



INDIAN NAVY COMPLETES MAIDEN COMMAND OF COMBINED TASK FORCE 154

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The Indian Navy successfully completed its maiden Command of a Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Task Force, with the relinquishment of Command of Combined Task Force 154 (CTF 154) at a ceremony held in **Manama, Bahrain, on 14 Oct 2026**. The eight-month tenure marked a significant milestone in India's growing contribution to multinational maritime training, capacity building and collaborative maritime security.

The ceremony was attended by VAdm Curt A Renshaw, Commander Combined Maritime Forces; HE Dr Pradeep Singh Rajpurohit, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Bahrain; Cmde Khalid Jasim Althawadi, Naval Sector Commander, Royal Bahrain Naval Force; Cmde Dan Thomas, Deputy Commander Combined Maritime Forces; and senior representatives of CMF Headquarters and Partner Nations. VAdm Manish Chadha, Director General Naval Operations, Indian Navy, participated through video teleconferencing. During the ceremony, Cmde Milind M Mokashi, formally relinquished Command of CTF 154 and handed over responsibilities to Commander Melissa Desjardins, Deputy Commander CTF 154, who received Command on behalf of CMF Headquarters.

Established in May 2023, CTF 154 is CMF's dedicated multinational maritime training Task Force, mandated to enhance professional competencies, interoperability and capacity development among Partner Nations. The Indian Navy assumed Command of CTF 154 on 11 February 2026, becoming the first Indian Navy contingent to lead a CMF Task Force. (<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2226776>)

During its tenure, the Indian Navy-led CTF 154 conducted 20 Staff Enhancement Training engagements, two major multinational training exercises and the inaugural Subject Matter Expert Exchange on Piracy and Armed Robbery (SPAR 2026). These initiatives collectively generated over **7,800 training hours**, with personnel from **39 countries** participating in CTF 154 activities. The Staff Enhancement Training and SPAR engagements alone recorded over 1,100 participant attendances, reflecting the scale and reach of the training initiatives undertaken during the Command.

A major highlight was **Operation Compass Rose 26-1**, conducted from **20 to 22 Apr 2026**. Adapted to a fully virtual format in view of the prevailing regional security environment, the exercise brought together 137 participants, 11 observers and 21 facilitators from 25

Partner Nations and 13 organisations. The exercise demonstrated the ability of CMF partners to sustain multinational training and operational coordination despite regional constraints.

Operation Southern Readiness 26-2, conducted at the Southern Naval Command, Kochi, from 20 to 23 Jul 2026, marked the **first major CMF training exercise hosted by India**. The exercise witnessed participation of 276 personnel from 27 countries and generated approximately 3,800 training hours, making it the largest Maritime Domain Enhancement Training engagement undertaken by CTF 154 since its establishment. The exercise provided participating nations an opportunity to train at the Indian Navy's specialist training establishments and gain exposure to advanced simulators and operational platforms, highlighting India's established naval training infrastructure and capacity to support multinational training requirements.

(<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2288511>)

The 20 Staff Enhancement Training engagements addressed a broad spectrum of contemporary maritime security challenges, including Maritime Domain Awareness, Maritime Law and Law Enforcement, Information Sharing, Counter-Piracy, Maritime Crime Investigation, Cyber Resilience, Emerging Technologies, Multinational Operational Planning, Leadership and Personnel Resilience. Drawing upon expertise from the Indian Navy, CMF Task Forces, Partner Nations, regional maritime agencies and specialist institutions, the programme facilitated the exchange of operational experience and specialised knowledge. Notably, the tenure witnessed the **first dedicated 'Training of Trainers' engagement within the CMF training framework** and CMF's first professional engagement with a Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

The concluding major training engagement was SPAR 2026, conducted on 05 and 06 Oct 2026. The inaugural exchange brought together 135 participants, including facilitators, from 25 countries, with contributions from 19 organisations and specialist teams. The initiative provided a common platform for operational counter-piracy forces, maritime law enforcement agencies, Information Sharing organisations, legal specialists, technology providers and the maritime industry to deliberate upon evolving piracy threats and contemporary challenges in maritime security.

During the Command tenure, CTF 154 also expanded its engagement with regional partners and specialised institutions. Participation in the Fifth Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Dialogue at Nairobi and interactions with the Royal Bahrain Naval Force facilitated discussions on maritime law enforcement, emerging training requirements and avenues for future cooperation.

India joined the Combined Maritime Forces as an Associate Partner in 2022 and became a full member in 2023. The successful completion of its maiden Command of CTF 154 represents an important progression in India's engagement with the multinational maritime partnership. The tenure demonstrated the Indian Navy's ability to plan, coordinate and deliver multinational training initiatives, bringing together diverse nations, institutions and operational expertise in support of shared maritime security objectives.

The successful tenure reinforces India's growing contribution to regional maritime security and underscores the Indian Navy's role as a Preferred Security and Training Partner, committed to strengthening maritime capacities and promoting a secure, stable and rules-based maritime environment.





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