

MAKING WAVES

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Inside this brief.....

MARITIME EDITORIAL

- ✦ The 'Mehran' Attack - Pakistan's enemy within
- ✦ The battle for Pakistan

MARITIME SECURITY

- ✦ Indian Navy concludes exercise 'Sagar Kavach'.
- ✦ India might become an observer of Arctic Council: United States.
- ✦ Piracy: IMO guidelines on armed guards on ships.
- ✦ Chief of Naval Staff asks Operational Commanders to be ready.
- ✦ Stone laid for Coast Guard Academy.

MARITIME COOPERATION

- ✦ Indian Navy helps thwart pirate attack on Chinese vessel.
- ✦ Iraq War officially ends on 22 May for Britain.
- ✦ India, Africa call for action to combat terrorism, piracy.

SHIPBUILDING

- ✦ Two IPVs to be decommissioned
- ✦ Adani plans to enter coastal shipping business.
- ✦ Indian Defence Minister A.K Antony opens modernisation project at GSL.
- ✦ New Talwar class frigate for Indian Navy launched.

MARITIME ENVIRONMENT

- ✦ Industries threaten Kutch Marine Park.
- ✦ Environment Ministry ties up with RIL to set up a research facility in PPP mode .

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Pakistan's enemy within

The Taliban have struck Pakistan again, this time targeting the Pak Navy. In an audacious attack on May 23, 2011 militants infiltrated the high security facility in Karachi, carrying out multiple explosions that reportedly killed at least ten naval personnel and destroyed two P-3C Orion Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft. The Taliban said the strike was a reprisal attack for the May 2 U.S. raid that killed Osama bin Laden.

In many ways the 17-hour siege of Pakistan Navy's air base, PNS Mehran, in Karachi is reminiscent of the attack on the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi in October 2009. It would be tragic for Pakistan if the latest of wake-up calls to snap out of its Janus-faced attitude towards terrorism is ignored — as it was after the GHQ attack or the discovery of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden from the “armpit of the Pakistan Military Academy” in Abbottabad. As always, the first official remarks on the attack had the stock phrase, ‘Pakistan-is-a-victim-of-terror.’ Nobody is denying that. But what will it take Islamabad to understand that terrorists cannot be assets, strategic or otherwise? If the events following bin Laden's killing are any indication, the chances of the PNS Mehran attack forcing a course correction look bleak. At the in-camera briefing by the military and intelligence establishment's top brass on the Abbottabad incident, India was again identified as “enemy number one,” clearly indicating that this remains the defining factor of Pakistan's strategic policy. As though this were not enough of a signal, the in-camera briefing for Parliament and the subsequent resolution reposing confidence in the armed forces were a telling reminder of how the security establishment can orchestrate even adverse events to its advantage.

While the civilian government can distance itself from ownership of the strategic policy, it has no excuse for not even trying to change the mindset that has allowed such policies to continue three years after a democratically elected dispensation was voted in. The school curriculum packed with hate towards all things Indian and eulogies to ‘jihad’ is a problem that remains unaddressed though it is critical to the country's existence as a nation of multiple ethnicities and religious diversities. These are issues that are coming to haunt Pakistan almost on a daily basis and the armed services too are not insulated from such divisive tendencies. In fact, Chief of Army Staff Ashfaq Parvez Kayani is reported to have admitted as much after Punjab Governor Salman Taseer's assassination — going to the extent of fearing a revolt within if he condoled the death. From all indications, the PNS Mehran attack could not have been carried out without some inside help. How could the terrorists, armed to the teeth with even rocket-propelled grenades, have entered the high-security area undetected? Weeding out this kind of mindset created over 30 years of systematic indoctrination is not a task that can be undertaken overnight but Pakistan must cut its losses now.

Source: [The Hindu](#), 23 May

The Battle for Pakistan

The brutal terrorist attack on the PNS Mehran turned out to be the worst nightmare for the security forces after the October 2009 attack on the GHQ. Pakistan lost 10 brave men at the hands of the terrorists while 15 others were injured. “It was the revenge of martyrdom of Osama bin Laden. It was the proof that we are still united and powerful,” claimed a spokesman of the Pakistani Taliban. The mind boggles at the state of security of an area that should have been a fortified place but instead turned out to be an easy target for the terrorists. Initial reports suggested that around 10-15 terrorists had penetrated PNS Mehran but after the operation, Interior Minister Rehman Malik said that six terrorists conducted the raid. Four of the terrorists were killed while two managed to escape. Logically, it is highly unlikely that six men were able to engage the trained commandos and rangers for more than 15 hours. They also managed to set ablaze two PC-3 Orion aircraft, each one of which is believed to have cost more than \$ 36 million. The US handed over two PC-3 Orions to Pakistan last June. After the operation, Mr Malik confirmed the presence of 11 Chinese men and six Americans, denied by officials during the operation, at the naval airbase.

The Navy has come under attack thrice before the PNS Mehran attack took place. On April 26, two Navy buses were bombed and on April 28, another Navy bus met the same fate. Under these circumstances and especially after the killing of Osama bin Laden, it is surprising that proper measures were not taken by the security forces in guarding the naval base. Pakistan should have been more alert but it saw a huge security lapse, something that the naval officials have failed to admit. Unlike in the past when the details of attacks have been hidden from public view, this time the authorities must come clean. A lot of pieces in the puzzle do not fit despite the press briefings of Rehman Malik and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Noman Bashir. There is more to it than meets the eye.

The terrorists conducted an attack with such precision that it must have taken months of planning and drills. They knew the exact location of the aircraft and other details of the naval base. Such information can only come from insiders. This means that just like the siege of GHQ, some members of the armed forces may have been involved in providing sensitive information to the terrorists the state is fighting for its survival. If true, it points to possible internal fissures in the armed forces. The military top brass must conduct investigations into the whole sordid affair and find out how a handful of terrorists managed to not just breach security so easily but had weapons that, in the words of Mr Malik, “the kind no common man can afford to buy”.

Many questions remain unanswered but one thing is for sure. The military might have the best and most sophisticated weapons to counter its ‘enemies’, but the terrorists have the will and patience to fight them out. The only way to deal with them is to eliminate them once and for all. But for that Pakistan must give up the double game. It is time to save Pakistan.

In an atmosphere of increasing disregard for its concerns and respect for its sovereignty, Pakistan needs to do a serious review of its security policy. Pakistan’s society has been engulfed by the fire stoked in the name of waging jihad against infidels. These networks have brought us nothing but infamy, instability and violence. Pakistan must uproot them from the soil for good

Source: [Daily Times](#), 24 May



Indian Navy concludes exercise 'Sagar Kavach'

Seeking to enhance coordination between agencies involved in the country's coastal and maritime security, the Indian Navy has completed a two-day exercise – Sagar Kavach – off the coast of Goa and Maharashtra.

The exercise was a drill for all stake holders in maritime security, and aimed at improving coordination between Navy, Coast Guard, customs, port authorities and marine police. Navy and Coast Guards participated in the exercise with ships, aircraft and ground forces, while other agencies put forward their required resources to ensure a foolproof coordination.

The latest exercise was conducted under the overall command of newly appointed Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Naval Commander, Vice-Admiral DK Joshi.

Source: [Brahmand.com](#), 6 May

India might become an observer of Arctic Council: United States

India might become an observer of the Arctic Council though its membership is uncertain. Addressing the issue of Indian membership, US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Fisheries David Balton said that the Arctic Council is not open for membership unless a nation has territory above the Arctic Circle. Since India did not have such territory it could not be said with decisive finality if membership would be given. If India did however become a member, it would be able to participate in that way in many of the working groups the Arctic Council has set up on a number of different topics.

Arctic Council is a high-level forum of the eight nations that have Arctic territory, territory above the Arctic Circle. It meets at the ministerial level every two years, and it is meeting this week in Nuuk, Greenland.

Source: [Business Standard](#), 10 May

Piracy: IMO guidelines on armed guards on ships

The UN's International Maritime Organization (IMO) is issuing guidelines on the use of private armed guards to protect ships from piracy. This comes after a meeting in London which discussed the use of guards on board ships in areas of high risk, including in the Indian Ocean.

About one in 10 ships off the Somali coast already carry armed guards. But observers say this number is now likely to rise. The IMO says there were 489 reports of piracy and armed robbery against ships in 2010 - up more than 20% on 2009. The areas worst affected were the Indian Ocean, East Africa and the Far East including the South China Sea, South America and the Caribbean. So far this year more than 200 cases have been reported.

The IMO's new recommendations are backed by the independent trade body for security companies operating at sea, the Security Association for the Maritime Industry (Sami), launched in 2011. The IMO insists that the guidelines are not intended to institutionalise the use of armed, privately contracted security staff on ships and that they do not address all the legal issues that could be linked to their use. It says it is up to each national government whether to endorse the use of armed guards. The IMO describes the guidance as "interim recommendations" and says it will review them in September.

Source: [BBC News](#), 21 May

Chief of Navy Staff asks Operational Commanders to be ready

In the wake of the changing security situation in the neighbourhood and the region, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Nirmal Verma has asked his top commanders to be operationally ready to deploy ships at "immediate notice." Speaking at the four-day Naval Commanders' Conference in New Delhi, Adm Verma noted that with the security situation still 'fluid', there was need to maintain high readiness and an organisational ability to deploy ships, submarines and aircraft at immediate notice.

The CNS' observation came in the context of a discussion on operational readiness of the force, which translates into its ability to get all that is required for a mission in place in the least possible time before deploying its assets. Naval officers maintain that it can vary anytime between four hours to 24 hours, depending on the nature of assignment and the size and strength of deployment.

However, it acquires greater significance as it comes in the backdrop of the terror attack on a naval base in Karachi that resulted in loss of lives and destruction of at least two PC-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft.

Source: [The Hindu](#), 25 May

Foundation-stone laid for Coast Guard Academy

Defence Minister A K Antony laid the foundation-stone for the Indian Coast Guard Academy planned to be built at Irinave near Azhikkal in the district. The Coast Guard Academy coming up a few kilometres away from the Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala, is the first-of-its-kind in the country. Addressing the stone-laying ceremony, Antony said that the Coast Guard had a greater role to play in meeting the maritime requirements of the nation and the defence of the country. Appreciating the role of the state government in offering support to the project, the Defence

Minister said that the Coast Guard Academy would offer training facilities to the new recruits to the Coast Guard from all over the country.

Source: [IBN Live](#), 29 May



Indian Navy helps thwart pirate attack on Chinese vessel

They might be jostling for the same strategic space in the Indian Ocean region but that does not prevent cooperation on the high seas. India's swift response to a distress call made by China prevented a Chinese merchant vessel from being hijacked by well-armed pirates in the Arabian Sea around 450 nautical miles (850 km) west off the Karwar coast.

An Indian Navy Tupolev-142M naval patrol aircraft virtually hovered over the Chinese merchant vessel 'Full City (Fucheng)' for around four hours, which made the pirates flee in their "mother vessel and skiffs", till NATO task-force warships reached the area to help the distressed ship. Curiously enough, Chinese news reports made no mention about the crucial role played by the Indian aircraft in thwarting the piracy attack on MV Full City. Quoting the Chinese transport ministry, it gave the entire credit to US and Turkish naval teams in freeing the vessel and its 24 sailors. The Chinese taskforce-526, which was over 1,000 nautical miles away on its anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden and would have taken two days to reach the pirate attack site, as well as the Chinese embassy in New Delhi however did express their gratitude for the "Indian Navy's prompt and persistent action" to repel the pirate attack on MV Full City.

Source: [Times of India](#), 7 May

Iraq War officially ends on 22 May for Britain

The UK's bloody, eight-year conflict in Iraq will officially end on May 22, 2011 the Government revealed. The final remaining troops – more than 100 Navy personnel – will leave now they have finished their last job of training security forces in how to secure oil installations. The war claimed the lives of 179 UK soldiers, while thousands were seriously injured. It began in April 2003 with the invasion of Iraq and Britain's involvement, codenamed Operation Telic, has cost £10billion. As many as 46,000 UK troops were deployed to the country at the start of the operation.

Source: [Daily Mirror](#), 19 May

India, Africa call for action to combat terrorism, piracy

India and Africa unequivocally condemned terrorism and piracy in all its forms and manifestation and called for active prosecution of authors of such crimes. Both sides also supported each other's claims for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council.

The Addis Ababa Declaration adopted at the end of the second Africa-India Forum Summit in the Ethiopian capital also called on all countries to ensure that acts of cross-border terrorism do not occur and that their territories are not made a base for terrorists. The summit was co-chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Equatorial Guinea President Obiang Nguema Mdasogo. The declaration called on all states to cooperate with one another in prosecuting, extraditing and rendering legal assistance with regard to actions of international terrorism.

The leaders deplored the tragic loss from terror attacks and called for the active prosecution of the authors of such crime and their accomplices and urged that they be brought to justice expeditiously. Taking on board serious concerns over the problem of piracy, the leaders strongly condemned kidnapping and hostage taking as well as demand for ransom and political concessions by terrorists groups.

India has voiced its serious concerns over the threats posed by Somali pirates since about 11 per cent of seafarers engaged by international shipping companies are Indian nationals, some of whom have been taken hostage. There have been over 200 attacks, including about 70 successful hijackings and ransoms have been paid to the pirates for securing the release of hostages and ships. Taking note of the African position on the condemnation of the payments of ransom to terror groups, the leaders called for the urgent need to address the issue.

India supports Africa's claims for permanent membership of Security Council. On its part Africa backs India's claim to a permanent seat with full rights in an expanded Security Council.

Source: [The Hindu](#), 25 May



Two IPVs to be decommissioned

The Indian Coast Guard will decommission two of its Inshore Patrol Vessels (IPVs) in May as part of a fleet modernisation exercise. Inspector General SP Sharma, Commander, Coast Guard Region (East) suggested that Coast Guard is in the process of fleet modernisation beginning with the decommissioning of vessels that were beyond their span.

The two vessels that are being decommissioned are the ICGS Ranijindan and ICGS Kittur Chennamma which had celebrated their silver jubilee in 2008. A state-of-the-art pollution control patrol vehicle currently deployed in Mumbai is also likely to be redeployed to the East Coast. However, the ICG was on course to become a "potent" force in the region in two years with acquisition of new patrol boats and surveillance technology.

Source: [The Hindu](#), 10 May

Adani plans to enter coastal shipping business

Adani Enterprises Ltd, the operator of India's biggest port outside state control, plans to enter coastal shipping and will buy small bulk ships for this purpose. Coastal shipping refers to the ferrying of cargo by small ships between Indian ports, and is considered among the most economical and environment-friendly modes of transport. Coastal shipping makes business sense for the group as most of its mining locations are on the east coast while the power plants that require coal are on the west coast. The government is planning new regulations to promote coastal shipping in order to ease road and rail congestion and trim transport costs. "Coastal shipping is highly fragmented and a small market in size. Companies never explored this as an option as there were very few opportunities," said Siddhartha Khemka, an analyst at domestic broking firm Centrum Broking Pvt. Ltd. "It is a welcome move if Adani Enterprises is entering this sector."

Source: [Live Mint](#), 14 May

Indian Defence Minister A.K Antony opens modernisation project at GSL

Defence minister A K Antony commissioned the 1st and 2nd phases of infrastructural modernisation project of Goa shipyard limited (GSL) and the state-of-the-art "Shiplift System" considered the first of its kind in defence shipbuilding yards. This has enhanced GSL's infrastructure by two repair berths, transfer area, shiplift piers in addition to the shiplift facility. GSL can now pride itself as India's first defence shipyard to be equipped with a modern shiplift facility for launching and docking of ships.

The modernisation plan at a cost of ` 800 crore is essentially transforming the shipyard to be ready for cutting-edge technology warships. Once the modernisation programme is fully completed, it will result in substantial augmentation of GSL's capacity to fabricate and construct steel, aluminium and GRP hull vessels to nearly three times the present yard capacity.

Source: [Times of India](#), 22 May

New Talwar class frigate for Indian Navy launched

A new Talwar class stealth frigate built by Russia for the Indian Navy was launched at a solemn ceremony at Yantar Shipyard in Russia's Baltic exclave of Kaliningrad. Ira Malhotra, wife of newly-appointed Ambassador Ajai Malhotra, launched the stealth frigate 'Trikanth', the third of the three stealth frigates christened by President Pratibha Devisingh Patil along with 'Teg' (Sabre) and 'Trakash' (Quiver) in the Navy's tradition of naming the same class of warships beginning with common letter. "Trikanth", means a mythological arrow with three heads.

Congratulating workers of the state-owned Yantar Shipyard upon the successful launch, Ambassador Malhotra hailed defence cooperation between India and Russia as a key pillar of the special and privileged strategic partnership between the two countries. The launch of INS

Trikand, he said, reflected the sophisticated level that India-Russia defence co-operation had achieved.

The first two warships under the present project, "Teg" and "Tarkash", were launched in November 2009 and June 2010 respectively. Delivery of all three ships to the Indian Navy is scheduled to take place in 2011-12, after completion of outfitting works and extensive trials in harbor and at sea.

Like its predecessors the INS Trikanth will carry the supersonic BrahMos missile system and would be armed with advanced surface to air missiles, 100mm artillery guns, and other sophisticated equipment, as also a deck-based KA-31 helicopter. The stealth frigate is powered by four gas turbines and is fitted with state-of-the-art navigation, communication and electronic warfare equipment. It also contains advanced radar and sonar systems for early detection and warning.

Earlier, Russia had built INS Talwar, INS Trishul and INS Tabar at Balititsky Zavod shipyard in St Petersburg.

Source: The Economic Times, 27 May



Industries threaten Kutch Marine Park

Petrochemicals, SEZs, chemical industries, ports and jetties in the Gulf of Kutch, all pose a danger to the Kutch Marine Park, states a recent scientific study funded by the Gujarat Ecology Commission. When asked about the issue, Principal Secretary at the Department of Environment and Forests said that the possible ill-effects of industrial development are likely to be checked by the CRZ-2011 notification, under which the Gulf of Kutch would be identified as a Critically Vulnerable Coastal Area (CVCA).

The report says it is the biggest threat to the biodiversity of Marine Park. It says Reliance and Essar have been allowed to lay oil pipelines right through the Marine National Park and Sanctuary, and seven Single Buoy Moorings needed to unload petrochemicals from large ships are planned in the area. Half of the planned developments are in this sector.

Two scientific studies (from 1993 and 2006) on the chemicals and fertilizers sector have shown "highly saline brine water" from the 15,000-acre Tata Chemicals Limited plant at Mithapur being released that could prove to be lethal for marine life. The raw effluent released into the waters, the studies showed, is so toxic "fish did not survive in it for more than 20 minutes". An accidental release of brine by TCL in June 2001, is supposed to have killed one lakh mangroves.

Source: [Indian Express](#), 17 May

Environment Ministry ties up with RIL to set up a research facility in PPP mode

Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has tied up with Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) to set up a research facility under the title of ‘National Centre for Marine Biodiversity’ in region of Jamnagar, Gujarat. This is the first research institute to be established in the public private partnership (PPP) mode in the country.

This facility, to be designed in association with Reliance Industries, would exclusively focus on the conservation of the country's marine biodiversity. It will be the first marine national park of India located under the Reliance turf of Jamnagar. By inculcating aspects of research and development into conservation process, this facility is likely to mitigate the severe rise in number of endangered biodiversity. It has been noted that over the years, marine biodiversity has been readily ignored in India's conservation programs. So far, around 25 species of fish and amphibians have been listed as critically endangered species in India, and without proper conservational and research programs, much of marine biodiversity may face the brunt extinction.

Source: [Ground Report](#), 25 May