

MS DAILY BRIEF - 29 August 2022

Contents

- 1. US increased arms supplies to Ukraine by sea**
- 2. US destroyers crossed the Taiwan Strait. First US force action after Pelosi's visit**
- 3. US warships transit Taiwan Strait for first time since Pelosi visit**
- 4. HII drops the keel of the future aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CVN 80)**
- 5. Turkey tests a SIPER air defence missile**
- 6. Romania discussed the impact of Russia's aggression on Ukraine's grain exports**
- 7. A record number of ships passed through Danube ports**
- 8. Chinese defence firm takes over Venezuelan oil pickup to offset debts**
- 9. Chinese shipyard designs Smart Sail for seagoing vessels**
- 10. China and India fight over controversial Sri Lanka ship call**
- 11. 12 new LNG bulkers to be equipped to burn HFO**
- 12. India's first aircraft carrier Vikrant to be commissioned on September 2**

US has stepped up arms supplies to Ukraine via shipping

In recent months, the United States has expanded arms supplies to Ukraine by sea, not by air. This is reported by UNN with reference to the Washington Post. Although air supply is more efficient, shipping allows for the transport of large volumes of cargo, which gives Kiev the opportunity to build up stockpiles of weapons.

"Arms shipments by sea began weeks after the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but expanded significantly in the spring when Washington began supplying Kiev with howitzers and other heavy weapons, requiring a steady flow of ammunition," WP writes.

Source: <https://www.blackseanews.net/read/193634>

US destroyers crossed the Taiwan Strait. First US force action after Pelosi's visit

Two US warships are crossing the Taiwan Strait, the US Navy has announced.

Radio Romania notes that this is the first such operation to take place after tensions between Taiwan and China escalated following a visit by US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan in early August.

According to CNN, it involves the guided-missile destroyers USS Antietam and USS Chancellorsville.

The action comes after huge tensions generated by Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, the third U.S. statehood and highest-ranking U.S. official to visit Taiwan in decades.

China has responded by staging large-scale military exercises in the area.

Washington says the two guided missile cruisers demonstrate freedom of navigation through international waters. Beijing regards such actions as provocative and argues that Taiwan is an integral part of Chinese territory.

Yesterday, the Taiwanese Ministry of Defence announced that it had detected 21 Chinese aircraft and five ships operating around Taiwan, as China continues its military exercises near the island.

Since 4 August, China has staged large-scale military manoeuvres, deploying planes, ships and ballistic missiles in six sectors around Taiwan island in response to a visit to Taipei by US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The Taiwan issue

Taiwan and China split in 1949, when Nationalist forces led by Chiang Kai-Shek were forced to retreat to the island of Taiwan following their defeat by Communist forces led by Mao. Thus, near the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, the Communist Party of China established the People's Republic of China, overthrowing the Nationalist government on the Chinese mainland.

Since then, both Taiwan and China claim to be the representatives of the true Chinese state.

As a result of the US policy of countering the USSR during the Cold War, the US accepted that the People's Republic of China should take Taiwan's place on the UN Security Council. Ever since, since the late 1970s, the West has given assurances that it respects the "one China principle" but remains committed to supporting Taiwan.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/exclusive-us-warships-carrying-out-taiwan-strait-passage-first-since-pelosi-2022-08-28/>

US warships transit Taiwan Strait for first time since Pelosi visit

Two US Navy warships sailed through international waters in the Taiwan Strait on Sunday, the first such operation since US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, infuriating China, which considers the island a territory. The US Navy, confirming a Reuters report, said the cruisers Chancellorsville and Antietam are carrying out the ongoing operation. Such operations typically last eight to 12 hours and are closely monitored by the Chinese military. In recent years, US warships and sometimes those from allied nations such as Britain and Canada have routinely crossed the strait, sparking anger from China, which claims Taiwan over the objections of its democratically elected government.

Pelosi's trip to Taiwan in early August angered China, which saw it as an attempt by the US to meddle in its internal affairs. China subsequently launched military exercises near the island, which have continued ever since. "These (US) ships transited through a corridor in the strait that lies beyond the territorial sea of any coastal state," the US Navy said. The operation demonstrates the US commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, and the US military flies, sails and operates wherever international law allows, the navy said. The Chinese military's Eastern Theater Command said it is watching the ships and warning them. "Troops in the theatre remain on high alert and are ready to thwart any provocation at any time," it added in a statement. Taiwan's defence ministry said the ships were sailing south and its forces were observing, but that "the situation is normal".

The narrow Taiwan Strait has been a frequent source of military tension since the defeated government of the Republic of China fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war to the Communists, who established the People's Republic of China. Pelosi's visit to Taiwan was followed about a week later by a group of five other US lawmakers, and the Chinese

military responded by conducting several exercises near the island. Senator Marsha Blackburn, a US lawmaker on the Senate Commerce and Armed Services committees, arrived in Taiwan on Thursday, the third visit by a US official this month, defying pressure from China to halt travel. US President Joe Biden's administration has sought to prevent tension between Washington and Beijing from escalating into conflict, reiterating that congressional trips are routine.

The United States has no formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan, but is obliged by law to provide the island with the means to defend itself. China has never ruled out using force to bring Taiwan under its control. Taiwan says the People's Republic of China has never ruled the island and therefore has no claim over it, and that only Taiwan's 23 million people can decide their future.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/exclusive-us-warships-carrying-out-taiwan-strait-passage-first-since-pelosi-2022-08-28/>

HII leaves the keel to the future aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CVN 80).

HII lays keel to future USS Enterprise (CVN 80) aircraft carrier HII, America's only builder of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and a leading provider of mission-based defense technologies, celebrated the keel-laying ceremony of the aircraft carrier Enterprise (CVN 80) at its Newport News Shipbuilding division on August 27, 2022.

US Olympic gold medalists Simone Biles and Katie Ledecky are the ship's sponsors. Ledecky participated in person, while Biles participated via video, as the pair marked the first major milestone in the construction of the aircraft carrier.

During the ceremony, Biles and Ledecky's initials were welded onto a steel plate that will be permanently affixed to the ship, signifying the sponsors' long-standing relationship with the shipbuilders and crew.

In his remarks, Undersecretary of the Navy Erik Raven stressed the importance of aircraft carriers, calling on shipbuilders to recognize the importance of what they build.

"Our aircraft carriers would not be possible without the designers and builders right here at Newport News Shipbuilding. Every team member here at Newport News can be assured that every steel cut, every wrench turned and every challenge encountered to build her were steps toward strengthening our naval and national greatness - especially when this ship sails the open seas to protect our nation's interests."

Undersecretary of the Navy Erik Raven NNS President Jennifer Boykin praised the skilled shipbuilders building Enterprise, emphasizing their commitment to the Navy and our nation as the only shipyard capable of building nuclear-powered aircraft carriers.

"These hardworking men and women take 100,000 tons of steel and technology and make it not only float, but serve as a home, a workplace and a shield for our Navy sailors," Boykin told the crowd. "Shipbuilding requires discipline, precision and a relentless drive for excellence that we can never let falter because our sailors and their families depend on us."

Boykin also recognized all of the veterans present from previous U.S. Navy ships that were named Enterprise, including CV 6 and CVN 65, both built at NNS.

CVN 80 will be the ninth U.S. Navy ship to bear the Enterprise name. The most recent, CVN 65, was the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in history. Already, 20,000 pounds of CVN 65 steel have been incorporated into modules for CVN 80. When fully built, more than 35,000 kilograms of steel from CVN 65 will live in CVN 80, ensuring that the Enterprise legacy continues.

CVN 80 is the third aircraft carrier in the Gerald R. Ford class. Designed to replace the Nimitz-class aircraft carriers, the Ford class features a new nuclear power plant, redesigned

deck, electromagnetic catapults, improved weapons movement, an enhanced flight deck to support increased operational efficiency and room for growth for future technologies.

As America recognizes the 100-year legacy of aircraft carriers this year, all aircraft carriers operating in the U.S. Navy fleet today were built at NNS.

Enterprise is the first aircraft carrier not only designed digitally, but also built digitally using visual work instructions on laptops and tablets rather than paper drawings. Construction processes on Ford-class carriers, including Enterprise, are enabled by the workforce learning that took place on the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) and John F. Kennedy (CVN 79).

Enterprise is the first of a two carrier acquisition for the Navy, with work also underway at NNS on the second, Doris Miller (CVN 81).

Source: <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2022/08/hii-lays-keel-of-future-uss-enterprise-cvn-80-aircraft-carrier/> and <https://news.usni.org/>

Turkey tests SIPER air defence missile

The Turkish Defence Industry Agency (SSB) announced that the "SIPER" air defence missile was successfully tested at the Sinop firing range on 26 August 2022.

The test firing of the SIPER surface-to-air missile, which will form the backbone of Turkey's air defence in the near future, was carried out by Turkish missile manufacturer Roketsan in cooperation with Aselsan and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK). SALVIE).

During the test firing, the unmanned supersonic drone (Banshee 80) was detected by the EIRS radar produced by Aselsan, and the missile hit the target at a range of over 90 kilometers and an altitude of over 26,000 feet. The first test launch of the SIPER Block-0 rocket was conducted in November 2021.

What is SIPER's relationship with the Turkish Navy?

Although there is no official statement, the Turkish Navy's future TF-2000 air defence destroyer, scheduled to enter service after 2027, is expected to be armed with the SIPER air defence system. In this case, other variants of the SIPER missile (perhaps Block-2 or Block-3) with increased range could be considered for the TF-2000. After the US broke off its partnership with Turkey for the F-35 project and imposed CAATSA sanctions on Turkey over its purchase of the Russian S-400 air defence system, Turkey has focused on local solutions for major projects. In this case, Roketsan has accelerated the development of MIDLAS, an indigenous vertical launch system, and the first delivery of MIDLAS is expected to be completed before TCG Istanbul enters service, scheduled for 2023.

MIDLAS will be able to accommodate and launch a variety of missiles, including the HISAR family of air defence missiles that form the basis of SIPER (the former name of SIPER is HISAR-U, which stands for HISAR long-range).

SIPER missiles launched from the 64-cell MIDLAS VLS therefore appear to be a compatible solution for TF-2000 destroyers. On the other hand, Turkey is currently in talks with France and Italy for the EUROSAM SAMP/T air defence system, but there is no agreement yet. Should the parties reach an agreement, the ASTER 30 missile could be another option for the TF-2000.

Source: <https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2022/08/turkiye-test-fires-siper-area-air-defence-missile/>

Romania discussed the impact of Russia's aggression on Ukraine's grain exports

Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu received International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Secretary General Kitack Lim at the MFA headquarters on Sunday, discussing the

impact of Russian aggression on Ukraine's grain exports by sea, which affects global food security and freedom of navigation in the Black Sea.

According to an MFA press release, the two officials discussed the state of implementation of the Ukraine Black Sea Grain Initiative Agreement, concluded in Istanbul on 22 July 2022, following the acceptance by Ukraine, the Russian Federation and Turkey of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' plan in this regard.

Minister Bogdan Aurescu reaffirmed the importance of implementing this agreement in accordance with the commitments undertaken by the parties, mentioning the need to ensure safe maritime transport in the Black Sea, without which global food security is threatened, the source said.

At the same time, the head of the Romanian diplomacy drew attention to the importance of ensuring freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and the safety of maritime transport, "including through action by the international community, in the context of the extensive restrictive measures unilaterally introduced by the Russian Federation under the pretext of military action and the presence of sea mines".

Bogdan Aurescu reaffirmed Romania's support to Ukraine

Bogdan Aurescu reaffirmed Romania's support for Ukraine "in the context of Russia's unjustified, unprovoked and illegal aggression against the neighbouring state", noting that it is centred on the humanitarian aid offered to the more than 2.1 million Ukrainian refugees who have entered our country and on measures to facilitate Ukrainian grain exports.

Minister Aurescu presented the steps taken by the Romanian authorities to facilitate the transport and transit of Ukrainian grain to international markets, including through Romanian ports on the Danube and the Black Sea port of Constanta, pointing out that in recent months more than 3.4 million tonnes of Ukrainian grain have been shipped through Romania to the world.

He gave assurances that "our country will remain committed, together with European and global partners, to play an important role in facilitating grain exports from Ukraine to ensure global food security".

The Romanian Foreign Minister also presented Romania's efforts to promote connectivity in the Black Sea region, mentioning among others the steps taken in recent years to create a cargo corridor between the Caspian and Black Seas, with the involvement of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, and to create a direct connection between Georgian ports and the Port of Constanta.

Aurescu underlined "the deeply negative impact of the protracted conflicts in the region and Russia's illegal and illegitimate war against Ukraine on efforts to develop the Black Sea region economically and to exploit its exceptional economic potential".

"At the same time, Minister Bogdan Aurescu, in his capacity as a member of the UN Commission on International Law and co-chair of the UN Commission's Study Group on Sea-Level Rise in relation to International Law, presented the state of work on this topic and discussed with the IMO Secretary-General the potential for cooperation with the UN Commission on International Law on issues of common interest related to this important topic for a large number of UN member states," the MFA added.

For his part, Secretary General Kitack Lim expressed his appreciation for Romania's efforts to facilitate Ukrainian grain exports in the context of Russian aggression against the neighbouring state and for the manner in which this complex situation is being handled, the MFA said.

The IOM encouraged Romania to continue its active involvement in these efforts.

The IOM official encouraged Romania to continue its active involvement in these efforts, underlining the strategic position of our country on the Black Sea, with an important role in facilitating maritime security and for the continuation of grain exports from Ukraine.

He also underlined the economic potential of the Black Sea, including in the field of tourism.

According to the MFA, "the Secretary General of the IMO appreciated the efforts of the UN Commission on International Law and its Study Group, co-chaired by Minister Aurescu, on the subject of Sea-Level Rise in relation to International Law, expressing readiness to cooperate on issues of common interest with the International Maritime Organization, which already has on its agenda issues related to the impact of climate change (sea-level rise being a direct effect of climate change) on the seas and oceans".

The Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation will visit the Port of Constanta, the MFA added.

A record number of ships passed through Danube ports

Over the past day, 11 ships with 45,000 tonnes of grain passed through Ukrainian Danube ports. This was reported by the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine on Facebook, Ukrinform reports. "Last day, on August 27, 11 ships with a total volume of 45,000 tons passed through the mouth of Bystra and the Romanian Sulina channel in the direction of Ukrainian Danube ports ("Izmail", "Reni" and "Ust- Dunaisk"). This is a record figure since February 24, the beginning of Russia's large-scale invasion," the message reads. In particular, it is reported that 7 ships passed through the Bystre mouth of the Danube-Black Sea waterway, and 4 through the Romanian Sulina Channel. According to Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov, more than 4 million tons of grain have been transported through Danube ports since March - so far this is more than all other modes of transport. The Ministry of Infrastructure continues to improve the logistics of exports on the Danube - conditions are being created for unhindered communication between ports by rail, including the provision of direct rail connections. "If systematic investments are made and the modernisation programme of the Danube ports is implemented, it is possible to increase their capacity to 25 million tonnes of cargo per year. By the way, a joint project of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the EBRD on the study of export logistics in Bessarabia has already started. In two months, we will receive planning proposals for public, public-private and private investments, international projects and projects financed by international financial organizations," Kubrakov said.

Source: <https://www.blackseanews.net/read/193638>

Chinese defense firm takes over Venezuelan oil pickup for debt compensation

China has entrusted a state-owned defense-focused firm to deliver millions of barrels of Venezuelan oil despite U.S. sanctions, part of a deal to offset Caracas' multibillion-dollar debt to Beijing, according to three sources and tanker tracking data.

China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC) stopped carrying Venezuelan oil in August 2019 after Washington tightened sanctions on the South American exporter. But it continued to find its way to China via traders who renamed the fuel Malaysian, Reuters reported. Since November 2020, China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp (CASIC) has been transporting

Venezuelan crude on three tankers it bought that year from PetroChina, CNPC's listed vehicle, the sources said.

The crude is stored in a tank farm it also took over from PetroChina, the sources said. The three CASIC tanks are loading in Venezuela with their transponders active, allowing third-party tracking, Eikon data showed.

The company has taken on 13 shipments totaling about 25 million barrels of oil, including two vessels due to arrive in China in September, according to the loading schedules of Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA and tank tracking data from Refinitiv and Vortexa Analytics.

The 13 shipments, worth about \$1.5 billion at prices for Venezuela's flagship Merey crude, were declared "crude oil" at Chinese customs without specifying the origin, one of the sources said.

"These shipments are strictly under a government mandate, in which CASIC has been assigned to move the oil as payment to offset Venezuela's debt (to China)," the person said.

The three sources spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject. Without commenting on debt compensation, China's Foreign Ministry said Friday that the two nations are engaged in cooperation on "oil for humanitarian goods." "The cooperation meets Venezuela's current needs and is also in line with humanitarian principles," a ministry spokesman said, adding that China opposes unilateral sanctions and US long-arm jurisdiction. The media departments at CASIC and China's General Administration of Customs did not respond to requests for comment. A CNPC representative declined to comment.

A second source said that while some of each commodity pays off the debt, other goods, such as COVID-19 vaccines, are also deducted from crude oil sales.

"All the revenue money stays in China. The Venezuelan Foreign Ministry is responsible for reconciliation and accountability," this person said.

At about 42,000 barrels a day, these shipments increased total Venezuelan oil to China to about 420,000 bpd between January and July this year, equivalent to about 3% of China's consumption, according to Emma Li, an analyst at Vortexa, which tracks such flows. China has not officially reported any crude oil imports from Venezuela since October 2019. Venezuela's debt dates back to 2007, the era of then-President Hugo Chavez, when the country borrowed more than \$50 billion from Beijing under oil loan deals. Reuters could not determine how much of Venezuela's debt remains outstanding. In August 2020, Beijing agreed to extend a \$19 billion loan grace period, Reuters reported, but China and Venezuela have not said whether that period has ended.

GREEN CHANNEL

China, the world's biggest oil buyer, has benefited in recent years from cheaper oil supplies from Iran and Venezuela, and in recent months has stepped up imports from Russia amid soured relations with Washington. The country manages its crude imports under a rigid quota system for qualified refiners. CASIC shipments are an exception, with no quota, the first source said.

"They enter China on a special green channel," the person said. PDVSA and Venezuela's oil and foreign ministries did not respond to requests for comment.

The US Treasury Department, which enforces the sanctions, declined to comment. CASIC, which began in 1956 as a defense research facility that developed China's first missile, has expanded over the decades into a defense conglomerate specializing in space technology. It was chosen for the oil issue because it is politically powerful and has limited global financial exposure, making it less vulnerable to sanctions, the first source said. The company has worked since 2015 with state-owned oil giants, including CNPC and Sinopec, in

oil equipment production, digital technology and overseas projects, according to company websites.

TANK TRANSFER, STORAGE

CASIC's Venezuelan oil shipments are transported by three Very Large Crude Carriers- Xingye, Yongle and Thousand Sunny- according to PDVSA's loading schedules and vessel tracking by Vortexa and Refinitiv. CASIC took over the vessels from PetroChina in 2020, shortly after PetroChina took control of them after a legal dispute with PDVSA over assets involved in a joint venture bankruptcy, two sources told Reuters. PetroChina told Reuters in 2020 that it had transferred the vessels but declined to say to whom. PetroChina also transferred to CASIC a tank farm based in the eastern coastal city of Ningbo, where shipments are delivered, the sources added. All Venezuelan oil cargoes received by CASIC were initially picked up from the port of Jose by Cirrostrati Technology Co Ltd, a firm with no history in the oil trade, acting as an intermediary only for these goods, according to PDVSA's programs. Cirrostrati could not be reached for comment. Reuters was unable to find information about the company's registration or incorporation or to independently determine other links between Cirrostrati and CASIC. Oil supplied by CASIC is consumed largely by independent refiners in China, which have increasingly relied on cheaper crude from Iran and Venezuela and, more recently, Russia to maintain operations.

One independent refiner said it was offered oil at \$8 per barrel below the Brent benchmark, compared with a discount of more than \$30 for similar quality crude marketed as a Malaysian export.

"It's more expensive, but it's good that the government is now handling these Venezuelan supplies, which saves us a lot of logistical headaches and sanctions risks," a refinery executive said. (Reuters - Reporting by Chen Aizhu in Singapore and Marianna Parraga in Houston.

Source: <https://www.marinelink.com/news/chinese-defense-firm-takes-lifting-499043>

Chinese shipyard designs Smart Sail for seagoing vessels

China's Jiangnan Shipbuilding has become the latest in a string of companies to unveil wind-assisted propulsion designs for large ocean-going vessels. The shipyard reports that it has developed its Smart Sail system in-house and that it is based on a high-performance computing platform that evaluates the aerodynamic properties of the sail and allows the selection of aerodynamic profile parameters.

Several companies in Europe have already started tests on prototype sails designed to reduce fuel consumption and resulting emissions. Michelin and Chantiers de l'Atlantique in Europe and Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL) in Japan are also developing sail concepts. The sail designs are in addition to propulsion sails, which have already been successfully demonstrated to harness wind energy.

In collaboration with Oshima Shipyard, MOL has installed a rigid sail on a bulker due to enter service later this year, while the companies have placed additional orders for bulkers fitted with their telescopic rigid sails.

Jiangnan's Intelligent Sail Bost concept is autonomous and controllable by a technology platform that automatically adjusts the sail area according to changes in wind speed and wind direction angle along the route. The technology used to rotate the sail ensures maximum efficiency, while the use of automatic control system equipment reduces the demands on the crew. The sail can be automatically lowered in height according to wind conditions and retracts freely according to air draft requirements. In rough sea conditions, the vessel can quickly stow the sail to ensure the safety of the vessel. The surface material of the

sail is made of polymer composite materials and the lightweight design of the whole sail ensures the structural strength of the system under wind pressure.

The lightweight and modular design also means that the sail can be assembled without a shipyard. Jiangnan reports that its smart sail will produce a four percent saving in energy consumption. The shipyard said it is also working on a modular sail system design to accommodate different types and sizes of ships.

Source: <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/chinese-shipyard-designs-smart-sail-for-ocean-going-ships>

China and India fight over controversial ship call in Sri Lanka

India and China have traded insults over their divergent interests in Sri Lanka after a controversial Chinese scientific research vessel arrived the island nation despite security concerns in New Delhi. Sri Lanka "needs support, not unwanted pressure or unnecessary controversy to serve another country's agenda," India's embassy in Colombo said on Twitter on Saturday night, referring to the ongoing political and economic turmoil the nation is already struggling with after defaulting on its debt for the first time.

"External obstruction based on so-called 'security concerns' but without any evidence from certain forces is de facto deep interference in Sri Lankan sovereignty and independence," the Chinese mission wrote.

"Some countries, far or near, always give baseless excuses to aggress Sri Lanka and trample Sri Lanka's sovereignty and independence repeatedly," it said, without naming India directly.

Sri Lanka allowed the Yuan Wang 5 to dock at Hambantota port from August 16 to 22, after initially deferring a request from the Chinese embassy to allow the ship to make a mid-August call for resupply purposes.

India's Ministry of External Affairs said last month that the ship's movements could impact its security and economic interests. The Hambantota port where the ship stopped has been plagued by controversy, with the Sri Lankan government having to borrow heavily to build it. When Sri Lanka could not repay the loans, it granted China a 99-year lease for debt relief facility. Sri Lanka is currently negotiating with the International Monetary Fund for assistance amid its worst economic crisis.

Source: <https://gcaptain.com/china-india-spar-over-controversial-ships-call-in-sri-lanka/>

12 new LNG bulkers will be equipped to burn HFO

Independent bulker operator Himalaya Shipping is planning to install scrubbers (Scrubbing System consisting of a diverse group of air pollution control devices that can be used to remove some particulates and/or gases from industrial exhaust streams) on a fleet of 12 LNG-fuelled Newcastlemax bulkers currently under construction at New Times Shipyard (NTS) in China.

The installation recognises the reality of dual-fuel LNG energy today: LNG is so expensive that most LNG-fuelled ocean-going vessels have switched to VLSFO (Very Low Sulphur Fuel Oils).

The addition of a sulphur scrubber - although not required for LNG operation - will allow these bulkers to run on conventional fuel at the lowest cost, HFO. Himalaya, which was listed in April on the Euronext Expand exchange, has in recent months entered into a sale-leaseback agreement to secure financing for the new construction. The ships will deliver in 2023-24.

Once the scrubbers are installed, the vessels will have the ability to be fuelled by liquefied natural gas (LNG), low sulphur fuel oil (LSFO) or high sulphur fuel oil (HSFO). Himalaya says the scrubber installation offers "significant increased flexibility for its customers and will be valuable in ongoing employment discussions".

Based on the current spot price of LSFO versus heavy fuel oil (HFO) in Singapore, the scrubber investment is estimated to provide a total benefit of US\$7,500 per day when it sails.

Based on the company's estimated share of the scrubber benefit, the investment is expected to be repaid in less than a year and a half.

"The management and board would like to express their appreciation to NTS for showing their willingness and ability to make changes during the construction process, highlighting the excellent cooperation between the builders and the company," said Herman Billung, CEO Himalaya Shipping.

The 12 208,000 dwt Newcastlemax bulk carriers are designed to burn LNG as their primary fuel and have state-of-the-art MAN high-pressure engine and in-line shaft generator. The vessels are estimated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by around 60% per tonne/mile compared to a standard 180,000 dwt Capesize built in 2013, due to the higher cargo carrying capacity.

Source: <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/12-new-lng-bulkers-will-be-equipped-to-burn-hfo>

India's first Vikrant aircraft carrier to be commissioned on 2 September

Narendra Modi, India's Prime Minister, will inaugurate Vikrant - India's first indigenously built aircraft carrier - on September 2, including the nation in a select group of countries that will subsequently produce aircraft carriers with a displacement of over 40,000 tonnes.

Vikrant is expected to become operational after commissioning, the Navy said on Thursday. The Navy also pointed out that India has the capacity to build another indigenous aircraft carrier. This would give the country three aircraft carriers apart from INS Vikramaditya and IAC Vikrant, which is yet to be commissioned. But the central government's approval is still pending for the third ship. While five trials have been executed for Vikrant, another trial will be held in November this year. The Navy added that Vikrant is expected to conduct trials by mid-2023.

Vikrant's keel laying was executed in 2009, the ship was launched in 2013 (around August), sea trials began in 2021 (around August), and the ship was delivered in 2022 (around July).

During a press conference on Thursday, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff Satish Namdeo Ghormade said the commissioning of Vikrant was crucial in establishing the Indian Navy as the Blue Water Navy. He further added that the aircraft carrier will ensure security and safety in the Indo-Pacific region. The deputy reportedly praised the construction of Vikrant and referred to it as the nation's effort.

The Deputy Chief also mentioned that 18 Indian states and Union Territories have provided essential components, pointing out that Vikrant has been successful with 76% indigenisation.

Some of the cities that have sent parts include Kolkata, Jalandhar, Ambala, Daman, Kota, New Delhi and Pune. The Navy's warship design office designed the Vikrant. It was built at the Cochin shipyard. Equipped with 32 MRSAMs and a displacement of about 42,800 tonnes Vikrant has 32 medium range surface-to-air missiles (MRSAMs). It is also loaded with CIWS AK 630; these are close-in weapon systems. It will also operate Kavach, an Indian naval anti-missile decoy system that diverts laser-guided missiles from their precise targets.

Vikrant comes with a capacity to hold a mix of 30 helicopters and aircraft. It has a displacement of about 42,800 tons. Vikrant will be able to accommodate nearly 1,600 crew members. The ship has a cruising speed of around 18 knots and a top speed of 28 knots. The maximum sailing distance is approximately 7,500 Mm.

Vikrant reportedly involved over 100 SMEs and indigenous OEMs. In addition, over 500 Indian sub-contractors and ancillary industries were involved in the manufacturing process. The research and development organisation Deference and the Steel Authority of India Limited developed the steel for the vessel. The IAC battle management system, power distribution system, data network, electronic warfare suite and integrated platform management system were built locally. Tata Advanced Systems built the battle management system. Meanwhile, Bharat Electronics helped with the electronic warfare suite and data network, the power network was by L&T, and the integrated platform management system was by Bharat Heavy Electricals.

Source: <https://www.marineinsight.com/shipping-news/indias-first-ever-aircraft-carrier-vikrant-to-be-commissioned-on-2nd-september/>