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Pirate Attacks Up 75%; Nearly One Raid Per Day

By Noah Shachtman [✉](#) June 5, 2008 | 6:36 am | Categories: [Navy](#)



Somewhere on the world's waterways, a pirate will try to strike today. Another will tomorrow. And another the day after that. Piracy is on the rise, across the globe — [up nearly 75%, from last decade to this one](#), according to a new report from the [RAND Corporation](#). There's now at least an attempt at a pirate attack nearly every day.

Why? Mainly, the RAND report says, because there are now more targets to loot. "First and most fundamentally, there has been a massive increase in commercial maritime traffic. Combined with the large number of ports around the world, this growth has provided pirates with an almost limitless range of tempting, high-payoff targets."

And while some governments (and some reporters) have worries about pirates and terrorists teaming up, "the presumed convergence between maritime terrorism and piracy remains highly questionable, however. To date, there has been no credible evidence to support speculation about such a nexus emerging."

There were "a total of 2,463 actual or attempted acts of piracy were registered around the world between 2000 and the end of 2006. This represents an annual average incident rate of 352, a substantial increase over the mean of 209 recorded for the period of 1994–1999," the report notes.

"The concentration of pirate attacks continues to be greatest in Southeast Asia, especially in the waters around the Indonesian archipelago... which accounted for roughly 25 percent of all global incidents during 2006."

The post-9/11 environment has also made some shipping lanes more vulnerable. Since then, governments have been pressured to "to invest in expensive, land-based homeland security initiatives" — often ignoring maritime security, as a result. In addition:

...lax coastal and port-side security have played an important role in enabling low-level piratical activity, especially harbor thefts of goods from ships at anchor.

...corruption and emergent voids of judicial prerogative have encouraged official complicity in high-level pirate rings, which has impacted directly on the "phantom ship" phenomenon.

...the global proliferation of small arms has provided pirates (as well as terrorists and other criminal elements) with an enhanced means to operate on a more destructive and sophisticated level.

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Comments (21)

Posted by: JWB | 06/5/08 | 5:42 am

What are the current statistics for ninja attacks?

Posted by: rvx | 06/5/08 | 5:56 am

YARRRRRRRRRG!!!

Posted by: =ity | 06/5/08 | 6:26 am

Her Majesty The Queen's Royal Navy will be happy to assist. Oops, except we musn't hurt those pirate's feelings.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article3736239.ece>

Posted by: EricLR | 06/5/08 | 6:30 am

Obviously, we need to move the ninja breeding program into phase 3 a lot earlier than planned. They will be a lot greener than we had planned, but they're our only hope.

Posted by: Thosw | 06/5/08 | 7:09 am

Where's Captain Nemo when we need him?

Posted by: SolarFlared | 06/5/08 | 7:29 am

@JWB:

No one knows because no one has actually ever seen a ninja and lived to tell the tale. If you think you've seen a ninja, it wasn't a ninja.

Posted by: angusshangus | 06/5/08 | 7:45 am

@JWB:

Ninja attacks are generally known as a "flip out" and often involves the ninja wailing on a guitar. realultimatepower.com is an excellent ninja resource

@rvx:

yo ho ho

Posted by: angusshangus | 06/5/08 | 7:47 am

excuse me... thats

<http://www.realultimatepower.net/>

Posted by: Dave | 06/5/08 | 8:32 am

Piracy = terrorism, kind of.

I mean, the rules for combating piracy have always been EXTREMELY lenient in doing the worst to pirates. I guess the fact that we now are treating piracy with kid-gloves is predictable, given the increasingly permissive international legal environment for terrorism.

Personally, if the U.S. Navy is looking for something to do, why isn't it helping to stop this? Freedom of the seas is the responsibility of EVER civilized navy. I say we sink these bastards when we find them.

But my guess is that'll offend SOMEBODY, probably some European lawyer, and we'll all have to get touchy-feely with the pirates.

What's next- protecting the rights of slavers?

Posted by: Kevin | 06/5/08 | 9:21 am

Good news for global warming, then.

Posted by: Steve Real | 06/5/08 | 10:20 am

where are my marines?

where is NATO?

I want thew fleet moved today
you shoot every damn one of those boats
out of the water

end this thing.
move the fleet

tell the Marines to kill them all.

Posted by: Steve Real | 06/5/08 | 10:28 am

Is Manfred Von Richthofen going to sit this one out again?

Drinking tea, eating crumpets and watching "The View"?

NATO needs Europe to rework its policies.

I'm not asking Europe to field a million man Army here...
I'm only asking for equality

no cake Manfred
you have a duty
why are they treating you like this?

Posted by: space ghost | 06/5/08 | 10:47 am

these pirates are untouchable, just like the non-existent "hijackers" on 9-11. they work for busche/cheney, and deliver the proceeds to support more republinazi evil. open your eyes, sheeple.

Posted by: Bozo Rebebe | 06/5/08 | 1:04 pm

Maybe I just don't understand the threat, but what's wrong with taking these guys on. This is the way I see it, there's what looks like a rusty tramp steamer siting low in the water, decks with cargo, the crew manned with elements of SEAL team-6. Under tarps are Hellfire missiles, M-2 50cal guns, and anything else that can turn boats into scrap and flesh into fish food. Again I ask what's wrong with taking these guys on, is there something I'm missing. This ship I envision stays close to shore, but not too close. It entices pirates to come get it and they

get it good. Just dreamin

Posted by: jean | 06/5/08 | 2:30 pm

if pirates are on the increase, then we don't have to worry about global warming anymore!

Ramen.

Posted by: jean | 06/5/08 | 2:32 pm

Aw, heck. my html didn't work, so here's the site raw: veganza.com

Posted by: Just wondering | 06/6/08 | 2:26 pm

Do any of them look like Johnny Depp and gang?

In a more serious attitude, the pirates have to negotiate the waters using GPS. They should be able to be tracked back to where they go.

Better yet, since they are in International waters where almost anything goes, unleash some of the Navy Dolphins to attach a bomb to their hulls and b-bye.

The dolphins could just be stationed out and about in the open seas awaiting orders. As it is now, the dolphins are stuck in tiny water filled cubes like beaurocrats. They have a lifetime of confinement because, last I heard, the Navy will not agree to retire them for release to rescue or rehab organizations. The dolphins would probably like the active duty and it would solve a problem too. After what the US had done in the past several years. blowing up a pirate ship would probably not even raise an eyebrow.

Oh.....newer thought.....let's just hire Blackwater.

Oh, on second thought, that wouldn't work. No one would be able tell the pirates from Blackwater.

Posted by: [Anthony M. Davis](#) | 06/7/08 | 6:06 am

The issue of piracy is one I write about in my recent book, "Terrorism and the Maritime Transportation System."

These guys are not just a bunch of thieves running around the waterways looking for boats to attack. They are part of a larger transnational criminal organization that continues to get stronger with each attack.

Anthony M. Davis

Author: Terrorism and the Maritime Transportation System

<http://www.homelandsecuritygroup.info>

Posted by: illissius | 06/7/08 | 3:24 pm

I'm heartened to see I'm not the only one whose first thought was the global warming connection.

Posted by: Griffy | 06/9/08 | 1:40 pm

‘I’m sure they’ll listen to reason,” Fisheye says.

Posted by: yanni | 11/25/08 | 6:42 am

International shipping is clearly in jeopardy; the other day my amazon order was hijacked (by pirates?) and I had to pay a ransom to get my CD’s. This is getting way out of hand.
