department of Justice. “You’d think that somehow it would be a cause for concern, but there doesn’t seem to be that kind of reaction.”

Duterte’s office did not respond to questions from Reuters.

As he warms to China, Duterte is also spurning the country that is the primary

source of aid and expertise to Manila in its battle against drugs — the United States.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) provides training and intelligence to drug authorities across the Philippines and supports an interagency task group at the international airport in the capital aimed at countering trafficking. Carreon said the DEA recently helped uncover six separate incidents of cocaine smuggling at the airport.

“All my friends are in the U.S. DEA,” said one senior Philippine drug control official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. “Most information comes from the U.S. DEA.”

That may change. Saying it was “deeply concerned” by reports of extrajudicial killings in Duterte’s crackdown, the United States recently said it was shifting U.S. \$5 million in funding for Philippines law enforcement away from police drug-control programs.

SKEPTICAL DRUG OFFICIALS

Since taking office on June 30, 2016, Duterte has aimed some criticism at China. He suggested after the raid on the Arayat meth lab that if Beijing considered his country a friend, China should act to stem the flow of drugs. In August 2016, his government summoned the Chinese ambassador to explain the supply of narcotics from China to the Philippines.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay told Reuters at the time that China’s ambassador to Manila, Zhao Jianhua, had rejected the charge. “I told him these reports are based on intelligence information; they have been validated so far as we are concerned,” Yasay said.

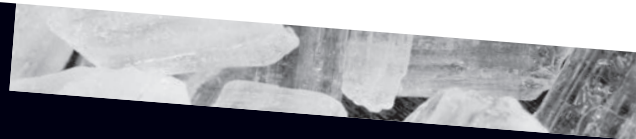
Still, Duterte has pointed to what he says is a willingness in Beijing to help Manila in its battle against drugs. Since visiting Beijing, he has not pressed the issue of drugs and precursors flowing from China. During that trip, Duterte and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to bolster exchanges of intelligence, know-how and technology in fighting drug crimes, and to set up a mechanism for joint investigation of drug cases. In a joint communiqué, the Philippines thanked China for an offer to donate drug-detection equipment and help with training.

Some Philippine drug officials scoff at China’s offers of assistance. “I almost fell off my chair when I heard that China would be helping the Philippines with its





Chinese paramilitary police seize large quantities of crystal meth at Boshe village, Guangdong province, which is an area notorious for producing narcotics. REUTERS



drug problem,” said a Department of Justice official who has been dealing with drug crimes for many years and has experienced little cooperation from Beijing.

In an interview, Philippine National Police spokesman Dionardo Carlos said: “We are not aware of any high-profile drug cooperation between China and the Philippines since the president’s visit to Beijing.”

Jeremy Douglas, regional representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, said there is “some cooperation and information exchange” taking place between the two countries on regional drug and precursor trafficking. “But we understand it is on a case-by-case basis and is not systematic or routine,” he said. “The only way to make a dent in the trade is to target those that run the business.”

Duterte regularly says he will hunt down drug lords. In October 2016, the police announced they were launching a new phase in the drug crackdown that would focus on “high-value” targets. Through mid-December 2016, however, the president’s campaign almost exclusively targeted users and small-time pushers in the country’s poorest neighborhoods, not the drug barons supplying them with meth, or “shabu,” as it is called in the Philippines. In early March 2017, Duterte reiterated his pledge to go after “high-value” targets and created a joint command to mobilize 21 state agencies. He outlined a “priority thrust” to “put behind bars” makers, dealers and traffickers of narcotics while “transforming users into productive members of society.”

MASKING THE SMELL

In another twist, China offered the Philippines assistance with drug rehabilitation during Duterte’s visit. Even as meth and precursors continue to pour into the country from China, a Chinese businessman has pledged to fund two 10,000-bed rehabilitation centers in the Philippines, which has few drug treatment facilities. One of the projects opened in late November 2016.

Drug seizures and police raids on meth labs have ticked up under Duterte. Nine laboratories have been dismantled this year, according to PDEA spokesman Carreon, which is more than in the previous three years combined. Six of these labs have been raided since Duterte took office.

Data provided by PDEA also showed that 1,520 kilograms of meth had been seized during 2016 as of November 10 – 2.5 times the figure for all of 2015. This still represents a small fraction of the amount being consumed, says the U.N.’s Douglas.

Near the site of the Mount Arayat police raid, Apolonia Pineda, 68, a local resident, recalls that Chinese men would regularly buy food from a ramshackle general store on the dirt track leading to the pig farm. “The Chinese told us they were setting up a tire factory,” she recalled.

The subterfuge had been well thought out. Head-high grass largely concealed the hangar that housed the meth lab, making it impossible for passersby to peek in.

While there were no longer any pigs at the farm, police

found several thousand hogs when they raided a piggery on the other side of Mount Arayat a few weeks earlier. There, they uncovered a smaller meth lab in the basement of a building. According to the police report, 20 kilograms of the precursor ephedrine and a small amount of methamphetamine were seized. So were seven Chinese nationals.

Drug syndicates are locating meth labs in pig farms for a reason, said Graciano Mijares, a senior police official in the region where Arayat is located. The stench from the piggeries masks the powerful odor given off by meth-cooking, he said.

CHINESE CONTROL

For centuries, Chinese traders made their way to the shores of the Philippines, landing in junks laden with ceramics, tea and silk that they exchanged for gold, wax, pearls and tortoise shells. Today, China’s exports to the archipelago of just over 100 million people include large quantities of meth and the precursors used to make the drug.

Drug control officials struggle to gauge exactly how much meth is flowing into the Philippines from China. The production volumes of plant-based drugs, like heroin and cocaine, can be calculated from crop surveys of opium poppy and coca in a particular country. It is far more difficult to quantify the production of meth, a synthetic drug made from precursor chemicals like ephedrine and pseudoephedrine that are used legally in the pharmaceutical and other industries.

The trade is controlled by small, tight-knit groups of Chinese who oversee the entire process, drug enforcement officials say, from the procurement of precursors in China to the production of the drug in the Philippines to its distribution by local gangs. Philippines police say many of those running the meth trade are Triads, the ruthless criminal syndicates that have long been involved in drug trafficking.

Precursors are abundant in China. Weak regulation of China’s vast chemical and pharmaceutical industries, as well as official corruption, have made the country “an ideal source for precursor chemicals intended for illicit drug production,” according to a U.S. State Department report in 2016.

Meth smuggled in from China is typically passed from large ships to smaller vessels, mainly off the coast of the northern Philippines island of Luzon, officials say. Packages are sometimes dropped into the sea off the Philippines’ long and poorly patrolled coastlines and picked up by fishermen. The meth then passes into the hands of local drug traffickers.

Meth production inside the Philippines requires a different operation. Precursors are often hidden in the legitimate cargoes of container ships that cross the South China Sea to the Philippines. Once on land, the chemicals are transported to labs, like the one at Mount Arayat, where a team with Chinese men has been assembled. They include a chemist to oversee production of the drug and a cook to actually make it. They come in on separate flights posing as tourists or businessmen, according to a senior drug-control official.

THE 'SHABU 11'

This was largely the template for the meth operation exposed in the case of the “Shabu 11,” as the local media dubbed them. In 2012, 11 men — including five Chinese nationals — were convicted of creating what the judge called a “mega-lab” in the city of Cebu. The lab, uncovered in 2004, aimed to produce “mind-boggling” amounts of meth in a warehouse disguised as a legitimate business, the judge ruled. All 11 pleaded not guilty.

A British national by the name of Hung Chin Chang told the court he had met Calvin de Jesus Tan, a Chinese citizen and financier of the operation, on the island of Macau. Chang testified that Tan introduced him to another Chinese man who would rent the premises for the meth lab, pull together a production team and purchase the materials.

The passports of five lab workers — a Chinese national, two Taiwanese and two Chinese Malaysians — were taken away by the team after they reached the Philippines. The group rented three warehouses, one to produce the meth, one for drying it and a third for packaging and storing the product.

In the days before the raid, a police officer testified, the warehouse’s lights had been on through the night, the machines inside were working flat out, and there was a foul odor in the air. The 11 men are all serving life sentences in a Philippine jail.

Manila’s casino resorts provide traffickers a risk-free way to launder drug cash. Meth produced at the labs is sometimes driven to casinos in the capital, where many of the high rollers are Chinese, a local drug-control official explained. With ambitions to turn Manila into one of Asia’s gambling hubs, the government has exempted casinos from anti-money-laundering laws that would oblige them to report suspicious transactions.

LIKE WHACK-A-MOLE

China has at times moved against the production of meth at large labs in its southern provinces. Thousands of suspects were detained in 2014, for instance, during an anti-drug campaign in Guangdong province.

Despite these efforts, China remains the biggest source of precursors for meth production across Asia. Globally, the bulk of the seizures of raw ephedrine in 2014 was reported by China, with 31.6 tons, according to the International Narcotics Control Board in Vienna. This was followed by the Philippines with 510 kilograms, which the UNODC believes came mainly from China.



A police officer looks at a methamphetamine lab seized by authorities in the remote village of Arayat, Pampanga. | Chinese police examine crystal methamphetamine confiscated in Guangdong province, which produces an estimated one-third of China’s output of the synthetic drug. REUTERS

The amount seized in the Philippines is “a proverbial drop in the ocean,” said the UNODC’s Douglas.

As they step up their efforts against meth production, local drug enforcement officials say they expect traffickers to move some operations to floating labs, where meth is cooked on boats moored off the coast. In July, four Hong Kong residents were arrested on a fishing boat anchored in Subic Bay, once the site of a U.S. naval base. The men have denied charges of producing and selling meth and are in jail awaiting trial.

This whack-a-mole pursuit of the Chinese meth gangs won’t work, said Fadullon, the senior Philippine justice official.

“They’ll just keep on cropping up in different areas which are least expected by the authorities.” If the Duterte government wants to get meth off the streets, he said, “eventually they will have to go to the source and come up with high-level discussions on how to put a stop to this — talking with the Chinese government.” □



Improving HUMAN RIGHTS

Regional multilateral trade agreements can improve
quality of life, create opportunities

SIDDARTH SRIVASTAVA AND JACOB DOYLE

Exasperated South Korean farmers traveled to Nairobi, Kenya, in December 2015 to protest a major pitfall of free trade: Low-cost imports, they said, were putting them out of business.

They descended on the World Trade Organization's (WTO) talks in Nairobi, and as rain poured outside the Kenyan National Archives, the group of 15 farmers sang protest songs and held banners reading, "No WTO, yes to food sovereignty!"

"We came here representing the Korean Women Peasants Association to oppose the WTO," said Hae Yeon Chung, the group's spokeswoman. "The WTO has forced us to open our markets to cheap, foreign agricultural products. Once they come into

the market, the prices plummet. So, Korean farmers cannot compete with those prices. They go into debt and leave agriculture."

The WTO, an intergovernmental body that regulates international trade among its 164 member states, is beginning to take notice of such pleas. It lists 10 benefits to joining its ranks, and they closely mirror widely recognized human rights ranging from the promotion of peace to an affordable cost of living.

Michael Moore, former WTO director-general and former New Zealand prime minister, told *FORUM* that he concurs with the concept of trade agreements promoting human rights, with some qualifications.



A South Korean farmer holds a sign during a 2015 rally in Seoul opposing a free trade agreement with China. During the past decade, South Korean farmers have increasingly expressed concerns over pacts that allow low-cost imports to drive down crop prices. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"I think trade between nations does promote human rights because trade makes countries wealthier," Moore said. "It puts a high premium on education and acquisition of skills, and therefore the countries get better when they get more skilled. But human rights is not the basis of trade."

PREVAILING PACTS

Regional multilateral free trade agreements have been in place in the Indo-Asia-Pacific since the mid-1970s. Among the most significant are the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

APTA, the oldest, was signed in 1975, with its key objective to enhance economic development among its participating states, which include Bangladesh, China, India, Laos, Mongolia, South Korea and Sri Lanka. It seeks to achieve its objective through the coverage of goods and services, a synchronized investment regime and free flow of technology transfer by "the adoption of mutually beneficial trade liberalization measures," according to the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

AFTA was signed in 1992 as an agreement among the members of the ASEAN trade bloc to eliminate import tariffs and other trade barriers among members and to attract foreign direct investment. The 10 current signatories include Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

SAFTA is an agreement signed in 2004 to create a free trade area that counts Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as its member states. A noted achievement has been the 2011 framework agreement to reduce customs duties of all goods traded between members to zero by 2016.

All Indo-Asia-Pacific countries are also members of the WTO, with the exception of Bhutan.

Moore affirmed the role of trade agreements in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region in helping to enable such widely accepted human rights as the right to work, but he stopped short of calling them guarantors of human rights. "They stand for, collectively, reaching a place that's better than where we are now," he said, adding that such agreements do not, however, "force countries to have elections."

If free trade agreements can't directly enable rights such as free elections, perhaps suspending them in the form of sanctions can. Moore recalled his own experience working to dismantle South Africa's system of apartheid. "South Africa was boycotted, and most countries were involved in it," he said.

Free trade, he said, enabled the possibility of sanctions.

PROMOTING PROTECTIONS

Moore's views correspond to a degree with the findings of "Pacific Trade and Human Rights," a 2014 United Nations report.

"In broad terms, economic growth through free trade can increase the resources available that may support the realization of human rights, including for example the right to health and the right to food," the report said. "At the same time, there are concerns that free trade does not always lead to economic growth, and that economic growth does not automatically lead to greater promotion and protection of human rights."

The report looks at how reducing import tariffs — a cornerstone of the three agreements mentioned above, as well as the WTO — has in many cases lowered overall tax revenue for Pacific island countries that depended on taxing imports to pay for such services as roads, schools, health care and defense. While lowered import tariffs have often meant a wider range of product choices for consumers, the report added, it has come at the price of having to overhaul tax systems, typically replacing import tariffs with a value-added tax at the point of sale, a process that may require a decade or more before revenue is restored to the level before the tariffs were cut.

As for inequities in the agricultural sector, protester Chung said her constituents have suffered severely under WTO agreements, even though she acknowledged that such large Korean corporations as Samsung may benefit from them.

A contrast is offered by India, the world's second-largest country and now the world's fastest-growing economy, as reported by the International Monetary Fund. India's economic growth trend has paralleled its membership in the WTO and its participation in APTA and SAFTA and a number of other, less comprehensive agreements. Moreover, agricultural products have been among its top exports by volume, according to Maersk Line, the leading international shipping company. India's Human Development Index, a composite statistic of life expectancy, education and per capita income, is at an all-time high, up more than 60 percent since 1980.

Uneven benefits from global trade, as demonstrated by the plight of South Korea's farmers, is not lost on the WTO, however.

"The trouble we have in trade is that agriculture and these sort of products are not covered well enough," Moore said. "And there's still work to be done."

This work, according to the U.N. report, includes formulating future trade agreements with greater attention to human rights "to improve the outcomes of trade liberalization."



A South Korean farmer burns rice stalks during a 2014 rally in Seoul opposing a trade agreement with China.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

REALIZING GAINS

What the report characterized as “the human rights-based approach to trade and investment” involves seven principles, including holding state actors accountable for delivering trade agreements that respect the principle of nondiscrimination, promoting participation of all — including marginalized groups — and encouraging international cooperation and assistance to ensure that poorer countries also benefit from trade.

To achieve this new approach, the report recommended that governments recognize their obligations “to ensure that commitments made in trade agreements help to realize and do not undermine human rights.”

“This points to an immediate need to strengthen the capacity for trade officials and negotiators to understand human rights,” the report continued, “and to integrate rights-based assessments and measures into agreements. Conversely, it is important for human rights officials and national human rights institutions to improve their capacity to engage on trade issues.”

This capacity-building needs to happen in lesser-developed countries (LDCs), which have seen their interests overlooked at global trade talks, said Selim Raihan, one of the U.N. report’s authors and a professor of economics at the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh.

“There is a kind of passive player approach LDCs too often take to the trade negotiations,” Raihan said. “So, they’re not really active, and what agreements happen at the global level somehow they have to accept without having much influence. As I see it, they have to mobilize a

kind of collective voice. That way, there is a kind of LDC forum within the WTO.”

Raihan added that such a forum could bolster the clout of the existing LDC group of 36 nations within the WTO. Chief among the issues important to the LDCs, Raihan said, is a long-standing demand for more open access to the food markets of the more economically developed countries, which would require them to reform their import tariffs and agricultural subsidies. A better understanding of international trade and trade law on the part of LDC negotiators, in addition to speaking with a common voice, could help achieve this.

“One of the basic fundamentals of human rights is a kind of economic emancipation of those people who are involved in this development process,” Raihan said. “They need to be effectively represented. I think that at many of the trade negotiations, unfortunately, this was not the case. Human rights may be defined and perceived differently in different contexts, but they are sufficiently important that they have to be taken seriously by the WTO, and probably they need to come up with some kind of definition of human rights, which is consistent with trade and economic agreements.”

Is raising the standards of trade agreements to give more effective consideration to human rights too much to ask? Will countries make this a priority?

“They should, yes,” Moore said. “As countries get wealthier, they expect more. You’ve seen that happen in my region here, with South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, etc. We’re all impatient. We hate sitting here, watching it happen, but it happens.” □




BUILDING

CAPACITY

CAPT. SHANE ARNDELL/ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY

*The Royal New Zealand
Navy promotes participation
in multilateral exercises
and security forums to
bolster regional security*



Many mariners would argue that New Zealand is the last civilized stop at the bottom of the world before Antarctica. Located at the lower southwest corner of the Pacific Ocean, New Zealand is home to a culturally diverse and proud population of 4.7 million people spread throughout the country's 268,107 square kilometers.

New Zealand also claims an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 4 million square kilometers, the fourth-largest in the world, and it possesses an abundance of fish and natural undersea resources. Liberal policies of successive governments during the past three decades have supported the nation's growth and economic prosperity. When combined with the development and maturing of an independent foreign policy over the same period, New Zealand's status as a voice of reason in global affairs has grown.

Although New Zealand is relatively isolated geographically, it works with many trading partners to address growing security challenges. The Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) is regularly deployed throughout the Indo-Asia-Pacific region to support like-minded nations in maintaining regional and global security.

A Challenging Area of Responsibility

Rear Adm. John Martin, chief of the RNZN, spoke at the November 2016 Maritime Security Forum in Auckland, New Zealand, as part of the Navy's 75th anniversary celebrations. He described New Zealand "not [as] a small island nation with a small navy, but a large oceanic nation with significant maritime responsibilities." The RNZN's operating area stretches from the equator to as close to the South Pole as a ship can go before hitting the continent. The RNZN regularly contributes ships, aircraft and personnel to coalitions and multinational maritime forces in the Arabian Gulf; independently deploys platforms and capabilities such as command teams and explosive ordnance disposal teams; offers specialized naval cooperation and guidance for shipping personnel to participate in exercises and operations around the world; and, within its EEZ, conducts a wide range of tasks that span the spectrum of operations expected of any modern

A Royal New Zealand Navy helicopter conducts a vertical replenishment at night.

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY

navy. This is no small feat for a navy that has only 11 ships and a little more than 2,000 officers, Sailors and civilian

staff based 1,000 nautical miles from its nearest neighbor and ally, Australia.

As a small navy with a large oceanic area of responsibility, the RNZN plays an integral part in the New Zealand Defence Force's (NZDF's) contribution to the nation's elements of national power (diplomacy, informational, military and economic). A credible military is required to defend the country's sovereign claims and assure security partners that New Zealand can be relied on in a time of crisis. This primacy allows the government to be more resilient when it responds to national emergencies and security risks at home, such as the 7.8-magnitude earthquake in Kaikoura, New Zealand, on November 14, 2016.

Given the small size of the Navy, a realist could argue that New Zealand is becoming increasingly vulnerable in its ability to defend itself at the bottom of the world and to protect its national security interests around the world. Global trends in changing demography, population growth and migration, increasing ideologies, resource scarcity and climate change are starting to be felt in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. It is only a matter of time before these trends directly affect New Zealand's ability to secure its EEZ. As a maritime nation almost entirely dependent on maritime trade, having the NZDF and the RNZN engaged in maritime security and the defense of the wider international security system with allies and partners is critical to maintaining national security.

Geopolitically, the key to New Zealand's success has been its ability to manage its economic and security relationships, which has been achieved by fostering strong international relationships characterized by mutual transparency and trust. Beyond its close defense security relationship with Australia, New Zealand has made it policy to participate in multilateral institutions that reinforce international norms and promote dialogue between states. The nation practices defense diplomacy, using its resources and capabilities in times of peace and conflict to support the government's foreign policy priorities and contribute to international peace and security.

International Defense Engagement Strategy

For a small nation with a relatively small defense force, a combined Ministry of Defence and international defense engagement strategy (IDES) helps New Zealand government officials target international defense engagement in shaping the

NEW ZEALAND'S EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE



Global trends in changing demography, population growth and migration, increasing ideologies, resource scarcity and climate change are starting to be felt in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. It is only a matter of time before these trends directly affect New Zealand's ability to secure its exclusive economic zone.

The HMNZS Wellington navigates through an ice field during operations in the Southern Ocean.

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY





The HMNZS Wellington's boarding team works with New Zealand's South Pacific partners.

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY

strategic environment. The IDES also assists defense officials in meeting New Zealand's interests, while enhancing the nation's reputation as a responsible international partner and contributing to regional and global peace, security and stability. All of these activities promote New Zealand's prosperity. Many of the strategic security relationships are characterized by a mix of engagement activities, which include annual dialogues among senior defense officials, exchanges of defense personnel, joint military exercises, high-level visits, and information sharing in numerous regional and global security forums.

In the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, the NZDF participates in over 100 joint, combined, and single-service exercises or activities per year. Examples include the long-standing Singaporean or Malaysian-led Bersama series of exercises in Southeast Asia (as part of the Five Powers Defence Arrangement for the defense of the Malaysian Peninsula among Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom); the U.S.-led multilateral maritime Rim of the Pacific Exercise held every two years in the Pacific; and the NZDF-led Tropic series of humanitarian aid and disaster relief exercises that help build partnerships in the Southwest Pacific, which involves regional partners from the Pacific islands and, increasingly, the wider Indo-Asia-Pacific. Participation and engagement in regional security forums such as the Asian Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) helps to develop and

enhance cooperative maritime security capabilities and form relationships between nations.

Participation in such forums demonstrates that New Zealand can effectively contribute to the maintenance and security of the global sea lines of communication and work in the international environment with like-minded nations in a time of crisis.

For New Zealand's Navy, participating in multilateral exercises demonstrates that it can effectively secure the region surrounding New Zealand and contribute to the defense of the wider Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

Finally, successful deployments in coalition operations validate the investment in multilateral exercises and security forums. The mutual trust and understanding gained in such engagements also enables nations to help each other during national disasters. The New Zealand government's response to the earthquake in Kaikoura would not have been as easily achieved were it not able to call on its ADMM+ partners and friends who were exercising in New Zealand's waters or visiting for the Navy's 75th Anniversary International Fleet Review. The international response was almost instantaneous. All available aviation-capable platforms deployed toward the epicenter as a combined task group in preparation of receiving a diplomatic request to provide assistance. This highlights the value that New Zealand puts into its participation in multilateral engagements and regional security forums. □

A large, stylized map of China is centered on the page. The map is filled with a vibrant orange and yellow gradient, giving it a glowing, sun-like appearance. The edges of the map are irregular and textured, resembling a torn piece of paper or a rough silhouette. The map is set against a dark, textured background that looks like a night sky or a map of the world with other continents in dark grey.

China's

Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles and Spheres of Influence

———— SCOTT DEVARY ————

FORUM ILLUSTRATION

Nations must respect international institutions and standards of conduct

China's nationalism is leading to greater tensions with its neighbors and the United States, which has an enduring commitment to the Indo-Asia-Pacific region's peace and security.

The embodiment of China's and the U.S.' soft antagonism of one another has been the maneuvering of assets close to the other's militaries. A flyby in 2016 of two Chinese military jets near an American reconnaissance plane illustrated the tense military interactions between the two nations. Such incidents are not commonplace for militaries or states. The situation resembles a life-size chess match — only the most powerful pieces have yet to be brought to bear.

The primary U.S. power projection in the North Pacific Ocean is the Carrier Battle Group (CBG), a flotilla of multiple vessels surrounding a 90,000-ton super carrier with roughly 7,500 U.S. Navy personnel. The CBG is the linchpin of a forward-operating capability for the United States Navy (USN) in performance of its missions to protect, defend and maintain U.S. security commitments globally, and China is well aware of this. The CBG is paramount to the United States and its allies in addressing multiple hard- and soft-power concerns.

Thus, it is with great consternation to America's top military brass that China as an extension of its nationalism in recent years has developed two types of quasiballistic missile systems designed to target ships at sea. China's anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) systems have a range and capability for effectively restricting foreign access to its near seas, including CBG access, specifically in the South China Sea where China is engaged in its expansion projects.

China's ASBMs include the Dong Feng 21D (DF-21D), a medium-range ballistic missile with a range exceeding 1,450 kilometers first deployed in 2010, and the Dong Feng 26 (DF-26), an improved system in the series with a supposed range more than double that of the DF-21D.

The ASBM as a platform has an ordnance delivery system that could home in on a ship from extreme range and deliver its destructive payload at hypersonic speeds. Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Gen. Chen Bingde dubbed the system a "carrier killer" in July 2011. Such a weapon would bridge modern communications and ballistic missile technology to

create a highly advanced anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capability for China. ASBM technology, a facet of China's nationalism, is part of a greater effort to define its sphere of influence. This effort has complications larger than China's footprint in its near seas and could harm its long-term interests.

There is legitimate concern for the USN's ability to carry out missions should the ASBM technology proliferate in Asia and around the world. Even if the United States does have readiness in retaliatory defense systems, proliferation of the missile technology presents a serious concern.

DF-21D and DF-26 ASBM Capabilities

China's development of the ASBM could represent a milestone for hypersonic ordnance delivery systems because of the missile system's use of communications and geopositioning technology. A significant step beyond present capabilities for missile technology, the DF-21D, built by China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp., is reported to carry a multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle payload. The system, operated from a 10-wheeled mobile transport erector launcher, is designed to coordinate targeting parameters with spy and GPS satellites or spy drones relaying targeting position information to command infrastructure. In the realm of rocketry and missile systems, the proven technology would be a great leap forward in capability.

The South China Sea spans roughly 1.83 million square kilometers. Thus, a missile capable of striking a 90,000-ton ship from kilometers away offers strategic advantages. The DF-26 missile is rumored to have a range between 3,000 and 4,000 kilometers and a fast response time, allowing it to launch immediately on receiving target data. That specific capability has not been verified.

The prevailing wisdom holds that "survivability equals credibility" in terms of nuclear deterrence, and mobility greatly adds to the question of survivability. Mobile intermediate- and long-range launchers as well as submarine-launched ballistic missiles greatly enhance a state's nuclear arsenal.

"China's emerging missile strategy will be marked by increased shooter survivability, enhanced operational flexibility, and significantly greater





Chinese military vehicles carry Dong Feng 21D anti-ship ballistic missiles past Tiananmen Gate during a September 2015 military parade in Beijing. REUTERS

“

China’s emerging missile strategy will be marked by increased shooter survivability, enhanced operational flexibility, and significantly greater reach and precision.”

— National Air and Space Intelligence Center

reach and precision,” according to the National Air and Space Intelligence Center. Longer-range conventional strike capabilities, including intermediate-range ballistic missiles, are in development, according to the center.

Understanding the path that China has taken in the development of the People’s Liberation Army Second Artillery Force (PLASAF) platforms and tools is key to appreciating what regional interests are most valuable and what weapon systems their neighbors are going to see fielded in Chinese efforts for A2/AD should tensions rise.

Although China has produced limited numbers of medium-range ASBMs and their launchers, the technology was designed to threaten adversary aircraft carriers if they approach within 900 nautical miles of the Chinese coastline, according to the Pentagon’s 2015 PLA report.

The construction of the DF-21D and DF-26 weapon systems and their relatively small footprint is also significant. A smaller footprint and a mobile transporter make the weapons system harder to detect and monitor for launches, unlike hardened silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles, which are larger and static.

Conceptually, area denial is nothing new in warfare. The ASBM is part of China’s plans for greater autonomy throughout Asia and the North Pacific. The DF-21D’s purpose is similar to China’s island building in the South and East China seas. The efforts are not so much about outright hostility to the U.S. or its interests but about expanding China’s sphere of influence. Toward that end, A2/AD capabilities merge with nuclear deterrence and the growing sophistication of Chinese aerospace and rocketry industries. In a December 2012 meeting with PLASAF officers, Chinese President Xi Jinping described the force as “the core strength of China’s strategic deterrence, the strategic support for the country’s status as a major power, and an important

cornerstone safeguarding national security,” according to ChinaDaily.com.

The DF-21D’s use could lead to a dire escalation and full-out warfare simply because its primary intent is to strike a target so large and valuable to

the United States that there could never be a question of reciprocity. Furthermore, the weapon’s best use may be as a first-strike option because it relies on network information for target acquisition, has a small footprint for mobile deployment, and is easily hidden. Some commentators have stressed that, for such a weapon system, the Chinese would not necessarily limit themselves to a conventional warhead for a first strike. Perhaps in China’s “no first-use” policy, in terms of nuclear arms, it has developed a strong deterrent. However, using an atomic weapon (such

as deploying an ASBM armed with a nuclear warhead) close to its own shores and resource interests seems counterproductive, given the radioactive fallout.

Extent of the ASBM Threat

The threat of China’s DF-21D and DF-26 ASBM has been somewhat overshadowed by various international crises in the seven years since the U.S. Department of Defense listed the missile system as an operational possibility. The degradation of the Middle East, the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and other threats and emergencies have commanded more urgent attention. Now, however, with heightening tensions in the South China Sea and the potential for China putting the ASBM in forward emplacements on man-made islands, it is appropriate to reconsider the implications of this weapon system.

The USN and other navies around the world have spent billions creating close and medium defense systems to detect and neutralize incoming

projectiles, such as the Phalanx Close Interception Weapon System. However, these defense capabilities simply cannot target or neutralize a ballistic missile homing in on a ship. In 2008 and 2015, using modified SM-3 Block IB missiles launched from Aegis defense systems, the Pentagon demonstrated the ability to strike a satellite in orbit and interdict ballistic missiles.

Given time and mass production, the ASBM could fill a role to counter CBGs of U.S. naval operations if China, for example, used the ASBM to cut supply lines.

If the DF-26 lives up to its operational projections and real-time satellites and information system penetration allows for the acquisition of fuel ships or smaller frigates, China could effectively counter the CBGs, turning the extreme range and capability of the USN against itself.

The goal of the ASBM may be area denial, but its ability to make force projection costly to use is noteworthy. Moreover, there is a connection between the political goals of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and efforts to find a platform solution to foreign navies cruising near its waters.

However, looking at the USN as a purely offensive kinetic policy tool is to minimize the role of the CBGs in maintaining global stability. More than simply protecting American security interests, CBGs provide a global flexible platform for supporting crucial humanitarian, environmental, maritime domain awareness and rescue missions.

The CBG provides airlift and elite personnel on a mobile platform that can reach distant shores with impressive speed. A flotilla that can deliver needed disaster relief and perform humanitarian aid missions while providing security and law enforcement on the high seas is vital in the modern world. Politics and policy interests aside, it is essential to have effective tools for protecting open global trade networks and communications lines as well as for responding to disasters, both natural and human-caused.

In the 21st century, states are more closely tied together than ever before by globalized trade, intertwined economies, resource scarcity and foreign markets. These interconnected priorities link would-be rivals in peculiar ways and make the world safer. Economic ties between different states overwhelmingly rely on standardized shipping, which follows sea lines of communication (SLOCs), trade and commercial arteries upon the ocean. These assets must be guarded or at least guaranteed a rapid response to threats even when in distant waters. The CBG is part of this assurance because of the extreme range and speed at which it can move and respond, and this is a functionality that comes at great cost.

Global Stakes

Super carriers and their support flotillas are the best platform for providing essential mission flexibility.

In the 21st century, states are more closely tied together than ever before by globalized trade, intertwined economies, resource scarcity and foreign markets. These interconnected priorities link would-be rivals in peculiar ways and make the world safer.



Then-U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the second Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, or SALT II, in July 1979. | U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy speaks in Massachusetts at an August 1979 fundraiser for a bipartisan group supporting the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) treaties. The group was known as Americans for SALT. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Despite the expense required for their maintenance, crew, and logistical support, CBGs are cost-effective in ensuring the stability the world needs.

China's pursuit of the A2/AD capability could have a real impact on the rest of the world, and a resurgence of spheres of influence could hinder larger soft-policy goals for humanity. Egalitarian ideals, human rights, resource scarcity and global efforts to combat climate change and pollution will become exponentially more difficult to tackle in the global community if new "fiefdoms" crop up and states become beholden to multiple powers to keep their economies afloat. From a tactical and economic perspective, there are other reasons to view China's ASBM development as a disturbing trend. China relies on access to the Malacca Strait for the vast majority of its energy resource imports and for its transport of exports. Long-range area of operations access denial might serve to keep a CBG out of the littoral waters of China or even out of the near seas region for Asia. However, that access denial most certainly would incite dire economic consequences for China.

Recognizing that the CCP faces pressure at home to maintain its leadership mandate based on continued economic growth and stability, Beijing can no more afford this kind of aggression in a globalized world than any other state. The ASBM is a weapon system that could rapidly escalate a dispute into much larger economic woes for the world if China and the U.S. engaged in the kind of hostilities described. The ASBM is a weapon system aimed specifically at curtailing the kinetic capability of the USN in

the North Pacific and, if allowed to proliferate, every maritime domain where the USN conducts operations. The CBG is more than just a military platform. These flotillas are a big part of what keeps trade flowing on SLOCs. Real-time targeted, ultralong-range, hard-to-detect conventional weaponry has the potential to be as disruptive or devastating as nuclear arms if allowed to proliferate.

Stopping Proliferation

The ramifications of ASBM technology proliferation are major and worrisome. They merit a defense strategy that incorporates not only counterstrike technology but also policy tactics. For counterstrike technology, certain advanced defensive strategies are well-known. One is cyber espionage and interdiction to disrupt communications networks needed to deploy the weapons. Although cyber is much easier to attack than to defend, the United States has a decided advantage in its talent pool for hackers. Despite its obvious liabilities and limitations, cyber is an attractive defensive strategy for the USN and Department of Defense until a more reliable countermeasure can be deployed.

Moreover, ASBM deployment requires effective coordination between the PLA Navy and PLASAF, and that coordination relies heavily on command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance infrastructure to ensure the system functions as intended. The U.S., on the forefront of full-spectrum warfare, has elite personnel who have revolutionized communications and control infrastructure and practices. U.S. military

and intelligence community could readily neutralize ASBM threats, for example, through disruption of communication for target acquisition. Many of the kinks in an ASBM system's operations may already be readily apparent.

In addition to risks to U.S. CBGs, the littoral states of the world will find their navies and merchant fleets at risk as well, and they, too, will be seeking countermeasures such as enhanced submarine fleets. Submarines are important systems for modern warfare, but in terms of policing and maintaining territorial integrity without causing an escalation, visible (and preferably mission flexible) ships are better suited for peacekeeping. Unfortunately, these are precisely the kind of vessels increasingly at risk to over-the-horizon missiles, drone swarms and ASBMs. Submarines counter the vulnerability with their greatest assets, which are in their covert operation and first-strike capability, should a conflict arise.



A Chinese coast guard vessel attempts to block a Philippine government vessel on a resupply mission near the Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea in March 2014. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Given the scope and possible ramifications of such threats and the limitations of technology alone to counter them, an arms limitation treaty to deter proliferation of the ASBM platforms should be pursued. The DF-21D and DF-26 are not the world's first ASBMs. The Soviet Union had R-27K missiles (albeit with a smaller payload capacity and shorter range) in 1975, but these were taken off the field as a result of the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) treaties. Additionally, China's experimental WU-14 Hypersonic Glide Vehicle, now dubbed the ZF-DF and which has been flight tested at least seven times, provides a delivery system for ordnance that could home in on a mobile ship from extreme range. The

DF-26 is capable of carrying such anti-ship warheads.

U.S. policymakers should lead a multilateral engagement strategy to limit proliferation of such capabilities. Although extremely challenging, agreements to curb the proliferation of threatening technological developments can be realistically achieved as demonstrated by the SALT I and II treaties.

A long-term policy solution could be designed to mitigate specific threats of today's ASBMs to the United States, its allies, and their common interests. Through organizations such as The Hague and the United Nations, great work has been achieved in reinforcing international structures and norms. Although there are legitimate criticisms of various international bodies today, the United States needs to re-embrace international institutions to maintain its primacy despite the compromises that might be entailed.

As it is, the U.S. political apparatus is widely influential. Through a well-structured, multilateral policy solution, the U.S. can work to reinforce behavioral norms and international law to remove the ambiguity and wiggle room that allowed China to build seven islands (an eighth one currently in the making) and use them as justification for territorial disputes. For example, signing the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea or a similarly designed instrument could be a step toward a major multilateral engagement on maritime issues that includes ASBM restrictions for states. The long-term payoff of continued efforts to re-engage through multilateral treaties could cement behavioral norms for states and strengthen international arbitration bodies.

By making greater use of certain policy tools and institutions, the United States and its allies may be able to bolster the United Nations and other international instruments while reducing potential costs in conflicts and addressing proliferation threats from rising powers.

The ASBM is China's technical solution to a problem it perceives in its sphere of influence. A policy solution can help the United States curtail proliferation of these ASBM weapons systems internationally. It can mitigate tensions by developing policy strategies, platforms and resources that will keep the CBGs and other USN assets operational. U.S. and NATO leaders would be wise to apply lessons learned during the ongoing South China Sea disputes in developing the next generation of international laws that can curtail the negative behaviors of states before competition for resources expands beyond borders (and sea lanes).

Leveraging economic and market powers and utilizing a rapidly diversifying labor market in the developing world will also be integral to countering



states that behave like China and attempt to provoke or infringe on their smaller neighbors.

Policy Solutions

The ASBM buildup affects U.S. military capabilities in fulfilling security agreements. As the nuclear bomb changed the face of industrial warfare by diminishing the utility of massed armies being used in the field, so is advanced rocketry and communications infrastructure. They provide enhanced precision and range for ordnance delivery, changing the calculus of naval warfare and how states view regional footprints and spheres of influence.

While pursuing a next-generation defensive system that will allow USN ships to operate with physical security, the U.S. needs to address these technological shifts on a policy level and initiate a multinational effort to curb the expansion of such ASBM weapon systems before they become a liability.

The technological aspect of this threat means that militaries around the world will be caught in a continual development cycle to counter one another until a reasonable treaty can be reached, as evidenced by past arms limitations treaties.

The world is entering the age of remote combat, and that is extremely dangerous without forward-thinking policy to limit the platforms and tools that will be

Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, meets with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in Beijing in March 2017. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

developed for warfighting.

Military-to-military relationships keep states from overreacting and escalating hostilities. It is

vital that world leaders keep the human element in mind as they address conflicts, and this is best achieved through professional working relationships between adversaries, which often is done at a military level.

There is virtue in keeping forward power projection manned rather than remote despite the entailed risks. Policymakers and military leaders need to consider how this transition in technology and tactics will affect the global status quo and economy. To prevent wars, SLOCs must remain open for trade, and human ties between governments and militaries must be maintained.

The globalized economy is as much a preventive expedient of large-scale industrial war as it is a facet of the modern world. However, it is hardly a permanent structure immutable to global politics. Inevitably, conflicts can still arise from scarcity and resource competition. The surety of international trade and communication, which the USN has provided for the past half century, can be undone unless a proper application of political will helps reduce the threat potential of ASBM technology and similar systems. □

FORGING

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

THE SRI LANKA NAVY EMBRACES DIVERSE OPINIONS TO COMBAT SECURITY CHALLENGES



FORUM STAFF

Rear Adm. Dharmendra Wettewa

is director of general operations for the Sri Lanka Navy, which has steadily increased its multilateral engagements and partnerships with other navies. When Wettewa attended the 22nd International Seapower Symposium at the U.S. Naval War College in Rhode Island in the United States, he spoke with *FORUM* about the transformation of the Sri Lanka Navy from a ceremonial organization into a military force.



Sri Lankan military personnel participate in a joint training exercise on Batticaloa's eastern coast.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

FORUM: Since 2010, the Sri Lankan government has hosted an annual multilateral discussion on international security called the Galle Dialogue. Discuss how this event has grown and how it contributes to problem solving on issues such as the fights against terrorism and drug trafficking.

WETTEWA: Yes, the Sri Lanka Navy has been organizing this event with the guidance of the Ministry of Defence since 2010. We have done six conferences successfully, and I think the 2016 one was special. The highest level of representation from the U.S. Pacific Command attended, along with the Indian naval chief and naval chiefs from six to seven countries and delegates from more than 40 countries. We started with about 10 countries and grew to this level. Sri Lanka is a country where navies that generally do not have much interaction can sit

together and engage in constructive dialogue. In addition to the level of participation, the diversity of the parties has increased. A number of organizations that regulate or work on maritime affairs such as the International Maritime Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, states that signed the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia, the International Organization for Migration and others are becoming permanent participants. Many other think tanks from around the world joined the deliberations, making them vibrant and inclusive.

I should be frank. Along with the Galle Dialogue, there are many other conferences, such as the Western Pacific Naval Symposium and the

Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, that have come up with constructive security arrangements. In Sri Lanka, we strengthen our commitment on areas we should agree upon, and countries that are not part of other organizations also sit together and make the same commitment to share experience, commit resources and voice opinions. Ultimately, it becomes an inclusive process, and we come up with common approaches to common threats.

FORUM: Due to its strategic geographic location south of India, modern-day threats have forced the Sri Lanka Navy to transform from a largely ceremonial navy to a military force. How do partnerships with larger navies accelerate this transformation?

WETTEWA: The Sri Lanka Navy had to transform along with the Army and the Air Force from a ceremonial



Navy into a robust, diverse and multitask-oriented force because of the conflict [internal war against the Tamil Tigers] that started in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Successive Sri Lankan governments did not intend to have larger militaries since independence, and if not for the insurgencies, we would not have enhanced our militaries to this level. With the passage of time, however, any government would have realized the importance of improving the capacity and capability of the Navy. We are a maritime nation in a strategic location, so the global community expects us to honor our obligations to secure the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) and be part of the huge task of securing the oceans. We are dependent on busy transit ports, so we need to manage the security of the oceans effectively.

As far as partnerships are concerned, what we faced was an asymmetric or irregular type of warfare, thrown at us by a terrorist unit. As far as facing the asymmetry, I don't think we could get much assistance because it was a unique type of warfare. It was an era of hard lessons where we learned through setbacks and bitter experiences. We faced tactics of a ruthless opponent. The suicide boats that fought among other swamps of highly maneuverable boats with a daredevil approach were difficult to fight. We realized we did not have anyone to learn from, so we had to come up with our own concepts from our own experiences.

As for partnerships with others, we were fortunate to get the technology to have the types of craft we needed, which had to be robust, fast and maneuverable to fight in coastal warfare. We had the help of certain countries to acquire the necessary technology to locate, target and destroy a potent enemy.

FORUM: *Since you protect an island nation, guarding the coastline against illegal immigration and drug smuggling is a priority. How is Sri Lanka communicating with its neighbors to deal with these potential threats?*

WETTEWA: Yes, confronting illegal immigration and drug smuggling requires cooperation, but strategic communication and sharing of information is important to counter almost all threats. Our closest neighbor, India, has always been helpful in developing our capacity and capability. They have provided us with assets and training, which helped the Sri Lanka Navy immensely. That close cooperation makes working together comfortable, and it is the same with the Indian Coast Guard. The deliberations are frank, and since those are bilateral engagements between navies that have worked together for a long period, we are comfortable with each other and it is easy to implement decisions. Our cooperation in joint patrols and coastal surveillance is well established and working well. You asked about human smuggling and drug trafficking. For that, we use relatively small craft. Apprehending suspects requires collaboration between the navies in joint patrolling.

With countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh, our cooperation is good, and I must say the Sri Lanka Navy is the beneficiary in most cases. After the end of the [internal] conflict, large numbers of Sri Lankans started moving toward Australia under the guise of asylum seekers. It was through strategic communication that the two governments understood the problem. It was this understanding and the ability to differentiate between illegal immigrants and asylum seekers that led to success. Once you identify economic migrants over asylum seekers fleeing a country due to oppression, it helps in finding solutions. Enhanced information sharing and other capacity- and capability-building programs to improve our surveillance network helped us drastically reduce the number of illegal immigrants.

There is a lesson to learn. Maritime nations can have multilateral as well as bilateral cooperation. Success depends on the approach and the will to engage. Bilateral cooperation works well when challengers of the two countries are specific to those countries. Strategic and operational communication makes implementing solutions easy and helps partners improve capacities. We have cooperation with Maldives that cannot be taken lightly. They have helped us during the insurgency by providing valuable information. They have detected ships that were supplying ammunitions to militants. Now, we are sharing information on illegal immigrants and drug trafficking, and our cooperation is at the highest cordial level.

FORUM: *You have described Sri Lanka as a “neutral country in a strategically located place.” Because of that, Sri Lanka is able to bring together militaries that would not typically sit down to engage one another. How do these international discussions, such as the Galle Dialogue, enhance the security picture in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region?*

WETTEWA: I think when we call [ourselves] a neutral country, what we try to portray is that we are ready to engage equally with all countries that have the same commitment to promote secure seas. We want trade and shipping along the SLOCs between regions of the Indo-Asia-Pacific to be maintained without disturbance. It is an established fact that this region is going to see more growth than any other part of the world in the decades to come. Hence, the energy and trade routes have become some of the most crucial in the world.

It is imperative that we collaborate with countries who look at these developments through a similar lens and develop strategies respecting the rule of law and freedom of seas. Whatever partnerships we forge must be mutually beneficial and should help improve the stability of the whole region as far as maritime domain is concerned. In this context, when we speak about neutrality, we look at the quality and the concept of engagement and the frequency that we engage. For certain countries, when you connect that concept with the Galle Dialogue conference, they are happy to be



An officer from the USS New Orleans talks to Sri Lanka Navy officers about U.S. helicopter capabilities during a port visit to Colombo in July 2016. REUTERS

part of it, since they generally do not sit together frequently to discuss maritime issues.

The fact that they are willing to sit and discuss those issues in the Galle Dialogue is something special. Therefore, the Galle Dialogue provides a platform where countries who have different approaches toward the Indo-Asia-Pacific region identify common threats, leaving behind their traditional differences. I think Sri Lanka's approach is that we are ready to engage with any country with no special affection, focusing not only on the concepts, but also on quality, frequency and how mutually beneficial the interactions are. Through the Galle Dialogue and one-to-one meetings, we have been able to understand the issues and develop the role the Sri Lanka Navy should play and to shape our commitments to enter partnerships with other navies. In the context of the U.S. Navy, what we have achieved is exceptional and is set to take off to a very high level in coming years.

FORUM: *The Sri Lanka Navy has been working with some major militaries on information sharing initiatives to increase its maritime domain awareness. Describe how these initiatives have helped Sri Lanka's progress.*

WETTEWA: We have been working not only with major militaries but with everyone. As I described earlier, we work on the concept of mutual benefit and benefit to the whole region. With one of the largest navies and our closest neighbor, India, we are sharing the Automatic Identification System. [This system

identifies vessels through electronic and satellite data exchanges.] For search and rescue, the Australian government has helped us. The U.S. government has been supporting our coastal surveillance system with infrastructure, radar and other capacity-building measures.

We need to progress in a rapid manner, to integrate the common maritime picture into a command-and-control center. Then we can monitor and analyze the information for prompt action on search-and-rescue missions and in collaboration with other navies across the spectrum of maritime threats, including illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. That is the future expectation. For that, you need a connected network. We need technological and software upgrades and support from other countries. The U.S. is helping with the coastal surveillance system. We are planning to work with India and the U.S. to develop an integrated system. Especially, due to our location, we are able to monitor the vital SLOCs south of Sri Lanka. The challenge is the vastness of the ocean. The force we have is meager, so we will struggle to respond in a timely manner. Everyone agrees that policing large ocean spaces is not possible for a single country. The only answer is cooperation and information sharing so we can effectively direct limited assets to the right space at the right time. We believe partnerships matched with capacity- and capability-building will help ensure the maritime security that we all would like to have for a stable Indo-Asia-Pacific region. □

India's female farmers

BATTLE TRADITION

STORY AND PHOTOS BY REUTERS



Anjali has worked on the land nearly all her life, first with her tenant-farmer parents, and then alongside her husband in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.

Still, she has never owned land — a right she has been denied by inconsistent inheritance laws and her community's rigid custom that led her to believe only a man should own land. Now, at 32, Anjali's name will finally be on a title as joint owner of land allocated by the state, after months of petitioning local officials and addressing age-old traditions and superstitions that deny women land ownership.

"It has never been our custom for women to own land, and I never thought that I would one day be a land owner," said Anjali, who goes by one name, at a land-literacy meeting of advocacy group Landesa at a school in Taardeh village.

"Having the title in my name means a lot to me: It means I have a say in what we do with the land, and my husband can't throw me out or sell the land without my permission."

LACK OF RECOGNITION

Women make up more than a third of India's agriculture workforce, yet only about 13 percent of farmland is owned by women, according to official data. As more men from villages migrate to urban areas in search of jobs, their wives and daughters are tending the land. Despite their growing numbers, these women are not recognized as farmers because most do not own the land; the government labels them "cultivators."

In India, land titles are almost always in the man's name, and custom allows men to sell land without permission from their spouses, choose what crops to grow and control any income. Meanwhile, the female farmer is denied loans, insurance and other government benefits because her name is not on the title.

"Culture and tradition impacts so much on land ownership," said Shipra Deo, state director of Landesa. "It's a very patriarchal system, and women encounter entrenched biases everywhere — from their own families, as well as officials, who all believe women shouldn't own land. Women themselves have come to believe they don't have this right."

UNDER PRESSURE

When women have secure rights over the land they cultivate, they gain status and greater bargaining and decision-making power at home and in their community, Landesa's research shows. Such women are more likely than men to boost food security and to spend their income on the next generation.

Yet, even a decade ago in Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populous state and among its poorest, only 6 percent of women owned land, according to a study by Oxfam India. By 2015, that percentage had increased to 18 percent, according to Oxfam, as campaigners educated women on their rights, and the state began issuing joint titles to some of the landless poor.

Still, women face numerous legal and social hurdles to ownership. Land is still transferred largely through inheritance, and it is almost always men who inherit the land.

A Hindu woman is entitled to a share of land owned by her father, according to the Hindu Succession Act. Yet, the law is used to deny women a share of their husband's land, said Nand Kishor Singh, a regional manager at Oxfam, which launched a campaign for joint titles in Uttar Pradesh in 2006.



“Men — and even officials — say she is already getting her father’s land, so there is no need for a joint title with her husband as she would then get two properties,” Singh said. “The government is required to issue joint titles for land that they allocate to landless families, but women are locked out of existing titles in their husband’s name.”

The state has an entrenched caste system, with one of India’s lowest gender ratios of 912 women per 1,000 men and one of its highest gender crime rates, according to official data.

Arvind Kumar, an official in the Uttar Pradesh Revenue Department, said the granting of joint titles for land allocated by the state had been a big step, because it was not the custom. “But we cannot intervene in existing titles or private purchases — it is up to the owner to decide if it should be a joint title,” he said.

CUSTOMARY LAWS

Several states have amended their laws to make it easier and more beneficial for women to own land, with lower interest rates on loans and lower registration fees for women. Progress has been stymied, however, by

customary laws that typically favor men.

In Rajasthan, for example, women are asked to give up their right to ancestral property when they marry. Women have also been held back by traditions such as not being allowed to handle the plow, seen as a potent symbol of the male farmer.

As part of Oxfam’s decadelong Aaroh campaign — meaning “ascend” in Hindi — more than 100,000 women have attended land-literacy programs, Singh said.

Tens of thousands of women also joined rallies where they wielded the plow, and some have also begun driving tractors, a practice once reserved for men, he said. “The women have fought many traditions and superstitions, and we have seen big changes in attitudes,” he said. “Sadly, there have been few changes at the policy level, and our goal of land in the name of women is yet to be achieved.”

For Anjali in Taardeh, getting a joint title to land allocated by the state is a very big deal. “With the land, I will have some security, some rights,” she said. “I will not be any less than my husband, but his equal.”

A farmer drinks water in a wheat field in Rajasthan, India. After China, India is the world’s second biggest wheat producer. RIGHT: A wheat farmer stands in a field in the village of Stok, in Ladakh, India.



PINPOINTING PLANES

Three years after a Malaysian airliner vanished, it's still possible — if unlikely — for a plane to disappear. That's changing, however, with new satellites that will soon allow flights to be tracked in real time over oceans.

New international safety standards also will start to be implemented in 2018, although the deadline for airlines to meet most of the standards is still four years away. Even then, it could be decades before the changes permeate the entire global airline fleet because some of the requirements apply only to newly manufactured planes.

Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 vanished from radar on March 8, 2014, while flying from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 passengers and crew on board. An exhaustive search of a remote corner of the southern

Indian Ocean has failed to turn up the aircraft's remains. (The Royal Australian Navy's HMAS Success, above, scans the southern Indian Ocean for the missing airliner.)

"If the exact same thing happened today, I think we'd have the same result," said William Waldock, a professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona, and former accident investigator. "There has been change, but we haven't put anything physical into practice yet."

In spite of Waldock's doubts, Atholl Buchan, director of flight operations at the International Air Transport Association, said a repeat of Flight 370 is "highly unlikely" because many airlines have already increased efforts to keep tabs on planes over open ocean where they are beyond the reach of land-based radar.

"In a few years, new systems and technology, if adopted universally by [air traffic control providers], will allow for global surveillance coverage," he said.

Among the changes in the works:

The International Civil Aviation Organization, a United Nations agency, approved a series of new global safety standards in 2016 in response to Flight 370, including a requirement that airline pilots flying over ocean out of the range of radar report their position by radio every 15 minutes.

Another new standard requires new planes beginning in 2021 to be able to transmit automatic, minute-by-minute reports on their location if they're in distress. At normal flight speeds, minute-by-minute reports would provide authorities with a search area of a little over 259 square kilometers.

Satellite flight tracking services may solve much of the problem sooner. In January 2017, Aireon, a satellite joint venture, launched the first 10 satellites in what is planned to be a 66-satellite constellation that can track airliners equipped with the latest satellite surveillance technology, known as ADS-B.

The Associated Press

PROMOTING A DIGITAL INDIA

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi told a gathering of business leaders in January 2017 that the country has the potential to become the world's most digitized economy.

Speaking at India's biggest investor summit, organized in his home state of Gujarat, the 65-year-old said his government was strongly committed to continue reforming the Indian economy.

"We are working to adopt



and absorb newer technologies, to bring about transparency and to end discretion," Modi told the summit, adding that foreign direct investment in the country has topped U.S. \$130 billion in his 2.5 years in office.

"Believe me, we are on the threshold of becoming the world's most digitized economy. Most of you

wanted this change in India. I am proud to say that it is happening before you."

Modi's address to the Vibrant Gujarat investor gathering came just weeks after his shocking decision to abolish 500 and 1,000 rupee notes, worth about U.S. \$7.50 and U.S. \$15 each.

The move caused widespread anger among millions of people, as they endured long queues at banks and ATMs to draw money or deposit old notes about to expire.

The gambit has been billed as an attempt to root out corruption, end terror financing and move the country into the age of digital payments. Reuters

DAIRY A POTENTIAL ALLY

IN INDO-ASIA-PACIFIC'S NUTRITION CHALLENGES

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

REUTERS

The Indo-Asia-Pacific has made strides in taming hunger and famine, but the rapidly modernizing region needs to focus more on diversifying its diet or risk failing to quell malnutrition, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said in a report. It said milk has the potential to help.

"We still have nearly half a billion hungry people in this region," said Kundhavi Kadiresan, FAO's assistant director-general. "This report is an eye-opener."

With greater political stability and modern farming techniques, undernourishment rates halved in Asia from 24.3 percent to 12.3 percent in the past 25 years, satisfying one of the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals, the report said.

As people move from the countryside to big cities by the millions, diets are changing from ones dominated by rice to more Westernized versions incorporating more fruits, vegetables and meats. Calories from starches declined by 50 per person a day while ones from fruits, vegetables and meat increased by more than 300 per person a day, the report said.

Despite this improvement, the changing diets aren't all good news. Like citizens in the West, people in the Indo-Asia-Pacific are exercising less and chowing down heavily on processed foods filled with sugar and fat instead of traditional ones like chickpeas. This means many still aren't getting enough nutrients such as zinc, iron or vitamin A. Obesity levels are skyrocketing, rising more than 4 percent a year, the report said.

So as dire hunger becomes less common, balanced and diverse diets are becoming a more pressing issue. Agriculture experts acknowledge they have been obsessed with rice, wheat and maize in the fight against hunger, at the cost of overlooking

whether expanding diets are also nutritious.

"It has filled the belly, but it is creating a lot of problems," said Kadambot Siddique, a professor at the University of Western Australia.

"We must make this distinction between hunger and malnutrition," said Biraj Patnaik, a food policy advisor to India's government. He said India is in the process of eliminating hunger, but has reduced undernutrition by only 1 percent in the past decade.

With persistent hunger in South Asia, only two of 19 developing Asian countries are on track to reach the U.N.'s Sustainable Development zero hunger goal by 2030, and seven by 2040, the study said.

However, changing tastes in food means Asians are drinking more milk, a cheap and nutritious way of diversifying diets. Dairy products are traditionally largely absent in Asian diets but now fly off the shelves from Bangkok to Beijing, with production almost tripling from about 110 million tons in 1990 to nearly 300 million tons in 2013. Some countries are providing cartons in classrooms, like Thailand's National Milk Program.

Experts say governments should avoid repeating the mistake of taking "shortcuts" that emphasize investment in big agribusiness over small farmers. Small producers generate nearly 80 percent of the milk in Asia, so booming milk sales benefit everyone, not just the rich, in contrast to farmland, where major landowners often win big on crop subsidies.

As a result, the report said, the dairy industry is a potential "engine of poverty-alleviating growth"—so long as things remain egalitarian.

"Policymakers need to ensure that the region's smallholder dairy farmers — the largest segment of dairy producers — can have fair access to, and compete in, the marketplace," Kadiresan said.

POTTY TRAINING



Japan's toilet chiefs say they have come up with a plan to stop tourists from getting their knickers in a twist over the country's mind-bogglingly high-tech loos. Under new guidelines, manufacturers will use the same eight pictograms to tell users which button flushes, which one fires a frighteningly accurate jet of water at the backside and what to press to close the lid.

Japan has been drawing record numbers of tourists in recent years,

and Tokyo is expecting millions of visitors when it hosts the 2020 Olympic Games.

The Japan Sanitary Equipment Industry Association hopes that ensuring all toilets have standardized images will do the job, ensuring millions of non-Japanese speaking visitors will know the difference between a big flush and a small flush. Japan's state-of-the-art toilets offer everything from seat warming and bidet functions to motion sensors, variable jet strengths and

powerful deodorizers.

U.S. celebrities such as Madonna, Leonardo DiCaprio and Will Smith have raved about the smart loos, which are a big hit among visiting tourists, particularly the Chinese.

There has been no standardized set of symbols for their many buttons, and different manufacturers often use their own images, representing something of a pain in the backside for unaccustomed users. Agence France-Presse

SHRINE — FOR PET BLESSINGS

Pet owners have been flocking to the Ichigaya Kamegaoka Hachimangu shrine in Japan since it introduced New Year ceremonies for dogs and cats in 2000 — and numbers have skyrocketed in recent years.

"Well, they're part of the family," 43-year-old Yuki Mitsui said, hugging two miniature dachshunds that were proudly sporting tiny fur-trimmed kimonos. "It gives me peace of mind that these little fellas can also receive an amulet that will protect them for the year."

Visits are by appointment only. More than 500 visitors yearly bring pets dressed in brightly colored finery to the shrine, where they make an

offering to the gods in return for a blessing.

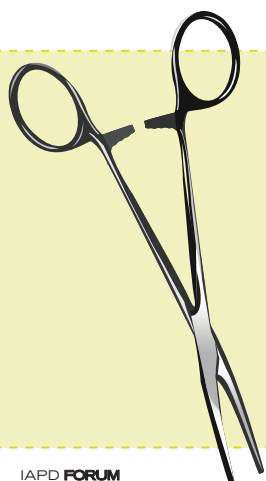
Local priest Masaki Kaji revealed that he hit upon the idea of offering the Shinto rituals due to high demand from animal lovers. "Many people told me they wanted to be blessed along with their pets," he said as a steady stream of excited poodles, terriers and chihuahuas trotted past. "So we decided to make this the best place for pets to worship."

"This is the time of year when we have most visitors to the shrine, and those numbers keep rising every year," Kaji added. "It goes to show that pets are becoming more important to families."

Agence France-Presse



AFP/GETTY IMAGES



RUNNING WITH SCISSORS

Doctors in Vietnam have removed surgical forceps from a man who unknowingly carried them inside his body for 18 years, national television network VTV reported.

Ma Van Nhat, 54, said the forceps had probably been left in his abdomen in 1998 when he had emergency

surgery after a traffic accident. Nhat had felt only the occasional pain, and a clinic had given him medicine for a suspected stomach ulcer. An X-ray taken in late 2016 showed the forceps were to blame.

The 15-centimeter-long instrument had broken apart and become lodged in Nhat's

stomach. It was removed in an operation.

The director of Bac Kan Hospital, Trinh Thi Luong, told VTV that officials were trying to find out who might have left the forceps in Nhat. "Even if they are already retired, we will still inform them," she said. "This is a lesson to all doctors." Reuters



SNOW SHOT

South Korean and U.S. Marines participate in a joint annual winter exercise near Pyeongchang, South Korea, where temperatures sometimes fell below minus 20 degrees Celsius. During the January 2017 drill, snow troopers armed themselves with skis, gigantic kit bags and automatic guns painted white to blend in with the terrain.

Photo By: **KIM HONG-JI** | Reuters

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