National Maritime Foundation

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

BALTIC STATES AND FINLAND ISSUE DRONE ALERTS AS UKRAINE, RUSSIA EXCHANGE STRIKES

NATO scrambled jets overnight after at least four drones strayed into Baltic airspace during Ukrainian strikes on Russia, prompting brief alerts to residents of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to seek shelter. The warnings were later withdrawn, with no injuries reported, while Finland imposed temporary restrictions in the eastern Gulf of Finland. Two attempts to shoot down one drone over Lithuania failed, and it later crossed into Latvia, according to Lithuania's Chief of Defence Staff Giedrius Premeneckas. Some Ukrainian drones aimed at Russian oil export ports on the Baltic Sea have missed their targets, triggering security warnings in neighbouring countries and contributing to a government collapse in Latvia this year.
Source: Here, November 04, 2026

TANKERS HIT IN HORMUZ AS IRAN KEEPS UP PRESSURE AFTER US VOTE

Iran reported three more tankers damaged in the Strait of Hormuz on 5 November, with the Revolutionary Guards saying two struck naval mines and a third caught fire. UKMTO said at least five vessels have reported incidents since Sunday, close to October's rate, when 35 vessels were hit, the most of any month of the war. Oil prices have fallen more than $20 a barrel from last week as traders bet Washington may hold back from renewed strikes after the US midterms, though two sources told Reuters that President Trump is still likely to order resumed hostilities. Qatari-mediated talks have produced no announced breakthrough, and a senior Iranian official said the two sides remain far apart.
Source: Here, November 05, 2026

HORMUZ TRAFFIC RECOVERS, BUT OCTOBER BRINGS WORST MONTH FOR SHIP ATTACKS

October was both the busiest month for Gulf LNG exports since the Iran war began and the worst for ship attacks, Reuters reported. S&P Global Energy counted 31 LNG tankers leaving the strait, up from 23 in September, with UAE volumes back to prewar levels and Qatar's just over 30%. The Washington Institute counted 37 vessels hit, as charter rates above $1 million a day draw owners back into the Gulf. The IMO has confirmed 130 incidents and at least 25 seafarers killed, while Indian sailor Naveen Kumar remains missing since May. Oil leaking from the tanker Gem No.2 has closed beaches in the northern emirates and threatens a desalination plant about 2 km away.
Source: Here, November 11, 2026

HOUTHIS RECAPTURE POSITIONS OVERLOOKING BAB EL MANDEB

Yemen's Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) announced on 15 November that it was withdrawing from Dhubab Airfield and the Bab el Mandeb area to redeploy forces in defence of Aden, leaving the Houthis free to reoccupy the Ras Menhali peninsula and Perim Island. Maritime Executive assesses that control of Perim would let the Houthis attack and board ships with armed speedboats rather than relying on drones and missiles from a distance, making a closure of traffic far more practical. Container lines have resumed Red Sea transits after the Houthis said they would target only Saudi- and

Israeli-linked shipping, but the report warns they may be waiting to consolidate before acting, and that EUNAVFOR Aspides is configured only for limited defensive operations.
Source: Here, November 15, 2026

IRAN CLAIMS DRONE STRIKE ON US RADAR IN BAHRAIN, THREATENS "HARSHER" RESPONSE

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said on Sunday it had carried out a drone attack on a US military radar system at a base in Bahrain, the second reported targeting of the Gulf state in three days. The IRGC said six drones were used against the Al-Riffa helicopter base, and there was no immediate US confirmation of the strike. On Friday, US Central Command had rejected an earlier IRGC claim of destroying a US early-warning radar installation in Bahrain, saying two Iranian drones were shot down. The IRGC warned that any further American aggression would draw a harsher response and said the Strait of Hormuz remains closed.
Source: Here, November 15, 2026

MARITIME FORCES

RAFALE M CONDUCTS MAIDEN TRIALS ONBOARD INDIAN AIRCRAFT CARRIER INS VIKRANT

A French Rafale M fighter made its first landing on INS Vikrant on 29 October 2026, succeeding on the maiden attempt, which Naval News describes as the first step towards the aircraft's operationalisation in the Indian Navy. The landing followed shore-based tests at INS Hansa in Goa. India signed a $7.5 billion deal in April 2025 for 26 Rafales, comprising 22 Rafale M fighters and four twin-seat Rafale DH trainers, which are not carrier capable, with deliveries scheduled from 2029. The agreement includes technology transfer for integrating indigenous weapons, and Tata Advanced Systems is developing a fuselage production facility, alongside maintenance facilities being set up by Dassault and Safran.
Source: Here, November 02, 2026

INDIAN NAVY PLACES ORDERS FOR EIGHT NEXT GENERATION CORVETTES

On 2 November, India's Ministry of Defence signed contracts worth ₹53,866.5 crore with Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) and Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) for eight Next Generation Corvettes. GRSE, the lowest bidder, will build five for about ₹32,000 crore and GSL the remaining three. Project 28A is the first in which Navy-designed ships are built by defence public sector yards selected competitively rather than by nomination. The 4,950-tonne ships will carry medium-range anti-ship and surface-to-air missiles, torpedo tubes, and a 76 mm gun, with first launches targeted for late 2029 and deliveries from 2031.
Source: Here, November 03, 2026

DEFENCE SECY PROPOSES INDO-PACIFIC OCEAN DATA EXCHANGE, MARITIME AI NETWORK

Speaking at the valedictory session of the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue 2026, organised by the Indian Navy with the National Maritime Foundation in New Delhi, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh on 5 November put forward four proposals for regional cooperation: a cloud-based ocean data exchange for non-sensitive oceanographic and meteorological data; a regional maritime AI network to co-develop open-

source models for maritime domain awareness; a marine pollution early warning system combining satellite imagery with autonomous patrol vessels; and a multilateral fellowship programme modelled on the Rhodes and Fulbright schemes. He said pooled data could help smaller island nations monitor their exclusive economic zones and track illegal fishing. Singh said the initiatives should build on the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.

Source: Here, November 05, 2026

QUAD NAVIES LAUNCH MALABAR 2026 MULTI-DOMAIN DRILLS TO STRENGTHEN FREE AND OPEN INDO-PACIFIC

The navies of India, the US, Japan and Australia have commenced another edition of the Malabar exercise at Yokosuka, Japan. India's indigenous stealth frigate INS Sahyadri arrived there on 4 November to take part. The schedule has multiple phases, with harbour and at-sea components. Planned drills include anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, and a joint sail photo exercise, with training in detecting, tracking, and engaging targets at sea, in the air, and in cyberspace. Malabar began as a bilateral India-US exercise in 1992; Japan joined in 2015 and Australia returned in 2020, bringing in all four Quad countries.

Source: Here, November 06, 2026

INDIAN NAVY DEMONSTRATES ITS SKILL IN CURBING PIRATE ACTIVITY

On 2 November, the Indian Navy led a short-notice joint operation that recovered the Iranian fishing vessel Azini, seized on 29 October by 12 Somali pirates in the Guardafui Channel off Puntland. The response force comprised the guided-missile destroyer INS Kolkata, a P-8 maritime surveillance aircraft, and a commando boarding party. The pirates surrendered without a fight, and there were no casualties on either side or among the dhow's crew. Three Iranian fishing vessels have been seized by pirates off Puntland since July. The Iranian Navy, which patrolled the area continuously from 2008 to 2026, no longer maintains a presence there.

Source: Here, November 08, 2026

SHIPPING, POsssRTS AND OCEAN ECONOMY

INDIA MUST LOOK BEYOND PORT CAPACITY TO BUILD GLOBALLY CONNECTED TRADE GATEWAYS: FICCI-KEARNEY REPORT

A FICCI-Kearney report released in Mumbai says India's ports have become busier and more efficient, but inland connectivity, logistics coordination, and shipping services now limit further gains. Port cargo rose 38% between FY2017-18 and FY2025-26 to 1,668 million tonnes, while capacity grew 22%, and average vessel turnaround at major ports fell 18% to about 49 hours. At four core seaports, export approval took about 30 hours, but the interval from approval to vessel departure stretched to about 158 hours, 84% of total measured time. As of May 2025, about 75% of India's transshipment containers were handled at overseas ports. The report urges differentiated strategies by 2030 for container, transshipment, industrial and energy, and specialised export gateways, each with a designated coordinator.

Source: Here, November 04, 2026

DENMARK'S MARTIN LIDEGAARD ADVANCES INDIA-DENMARK, TRADE AND SHIPPING AND TRADE PARTNERHSHIP DURING INDIA VISIT

Denmark's Minister for Business and Competitiveness, Martin Lidegaard, visited India on 2-3 November to expand the India-Denmark Green Strategic Partnership. In Mumbai, he toured APM Terminals at JNPA, run by Maersk, and discussed green shipping, decarbonisation, alternative fuels, seafarer training, shipbuilding, and ship recycling with Maritime Administration Director General Shyam Jagannathan. L&T Chairman S. N. Subrahmanyan was appointed Denmark's Honorary Consul in Mumbai. In New Delhi, Lidegaard met Union Ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Piyush Goyal on green maritime corridors, sustainable ports, and trade, including the proposed India-EU Free Trade Agreement. More than 60 Danish companies operate in Maharashtra.

Source: Here, November 04, 2026

WEST ASIA CRISIS DRIVES INDIA'S CRUDE OIL SHIPPING COSTS UP NEARLY FIVEFOLD; STRAIT OF HORMUZ REMAINS IN FOCUS

Drewry Maritime Research says freight for crude from Fujairah to India's west coast rose to about $7.51 a barrel in October, from $1.57 in late February, a rise of nearly 377%. Part of the increase is attributed to greater use of ship-to-ship transfers in the Gulf of Oman. Freight on Russian crude from Baltic ports to India has risen from $8-12 a barrel before the conflict to around $25-30 or higher. Kpler estimates India's crude imports hit a record 5.6 million barrels a day in October, with Russian supplies at 1.97 million, nearly 35% of the total, below July's peak. Drewry says normalised Hormuz transits in 2027 could ease freight pressure.

Source: Here, November 11, 2026

IOC PLANS TO ACQUIRE CRUDE AND LPG CARRIERS AS WEST ASIA CRISIS HIGHLIGHTS INDIA'S SHIPPING VULNERABILITIES

Indian Oil Corporation's board has approved the purchase of a few vessels, with tenders issued several months ago, PTI reports, and the company is also exploring having ships built in India. IOC currently operates three crude carriers and nine LPG vessels on time charter. Time-chartered crude carriers cost about $2-2.50 a barrel, against spot rates of $8-10 during the recent volatility, while LPG spot freight has climbed from around $40 a tonne to $160-180. Russian crude accounted for about 55% of IOC's procurement in the first half of FY 2026-27, and Middle East supplies for around 24%.

Source: Here, November 11, 2026

ANDHRA PRADESH AIMS TO BECOME INDIA'S EASTERN MARITIME GATEWAY WITH 4 NEW PORTS

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal told the 31st CII Partnership Summit in Visakhapatnam that Andhra Pradesh is positioned to become India's maritime gateway to ASEAN, East Asia, and the Indo-Pacific. Four greenfield ports are under construction at *Mulapeta*, *Machilipatnam*, *Ramayapatnam*, and *Kakinada* SEZ. The proposed *Dugarajapatnam* shipbuilding cluster has in-principle approval under the National Shipbuilding Mission, with about ₹30,000 crore of investment and a target capacity of 1.2 million gross tonnes a year. Visakhapatnam Port handled a record 91.17 million tonnes in FY 2025-26, about 10% more than the previous year. Sonowal also noted that a foundation stone was laid for projects worth over ₹560 crore at the port.

Source: Here, November 13, 2026

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

GREENPEACE ACTIVISTS DEPLOY UNDERWATER 'BOULDER BARRIER' TO PROTECT PORPOISES IN UK'S MOST BOTTOM TRAWLED NATURE SITE

Greenpeace UK activists have deployed an underwater barrier comprising giant boulders, weighing up to two tonnes each, across 116 sq km of the Southern North Sea Marine Protected Area to deter destructive bottom trawling. The initiative aims to protect harbour porpoises and vulnerable seabed habitats in an area that recorded over 37,200 hours of bottom-towed fishing in 2025. Greenpeace's analysis further reveals that bottom trawlers and dredgers disturbed 55,600 sq km of seabed across UK offshore Marine Protected Areas during the same year. The intervention highlights the gap between marine protection designations and their enforcement. Effective conservation requires stronger regulatory enforcement, sustainable fishing practices and sustained collaboration between governments and environmental stakeholders to translate protected-area commitments into tangible ocean protection.

Source: Here, November 02, 2026

GLOBAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM STATUS REPORT 2026

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has released the 2026 Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Status Report, highlighting progress in global ocean monitoring and persistent gaps in observational capacity. Currently, 67 countries contribute to physical and biogeochemical observations through 17 global observing networks, complemented by satellite-based monitoring. These observations support weather forecasting, climate research, maritime and coastal risk management, biodiversity conservation and sustainable ocean economies. However, monitoring remains uneven, particularly across the Southern Ocean, polar regions, deep oceans, marginal seas and developing coastal states. Strengthening international cooperation, sustained investment and equitable data-sharing will be essential to building a resilient global ocean-observation architecture and improving maritime domain awareness.

Source: Here, November 05, 2026

MICROPLASTICS ARE CHANGING THE COLOR OF OCEAN WATER, STUDY SUGGESTS

A study published in *Communications Earth & Environment* suggests that microplastic accumulation may be altering the colour of seawater around the Great Pacific Garbage Patch in the North Pacific. Analysis of three satellite datasets covering 2002–2022 revealed increased brightness in blue and green wavelengths, giving parts of the ocean a more cyan appearance. Computer simulations found that this pattern was more than four times as likely when microplastics were included. Although further field measurements are required to establish causation, the findings highlight the potential of satellite-based ocean monitoring to detect microscopic marine pollution. Advances in remote sensing could provide a valuable tool for strengthening marine pollution surveillance and supporting more targeted ocean conservation efforts.

Source: Here, November 05, 2026

INDIAN SECTOR OF SOUTHERN OCEAN SEES RISING OXYGEN LEVELS, FINDS STUDY

A study by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa, has identified a significant rise in dissolved oxygen levels in the Indian sector of the Southern Ocean between 1993 and 2025, contrasting with declining oxygen levels observed across much of the world's oceans. Published in

Environmental Research Letters, the research attributes this increase primarily to enhanced ocean ventilation and changing circulation patterns, with the strongest oxygenation recorded in intermediate and deep waters. The findings highlight the Southern Ocean's critical role in regulating global heat, carbon and nutrient cycles. Sustained oceanographic research, expanded Argo float deployments and repeat hydrographic surveys will be vital to understanding these changes and strengthening India's contribution to global ocean observation and climate science.

Source: Here, November 11, 2026

OIL SLICKS SEEN FROM SPACE: THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF BOAT STRIKES ON FRAGILE GULF ECOSYSTEMS

Missile and sea-mine attacks on oil tankers during the US–Iran conflict have triggered extensive marine pollution across the Strait of Hormuz and the wider Gulf. Greenpeace has identified over 500 instances of oil spills since February 2026, with cumulative mapped footprints covering approximately 20,000 sq km. Satellite imagery reveals contamination near coral reefs, mangroves, protected islands and critical fishing grounds. The naval blockade has restricted on-ground environmental assessments, complicating damage evaluation and attribution. The incident underscores how maritime conflicts extend beyond shipping security and energy infrastructure to threaten marine biodiversity and coastal livelihoods. Strengthening regional maritime cooperation, environmental monitoring and coordinated spill-response mechanisms is therefore essential to safeguarding the Gulf's fragile marine ecosystems.

Source: Here, November 11, 2026

GEOPOLITICS

RAJNATH SINGH ADVOCATES SUPPLY CHAIN DIVERSIFICATION AT INDO-PACIFIC REGIONAL DIALOGUE AMID WEST ASIA CRISIS

Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh has called for supply-chain diversification and stronger regional cooperation to enhance maritime resilience amid disruptions caused by the West Asia crisis. Delivering the commemorative address at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) 2026 in New Delhi on 4 November, he emphasised the need for reliable maritime infrastructure, enhanced maritime domain awareness and collective preparedness against disruptions to global trade. He also highlighted the strategic importance of safeguarding freedom of navigation and strengthening technological cooperation among regional partners. His remarks reinforce India's vision of an open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific, where resilient maritime networks and regional partnerships underpin shared security and economic prosperity.

Source: Here, November 04, 2026

MAIDEN BIMSTEC MARITIME SECURITY EXERCISE CONCLUDES IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS, STRENGTHENS REGIONAL NAVAL COOPERATION

The maiden BIMSTEC Maritime Security Exercise concluded on 3 November 2026 at Sri Vijaya Puram, following five days of engagements conducted under the aegis of India's Andaman and Nicobar Command. The exercise, held from 30 October to 3 November, involved naval vessels from India, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, including INS Taragiri, INS Karmuk, INS Saryu, UMS King Aung Zeya and SLNS Gajabahu. Comprising harbour and sea phases, it focused on enhancing naval interoperability,

professional exchanges and coordinated maritime operations. The exercise marks an important step towards institutionalising BIMSTEC's maritime security cooperation and strengthening collective capabilities for a secure, resilient and open Bay of Bengal.

Source: Here, November 11, 2026

INDIA, SOMALIA DISCUSS STRENGTHENING DEFENCE COOPERATION, FOCUS ON MARITIME SECURITY AND COUNTER-TERRORISM

India and Somalia have discussed strengthening bilateral defence cooperation, with particular emphasis on maritime security, counter-terrorism and capacity-building, during a meeting in Mogadishu on 14 November 2026. India's External Affairs Ministry Secretary Sripriya Ranganathan met Somali Defence Minister Ahmed Moallim Fiqi and exchanged views on the evolving regional security environment. The engagement, marking a high-level Indian bilateral visit to Somalia in recent years, reflects renewed efforts to deepen strategic ties with the Horn of Africa. Enhanced India–Somalia cooperation offers opportunities to strengthen maritime security in the western Indian Ocean, particularly through capacity-building and coordinated responses to shared security challenges, including piracy and maritime threats.

Source: Here, November 14, 2026

US ACCUSES IRAN OF THREATENING MARITIME SECURITY, DEMANDS ACCOUNTABILITY AT UN

The United States has accused Iran of undermining international maritime security through attacks on commercial shipping, support for armed groups and alleged violations of UN Security Council resolutions. Addressing a Security Council meeting on 13 November 2026, US envoy Jennifer Locetta called for Tehran to be held accountable, highlighting threats to navigation across the Strait of Hormuz, Bab el-Mandeb and the Red Sea. She also raised concerns over Houthi attacks on Saudi commercial vessels and critical infrastructure. The deliberations underscore the growing internationalisation of maritime security challenges across strategically vital waterways. Strengthening multilateral maritime governance and upholding freedom of navigation remain essential to regional stability and the uninterrupted flow of global trade.

Source: Here, November 14, 2026

ASEAN SUMMIT: PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT CALLS FOR GREATER REGIONAL UNITY TO ADDRESS GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS

The 49th ASEAN Summit commenced in Manila on 15 November 2026 under the Philippines' chairmanship, bringing together leaders of the 11-member bloc to address regional security, economic resilience and geopolitical challenges. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. emphasised regional unity amid growing strategic competition and maritime tensions. Key maritime priorities include advancing negotiations on the South China Sea Code of Conduct in accordance with international law, strengthening maritime cooperation and establishing an ASEAN Maritime Centre. Discussions also encompass the Myanmar crisis, energy security and transnational threats. The summit provides an important opportunity for ASEAN to reinforce collective maritime governance, uphold UNCLOS and strengthen regional cooperation towards a stable and rules-based Indo-Pacific.

Source: Here, November 15, 2026