

MARITIME NEWS – 24 JUNE 2015

Russian Navy to Start Building New Lider-Class Destroyer in 2019



The Russian Navy unveiled Lider's designs at the Army-2015 international military technical forum earlier this week. According to the description, the vessel will have a displacement of approximately 17,500 tons, with a length of 200 meters and a breadth of 20 meters. The destroyer may be armed with up to 60 anti-ship cruise missiles, 128 anti-aircraft guided missiles, and 16 anti-ship guided missiles. The vessel may reach a speed of 30 knots and operate to up to 90 days without support

"We plan to start construction of a Lider destroyer in 2019. We are currently carrying out design work," Chirkov said. He added that the capabilities of the new destroyers would be comparable with the capabilities of a cruiser. Russia is currently undergoing a \$325-billion rearmament program for a 70-percent increase in its military's modern weaponry by 2020. **Source: sputniknews**

Additional facts are-

The Severnoye (Northern) Design Bureau has been given the engineering design preparation assignment; it plans to launch the work in 2015. The Navy of Russia intends to order 12 advanced Leader destroyers. A half of them will be designed for the Northern Fleet, and another half – for the Pacific Fleet, officials with the Defense Ministry of Russia said. The lead ship of the new class will join the Russian Navy not earlier than in 2023-2025.

The Leader will be presented in two versions – with a nuclear powerplant and gas turbine power generating units. For the time being, the Leader is not included on the state armaments program before 2020. Its construction will be carried out under the shipbuilding program that runs through 2050. The works on the project are to start next year. **Source: Defense Updates**

Thus no need for NATO to panic yet!

Building brighter prospects for Africa's seafarers

Tomorrow, Thursday 25 June, the world will celebrate the International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) Day of the Seafarer. This year's theme focuses on maritime education and aims to create awareness among young people about career opportunities at sea. For Gulf of Guinea states, the event is an opportunity to reflect on the disappearance of their national shipping lines, which occurred in the mid-1990s when maritime transport was liberalised globally.

Prior to this, the 1974 International Convention on the Code of Conduct for Liner Conferences had established a fair distribution of maritime transport between exporting and importing countries. This convention was tacitly repealed and ever since, most African states, particularly those in the Gulf of Guinea, have had neither ships nor shipping companies worth mentioning.

Still, students who are enrolled at maritime schools need ships for their training, as they have to accumulate a certain number of hours at sea to complete their studies. For instance, to obtain a master mariner certificate of competency at the Regional Academy of Science and Technology of the Sea of Abidjan (ARSTM) – a training centre for West and Central African francophone countries – students must complete seven years of education and training. This includes three years at sea.

This requirement poses a big challenge to students in the ARSTM department of seafaring, who have difficulty completing their training. The centre has subsequently been forced to reduce its student intake. Lieutenant Colonel Karim Coulibaly, the ARSTM Director General says that the academy's 'main challenge is finding engagements for its students, because African countries have no ships.' Every year, Coulibaly struggles to find training opportunities for his students on foreign ships.



The ARSTM's sister academy in Accra, Ghana, has the status of a university and enrolls English-speaking students from the Gulf of Guinea. This academy, however, also has to negotiate with foreign companies to obtain internships for its students. These two centres of excellence certainly have the necessary teaching equipment, including simulators for training skilled seafarers, but their real challenge is ensuring on-deck internships for their students.

The ship is the seafarer's main place of work. Irrespective of training, a seafarer faces redundancy if there is no ship or shipping company willing to recruit him or her. Certainly, there may be job opportunities for African seafarers on foreign vessels (as people in Western countries are becoming more attracted to jobs based on land), but there is no clear indication of when or how many jobs will become available. African seafarers also face competition from other continents, including Asia, which is dominating the labour market.

China and the Philippines account for 10% of the global seafaring workforce, which was estimated to be made up of 1.2 million people in 2005. All the African countries together represent only 2% of this workforce. Countries in the Gulf of Guinea should not rely solely on the international market, but should create a job market for mariners by setting up shipping companies and acquiring merchant ships.

Beyond the issues of training and employment, significant economic benefit can also be derived from the maritime transport generated by their external trade. Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, is the world's largest producer of cocoa with 40% of the world's production, but it is entirely dependent on foreign shipping companies to export its product to international markets. Maritime transport represents about 40% of the price of raw materials and 10% of the price of capital goods. Countries that are dependent on external commerce, and don't possess their own vessels, lose out on adding this value to their product.

Acquiring commercial vessels is also a way for states to assert their sovereignty, since it eases a state's dependence on ship-owning countries. The state can also subsidise maritime transport when foreign ship owners decide to increase the freight rates for vessels calling at their ports. Moreover, seeing its national flag flying on the high seas can be prestigious and a source of pride for any country.

Drawing lessons from past experiences of African state-owned shipping lines, where their downfall was partly attributed to poor management, the ideal situation would be for states to disengage from maritime transport and leave it to the private sector. Unfortunately, the domestic private sector is still weak in most Gulf of Guinea states. Thus, the solution lies in private-public partnerships with the state taking initiative. The state would no longer be the sole or majority shareholder, but would share ownership with the private sector. Management would be entrusted to private maritime transport professionals.

This view aligns with the 2050 Africa's Maritime Integrated Strategy, which advocates for a Blue Economy to be created to assist with Africa's development. The African Union, which will launch the Decade of African Seas and Oceans next month on 25 July, should encourage its member states to focus on creating African shipping lines. This also applies to the Economic Community of West African States, which is implementing a maritime strategy that includes a blue economy and education as key objectives.

Political will is the first factor for success. For instance, after the Joola disaster in 2002, Senegal was able to acquire three passenger vessels with a carrying capacity of 200 people each to open up the Casamance region in southern Senegal, which is cut off from the rest of the country by a river. Pricing was not allowed to be an obstacle to the purchase of the ships. Drawing lessons from the mismanagement of the Joola, the Senegalese government granted the management of the new vessels to a private company.

Other countries in the Gulf of Guinea should express the same readiness to create shipping lines and acquire merchant ships. By doing so, they might reasonably encourage their youth to turn to seafaring. While ensuring jobs for their citizenry, these countries would also add value to their export products and increase their independence. **Source: Barthélemy Blédé, Senior Researcher, Conflict Management and Peacebuilding Division, ISS Dakar**

Tomorrow 25 June will be an interesting day as it is also the 60th anniversary of the Congress of the Peoples Conference at Kliptown.

Final two fast missile craft arrive in Egypt



The Egyptian Navy will in the coming weeks induct into service another two Ambassador class fast attack craft after they arrived in the port of Alexandria on 17 June. The United States Embassy in Cairo said the final two vessels were transported to Egypt via a US transport ship and double Egypt's total fleet of fast missile craft from two to four. Having received training on the Fast Missile Craft in Pensacola, Florida, Egyptian Navy personnel are now conducting all required inspections and will activate the vessels in Alexandria shortly.

U.S. Embassy Senior Defense Official in Cairo Major General Charles Hooper, noted that, "The Fast Missile Craft directly supports maritime and regional security, which includes protecting vital waterways such as the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. This delivery is a sign of America's ongoing commitment to Egypt and to our shared security interests in Egypt and the region."

The \$1.1 billion fast missile craft project began in 2005, when plans were initiated by the US Department of Defense to help produce a naval vessel for the Government of Egypt. The four 63 metre Ambassador IV class vessels were built by VT Halter Marine in Pascagoula, Mississippi, which received a production contract in September 2008.

The first vessel, ENS S Ezzat, was transferred to the Egyptian Navy in a ceremony in Florida in November 2013 while the second, ENS F Zerky, was handed over in December. Both were shipped to Egypt in late May 2014. Each of the craft carry an OTO Melara 76 mm super rapid gun, eight Harpoon block II missiles, Mk 49 Rolling Airframe Missiles, Block 1B Close-In Weapon Systems (CIWSs) and two M60 machineguns.

Powered by three MTU diesels, they have a top speed of 41 knots and with a crew of 38 they can operate at sea for up to eight days. The US embassy said the four vessels "will contribute significantly toward ensuring regional security, countering terrorism, and protecting global commerce. The Fast Missile Craft is designed to counter Egypt's current

maritime surface threats and provide freedom of navigation. They will also help protect civilian and commercial vessels entering Egypt's territorial waters through coastal patrol surveillance and maritime searches." **Source: defenceWeb**

READERS COMMENT

It would appear that some articles certainly open a 'can of worms' and elicit reader comment – even on facebook which is a public forum. Thus I repeat the comment by someone involved in Project BIRO – RAdm Bernard Teuteberg and some readers as they are thought provoking .

"There can be no doubt that South Africa needs more OPVs/IPVs; the maritime security strategy developed subsequent to the acquisition of the frigates and submarines first had to deal with the old Defence Review (including six strike craft and 8 MCMVs) and with the notion that the SA Navy had been rejuvenated with the acquisition of the SDPs. At the time it was clear that finances would be directed to the Army and Air Force and that our own SC and MCMVs were coming to the end of their operational life-cycles. At the same time various attempts were made to either update or re-write the Defence Review.

The SA Navy therefore put forward an argument for one IPV per large harbour, including the ability to deploy new MCM equipment (acquired under a funded project), to safeguard that harbour and its approaches (not the job of an OPV). The number of IPV's therefore became substantially more than the three approved in the original Staff Target. (It was also believed that this requirement could well prove a viable option for the Reserves, especially in line with their geographic nature).

The case for the OPVs was similar; the old Defence Review called for 6 SCs/OPVs and once again a proper appreciation indicated that we would require a total of 7 operational OPVs. Once again the original approved Naval Staff Target called for three OPVs (my fault at the time). The new Defence Review was not available and the numbers had been approved by the MOD. If we had cancelled the Naval Staff Target at the time in order to increase the numbers we would have had to start the very difficult process from scratch.

(By the way the NST remained unsigned on the desk of the MOD for 18 months whilst we fought our battles). We then decided to go ahead with the approved NST and acquire what we could with the understanding that this should be deemed to be a partial acquisition whilst awaiting the approval of the Defence Review 2014 and in order to continue with the battle for more funds.

*The aim was therefore to acquire a modest but affordable IPV/OPV fleet and grow into the full requirement. The requirements were thus driven by the naval strategy, coupled with the "back to the border" concept, the available funds and other but coupled projects. It must be a partial acquisition. The requirement for both IPV's and OPVs is of utmost importance when it is understood that the Navy should have the right tools to secure the maritime estate belonging to the people of South Africa." **Source: Facebook (RAdm Teuteberg SAN (Ret)***

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*The attachment is an extract from Arne Soderlund's Maritime News. I agree with his comment and although like him I do not consider myself an expert on these matters I would like to say that what little knowledge I can claim, makes me support the statement that the most cost effective number of **one** class of ships has always been put at six by the experts so ideally I would have said that the Navy should rather look at a 4 + 2, or even a 2 + 2 + 2 acquisition of the larger OPVs and leave the IPV's out of the order for the time being. If we are really interested in giving support to local shipbuilding then **continuity of contract** is more important than diversity of builders in my opinion.*

Having served on the old SDBs (afraid I do not know what an SDP is!) they were also the wrong option for us, being far too slow (apart from also having problematic gearing) and were never really used to patrol the inshore waters. Although never having operated Namacurras they were to me a far better and far more effective option for the patrolling of False Bay and other harbour approaches.

*In closing I sincerely hope that the Minister of Defence also brought her remarks on Maritime Security and its vital importance to the attention of the SAAF! Maybe if this was done we will in future get more than lip service paid to maritime aerial surveillance. **Source: Anon One***

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SANGP 3 was the approved Naval plan in 2005 but no plan can be cast in concrete. SANGP 3 was a basis from which to work, but times, threats and resources change and what was good in 2005, is not necessarily good in 2020. SANGP 3 envisaged a smaller class of surface vessel than the frigates that could satisfy RSA's maritime patrol requirements. A general purpose hull was envisaged with space to fit boats, missiles, etc should the requirement arise. Even a drone helicopter for reconnaissance purpose can now be considered.

The converted strike craft seem to be quite successful in their OPV role. There were times when a strike craft could proceed at speed when a minesweeper was down to 8 knots and a Type 12 down to 13 knots, as to wetness, an enclosed bridge makes quite a difference, so I would not mitigate against the length of 60m, but I would say that shorter vessels should be avoided.

*However, I am uncomfortable prescribing to the SAN as to their requirements. They have to live with their decisions. Where the concept of IPVs come from, I am not at all sure, it was not in the original plan, but requirements may have changed. Comments about a larger number of similar hulls make sense, however, I was not part of the decision process so prefer to stand outside and watch. **Source: Anon Too***

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The debate about one or two classes for BIRO is not helping the Navy's cause at all. The IPV was the replacement for FLEUR and the RIVER Class and provide an MCM capability. Ferrera and SA Ship Yards immediately started the argument for 90m only hulls with only profit and not strategic thinking as the departure point. The idea was always to grow both classes at a later stage.

*The 60 m argument is also misleading as, the Strike Craft has an awkward hull shape as a Med hull design. The DAMEN 60m hulls in Cape Town stole the hearts of the Australian Navy when they took it to sea in a sea state 3-4. The hull can also be 50m, but it must be able to carry three containers plus sea boats. **Source: Also Anon***

Please note that the comments have been edited and are most interesting as each one makes an important input and provides a more holistic train of thought for the general reader – thanks for the comment.

AGS