

2020 second bust: FS COURBET seizes ‘three tonnes of narcotics’

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Less than two weeks after their first drug bust of 2020, French Ship (FS) COURBET made drug bust number two whilst operating in direct support of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150). The narcotics find was a case of third time lucky for FS Courbet, who had conducted three boardings in 24 hours. Over 3,000 kg of hashish was discovered on the dhow in the Gulf of Oman, with an estimated regional wholesale value of over



FS COURBET team with seized drugs.

\$1500,000 US dollars. Using their shipborne helicopter, FS COURBET identified and tracked a suspicious dhow sailing in their area of operations. A boarding team, including their drug detecting dog, was dispatched in COURBET’s Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) to search the vessel, with significant results. Since Australia assumed command of CTF 150 in December with a staff from the Royal Australian, Royal Canadian and Royal New Zealand navies, FS COURBET has been a key enabler in CTF 150’s mission to disrupt terrorist organisations and their related illegal activities by restricting their freedom of ma-

noeuvre in the maritime domain. The activities of CTF 150 are a critical part of global counter-terrorism efforts, as terrorist organisations are denied a risk-free method of conducting operations or moving personnel, weapons or income-generating narcotics and charcoal. Not every boarding results in a seizure, but CTF 150’s persistent activity sends the message that there are forces in the Arabian Sea committed to protecting and promoting security and stability. FS COURBET has conducted five boardings in the last six weeks, with three netting eight tonnes of hashish with an estimated regional wholesale value of \$4.1 million US dollars.



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1.5 million American dollars is the regional wholesale value of seized narcotics.

In December 2019, Her Majesty’s Ship (HMS) DEFENDER of the United Kingdom’s Royal Navy, working in direct support of CTF 150, also seized 131 kg of crystal methamphetamine. The haul had an estimated regional wholesale value of over

\$280,000 US dollars, the largest seizure of crystal meth in the Combined Maritime Forces’ history. Of course, the regional wholesale value is small by comparison to the street value of these drugs should they reach the streets of Europe. “COURBET continues to impress,” said Commodore Ray Leggatt, Royal Australian Navy, Commander of CTF 150. “With this seizure, we are again demonstrating to organised criminals and terrorists that they cannot manoeuvre freely here, they cannot conduct their illegitimate trade without considerable risk, and that CTF 150 will continue its mission to promote security

and stability in this region.” CTF 150 is one of three task forces operating under Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a multinational naval partnership that exists to promote security, stability and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters encompassing some of the world’s most important shipping lanes. The 33 nations that comprise CMF share intelligence, assets and capabilities. Commodore Ray Leggatt concluded “FS COURBET’s action is a continuation of relationships built in Combined Maritime Forces and a demonstration of how many nations, working together, can make an impact.”

Agreement signed to train Saudis in construction

Riyadh

The Saudi Human Resources Development Fund (Hadaf) has signed a co-operation agreement for nationals to be trained for jobs in the construction sector, the Saudi Press Agency reported. The memorandum of understanding, between Hadaf and Saudi Abyat Academy for

Building Materials, is aimed at preparing nationals for the labor market through electronic training courses on the Dorooob platform. It was signed at Hadaf’s headquarters in Riyadh and will allow the academy to publish courses on Dorooob. Hadaf will also put in place enrolment standards for the Dorooob courses and coordinate their development in line with

the needs of the labor market. Dorooob comes within the training and qualification programs offered by Hadaf. It seeks to support Saudis who want professional advancement in their chosen field, as well as increasing the participation level of the national workforce in the private sector and helping job seekers to get better career opportunities.

‘8,000 steps’ campaign launched

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The Ministry of Health has launched a national walking campaign to promote exercise in the Kingdom. The campaign, #walk30, will last for four months and is in its first stage. The ministry’s director general of marketing and awareness, Anas Al Hamid, said that many schools and universities were taking part in the campaign, and that there was an app to calculate the number of steps taken. There will also be an event in all Saudi regions to coincide



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CERTIFIED TRAINER

with National Day for Walking, scheduled for March 5, he added. A walking challenge was one of the campaign’s many activities, he said, with participants trying to walk no fewer than

8,000 steps. Winners would be rewarded at the end of the competition and those interested were encouraged to download the app and register. Certified personal trainer Atif Adnan Bashawri, who owns a fitness studio, was quoted by Arab News: “I deal with people on a daily basis and the most common question is ‘How can I increase my fitness level?’ “One of the best pieces of advice I always give my clients is to walk for at least 25 to 30 minutes three times a week.”

Workshop held



Works, Municipalities and Urban Planning Affairs Ministry held an awareness workshop for its inspectors on safety laws. Many senior officials from the ministry attended the workshop.

