



# Weekly Security & Risk Report

20th July 2022



# MAST Intelligence

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# Issue 341

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Issue 341 of the series reviews, analyses and threat assesses the conflict-affected coastal states of Somalia and Yemen, as well as security issues facing the UK, London and the global security and risk picture.

## The Security and Risk Report Series focuses on

- Operational risks in areas of instability which could affect the safety of commercial and private vessels and personnel ashore and at sea.
- In-country reporting on key countries where civil conflict are directly impacting on maritime operations; and
- Reporting and analysis of incidents of terrorism, piracy and other related criminal activity.

MAST has a global reach and presence, delivering first hand, accurate and exclusive intelligence. MAST is entrenched and committed in continuing to support and promote the awareness of the very real risks that seafarers and other stakeholders face.

This Intelligence Report Series is a brief snapshot of MAST's Intelligence capabilities. MAST Intelligence specialises in providing clients with a suite of products and services, including; political and economic risk analysis, detailed port and vessel security briefs, vessel passage plans, threat and risk mitigation and travel risk management.

Working closely in conjunction with a host of experts, MAST Intelligence offers a market leading service pertaining to all maritime affairs and land-based guarding and asset protection provision.

Follow MAST on LinkedIn and Twitter to keep abreast with these insightful weekly reports and more — including real time security updates.

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# Somalia & Yemen

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Somalia is facing its worst drought in a decade, BBC News said on July 19th. The World Food Programme says up to 20 million people in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia are at risk of starvation by the end of the year. Hundreds of thousands of people are abandoning their homes in rural Somalia and heading to camps for the internally displaced.

## **US says it kills two Al Shabaab militants in Somalia airstrike**

Africom, US Africa Command, reported on Monday 18th that it had conducted an airstrike against Al Shabaab terrorists in southern Jubaland on Sunday 17th. The strike in Lower Juba region reportedly killed two terrorists. "The command's initial assessment is that two Al Shabaab terrorists were killed in action," AFRICOM said. "No civilians were injured or killed given the remote nature of where this engagement occurred," Arab News said on July 19th.

## **Suicide car bomb blast targets Somali regional capital**

A powerful suicide bomb blast rocked Somalia's town of Jowhar, in Hirshabele state, killing at least three people and wounding seven others. Senior regional administration officials were among those hurt. Militant group Al Shabaab has claimed responsibility for the attack, VOA reported on July 17th. Hirshabele state Humanitarian and Disaster Management Minister Abdifatah Qoorgaab told VOA attack targeted a popular hotel named Nur-doob that was frequented by state lawmakers, ministers and other officials. The wounded included the state health minister.

## **Somalia, Kenya ink deals on khat, aviation as relations warm**

Reuters reported on July 16th that relations between Somalia and Kenya are improving, with a range of deals signed by the presidents of each country amid a diplomatic thaw. Relations had become strained following the dispute of offshore oil and gas deposits but new deals on flights between the two nations and a resumption of the khat trade will improve ties. However, it is likely that this may not be the case should oil and gas exploration begin off the coast of Somalia.

## **Houthis vow not to let the Red Sea turn into 'Israeli Lake'**

Iran's state-backed Fars News reported on July 18th that Abdel-Aziz bin Habtour, premier of the Houthi National Salvation Government, which is not recognised by the international community, has said that his administration will not allow the Red Sea to become an "Israeli lake". He claimed that Yemen has the final say in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and will "preserve the Arab identity of the Red Sea in the face of the US conspiracy to turn it into a Zionist lake." MAST will continue to monitor these waters for any Houthi activity.

## **President Biden discusses Yemen with Saudi rulers**

US President Joe Biden met with Saudi Arabia's King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman on July 16th, Critical Threats reported. The subject of the ongoing war in Yemen was high on the agenda and, following the meeting, the US and Saudi Arabia issued a joint statement where both parties pledged to support negotiations to expand and extend the current truce in Yemen.

## **Iran Supports Houthi Control over Yemen Telecommunications Sector**

New analysis by Critical Threats on July 15th suggests that Iran may be giving Houthi forces technical assistance which allows them greater control over Yemen's telecommunications infrastructure. Critical Threats reported that a NGO based in Yemen had revealed that Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah had both sent support workers to aid the Houthis and that it was likely Houthis were acquiring new systems to increase their surveillance capabilities.

*For further information, [please click here.](#)*

# UK Security News

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A UK parliamentary committee has warned that MI5 should be given additional funding in order for it to tackle the rising threat of extreme right-wing terrorism, The Guardian reported on July 13th. "This situation is untenable," the committee said in a report released last week.

## **Isle of Wight boy, 15, accused of planning terrorist attacks**

A 15-year-old boy from the Isle of Wight has been charged with a terrorism offence, BBC News reported on July 18th. The teenager, from Cowes, was arrested by officers from Counter Terrorism Policing South East with help from Hampshire Constabulary last week. Following questioning, he was charged with the preparation of terrorist acts under Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006.

## **'Ruthless' gang member who threatened to cut off Ashley Cole's fingers during break-in jailed for 30 years**

Sky News reported on July 15th that Kurtis Dilks, 35, a member of a gang which broke into former England footballer, Ashley Cole's home with a sledgehammer, has been sentenced to 30 years in prison. Dilks, who threatened to cut off Cole's fingers, was convicted along with five others of a series of "ruthlessly executed" robberies and burglaries between October 2018 and January 2020, Sky News said. The judge described the gang as "intelligent, violent and chillingly ruthless men".

## **Neo-Nazi group teenager found with Nazi dagger, SS hat and Swastika armband**

A 19-year-old from Wales has become the first person to be convicted of belonging to the banned Feuerkrieg Division (FKD) since the far-right organisation, since the organisation was proscribed in 2020. Police discovered Nazi memorabilia during searches of properties used by Luca Benincasa. He pleaded guilty to membership of the FKD and four counts of collecting information likely to be of use to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism, the Express and Star reported on July 15th.

## **18-year-old pleads guilty to various far-right terror offences**

Oliver Riley, 18, from Oxfordshire, pleaded guilty to

a number of far-right terror offences at Westminster Magistrates' Court on July 11th, Tell Mama UK reported on July 14th. He will be sentenced in August. Detective Chief Superintendent Oliver Wright, who leads Counter Terrorism Policing South East (CTPSE), said: "Riley has recognised that he committed these offences by being in possession of videos which glorify terrorism and which promote white supremacy throughout. Some of the harmful content Riley had promotes the separation of races by violent means, along with some particularly hateful content being directed at the LGBTQ+ community. These are serious offences and I am glad that he at least acknowledged these offences by pleading guilty."

## London News

### **Craig David 'felt violated' after stalker turned up at his home**

Singer Craig David has told a court how he was left feeling 'violated' in his own home after being stalked by a 31-year-old woman, the Evening Standard reported on July 16th. Tanya Jeal visited the singer's home and a hotel he was at, as well as sending a letter to his family and messaging his friends on social media, the court heard. She was given a stalking protection order at Bromley Magistrates' Court, the paper said.

### **Knifepoint watch robberies soar in London in last month as moped gangs ambush victims**

The Metropolitan Police have said that knifepoint luxury watch robberies by gangs using mopeds in London have increased 60% in the last month, according to the Evening Standard. 108 watch robberies took place between April 26th and June 27th.

*For further information, please [click here](#).*

# Global Security News

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BBC News reported on July 19th that Russia's President Putin is visiting Iran this week. Mr Putin will meet Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Grain exports, Syria and Ukraine will be discussed in Tehran, a Turkish official said.

## Ukraine: Latest updates

BBC News reported on July 18th that President Volodymyr Zelensky had suspended the head of Ukraine's spy agency (SBU) and the prosecutor general, saying there were many cases of treason in the two organisations. He gave some striking figures: more than 60 former employees were now working against Ukraine in Russian-occupied areas, while 651 collaboration and treason cases had been opened against law enforcement officials.

The UK Ministry of Defence has reported that Russia is using forces from the Wagner mercenary group to bolster its front line forces in Ukraine. In a daily update, the MoD report that Wagner had reduced its recruitment standards and had begun hiring convicts and personnel who had previously been blacklisted, according to German media outlet, DW on July 19th. The MoD said that Russia continues to commit what are nominally six separate armies to its Donbas offensive, but struggles to sustain effective combat power and the problem is becoming increasingly acute.

On July 19th, Volodymyr Havrylov, Ukraine's Deputy Defence Minister, said that Ukraine was preparing to destroy Russia's Black Sea fleet and re-take Crimea, The Times reported. The news came after former Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev, said on Sunday 17th that Western powers who refused to recognise Russia's control of Crimea posed a systemic threat to the country. He said that any outside attack on the region would prompt a "Judgement Day" response from Russia.

In a shift in previous tone, on Monday 18th, President Putin appeared to admit that Western sanctions against Russia were causing 'colossal' high-tech problems for the country. He vowed to overcome the problems they had caused the sector in Russia. "Realizing the colossal amount of difficulties we are facing, we will look for new solutions in an energetic and competent manner," he told a meeting, according to DW.

## Irish man critically injured in Marbella nightclub shooting

An Irish man is in a critical condition in hospital after being shot in a nightclub on Spain's Costa Del Sol on Monday 18th morning. RTÉ is reporting that the man was the innocent victim of a violent row that broke out in the Opium Beach Club in Marbella at about 01:00 local time. Five people were taken to hospital with stab and gunshot wounds. They included the Irish man, who is in his 30s, who was shot in the chest, BBC News said on July 18th.

## Libyan PM makes alliance with ex-enemy to cement ceasefire

Libya's prime minister, Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh, has reportedly agreed to an alliance with warlord Khalifa Haftar, The Guardian reported on July 18th. The move comes as an oil blockade and ongoing political issues impact Libya's National Oil Company (NOC). The UN are reported to be welcome to the news, given the fragile ceasefire in the country. Last week, Dbeibeh offered an olive branch to Haftar and his supporters by removing the director of the NOC, who had been at odds with pro-Haftar protesters conducting blockades of oil installations in the east of the country.

# Industry and SIA News

## Your Guide to SIA's Upcoming Courses

SIAcademy LIVE! e-learning programs are presented as tracks with 4-7 hours of training each. These live virtual courses are designed to accelerate your business growth, covering topics like how to do business with the government, how to optimize challenging parts of your integration business and cybersecurity for physical security pros and even technical training on video and access control systems. For more details, [please click here](#).

*For further information, [please click here](#).*



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