



**भारत सरकार/ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय**  
**MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS**  
**नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई**  
**DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI**

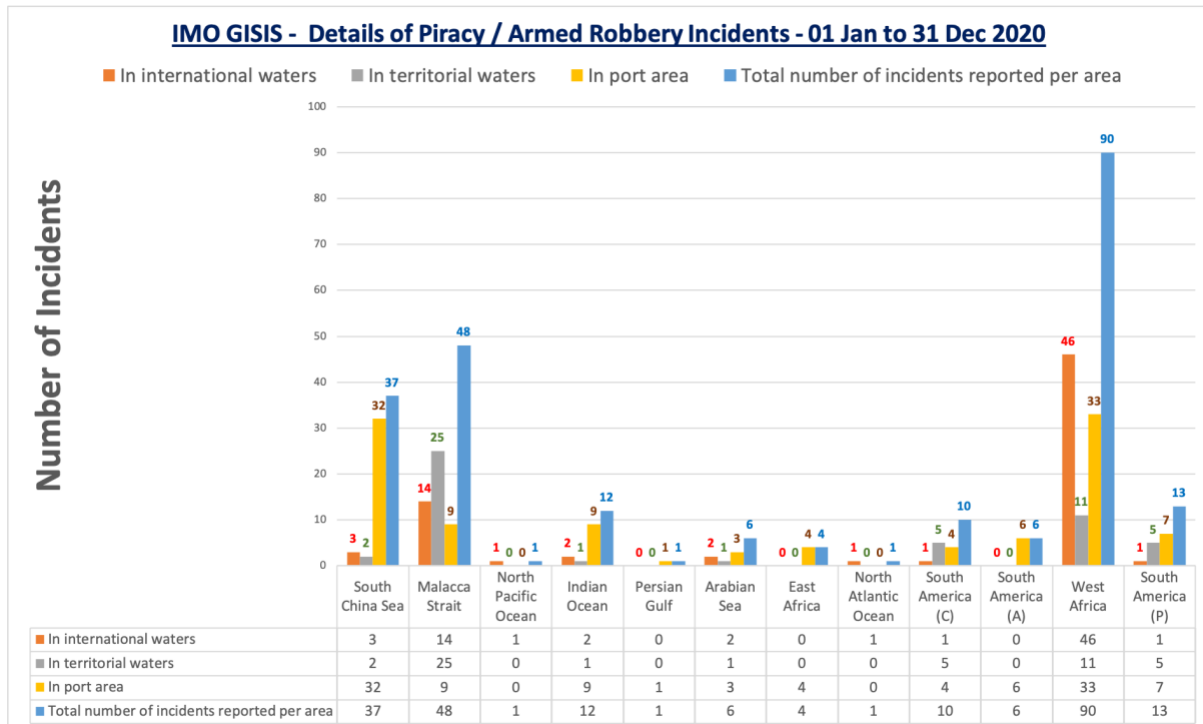
**F. No. 25-45/8/2021-NT - DGS**

**Date - 02.05.2021**

**NT Wing Piracy - DGS Circular No. 12 of 2021**

**Sub.: Piracy and Armed Robbery on Vessels - reg.**

1. As per statistics collated from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) on the reported and attempted attacks by pirates and armed robbers for the period between 01.01.2020 to 31.12.2020, the total number of such incidents that have occurred worldwide during the said period is 229 (Figure 1).



*Figure 1 - Details of Piracy / Armed Robbery Incidents - 01 Jan to 31 Dec 2020 (Source: IMO GISIS)*

2. From the graph (Figure 1), it can be observed that the piracy hotspot is focused in the West African region, with 90 incidents occurring during the period in this region followed by the Malacca Strait (48) and South China Sea (37). With regards to incidents within the West African region, it is observed 46 of these incidents occurred in International waters which indicates that the perpetrators are venturing more outside the territorial waters of the coastal States.

3. As per the [ICC-IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Report for the period 01 January – 31 December 2020](#), the increase in such incidents from the preceding year 2019 has been attributed to an increase in piracy and armed robbery reported within the Gulf of Guinea as well as the Singapore Straits. Furthermore, as per [IMB Piracy Reporting Centre \(PRC\) report for the First Quarter 2021](#) (IMB-PRC Q1) i.e. 01 January to 31 March 2021, violence against seafarers continued to take place with a total of 40 crew being kidnapped and one killed. Also, the report highlights that Callao anchorage in Peru is emerging as a new hotspot with five incidents being reported in 2021 (three in Q1 of 2020), wherein all types of vessel are being targeted.

4. Additionally, as per IMB-PRC Q1, the Gulf of Guinea accounted for 43% of all reported incidents in the period between January to March 2021 which including the aforesaid 40 kidnapping as well as the crew fatality incidents. The report also details an incident wherein pirates kidnapped 15 crew from a Maltese flagged Chemical Tanker at a distance of 212nm, in seas south of Cotonou, Benin. It is also reported that a fishing vessel hijacked on 8 February 2021 is being used by pirates as a mother vessel to facilitate such attacks.

5. It has also been observed that the attacks in the Gulf of Guinea spike during the dry season which begins around October. Kind attention is therefore also invited to the [Joint advisory dated 21.10.2020](#) issued by the round table of international shipping associations & OCIMF, for vessel operating in the Gulf of Guinea requiring them to pay particular attention to maritime security risks in their voyage planning.

6. The Maritime Domain Awareness for Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG) has put out a notice on [27.04.2021](#) stating that there is possibility of an increased threat of piracy activity in the immediate future in the area defined by the following points: 05°00'N – 005°00'E, 05°00'N – 010°00'E, 02°00'N – 010°00'E & 02°00'N – 005°00'E. All vessels transiting in these areas and are advised to exercise a sharp lookout and caution. Additionally, vessels transiting the Gulf of Guinea are also advised to apply procedures as listed in the [Best Management Practices to deter piracy and enhance maritime security off the coast of West Africa including the Gulf of Guinea](#) (BMP-WA).

7. A particular attention is invited to directions as per [DGS NT Wing Piracy Circular 03 of 2019 dated 05.05.2019](#) wherein all RPSL agents have been instructed to not engage any Indian seafarers on coastal vessels, trading solely within the ports in the Gulf of Guinea. It is reiterated that this requirement is still in force and that strict action will be undertaken against violation of the said circular by any RPS agency, which may include suspension of their license as has been done in past cases.

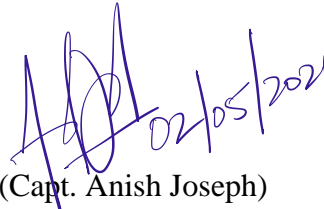
8. Maritime Security Charts (MSCs) published by agencies such as UKHO, etc., contain vital details such as security of navigation including details of piracy, terrorism, embargoes, mine warfare, exclusion zones, blockades and illegal fishing. Such details can assist the navigating officer in the planning of safe passages through such piracy high-risk areas. A non-exhaustive list of such charts covering specific areas is available in Table 1.

Chart	Area
<a href="#">Q6099</a>	<a href="#">Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea ; Gulf of Aden to Red Sea Transit Corridor</a>
<a href="#">Q6110</a>	<a href="#">Mediterranean Sea; Strait of Gibraltar</a>
<a href="#">Q6111</a>	<a href="#">Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea; Strait of Hormuz</a>
<a href="#">Q6112</a>	<a href="#">Karachi to Hong Kong</a>
<a href="#">Q6113</a>	<a href="#">Singapore to Papua New Guinea; Sulu Sea and Celebes Sea Transit Corridors</a>
<a href="#">Q6114</a>	<a href="#">West Africa Including Gulf of Guinea</a>

Table 1 - List of Maritime security Charts (Source: UKHO)

These MSCs when used alongside official navigational charts, can help to improve the safety and security of ships, crew and cargo. Furthermore, the [Best Management Practices to deter Piracy and enhance maritime safety in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea \(BMP5\)](#); [BMP-WA](#); [‘Global Counter Piracy Guidance for Companies, Masters and Seafarers’](#); [‘Regional Guide To Counter Piracy And Armed Robbery Against Ships In Asia’](#); [‘Guide for Tankers Operating in Asia Against Piracy and Armed Robbery Involving Oil Cargo Theft’](#); etc., are region specific guidelines detailing procedures to ensure effective piracy related risk reduction and mitigation. All CSO’s and Masters of vessels are advised to be extra cautious and follow the practices and take necessary precautionary measures as specified in the guidelines and publications mentioned above.

9. This is issued with the approval of the Director General of Shipping and Addl. Secretary to the Govt. of India.



(Capt. Anish Joseph)

Nautical Surveyor - cum -

Dy. Director General of Shipping [Tech. & Anti-Piracy]

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**Note** - The underlined blue content in the circular indicates hyperlinks to the relevant online content available on the respective website.