U.S. Navy’s Military Sealift Command Conducts Maintenance in India



The Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) moors pier side in L&T Shipyard in Kattupalli, near Chennai, India, Aug. 7, 2022 for scheduled maintenance. As part of Military Sealift Command’s Combat Logistics Force (CLF), Charles Drew enables U.S. Navy ships to remain at sea and combat ready for extended periods of time. *Joel Garcia*

CHENNAI, INDIA – Military Sealift Command’s (MSC’s) Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) conducted maintenance at Larsen & Toubro Ltd, commonly known as L&T shipyard, in Kattupalli near Chennai, India, Aug. 7-17, MSC Far East Public Affairs Spokeswoman said in a release.

“India’s initiative to offer logistics, repairs, and refits to

the U.S. ships assumes special significance in furthering the strategic partnership between India and the United States, thereby promoting harmony in South Asia under the Indo-Pacific initiative," said Dr. Ajay Kumar, defense secretary of India.

Both Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken expressed their intent to conduct maintenance in India during the U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in April.

"This inaugural repair of a United States naval ship, the Charles Drew, conducted by the L&T Kattupalli shipyard, is a landmark development to be celebrated as a symbol of our strengthened U.S.-India partnership," said Judith Ravin, U.S. Consul General in Chennai.

"Today marks another step forward in Indian and American maritime cooperation. Our shipping industries positively contribute to a free and open Indo-Pacific by partnering to deliver effective, efficient, and economical repair of military vessels We look forward to seeing the outcomes of this endeavor and where our partnership may go in the future," said Defense Attaché at the U.S. Embassy at New Delhi Rear Adm. Michael Baker, when the ship first arrived in India.

Routine maintenance conducted aboard Charles Drew in India included repairs to safety and crew habitability systems and equipment.

"We appreciated the opportunity to complete this maintenance in India which will ensure we are ready for any tasking," said Charles Drew's Third Officer Anna Lewis, who serves as the ship's navigator and operations officer.

Charles Drew is one of the many ships that are part of the U.S. Navy's MSC's Combat Logistics Force (CLF). CLF are the supply lines to U.S. Navy ships while at sea. These ships

provide virtually everything Navy ships need including fuel, food, fleet ordnance, dry cargo, spare parts, mail, and other supplies.

CLF ships enable the Navy fleet to remain at sea and combat ready for extended periods of time. In addition to U.S. Navy ships, CLF ships also resupply international partners and allies operating in the Indo-Pacific Region.

MSC Far East ensures approximately 50 ships in the Indo-Pacific Region are manned, trained, and equipped to deliver essential supplies, fuel, cargo, and equipment to warfighters, both at sea and on shore. Under Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet and routinely interacts and operates with 35 maritime nations in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific Region.