

MAKING WAVES

A MARITIME NEWS BRIEF COVERING:

- 1. Maritime Security**
- 2. Maritime Forces**
- 3. Shipping, Ports, and Ocean Economy**
- 4. Marine Environment**
- 5. Geopolitics**

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MARITIME SECURITY

INDIAN NAVY UPGRADES ITS MARITIME SECURITY HUB IFC-IOR IN STRATEGIC INDIAN OCEAN INITIATIVE

The Indian Navy has significantly upgraded its Information Fusion Centre–Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) facility in Gurugram, enhancing maritime security capabilities across the Indian Ocean. Inaugurated by Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti in August 2025, the new infrastructure enables IFC-IOR to host more International Liaison Officers and collaborate closely with 26 partner nations and numerous multinational frameworks. A highlight of the upgrade is the launch of MANTRA (Maritime Analytics Tool for Regional Awareness). This indigenously developed software enhances maritime domain awareness by enabling real-time tracking and analysis of commercial shipping, thereby boosting regional responses to piracy, smuggling, and other illicit maritime crimes.

Source: [Here](#), 07 August 2025

HOUTHIS LEVEL A THREAT AT 64 SHIPOWNERS FOR VIOLATING ISRAELI “BLOCKADE”

The Houthi rebel group has escalated threats in the Red Sea, targeting vessels belonging to 64 shipowners they perceive as linked to Israel. These warnings include actual attacks, aggressive manoeuvres, and the deployment of water cannons and explosives against ships, resulting in casualties and disruptions. The escalation has led to the rerouting of major shipping lanes, increased insurance costs, and heightened global concern for crew safety and supply chain stability. The UN and industry bodies strongly condemn these actions, emphasising the urgent need for enhanced security and adherence to international law.

Source: [Here](#), 13 August 2025

IMO SEC-GEN CALLS FOR INCREASED COOPERATION OVER MARITIME SECURITY

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez called for increased vigilance and deeper cooperation among Member States to address rising global maritime security threats. Speaking at the UN Security Council, he highlighted risks like piracy, cyber-attacks, and unlawful shipping incidents, urging collective prevention and multilateral action. Dominguez emphasised the importance of upholding international standards, sharing information, and capacity development projects, such as the ISPS Code and regional frameworks like ReCAAP and DCOC/JA. He advocated continued dialogue and partnerships with agencies like UNODC and INTERPOL to counter evolving technical and human challenges in maritime security.

Source: [Here](#), 13 August 2025

DRYAD GLOBAL: MULTI-FACETED RISKS IMPACT MARITIME SECURITY

Dryad Global's latest maritime security brief reveals the growing complexity of risks at sea. Major incidents include a collision between Chinese and Philippine vessels in the South China Sea, raising commercial shipping costs and operational uncertainty, and the first discovery of a narco-submarine in the South Pacific, signalling expanding organised crime. Other developments involve Houthi sanctions in the Red Sea, shadow tankers evading European authorities, and rising cyber vulnerabilities. Together, these multi-dimensional threats — geopolitical confrontation, crime, cyber risk, and regulatory challenges — demand data-driven awareness and coordinated action from industry stakeholders.

Source: [Here](#), 13 August 2025

INCIDENTS OFF KERALA COAST A REMINDER OF NON-TRADITIONAL CHALLENGES TO MARITIME SECURITY: VICE ADMIRAL SRINIVAS

Vice Admiral V Srinivas, Southern Naval Command chief, highlighted recent maritime accidents involving multiple container cargo ships off Kerala as reminders of rising non-traditional maritime security challenges. In his Independence Day address, he emphasised enduring threats like asymmetric attacks on maritime trade and narcotics trafficking, linked to current global rivalries and shifting strategic alliances. Srinivas noted that such incidents underscore the necessity for heightened maritime awareness and safety protocols. He also referenced the Indian Navy's operational achievements, such as OP *Sindoor*, in maintaining multi-domain dominance in complex environments.

Source: [Here](#), 15 August 2025

MARITIME FORCES

BRAHMOS LOADED INS *HIMGIRI* JOINS THE INDIAN NAVY'S COMBAT FLEET

INS *Himgiri*, the latest stealth guided-missile frigate built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) under Project 17A, was commissioned into the Indian Navy on August 26, 2025, at Visakhapatnam. The 149-meter, 6,670-ton frigate features advanced stealth, automation, a CODAG propulsion system, and a sophisticated weapons suite centred on BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles with a range of 400-450 km, Barak 8 surface-to-air missiles, torpedo tubes, and anti-submarine rocket launchers. With about 75 per cent indigenous content, INS *Himgiri* significantly boosts India's naval combat and blue-water operational capabilities, symbolising strategic autonomy and Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Source: [Here](#), 01 August 2025

INDIA, JAPAN STRENGTHEN MARITIME DEFENCE TIES DURING NAVY CHIEF ADMIRAL TRIPATHI'S STRATEGIC VISIT

India and Japan are deepening maritime defence ties during Navy Chief Admiral Tripathi's visit to Japan from July 30 to August 2, 2025. They agreed on joint development and production of advanced defence tech like stealth radar antennas, expanded naval exercises, and broader cooperation in shipbuilding, unmanned systems, cyber, and space. This partnership aims to counter regional maritime challenges, especially China's assertiveness, ensuring the security of sea lines and stability in the Indo-Pacific. Institutional frameworks for coordination and technology sharing have also been strengthened, highlighting a strong strategic alliance.

Source: [Here](#), 01 August 2025

PHILIPPINES, INDIA HOLD FIRST JOINT SAIL IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

India and the Philippines conducted their first joint naval exercise in the South China Sea in August 2025. The two-day operation included Indian Navy ships *INS Delhi*, *INS Shakti*, *INS Kiltan*, and the Philippine Navy's BRP *Miguel Malvar* and BRP *Jose Rizal*. Taking place near the disputed Scarborough Shoal within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, the exercise emphasised freedom of navigation, maritime security, and cooperation against regional tensions, especially regarding China's claims. Philippine Armed Forces Chief Romeo Brawner described the drill as a strong message of partnership and shared commitment to regional stability.

Source: [Here](#), 04 August 2025

COAST GUARDS OF INDIA, SRI LANKA VOW TO STRENGTHEN MARITIME PARTNERSHIP

The Coast Guards of India and Sri Lanka have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening maritime partnership after their 8th High-Level Meeting in New Delhi in August 2025. Both sides agreed to deepen cooperation in areas like marine pollution response, maritime search and rescue, law enforcement, capacity-building and capability-enhancement. The discussions emphasised operational coordination and joint efforts to address contemporary security challenges, promote environmental protection, and enhance information sharing. The partnership is guided by a 2018 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and ongoing collaboration aims to ensure maritime safety and security in the shared region.

Source: [Here](#), 11 August 2025

NAVY ADDS *IKSHAK*, A STATE-OF-THE-ART WARSHIP FOR SURVEYS AND COASTAL MISSIONS

The Indian Navy received the third ship in the *Sandhayak*-class Survey Vessels (Large), *INS Ikshak*, delivered by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) on August 14, 2025. Measuring 110 meters long with a displacement of about 3,400 tons, *Ikshak* is equipped with advanced hydrographic sensors, autonomous underwater vehicles, and digital side scan sonar for coastal and deep-water surveys. It can carry a helicopter and support humanitarian and disaster relief operations. *Ikshak* marks GRSE's 75th warship delivery and reflects India's Atmanirbharta policy in naval shipbuilding.

Source: [Here](#), 14 August 2025

SHIPPING, PORTS AND OCEAN ECONOMY

PANAMA CRACKS DOWN ON DARK FLEET WITH AGE RESTRICTIONS

Panama, the world's largest ship registry, has banned oil tankers and bulk carriers over 15 years old from registering under its flag, effective August 2025. The move, aimed at combating the proliferation of the "dark fleet" — vessels with opaque ownership and suspected sanction violations — follows data showing 71 per cent of Panama-flagged vessel detentions since 2023 involved older ships. Alongside the age cap, Panama's registry now mandates quarterly inspections and stricter safety management checks for high-risk vessels. The new policy prioritises quality, sustainability, and regulatory compliance to restore confidence in Panama's global shipping leadership.

Source: [Here](#), 04 August 2024

WAN HAI 503 BID FOR PORT OF REFUGE IN SRI LANKA FAILS

The fire-stricken container ship Wan Hai 503, severely damaged by explosions and fire while sailing off India in June 2025, was refused entry for port of refuge by Sri Lankan authorities at Hambantota. After similar rejections by India, the vessel was forced to remain at sea and eventually towed towards West Asia, with Jebel Ali in the UAE selected as its final refuge. The case prompted international concern about regional protocols for maritime emergencies, as Wan Hai 503 had endured a prolonged search for safety following the evacuation and loss of crew members.

Source: [Here](#), 06 August 2024

INDIA UPDATES MARITIME FRAMEWORK: LS PASSES MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL; RS CLEARS CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY SEA BILL

India's Parliament has passed the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 and the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, modernising the country's maritime framework. The new laws replace outdated regulations, streamline compliance, and align India's shipping sector with global best practices and IMO conventions. Key reforms enable broader ship ownership — now open to NRIs, OCIs, and corporates — strengthen safeguards for seafarers, boost safety standards, enhance marine environmental protection, and improve emergency response. These bills are part of India's strategy to become a leading maritime trade hub and set a strong foundation for sustainable, technologically advanced shipping.

Source: [Here](#), 06 August 2024

PARLIAMENT PASSES KEY COASTAL SHIPPING BILL TO BOOST MARITIME TRADE

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2025, passed by the Indian Parliament, modernises coastal shipping regulation, replacing outdated provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958. It aims to boost coastal cargo to 230 million tonnes by 2030 by simplifying licensing, promoting Indian-owned vessels, and reducing dependency on foreign ships. The bill mandates a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan and a National Database for Coastal Shipping to enhance infrastructure planning, transparency, and investor confidence. It also enforces strict penalties for unlicensed operations and empowers authorities to reroute or ban vessels in the national interest, strengthening supply chain security and creating jobs in coastal regions.

Source: [Here](#), 07 August 2024

VOC PORT SETS NEW BENCHMARK IN GREEN ENERGY

V.O. Chidambaranar (VOC) Port in Tuticorin achieved a record 1,623,461 units of renewable energy generation in July 2025, surpassing its previous highest output. The port operates multiple renewable installations, including 5 MW ground-based solar, 2 MW wind power, and 1.04 MW rooftop solar systems, with more expansions ongoing. VOC Port pioneered India's first green hydrogen pilot project at a port, producing green hydrogen to power streetlights and EV charging, positioning itself as a green energy and green bunkering hub. Partnerships with NTPC and investments totalling thousands of crores support its clean energy and net-zero goals aligned with Maritime India Vision 2030 and India's 2070 target.

Source: [Here](#), 12 August 2025

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

AN UNDERWATER GRAVEYARD: GREAT BARRIER REEF DYING FROM BIGGEST BLEACHING EVENT

The Great Barrier Reef suffered its fifth mass coral bleaching event since 2016, with 2024 recording the steepest coral cover decline in 39 years — between 25 per cent and 33 per cent in some regions, and up to 70 per cent in the worst-hit areas. This bleaching was driven primarily by elevated sea surface temperatures, marine heatwaves, and compounded by cyclones and coral-eating starfish outbreaks. The Reef's coral loss threatens marine biodiversity, coastal protection, and local livelihoods, emphasising urgent global action to reduce warming and boost reef restoration efforts.

Source: [Here](#), 06 August 2024

KENYA'S COASTAL REVIVAL AS COMMUNITIES RESTORE MANGROVE FORESTS

Communities in Kenya's Mida Creek and Marereni are restoring mangrove forests, transforming barren coastlines into thriving ecosystems. Supported by initiatives like COBEC and the nonprofit Seatrees, local women and youth nurture millions of mangroves in nurseries. These efforts revive fish stocks, protect against coastal erosion, and provide sustainable livelihoods through biodiversity credits. Restoration empowers women and strengthens community pride while combating climate change. However, challenges such as hydrological changes, sedimentation, and pollution persist. The project exemplifies the power of community-led conservation for environmental and economic resilience.

Source: [Here](#), 11 August 2024

GLOBAL PLASTIC TREATY HITS STANDSTILL AMID DISAGREEMENT OVER FINANCE

Global plastic treaty negotiations in Geneva hit a standstill amid disagreements over finance and production cuts. The EU demanded addressing plastic production before they fund the treaty, while the Like-Minded Countries, led by Saudi Arabia, opposed this. The US also urged rejection of production cuts. Over 460 million tons of plastic are produced yearly, with waste expected to nearly triple by 2060. Plastic pollution significantly contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. The treaty aims to go beyond voluntary commitments, focusing on waste management and production reduction, but consensus remains elusive as talks continue.

Source: [Here](#), 13 August 2024

SAYA DE MALHA: THE INVISIBLE ISLAND IN VISIBLE DANGER

Saya de Malha Bank is the largest submerged ocean bank in the western Indian Ocean, covering around 40,000 square kilometres between Mauritius and the Seychelles. Known as the “invisible island,” it features extensive shallow seagrass beds vital for carbon capture and marine biodiversity, including breeding grounds for whales, turtles, and sharks. The bank's remoteness has kept it largely unexplored scientifically, but it faces serious threats from illegal fishing and seabed mining by industrial fleets from countries like Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and Thailand, causing ecological degradation and endangering species.

Source: [Here](#), 13 August 2024

RESEARCHERS COMPLETE FIRST OCEANIC OZONE CAMPAIGN IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA, REVEALING TYPHOON IMPACTS

Researchers completed China's first shipborne ozone-sounding campaign in the South China Sea in May-June 2023, offering high-resolution atmospheric data. The study found higher summer ozone levels in the boundary layer compared to typical tropical marine sites. Typhoon-related deep convection caused a sharp drop in upper tropospheric ozone, while subsidence near the tropopause slightly increased mid-tropospheric ozone. This campaign confirms the feasibility of shipborne ozone monitoring in marine settings and aims to establish a long-term network to better understand marine-atmosphere interactions and support climate research.

Source: [Here](#), 13 August 2024

GEOPOLITICS

TANKERS DELIVER RUSSIAN CRUDE TO INDIA DESPITE US, EU PRESSURE

India continues importing significant volumes of Russian crude oil despite pressure from the US and EU. Several tankers carrying millions of barrels of Russian Urals crude have offloaded at Indian refineries, including private players Nayara Energy and Reliance Industries, as well as state-owned Bharat Petroleum and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation. Contracts were mostly finalised weeks before public US criticism intensified, and flows remain robust, with tankers observed near key Indian ports like Mundra, Sikka, Kochi, and Mangalore. The discounted Russian crude matches Indian refinery capabilities, allowing India to maintain its strategic autonomy and energy security amid sanctions and tariff threats by the West.

Source: [Here](#), 05 August 2024

PM MODI MEETS PHILIPPINES PREZ MARCOS JR: ELEVATING TIES, MANILA HAILS DELHI'S DEFENCE CAPABILITIES, BRAHMOS

During President Marcos Jr's August 2025 state visit to India, Prime Minister Modi and the Philippine leader elevated bilateral ties to a Strategic Partnership, signing a five-year Plan of Action covering defence, maritime security, trade, technology, and more. Manila praised India's BrahMos missile system, which has strengthened the Philippines' defence posture. Both nations conducted their first joint maritime drills in the South China Sea and agreed on further naval, air force, and coast guard collaboration, industrial cooperation, preferential trade negotiations, and joint digital infrastructure initiatives, underscoring a shared commitment to a free, rules-based Indo-Pacific region.

Source: [Here](#), 06 August 2025

SUEZ CANAL: WHY THE SURGE IN SHIP TRAFFIC COULD TRIGGER A STRATEGIC CRISIS

The Suez Canal Authority (SCA) is addressing concerns over increased ship traffic through the canal amid rising geopolitical tensions and recent disruptions, including attacks by Houthi rebels in the Red Sea. The canal, vital for global trade connecting Europe and Asia, saw its traffic drop sharply in 2024 due to security threats, causing major shipping companies to reroute via the longer Cape of Good Hope. SCA aims to boost transit by expanding capacity, improving services, and offering incentives such as reduced fees. Challenges include risks of congestion, blockages like the Ever-Given incident, and the canal's enduring strategic vulnerability. Despite setbacks, modernisation and improved security efforts seek to restore the canal's crucial role in maritime trade.

Source: [Here](#), 08 August 2025

INDIA REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO FREE AND OPEN MARITIME ORDER AT UNSC

India reaffirmed its commitment to a free, open, rules-based maritime order under UNCLOS at the UN Security Council. Highlighting maritime security as a collective challenge, India stressed the need for global cooperation to protect trade, energy routes, and undersea cables. Its approach focuses on unimpeded trade, peaceful dispute resolution, environmental protection, and responsible connectivity. Key initiatives include the MAHASAGAR doctrine, e-Samudra platform, Samudra Prachet vessel, and Indo-Pacific naval cooperation. These efforts reflect India's vision for regional security, disaster readiness, and collaboration with Global South partners.

Source: [Here](#), 12 August 2025

MULTIPLE CHINESE ICEBREAKERS DEPLOYED OFF ALASKA RATTLES TRUMP AND AMERICA

China's deployment of five icebreaking vessels near Alaska in 2025 marks an unprecedented escalation of its Arctic presence, surpassing the entire US Coast Guard icebreaker fleet in the region. These ships, including the Xue Long 2, conduct research and operations near US Arctic territory, prompting close monitoring by the US military and NORAD. China's Arctic ambitions, driven by new shipping routes and resource access due to melting ice, are intensifying geopolitical competition, highlighting US challenges in matching China's and Russia's icebreaking capabilities and Arctic influence. This deployment has heightened tensions amid concerns over regional sovereignty and security.

Source: [Here](#), 12 August 2025

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