

● POLITY

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PEGASUS SPYWARE FOUND ON JOURNALISTS' PHONES AFTER APPLE ALERT, SAYS AMNESTY

CONTEXT: Amnesty International's Security Lab revealed that The Wire's founder-editor Siddharth Varadarajan and another journalist in India were targeted with Pegasus spyware, as confirmed by Apple alerts.

BACKGROUND: Journalists, warned by Apple of "state-sponsored hacking," submitted their phones for testing after being targeted by NSO Group's Pegasus spyware. India's Intelligence Bureau imported NSO Group hardware in 2017. Following Apple alerts, government officials pressured the tech giant for "alternative" explanations regarding warnings sent to Opposition leaders and journalists, leading to unsubstantiated statements.

Concerns over the Attack

- **Unlawful Surveillance:** Journalists targeted, violating privacy and freedom of expression; NSO Group's Pegasus spyware used, exploiting Apple vulnerability.
- **Government Non-cooperation:** India refuses Supreme Court-ordered Pegasus investigation; phones of prominent journalists, including Varadarajan and Mangnale, infected.
- **Persistent Spyware Use:** Despite global scrutiny, NSO Group's Pegasus continues; government explores alternatives; Defence Intelligence Agency purchases snooping equipment.
- **Amnesty Findings:** Security Lab reveals Pegasus infections; samples consistent with BLASTPASS exploit; Apple patches vulnerability in iOS 16.6.1.
- **Journalists' Alert:** Varadarajan and Mangnale receive Apple alerts of state-sponsored attacks; government investigates; calls for human rights protection and accountability.

Is Pegasus spyware targeting journalists in India?

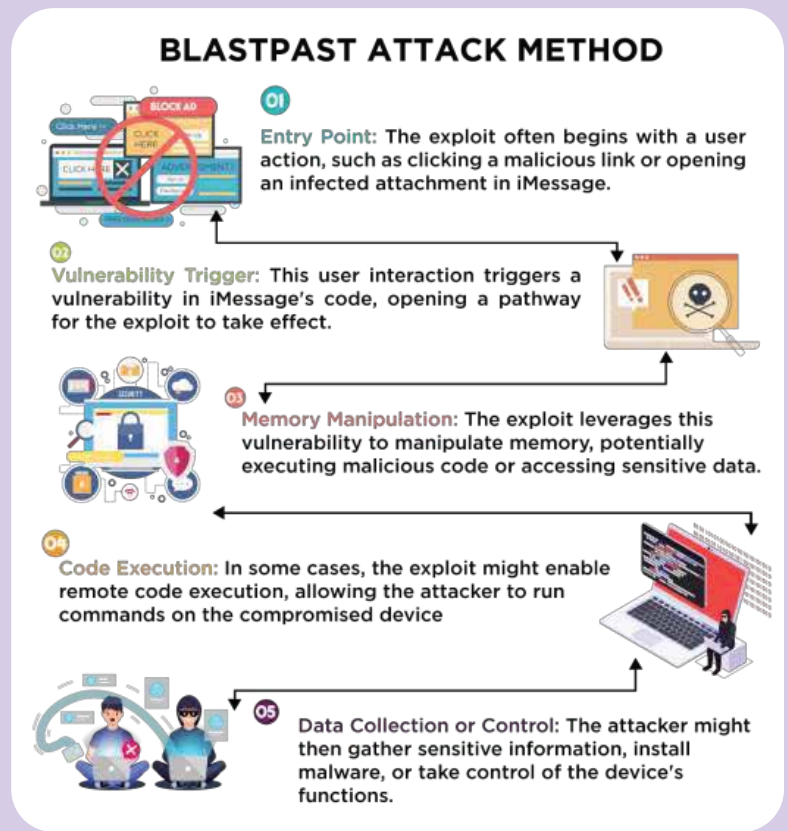
Amnesty International uncovered evidence of Pegasus spyware targeting Indian journalists Siddharth Varadarajan and Anand Mangnale. Utilizing a 'zero-click exploit' in an iMessage, Mangnale was attacked, while Varadarajan was targeted through an attacker-controlled email, both employing the BLASTPAST method to exploit iMessage vulnerabilities.

- **Pegasus Targeting Journalists:** Amnesty's Security Lab finds Pegasus traces on iPhones of Varadarajan and

Mangnale; alleged zero-click exploit used.

- **Zero-Click Exploit Definition:** Malicious software installs spyware without owner consent; no user actions needed for installation.
- **BLASTPAST Exploit:** Two-stage attack process targets Apple HomeKit, then delivers spyware via iMessage; similar to previous PWNYOURHOME Pegasus attack.
- **Security Measures:** Varadarajan's phone protected by Apple's 16.6.1 update; Mangnale's phone vulnerable during alleged attack; no evidence of successful infection.
- **NSO Group's Response:** NSO claims technologies licensed to vetted law enforcement and intelligence agencies for fighting terrorism and major crime.

Supreme Court, responding to Pegasus Project revelations, requested government details. Government declined, citing national security concerns amid surveillance allegations by activists.



SOCIETY

ANTI-ZIONISM VERSUS ANTI-SEMITISM

CONTEXT: U.S. House passes resolution equating anti-Zionism with antisemitism; White House condemns Representative Massie for dissenting and criticizing focus on Zionism over patriotism.

BACKGROUND: Republican Representative Thomas Massie faced White House condemnation for voting against a resolution, suggesting Congress prioritized Zionism over American patriotism. The enduring sympathy for Zionism in the U.S. is evident, with President Biden and Speaker Mike Johnson openly aligning themselves with it. The close ties between the American evangelist movement, particularly Christian Zionism, and the Israeli right influence U.S. foreign policy, amplifying support for Israel.

Zionism or occupation

Zionism, originating in the 1897 First Zionist Congress, aspired to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine based on biblical promises. Israel's historical claims cite a "natural and historic right," intertwined with religious convictions and eschatological concepts.

Criticism of Zionism views it as the forcible occupation of Palestine, while 21st-century anti-Zionism focuses on Israeli policies, not its right to exist. Debates involve legal questions, distinctions between criticism and anti-Semitism, and concerns about stifling legitimate critique through propagandistic tactics and "philosemitic McCarthyism."

Feature	Anti-Zionism	Anti-Semitism
Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political ideology favoring the existence of the State of Israel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious or ethnic group of Jewish people
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposes the right of Jewish people to self-determination in Israel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes prejudice, hatred, and discrimination against Jewish people
Manifestations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boycotting Israeli products, criticizing Israeli policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stereotyping Jewish people, denying the Holocaust, violence against Jews
Motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political concerns about land rights, human rights, or regional conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bias, religious intolerance, conspiracy theories, historical myths
Not all...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-Zionists aren't necessarily anti-Semitic. They may disagree with Israeli policies while respecting Jewish people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-Semitism can exist even without opposition to Zionism. Some may target Jews based solely on their religion or ethnicity.

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SOCIAL JUSTICE

DISABLED STAFF TO GET QUOTA IN PROMOTION WITH EFFECT FROM 2016

CONTEXT: Union government allows reservation in promotions for persons with disabilities in Central government Group A posts from June 30, 2016.

BACKGROUND: The Union government has issued an order enabling persons with disabilities to receive reservation in promotions, effective from June 30, 2016. This decision aligns with a 2021 Supreme Court ruling affirming the right to reservation in promotions for candidates with disabilities. After a decade-long legal battle, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) decided, following consultations with the Department of Legal Affairs, to grant notional promotion to eligible candidates.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

- Contempt Petition in 2023: Petitioner alleges non-compliance with court's 2016 direction to implement the 1995 Act for PwD candidates.
- Court's July 2023 Ruling: Despite compliance claims, the court asserts breach and orders notional promotion for eligible PwD candidates.
- DoPT's Response: Consultations with Legal Affairs lead to a decision to grant notional promotion from June 30, 2016.
- Financial Arrears Exclusion: Notional promotion recipients won't receive financial arrears from eligibility date until assuming charge of promoted position.
- Avoiding Seniority List Overhaul: DoPT fears an overhaul due to notional promotion, proposes creation of supernumerary posts for affected PwD employees.
- Supernumerary Post Conditions: Posts created are personal to PwD employee, abolished when adjusted to a vacancy or upon retirement.
- Proposal Submission: Ministries and departments advised to submit proposals for supernumerary posts to the Department of Expenditure.
- Protection for Previous Beneficiaries: Notional promotions won't adversely affect PwD candidates who already benefited from reservation in promotion.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

WOMEN ACCOUNT FOR 49% OF AYUSHMAN CARDS, SAYS MINISTRY

CONTEXT: Ayushman cards: Women constitute 49% of 28.45 crore; account for around 48% of authorized hospital admissions, reveals Health Ministry data.

BACKGROUND: India's Ayushman Bharat scheme has seen the creation of 28.45 crore cards, with 9.38 crore added in 2023. The initiative facilitated 6.11 crore hospital admissions totaling ₹78,188 crore, including 1.7 crore admissions worth over ₹25,000 crore in 2023. With 26,901 empaneled hospitals, the scheme conducted extensive screenings for hypertension, diabetes, oral cancer, cervical cancer, and breast cancer, alongside 2.80 crore yoga/wellness sessions in Ayushman Arogya Mandirs as of December 15.

Ayushman Bharat –Pradhan Mantri Jan AarogyaYojana (AB-PMJAY)

- PMJAY Overview: Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY offers Rs. 5 lakh/year cover for secondary and tertiary care to over 10.74 crore families.
- Extensive Coverage: Approximately 50 crore beneficiaries, vulnerable entitled families, will benefit from cashless and paperless health services.
- Financial Relief: Aims to reduce catastrophic health expenditure, preventing impoverishment due to hospitalizations and mitigating financial risks of health crises.
- Access without Hardships: Entitled families can access quality health services without facing financial difficulties, promoting health equity.
- Significant Scale: When fully implemented, PMJAY aims to be the world's largest government-financed health protection scheme, supporting Universal Health Coverage.
- Visionary Initiative: PMJAY stands as a visionary step toward advancing the agenda of Universal Health Coverage, emphasizing comprehensive government-backed health protection.

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ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

COVID-19-HIT MSMES CAN TAP NEW RELIEF WINDOW FROM JAN. 1

CONTEXT: India revives scheme to settle COVID-19-related disputes between MSMEs and central government agencies, providing potential relief in the New Year.

BACKGROUND: From January 1, 2024, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India have an extended opportunity to submit claims under the Vivad Se Vishwas I scheme. Originally open from mid-April to end of July, the scheme settled ₹650 crore across nearly 44,000 cases by December. The Department of Expenditure noted that eligible MSMEs, previously unaware of the scheme, can now submit claims until March 31, 2024.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

- **VSVS I for MSME Relief:** Finance Minister announced Vivad Se Vishwas I scheme in Budget 2023-24, targeting MSMEs facing pandemic-related compliance issues.
- **Flaws in Implementation:** MSMEs claim inadequate dissemination and flawed details; the scheme fails to ensure automatic return of security deposits.
- **Concerns Raised:** Association of Indian Entrepreneurs highlights gaps between government intent and execution; urges interest on returned security deposits to prevent losses.
- **Potential Losses:** Without interest on security deposits, MSMEs risk losing nearly 36% of the sum in three years.
- **VSVS II for Contractual Disputes:** Another scheme, VSVS II, addresses pending contractual disputes in public procurement; over 900 claims received, ₹1,652 crore settled by mid-December.
- **Claims Deadline:** VSVS II accepted claims until October, emphasizing the need for effective government communication to ensure MSMEs' maximum benefit.

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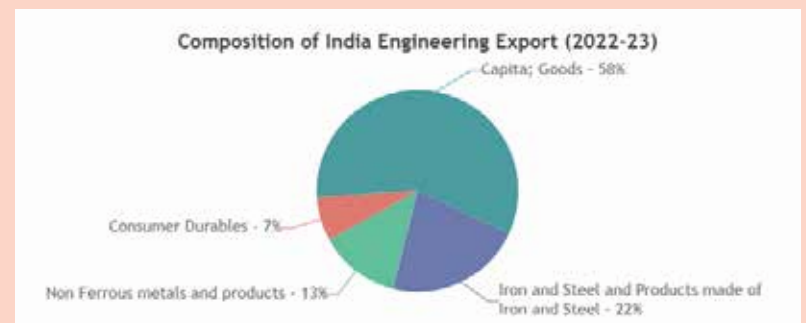
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ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

'APRIL-NOV. EXPORTS IN ENGINEERING DIP 2%'

CONTEXT: India's engineering exports for the first eight months until November fell 1.81% to \$69.46 billion; excluding iron and steel, there's a marginal 0.79% increase.

HIGHLIGHTS: India's engineering exports witnessed a decline in November following three months of growth, as reported by engineering exporters body EEPC India. Factors such as high interest rates, weak industrial output, commodity price volatility, and increased trade restrictions globally are impacting the country's engineering exports. Rising raw material costs and logistics expenses are further burdening Indian exporters amid a global trade downturn. While positive year-on-year growth was noted in some regions, overall, 16 out of 34 engineering panels recorded negative growth from April to November 2023-24.



CREDIT – Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Govt. of India

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

OLD AND STRONG

CONTEXT: India and Russia seem keen on renewing ties in a changed world

BACKGROUND: Despite Ukraine tensions and Western pull, India and Russia reaffirmed their historic bond through Jaishankar's visit. Agreements on energy, trade, and military signal commitment, but key issues like payment mechanisms and weapons delivery remain unresolved. Can this "constant" relationship navigate a complex world?

STORY SO FAR: Jaishankar's unusual 5-day Russia visit, despite Putin's holiday schedule, signifies renewed efforts to strengthen the traditionally close ties. Agreements on nuclear, trade, and military sectors suggest progress, but key concerns like payment mechanisms and weapons delays remain. Jaishankar's emphasis on continued energy imports and resuming the annual summit reflects India's commitment to this "only constant" relationship. Jaishankar's assertion of a "constant" relationship sends a message to both the West and China, but key issues like payment mechanisms and weapons delivery remain unresolved. The success of this visit hinges on translating words into concrete action and navigating the complexities of a shifting global order.

ANALYSIS OF JAISHANKAR'S RUSSIA VISIT: RESOLVING STATIC, REALIGNING IN A SHIFTING WORLD

Relevance

The Ukraine war has cast a shadow on India-Russia relations, traditionally close since the Cold War. Despite abstaining from condemning Russia at the UN, India's growing ties with the West have raised eyebrows in Moscow. Modi's absence from the annual leadership summit for two years fuelled speculation about a rift.

Significance of Jaishankar's Visit:

- **Length and Engagement:** The extended five-day visit and Putin's meeting with Jaishankar (a lower-ranking official) signify efforts to repair ties and address concerns.
- **Agreements and Resumed Talks:** Pacts on nuclear, trade, connectivity, and military production demonstrate commitment to cooperation and a desire to move beyond the Ukraine issue.
- **Hydrocarbon Imports and Summit Resumption:** Continued energy imports and confirmation of the 2024 summit signal resilience and intent to navigate differences.
- **Message to Washington and Beijing:** Jaishankar's assertion of a "constant" relationship sends a message of strategic autonomy and potential recalibration in the global power dynamic.

Opportunities:

Economic Cooperation: Expanding trade, joint ventures, and the Eurasian Economic Union free trade agreement hold potential for economic growth.

Multilateral Alignment: Collaboration in BRICS and other forums can strengthen their global influence.

Energy Security: Continued access to Russian oil and gas amidst Western sanctions diversifies India's energy sources.

Counterbalancing Power: A closer India-Russia partnership can provide a counterweight to US and Chinese dominance in the region. Convergence on a multipolar world aligns with India's vision of a fairer global order and offers potential for strategic cooperation against rising Chinese assertiveness.

INDIA-RUSSIA TIES

1) Possible Impact on China

Opportunities:

- Counterbalance China's assertiveness in Asia.
- Promote strategic autonomy from the West.
- Benefit from economic cooperation and technology transfers.

Challenges:

- Manage Western pressure and potential disapproval in India.
- Reconcile India's stance on Ukraine with Russia's involvement.

Impact on China:

- Create a more balanced power dynamic in Asia.
- Offer an alternative economic bloc to China's Belt and Road Initiative.

- Force China to be more accommodating of regional interests.

Success hinges on:

- India's ability to navigate complexities and leverage the partnership.
- Balancing interests between Russia and the West.

2) Potential Impact on the Western Bloc

Opportunities for India:

- **Strategic Autonomy:** A stronger partnership with Russia could provide India with greater leverage in international relations, reducing dependence on the West and promoting a multipolar world order.
- **Economic Collaboration:** Enhanced economic ties with Russia could offer access to new markets, resources, and technology, bolstering India's economic growth and diversification.
- **Counterbalancing China:** A closer Indo-Russia relationship could present a united front against China's growing influence in Asia, potentially mitigating its assertive behaviour and promoting regional stability.

Challenges for the Western Bloc:

- **Geopolitical Realignment:** A strengthened India-Russia partnership could disrupt the existing global power dynamics, challenging Western dominance in Asia and potentially creating a new power bloc.
- **Security Concerns:** Increased military cooperation between India and Russia could raise concerns in the West about arms proliferation and potential instability in the region.
- **Diplomatic Complexity:** The US and its allies may face a more complex diplomatic landscape, needing to navigate competing interests and potentially revise their strategies towards both India and Russia.

3) Potential Responses from the Western Bloc:

- **Increased Engagement:** The West might intensify diplomatic efforts with India, focusing on shared interests like counterterrorism and economic cooperation, to prevent further alignment with Russia.
- **Economic Incentives:** Offering attractive trade agreements and investment opportunities could be a way to entice India to remain within the Western sphere of influence.
- **Security Cooperation:** The US could strengthen its military partnerships with India, offering advanced weaponry and technology to address India's security concerns without pushing it closer to Russia.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS:

The impact on other regional players, like Japan and Southeast Asian nations, might need to adjust their strategies in response to a shifting geopolitical landscape.

The role of domestic politics in both India and Western countries, as public opinion and internal pressures could

influence the direction of foreign policy.

The long-term implications for the global order, as the power dynamics between the US, Russia, China, and other major players continue to evolve. The rise of Africa and India's collaboration with those powers will also add to these dynamics.

CONCLUSION: Jaishankar's visit reignites the "Old and Strong" India-Russia ties, offering opportunities for economic growth, counterbalancing China, and navigating a multipolar world. While challenges remain, this strategic recalibration sends a message to the West: India is charting its course, seeking partners beyond traditional blocs. The success of this dynamic dance depends on India's deftness in navigating shifting sands and forging a future where "constant" relationships find new meaning in a changing world.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SHIPPING VALUE CHAIN

CONTEXT: Amidst China's dominance in shipbuilding and ship owning, India's shipping industry struggles to rise beyond supplying seafarers and managing ships, calling for a strategic shift to gain a stronger foothold in global trade and maritime power.

STORY SO FAR: The Yangtze River, a symbol of China's history and modern prosperity, is teeming with merchant ships, showcasing the nation's dominance in global trade. In stark contrast, India's shipping industry lags, focused primarily on supplying seafarers and managing ships. This disparity reflects a missed opportunity for India, which once held potential in shipbuilding and owning. While China's success stemmed from government support and domestic demand, India's reliance on outdated strategies and lack of investment have left it trailing. India needs to adopt a strategic vision, focusing on building and owning ships to gain a stronger foothold in global trade and bolster its maritime power. Embracing this shift could not only boost manufacturing and create jobs but also enhance India's strategic autonomy and influence on the international stage. The question remains: will India rise to the challenge and navigate its path to success on the high seas?

INDIA VS. CHINA IN THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY

1. Historical Standings:

- India had a head start in modern ship-owning, boasting the world's largest tankers and active participation in the International Maritime Organization.
- China entered later but made rapid strides with dedicated government plans and state-owned yards, becoming the world leader in shipbuilding by 2020.

2. India's Stagnant Growth:

- Lack of consistent government support, decline of state-owned enterprises, and reliance on second-hand ships have kept India stuck in lower rungs of the value chain.
- Focus remains on supplying seafarers (4-5 out of 20 in

global ships) and managing ships, contributing a significant \$6 billion in foreign exchange.

3. Missed Opportunities:

- Successive Indian governments' plans like Maritime Agenda 2020 and Maritime India Vision 2030 lacked concrete strategies for shipbuilding, leading to a negligible global share.
- Existing shipyards primarily cater to naval orders, neglecting merchant shipbuilding despite India's long coastline and strategic location.

4. Potential Benefits of Shipbuilding:

- Boosted manufacturing capacity, creating jobs and enhancing technological knowledge.
- Increased strategic power and presence in global trade and maritime industry.
- Stronger naval base as demonstrated by the thriving Nagasaki shipyard.

5. Issues in India's Shipbuilding:

- Government apathy: Lack of dedicated plans, financial support, and policy initiatives to incentivize shipbuilding.
- State-owned enterprise woes: Decline of Shipping Corporation of India and underutilization of existing shipyard capacities.
- Private sector hesitation: Uncertain market conditions, short-term forecasts, and competition from cheaper second-hand vessels.
- Financial constraints: Limited access to capital and difficulty competing with state-backed Chinese yards.

Additional Information:

The Yangtze River symbolizes China's booming shipping industry, showcasing its vast might.

- Thriving Shipping Traffic: A constant flow of massive merchant ships, often in convoys, demonstrates China's sheer volume of vessels and dominance in global shipping.
- Ubiquitous Shipyards: Numerous shipyards lining the riverbanks highlight China's extensive shipbuilding infrastructure and capacity, surpassing most nations.
- Evolving Fleet: The presence of not only large cargo ships but also newer, technologically advanced vessels reflects China's commitment to continuous innovation in shipbuilding.
- Self-Sufficient Supply Chain: The Yangtze serves as a crucial artery for transporting raw materials to shipyards and finished goods for export, showcasing a self-sustaining domestic supply chain.
- Gateway to Global Trade: The river acts as a key channel for Chinese exports, symbolizing the nation's economic reliance on maritime trade, fueled by its strong shipbuilding industry.
- Historical Legacy: The Yangtze's long association with Chinese shipping and trade connects China's modern shipbuilding prowess to its historical maritime expertise.

- **Strategic Investment:** The river's role in shipbuilding reflects China's strategic investment in this crucial sector, aiming to maintain its leadership in the global maritime industry.
- **Technological Advancement:** The presence of advanced vessels underscores China's commitment to continuous technological advancement in its shipbuilding capabilities.
- **Economic Prowess:** The Yangtze's role in both raw materials import and finished goods export showcases China's economic strength and reliance on maritime trade.
- **Global Ambition:** The overall picture of the Yangtze as a hub for shipbuilding paints a clear picture of China's ambition to reign supreme in the global maritime industry. Merchant fleet and shipyards.

Despite a strong seafaring presence, India's overall foreign exchange from shipping pales in comparison to China's.

Nagasaki's story highlights the strategic significance of shipbuilding for both economic and military strength.

CONCLUSION: India urgently needs a strategic shift to move beyond supplying manpower and embrace shipbuilding and ownership. This will unlock economic and strategic benefits, allowing India to claim its rightful place in the global maritime landscape. Addressing the key issues hindering growth and implementing long-term, well-defined policies are crucial for success.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

HOUTHİ ATTACKS: A THREAT TO GLOBAL SHIPPING?

CONTEXT: Houthi rebels' drone attacks on Red Sea merchant vessels are disrupting global trade, threatening economies, and sparking concerns about maritime security. The attack on an Indian ship off Gujarat highlights the global reach of this threat, prompting India to take action and potentially spurring international cooperation to secure vital shipping routes.

THE GIST

- The recent drone attacks on merchant vessels in the Red Sea by Houthi rebels have raised concerns about maritime security, disrupting global trade routes and potentially impacting economies.
- These attacks have prompted some shipping companies to reroute vessels, avoid the Red Sea, and increase operational costs.
- India heightened its presence, deploying various resources to counter potential threats in the region and monitor maritime activity.
- However, uncertainties persist regarding potential future attacks, response strategies, and the broader

implications for global trade and economies.

STORY SO FAR

Houthi rebels extended their Red Sea attacks to Indian waters on December 23rd, striking a Liberian merchant ship near Gujarat. This incident, just outside India's EEZ, follows a recent surge in drone and missile attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea.

What is the latest on m.v. chem pluto?

The Indian-crewed Chem Pluto, hit near Gujarat by a suspected drone attack, reached Mumbai under Coast Guard escort. Navy analysis suggests a drone but further investigation is needed. Another Indian-crewed vessel, Sai Baba, also reported a drone attack in the Red Sea, marking the 14th and 15th such incidents since October.

How do these events impact India and the world?

Escalation threat: Sophisticated Houthi weapons disrupt supply chains, forcing ships to take longer routes and raising costs.

Global impact: 12% of global trade passes through the Red Sea, threatening its crucial choke point, Bab el-Mandeb.

Major consequences: Shipping companies like Maersk re-route, impacting fuel, insurance, and Suez Canal revenue.

Urgent action needed: International cooperation is critical to secure the Red Sea and ensure global trade stability.

What is being done to address this?

Global Response:

- Operation Prosperity Guardian (OPS) established by the US and Combined Maritime Forces to protect Red Sea trade.
- Several shipping companies reconsidering rerouting decisions.

Indian Efforts:

- Increased Navy and Coast Guard presence in the region.
- Four Project 15B/A class destroyers deployed for anti-piracy and drone attack protection.
- P8I aircraft, Dorniers, Sea Guardians, helicopters, and Coast Guard ships were also involved.
- Continuous Indian Navy deployment in the Gulf of Aden since 2008.
- Information Fusion Centre-IOR actively monitoring and facilitating communication.

Additional Information:

First actual piracy incident in the Gulf of Aden since the high-risk area designation was lifted in January 2023.

CONCERNS

- Indian seafarers are numerous (15% globally), but India relies heavily on foreign ships for its cargo.
- A major attack with casualties or significant cargo loss could trigger a strong reaction from India and other affected countries.

- The regional crisis poses a broader threat of economic shocks due to delays and price hikes.

CONCLUSION: Houthi rebels' Red Sea attacks cast a long shadow over global shipping, disrupting crucial trade routes and raising security concerns. While India's heightened presence and international initiatives like Operation Prosperity Guardian offer hope, uncertainties remain. The potential for escalation, economic turmoil, and even regional conflict underscores the urgency of collective action to secure the Red Sea and safeguard the arteries of global trade. Only through concerted international efforts can we navigate this choppy terrain and ensure the safe flow of goods for a connected world.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ISRAEL BOMBS GAZA, UN WARNS CIVILIANS ARE IN 'GRAVE PERIL'

CONTEXT: The Gaza Strip faced heavy bombing by Israeli forces on Thursday as intense fighting against Hamas shifted further south, with hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians taking refuge in the area.

STORY SO FAR: the war which was started with Hamas attack on 7th October has now reached southern Gaza city of Khan Younis with reported death of over 200 people in last 24 hours.

United Nations and French President Emmanuel Macron have expressed deep concern over very heavy civilian casualty.

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