

# CSS | ISSUE BRIEF

## INTEGRATION OF INDIAN COAST GUARD AND INDIAN NAVY

Post 26/11

*Mehak Dhiman\**

*Edited by: Ishani Sharma*

### INTRODUCTION

Given that 71% of the earth's surface is water, for a peninsular country like India with an overwhelming coastline of 7,500 km, the maritime security becomes a complex domain. 90% of the trade occurs through the waters and 80% of the oil trade passes through the Indian Ocean itself. The Sea Lanes of the Indian Ocean are considered to be one of the most strategically important in the world. These facts are relevant to the topic of this issue brief since the concepts of trade and economics cannot be separated from security given their direct relation i.e., greater trade activities attract the need for greater security measures.

India, surrounded by the three massive oceans in the west, east and the south, is spread across twenty-eight states, eight Union Territories and various islands. This extends the span of maritime security to coastal and port security. In fact, coastal and port security are the two most significant aspects of maritime security as India has 13 major ports and 190 minor ports.<sup>2</sup> Such a vast area of responsibility with multi-layered, multi-dimensional, dynamic and complex threats looming over the region required more strategic and tactical ways to tackle them. While the partial militarisation of the Indian Coast Guard occurred early in 1978, its implementation and functioning were deeply flawed. This challenged the capacity of the Indian Naval Force for a long time. It called for a smarter and a more strategic way of strengthening India's maritime security. To achieve this, the Indian Military has made efforts to integrate, synergise and optimise the resources at hand to deliver best outcomes which are in line with the input. There is an evident increase in focus and action on compartmentalisation of roles, duties and mandates between various departments which regulate the coastal and sea activities in the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. Joint exercises and inclusion of departments like the Indian Coast Guard (ICG); Customs Department; the water wing of Border Security Force (BSF); Maritime Police; Central Industrial Security Force (CISF); Land Port Authority; Ministry of Shipping, Roads Transport and Highways;

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\* *The Author is a postgraduate student at the Jindal School of International Affairs and Research Assistant at the Centre for Security Studies, JSIA.*

<sup>2</sup> Wallechinsky, D. W. (2016). India - Departments. All Gov India.

<http://www.allgov.com/india/departments/ministry-of-defence/coastguard?agencyid=7560>

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Intelligence Agencies for Coastal Security have improved the state of India's maritime security and defence.

The Kasab attacks of 2008 highlighted various deep-rooted shortcomings and fault lines in the Indian Navy as well as the ICG. The failure of the Indian defence capability, its response mechanism and vulnerabilities were discussed and critiqued worldwide. However, since the tragedy, India learned various significant lessons and has made several ground-breaking changes in the ICG and the Indian Navy, ensuring that such a horrific incident never repeats itself.

Building on the aforementioned context, this issue brief discusses the changes in India's maritime defence and security capabilities since the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. More specifically it looks at the "jointness" and integration of the Indian Coast Guard with the Indian Navy and its militarisation. Furthermore, the modernisation, evolution and expansion of the Indian Coast Guard that occurred through this integration is also discussed.

## **MARITIME SECURITY THREATS**

As mentioned in the introduction, the maritime security has a direct link with trade that occurs through the sea lanes of communication. This calls for more efficient offshore patrolling, surveillance, regulation and enforcement of the maritime trade laws. These administrative functions are a significant and tedious part of the overall maritime defence and security. Any compromise in coastal and port security will compromise India's security. Indian Maritime Security Strategy (IMSS 2015) also highlights that "an effective organisation for coastal security also facilitates coastal defence".<sup>3</sup> The maritime security environment is increasingly becoming complex and the difference between traditional and non-traditional security threats is almost non-existent. Along with this, another important observation is that the term "coastal" refers to both the dimensions on the land and the sea. Hence, coastal security further comprises of security and defence in the waters as well as ashore.<sup>4</sup>

The current maritime security climate remains complex for India. There is an urgent need for securing the Indian ports as well as the logistical aspect of the ICG and the Indian Navy. One aspect of the modern maritime warfare is attacking the systematic insecurities, administrative aspects as well as the "spinal" departments/the tail (support) of the enemy entity. The enemy, in

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<sup>3</sup> Capt. Das, H. D. (2021, March 23). AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO COASTAL AND OFFSHORE DEFENCE: LEVERAGING THE COASTAL SECURITY CONSTRUCT. National Maritime Foundation. <https://maritimeindia.org/an-integratedapproach-to-coastal-and-offshore-defence-leveraging-the-coastal-security-construct/>

<sup>4</sup> Capt. Das, H. D. (2021, March 23). AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO COASTAL AND OFFSHORE DEFENCE: LEVERAGING THE COASTAL SECURITY CONSTRUCT. National Maritime Foundation. <https://maritimeindia.org/an-integratedapproach-to-coastal-and-offshore-defence-leveraging-the-coastal-security-construct/>

modern day warfare, will aim for the logistics department, ports, communication and critical infrastructure of the Navy and the ICG to weaken the overall maritime security. The disruption of the tail/support will leave the teeth/frontline actors paralysed. Keeping these aspects in mind, a maritime security threat could come from a state or non-state enemy as an attack on offshore and ashore installations. Stand-off weapons can be used through ships, submarines or aircrafts. The enemy can also deploy underwater mines on ports and harbours which highlights the necessity of a well-oiled defensive as well as offensive action plan.

The ICG is given the mandate to partially manage the Indian coastal security during peace time. This involves checking and combating terrorist infiltration through the waters, offshore patrolling, 365x24x7 surveillance, data collection for the Indian Navy, security for fishermen, etc. It also acts as a point of contact between the lacks of Indian fishermen and the Indian Navy. However, during a time of distress and conflict, the ICG acts as the teeth as well as the tail in order to back up the Indian Navy. The ICG roles and responsibilities are discussed further in detail later in the paper.

## **HISTORY – INTEGRATION OF COAST GUARD AND INDIAN MILITARY**

The Indian Coast Guard was inaugurated as a part of the Indian Armed Forces on 19th August 1978. The origin is traced back to the 1960s, where the responsibility of checking and countering smuggling in the Indian territorial waters was entirely on the Indian Navy. The lack of resources and the inability of the Indian Navy to perform its tasks was a cause for concern. Through subsequent efforts and deliberation, the need for anti-smuggling unit was seen as a vital security need. This led to the approval of the Coast Guard Act, 1987 which established the ICG as a military unit under the Indian Navy.

ICG is the most recent branch of the Indian Military and was inaugurated by the former PM Morarji Desai. This decision was undertaken in the late 1970s when only a few countries had set up such a body to enhance its maritime security and jurisdiction. The recognition of its need in the third United Nations Conference on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS) further bolstered its establishment.<sup>5</sup> “The Indian Coast Guard was created to maintain economic and environmental discipline in its waters, and protect national and other interests in its maritime zones”, stated a former Director General (DG) of ICG.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the establishment and the comprehension of the importance of such a unit, the inauguration of the ICG never made a ground-breaking impact on the overall maritime security and regulation of the country. Major fault lines and cracks plagued the structure and system of the ICG. It was

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<sup>5</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

<sup>6</sup> Prabhakaran Paleri, “Role of the Coast Guard in the Maritime Security of India”, New Delhi, Knowledge World, 2004, p. 32.

not capable enough to live up to its expectations. Following the attacks of 2008, a plethora of reports were published in order to highlight the grave dysfunctionalities in the ICG and its structure. Various inefficiencies like, “Insufficient and inadequate assets, absence of vital communication equipment, limited night patrolling ability due to a lack of required equipment, ineffective inter-agency communication and coordination, lack of timely repair and maintenance, poor information management system, inability to carry out statutory duties such as environmental protection due to lack of resources as well as legislative backing, significant shortage of manpower” were mentioned in a report by the comptroller and auditor general (CAG) in August 2011 (Report No. 7 of 2011-12 Performance Audit of Role and Functioning of Indian Coast Guard).<sup>7</sup>

## **2008 MUMBAI TERROR ATTACK**

### ***Introduction***

The November 26, 2008, Mumbai Terror Attack was a never-to-be-forgotten tragedy. It was slow, painful, prolonged, terrorising, scarring and enraging. By the end of the massacre, at least 172 innocent people were killed. It is often compared and correlated with the 2001, 9/11 terror attack on the World Trade Towers in the United States. The professionalism, deep infiltration, use of advanced weapons and communication apparatus along with strategic and synergised operational execution, diversity of targets etc., were some of the factors behind this comparison. The attacks continued for two days and twelve hours. The wide media coverage sent chills across the whole country. Lashkare-Taiba, a Pakistan based terrorist group was found to be responsible for these attacks.<sup>8</sup>

The terrorists navigated through the sea routes to escape the stringent security apparatus set up on land, for example airport security. They hijacked an Indian vessel to avoid suspicion by the ICG. In addition, they came heavily armed with a number of Chinese AK56 rifles, Heckler & Koch MP5 machine guns, with seven magazines of ammunition (30 rounds each), 9-mm pistols two clips of ammunition, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) etc. This depicts the complexity and difficulty of carrying out such an operation. However, the plan was executed accurately due to the ineffective maritime surveillance and security at the time.

It relied on the element of surprise, creating confusion and overwhelming the ability of the authorities to respond. It also required the determined execution by suicide attackers who, nonetheless, were able to operate effectively over an extended period of time. The complexity of the operation demanded careful preparation. Eyewitness accounts from the Taj Hotel indicate that

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<sup>7</sup> Wallechinsky, D. W. (2016). India - Departments. All Gov India.  
<http://www.allgov.com/india/departments/ministry-of-defence/coastguard?agencyid=7560>

<sup>8</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., & Fair, C. C. (2009). *The lessons of Mumbai* (Vol. 249). (California: Rand Corporation).

the terrorists knew their way through hidden doors and back hallways of the hotel. According to another report, the terrorists had a detailed diagram of the hotel's layout.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Inefficiency***

The Indian government and the authorities were overwhelmed by the complexity as well as the scale of the attacks. Moreover, they were left confused and helpless. The response to these attacks shed light on some of the key vulnerabilities in the counterterrorism capabilities, maritime defence as well as the efficiency of the ICG and the Indian Navy. Intelligence failures, inadequate “target hardening”, incomplete execution of response protocols, response timing problems, inadequate counterterrorism training and equipment for the local police, limitations of municipal fire and emergency services, flawed hostage-rescue plan, poor strategic communications and information management were among the major shortcomings.<sup>10</sup>

Gaps in coastal surveillance was another major weakness which exacerbated the issue regarding the integration of ICG and Indian Navy along with bringing about “jointness” in maritime security activities. The ICG, back then, was unable to monitor the coastline due to a shortage of equipment as it had only 100 boats for 5,000 miles of coastline and inadequate aviation assets. This failure was heightened by the Maharashtra government's inaction for the purchase of 26 additional vessels on the grounds that it lacked the necessary resources for the maintenance.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Lessons learnt***

The attacks made two things clear. First, the terrorist groups were constantly evolving and were capable of tactical planning and executing ambitious operations. Second, a deficiency of effective means to counter terrorism was recognised. The aforementioned defects contributed to the disappointing response of the maritime defence and monitoring capabilities.

These realisations demanded a more integrated working of the center and the state-level security agencies and response mechanisms. A more stable internal security environment was also necessary. For improving the maritime surveillance and defence, the preparations for integration of the ICG and the Indian Navy were launched in full swing. The ICG drastically evolved, with its mandate being broadened. This gave the Indian Navy room, time and resources to focus on its maritime defensive and offensive capabilities. The ICG also took up various responsibilities and

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<sup>9</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., & Fair, C. C. (2009). *The lessons of Mumbai* (Vol. 249). (California: Rand Corporation).

<sup>10</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., & Fair, C. C. (2009). *The lessons of Mumbai* (Vol. 249). (California: Rand Corporation).

<sup>11</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., & Fair, C. C. (2009). *The lessons of Mumbai* (Vol. 249). (California: Rand Corporation).

this time the systematic changes made sure that the ICG contributed to the Indian maritime securitisation.<sup>12</sup>

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Since then, significant changes in the mandate and the responsibilities of the ICG have taken place. The Ministry of Defence website of the Indian Coast Guard suggests the mission of the ICG to be as follows:

*“To protect our ocean and offshore wealth including oil, fish and minerals / To assist mariners in distress and safeguard life and property at sea / To enforce maritime laws with respect to sea, poaching, smuggling and narcotics / To preserve marine environment and ecology and protect rare species / To collect scientific data and back up the Navy during war”.*<sup>13</sup>

The ICG’s security role is similar to that of the BSF which adopts a defensive approach and backs the Indian Army during times of distress. The BSF, also, has both peacetime and wartime tasks in guarding the Indian land borders.

More specifically, it indulges in safety and protection of artificial islands and offshore terminals, protection of fishermen, assistance to fishermen in distress at sea, preservation and protection of marine environment, prevention and control of marine pollution, assisting the customs and other authorities in anti-smuggling operations, enforcement of maritime laws in force, safety of life and property at sea and collection of scientific data.<sup>14</sup>

The ICG looks over the security of the Maritime Zones of India (MZI) which means maintaining the security in the Territorial Waters, the Contiguous Zones and the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). The 2008 terror attacks and the complexity in the security environment have led to the expansion of the ICG’s duties to include the protection of offshore natural resources, maritime pollution control, preventing soil erosion, food security and adopting a defensive military role during the times of war. The DG-ICG is the head of the Offshore Security Coordination Committee (OSCC) as well as the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP) and preparedness

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<sup>12</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., & Fair, C. C. (2009). *The lessons of Mumbai* (Vol. 249). (California: Rand Corporation).

<sup>13</sup> Mission and Motto. (2021, July 16). Indian Coast Guard. [https://indiancoastguard.gov.in/content/248\\_3\\_Mission.aspx](https://indiancoastguard.gov.in/content/248_3_Mission.aspx)

<sup>14</sup> Mission and Motto. (2021, July 16). Indian Coast Guard. [https://indiancoastguard.gov.in/content/248\\_3\\_Mission.aspx](https://indiancoastguard.gov.in/content/248_3_Mission.aspx)

meeting. This expands its role to implementation of security policies, threat assessment etc., along with serving for the Lead Intelligence Agency (LIA) for coastal and sea borders.<sup>15</sup>

## EVOLUTION IN COAST GUARD AND NAVY

The evolution of the ICG and the Indian Navy has been a primary area of focus for a long time now. Joint exercises, expansion in vessels, ammunitions, infrastructure in the ICG and the deployment of indigenous submarines and ships have all led to an immense improvement in the “jointness” of the ICG and the IN along with the modernisation of the ICG. “Sagar Kavach” is one such joint exercise where various agencies participate; it has proven to bring about coordination and effectiveness in the maritime security operations. The Navy and ICG have, together, changed the face of modern maritime defence and surveillance, despite the lack of instruments, resources, focused command and control structure.<sup>16</sup>

It was after the attacks in 2008 that the cabinet took the historic move of changing the structure of maritime security. The amendments led to the acquisition of additional assets, the creation of new infrastructure, such as coastal radars, Automatic Identification System (AIS), National Command Control and Communication Network (NC3I), Joint Operations Centers and an information collation and fusion center along with the setting up of marine or coastal police in all coastal states.<sup>17</sup>

### *Endeavours by the ICG and the IN*

Using the agreed-upon Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard have come up with various creative and innovative techniques for better regulation, surveillance, monitoring and data collection at the sea.

**Coastal Radars/AIS** – Such technology has been vastly used with coastal radars and AIS stations being embedded along the total coastline of the Indian Peninsula as well as the island coastlines. Through this, detection and identification of intruding vessels have been made relatively easier and more accurate. This equipment employs indigenously developed state-of-art software which constantly produces a comprehensive awareness picture of the entire coastal area.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Wallechinsky, D. W. (2016). India - Departments. All Gov India.  
<http://www.allgov.com/india/departments/ministry-of-defence/coastguard?agencyid=7560>

<sup>16</sup> Vice Admiral Karve, A. K. (2018, November 29). Maritime security: a decade after 26/11. Gateway House.  
<https://www.gatewayhouse.in/maritime-security-after-2611/>

<sup>17</sup> Vice Admiral Karve, A. K. (2018, November 29). Maritime security: a decade after 26/11. Gateway House.  
<https://www.gatewayhouse.in/maritime-security-after-2611/>

<sup>18</sup> Vice Admiral Karve, A. K. (2018, November 29). Maritime security: a decade after 26/11. Gateway House.  
<https://www.gatewayhouse.in/maritime-security-after-2611/>





	identification of voids, streamlining of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), etc. <sup>22</sup>	
<b>TROPEX</b>	Indian Navy's largest biennial Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise. It is India's largest war game. It enhances naval war fighting in areas within and beyond Indian maritime zones. This exercise takes place in two phases, namely, joint work-up phase and tactical phase. <sup>23</sup>	Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard
<b>ENCORE</b>	The Eastern Naval Command Operational Readiness Exercise is another theatre level exercise and continues for one month. It leads to improvement in threat response, meeting complex security requirements and brings about efficiency. <sup>24</sup>	Western Naval Command, Andaman & Nicobar Command, Indian Coast Guard and assorted naval, Indian Air Force
<b>PASCHIM LEHER</b>	This exercise is held on the east and the west coast. It enhances the coastal and offshore defence capabilities like the ENCORE exercise. It tests marine combat readiness, mobilisation capacity and operational synergy. <sup>25</sup>	Indian Air Force and the Indian Coast Guard units.
<b>DANX</b>	The Defence of Andaman and Nicobar Exercise, like the rest, also tests combat readiness and manoeuvrability at the sea. <sup>26</sup>	Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, Indian Coast Guard and Special Forces from newly formed Armed Forces

<sup>22</sup> Exercise "PRASTHAN" Conducted in Western Offshore Development Area Under Aegis of Western Naval Command. (2019, February 26). Indian Navy. <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/exercise-%E2%80%98prasthan%E2%80%99conducted-western-offshore-development-area-under-aegis-western-naval>

<sup>23</sup> Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX 21) Indian Navy's Largest War Game. (2021, February 11). Indian Navy. <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/theatre-leveloperational-readiness-exercise-tropex-21-indian-navy%E2%80%99s-largest-war-game>

<sup>24</sup> Capt. Das, H. D. (2021, March 23). AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO COASTAL AND OFFSHORE DEFENCE: LEVERAGING THE COASTAL SECURITY CONSTRUCT. National Maritime Foundation. <https://maritimeindia.org/an-integratedapproach-to-coastal-and-offshore-defence-leveraging-the-coastal-security-construct/>

<sup>25</sup> Western Naval Command Concludes Exercise Paschim Leher. (2019, February 26). Indian Navy. <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/western-naval-command-concludesexercise-paschim-leher>

<sup>26</sup> Defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands Exercise (DANX-17). (2019, February 26). Indian Navy. <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/defence-andaman-nicobar-islandsexercise-danx-17>

		Special Operations Division (AFSOD)
<b>KAVACH</b>	This exercise tests the maritime surveillance capability, defensive and offensive operational ability as well as air defence and submarines. <sup>27</sup>	The Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard under the ambit of the Andaman and Nicobar Command

### *Joint International Exercises*

Recently, the Indian Coast Guard held a joint exercise with the Japan Coast Guard ship “Echigo”. Echigo visited Chennai for Joint Exercise “Sahyog-Kaijin XIX” last year on 16 Jan 2020. The exercise was successful and Indian Coast Guard ships like Veera, Shaurya, Abheek, C-432 as well as C-435 participated along with the Japan Coast Guard ship Echigo.<sup>28</sup>

### *Logistics, Facilities and Assets*

Since the tragedy, the ICG has expanded in terms of its mandate, capabilities as well as assets. This has given the maritime defence and security the boot it requires. The ICG vessels and assets are now deployed 24x7x365 for monitoring the coast and water along with the extension of the deployment in the Maldivian Exclusive Economic Zone.<sup>29</sup> The ICG, now, has about 200 vessels compared to the 74 vessel force it was back in 2008. There have been various budgetary contributions by the government which have enabled the ICG to purchase high quality equipment and assets. Additionally, the center allotted an amount of Rs 31,748 crores for a five-year programme. Thus now, Coast Guard has 134 operational ships, 57 indigenous ships under construction, 58 aircrafts in the air wing and the ICG now has 12,000 personnel as compared to 5,000 in the 2000s as mentioned by a spokesperson from the Indian Coast Guard. A new station at Ratnagiri has also been added for better surveillance which will be commissioned soon.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Coastal Security Exercise “Sagar Kavach.” (2016, December 14). Indian Navy. <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/coastal-security-exercise-sagar-kavach>

<sup>28</sup> Press Information Bureau. (2021, January). Year End Review – 2020 Ministry of Defence. Ministry of Defence. <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1685437>

<sup>29</sup> Press Information Bureau. (2021, January). Year End Review – 2020 Ministry of Defence. Ministry of Defence. <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1685437>

<sup>30</sup> Pathak, M. K. (2020, November 26). 12 years since 26/11: Indian Coast Guard set to become 200-vessel strong force. Hindustan Times. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/12-years-since-26-11-indian-coastguard-set-to-become-200-vessel-strong-force/story-P5bASBse6f5trJITpAhMqN.html>

## ***Indigenisation***

The recent inclination of the entire defence sector towards “Make in India” and “Atmanirbhar

Bharat” has also seeped into the modernisation of the Indian Coast Guard. The ICG has set India’s leading shipyards to indigenously produce twelve large OPVs. Along with this The ICG’s Vigraha was launched in a southeastern port of Chennai on October 6, 2020, and the ICG’s Sarthak was deployed in western Goa on August 13, 2020, by the state-owned Goa Shipyard Ltd. (GSL). The

Vigraha is one of the seven OPVs and the last one contracted to L&T by India’s Ministry of Defence in March 2015 while Sarthak is the fourth contracted to GSL. The vessels will have high-speed boats, medical equipment and advanced surveillance systems attached to them along with the ability to carry helicopters. These OPVs will take up the tasks of surveillance, operations to combat smuggling and piracy and perform rescue missions in addition to preventing terrorist infiltrations.<sup>31</sup>

## ***Achievements***

A look at the ICG’s achievements and success operations can give us a clear picture of its evolution and modernisation. ICG has performed a number of rescue missions, provided assistance to entities in distress and aided the identification of foreign vessels. On September 28, 2020, a traditional sailing ship, Dhow, found itself sinking near the Indian Ocean. It was accompanying 900 tons of cargo which could not be saved. In this distressing situation, the ICG patrol vessels were assigned the responsibility of saving the crew members which it performed wonderfully by rescuing all 12 crew members.<sup>32</sup> Another real time instance where the ICG showcased its identification and surveillance capabilities was on the 22nd of October 2020, when its reconnaissance aircraft spotted a Sri Lankan fishing boat that had entered India’s EEZ, breaking the international law. Even more impressively, the ICG spotted such a small vessel 75 nautical miles away from Karaikal, a city in south India. The identification was followed by a chase which ended with the capture of six fishermen in the boat.<sup>33</sup> The accidental leak of Styrene gas at the LG Polymer Gas plant Gopalpatnam, Visakhapatnam was another incident where the ICG airlifted the chemical Para Tertiary Butyl Catechol (PTBC) from Vapi Industrial Estate in Gujarat. The ICG assets also transported 1000kg chemical from Daman to Pune and the other 1060 kg from Daman to Mundra

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<sup>31</sup> Singh, M. S. (2020, November 19). *Indian Coast Guard modernizing fleet, enforcing laws, saving lives*. Indo-Pacific Defense Forum | <https://ipdefenseforum.com/2020/11/indian-coast-guard-modernizing-fleet-enforcing-laws-saving-lives/>

<sup>32</sup> Singh, M. S. (2020, November 19). *Indian Coast Guard modernizing fleet, enforcing laws, saving lives*. Indo-Pacific Defense Forum | <https://ipdefenseforum.com/2020/11/indian-coast-guard-modernizing-fleet-enforcing-laws-saving-lives/>

<sup>33</sup> Singh, M. S. (2020, November 19). *Indian Coast Guard modernizing fleet, enforcing laws, saving lives*. Indo-Pacific Defense Forum | <https://ipdefenseforum.com/2020/11/indian-coast-guard-modernizing-fleet-enforcing-laws-saving-lives/>

by CG Dornier exDaman.<sup>34</sup> ICG also initiated pre-emptive measures on receiving information about the weather disturbance in the south of Bay of Bengal on the 13th of May in 2020. It alerted fishermen and merchant vessels in the location in order to prevent a natural disaster. ICG ACV H-197 provided search and rescue assistance to one British and one American Swimmer, swimming through Palk Bay on the request of the High Commission of India. On the 3rd of September 2020, a fire on a Greek owned vessel was reported. The ICG's Shaurya ship was dispatched the very same day and it portrayed commendable firefighting and pollution control skills as the vessel was also carrying 2.75 lakh metric tons of Kuwait export Crude Oil. Thus, the ICG's efficiency is also visible in the firefighting operations which it conducted with the Sri Lankan Coast Guard wherein the Sri Lankan naval ships like the Tug TTK-1, Tug Ravana, Tug Vasava and Tug APL Winger participated.<sup>35</sup>

## SHORTCOMINGS

The integration of the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard has resulted in many advantages and possibilities of revamping and strengthening the coastal security structure, the maritime security and defence. However, inherently, the Indian Navy and the ICG are extremely different bodies which function on systems and norms unique to each other. This overlap has various causes for concern and these gaps must be filled in order to eliminate the resistance caused by these factors in the delivering capability of the two.

### *Differing Norms and Structure*

A distinct difference in the rank system, functioning and promotional norms is a cause for concern as initiatives like “Atmanirbhar Bharat” and “jointness” are rooted on personnel from different agencies working together in synergy. Due to these, the chain of command is disturbed in the operation of a single unit. It is often noticed that the ICG personnel face a tough time with the tasks and jobs they do and what is expected out of them in peace and in war. The dynamic nature of these tasks may be mistaken for “using” the ICG for menial, “less important” tasks and serve the Indian Navy.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Press Information Bureau. (2021, January). Year End Review – 2020 Ministry of Defence. Ministry of Defence. <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1685437>

<sup>35</sup> Press Information Bureau. (2021, January). Year End Review – 2020 Ministry of Defence. Ministry of Defence. <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1685437>

<sup>36</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

### ***Work Culture***

Another area of concern is the difference in the way people address each other in the Indian Navy and the ICG. Mostly, the ICG officers work under the Navy only during their training period. This may keep the personnel in groups and often divided as ICG personnel are not aware of the operating procedures in the Navy.<sup>37</sup>

### ***Bureaucracy***

In this regard the ICG and the Indian Navy have not faced any drastic hinderances and they get along well. However, the status quo remains prevalent as most of the departments within the ICG are being chaired by officers of the Indian Navy. This has avoided the clashes so far but there is a need to introduce a more sustainable way of integrating the ICG and the Indian Navy at their core. We must also learn from the trends visible in the integration of the BSF and the Indian Army. As the BSF was entirely independent under the Indian Army, it started to resent the overpowering dominance of the Indian Army and did not wish to be associated with it. In addition, the Coast guard Act does not put the ICG under the Indian Navy.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Rank Allotment***

The rank allotment in the ICG and the Indian Navy differs by a mile. The ICG officers get training from the Naval Academy and the naval officers get trained from the National Defence Academy as well as the Naval Academy. Despite this, the Naval officer joins service as cadets while the ICG officers join as Assistant Commandants. This leads to a seniority disbalance where the ICG officer gets a ticket under naval officers despite the naval officers being junior to them. This is because seniority is judged through the years of service and also leads to the ICG officer getting promoted way sooner than naval officers.<sup>39</sup>

### ***Duplication***

The ICG has been learning and receiving assistance from the Indian Navy to a great extent. From infrastructure to ships to submarines to training facilities, the Indian Navy has often shared these with the ICG. Due to this, many of the practices, vessels and assets which have been developed by the ICG are duplicates of the Indian Navy. This causes the output to be lesser than the input and

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<sup>37</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

<sup>38</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

<sup>39</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

the assets may not suite the ICG as much as they suite Indian Navy. This duplication and blurring of responsibilities must be sorted out.<sup>40</sup>

### ***Maritime Police***

The agency of Maritime Police does not come under the command of the department of defence; however, the incapability of the police to carry out its operations and tasks poses a great barrier for achieving the desired maritime security and defence capabilities. The establishment of marine police wings in coastal states has seen no progress and hence, the improvement in the maritime police department since the last decade has not been much. Despite the financial assistance allowed by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) for the purchase of patrol boats, piers and jetties along with some infrastructure, the budget has not been utilised for the required tasks. The states have time and again failed to follow up on sustainable recruitment, training, deployment and maintenance of assets through the center funding.<sup>41</sup>

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Building on the shortcomings mentioned above, there are various areas where the departments should focus in order to make the command-and-control structure stringer and more efficient.

1. The Indian Coast Guard must indulge more in indigenisation and self-reliance to grow at a fast pace. For a long time, the ICG has been using the infrastructure, training facilities as well as the assets and ammunitions developed or procured by the Indian Navy. While this was appropriate during the initial stages of integration and boosted the capabilities, it is now time for the ICG to set up its own training equipment and develop assets which suit its unique needs. This way the ICG can avoid the duplication of the infrastructure that already exists with the Indian Navy and further complement the Naval capability, for optimum utilisation of scarce national resources.<sup>42</sup>
2. Apart from patrolling, surveillance and regulation, the ICG must also prepare for distress where it would have to showcase its combat capabilities. It should accelerate building its defence capabilities to counter low threat scenarios.

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<sup>40</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

<sup>41</sup> Vice Admiral Karve, A. K. (2018, November 29). Maritime security: a decade after 26/11. Gateway House. <https://www.gatewayhouse.in/maritime-security-after-2611/>

<sup>42</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

3. Technologies like Distress Alert Transmitter (DAT), which will be instrumental for the assessing threat, must be developed, using which, the fishermen can alert the authorities in case of unusual activity on Indian Waters.
4. The issuing of IDs/Aadhar card system for the local fishermen is an integral part of maritime surveillance and defence system. This will keep the infiltration in check and make the identification process more efficient.
5. The decision of procurement and signing of contracts and deals by the ICG must have some form of consultation from the Indian Navy to avoid duplication and in turn, complement the defence capabilities of the Indian Navy.<sup>43</sup>
6. Furthermore, in order to resolve the ineffectiveness and the lack of development in the department of Coastal Marine Police, the system of two-to-three-year attachment and the temporary nature of service must be reviewed. Additionally, the officers do not have clearly defined responsibilities and often go through punishment posting. Due to the lack of incentive and short spans of service, the performance is often below par.
7. The Standing Committee on Defence (2018-2019) observed a steady decline in the budget allocation for the Indian Coast Guard. Considering the plethora of tasks and responsibilities given to the ICG, the committee highlighted an urgent need to boost the capital budget. The same must be given priority in the coming years.<sup>44</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The result of the integration of the ICG and the Indian Navy has been positive for the overall coastal and maritime security as well as defence. The ICG relies and will rely on the Indian Navy for infrastructure and assets, however, it is gradually, in coordination with the Navy, developing and modernising itself. To further enhance the coastal security, additional maritime departments must be frequently included in joint operations. The ICG and the Indian Navy complement each other and must continue to do so. This has been visible in the numerous achievements mentioned in the document. Even though there are a plethora of areas which require more development and integration, the ICG has time and again showcased its capabilities and has convinced many of its war as well as peace time capabilities.

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<sup>43</sup> Bansal, A. B. (2008). Synergising Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. *Journal of Defence Studies*, 2(1). [https://idsa.in/jds/2\\_1\\_2008\\_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard\\_ABansal#footnot e3\\_xooctpx](https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_SynergisingIndianNavyandtheCoastGuard_ABansal#footnot e3_xooctpx)

<sup>44</sup> *STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2018–19)* (No. 46). (2019, January). MINISTRY OF DEFENCE. [http://164.100.47.193/lsscommittee/Defence/16\\_Defence\\_46.pdf](http://164.100.47.193/lsscommittee/Defence/16_Defence_46.pdf)

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