

**Maritime Security Agency – Challenges
In protecting
Economic Resources
And Pollution Control in
Maritime Economic Zone**

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By

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ABSTRACT

Pakistan's Maritime Economic Zone is enormously rich both in living and non-living resources. Most significantly, the Indus Delta region is abundant with the prime quality fish and a most attractive lure for fishermen. Indian fishermen therefore deliberately violate the international boundaries and indulge in poaching in Pakistan's EEZ, especially in the Indus Delta region. Pakistan imports about 19 MMT of oil annually to meet its energy requirements, additionally, considerable quantity of oil transit through our EEZ on daily basis which poses a serious threat and possibility of sea pollution which could cause damage to marine resources and ecological system of Pakistan, contributing huge export for the country. MSA since inception has been striving hard to keep this zone under effective surveillance to ensure protection of our resources. In order to undertake assigned tasks by PMSA the MSA Act was passed in 1994 by the Parliament to provide statutory powers for the assigned tasks.

To optimally utilize the available assets and to create synergy in operations, PMSA is well organized with its requisite assets and infrastructure. The MSA has four squadrons comprising of Ships and Aircrafts, covers the entire MEZ of Pakistan. The first Offshore Squadron comprising 4 X Corvettes and fourth Offshore Squadron comprising 3 X Defender Aircrafts covers an area upto EEZ. The second Offshore Squadron comprising 9 X Fast Response Boats and 3 X Fast Patrol Boats covers an area upto 80 NM from the coast line. While the third one is an Inshore Squadron comprising country craft and small boats of Coastal Bases, covers an area upto 12 NM from the coast line. PMSA in coordination with all other stakeholders also conducts oil spill containment exercise at sea rehearsing the anti-oil spill procedures and contingency mechanism with an objective to test and physically mobilise the requisite assets for ascertain their efficacy and limitations.

Maritime Security Agency has been assigned number of additional tasks other than protecting the economic resources and controlling the sea pollution. For which the MSA is to readily respond to emergencies and coordinate various operations. This has placed an additional burden for the MSA and has made the entire task gigantic against the available assets and infrastructure. However PMSA with the economies of efforts has been quite successful in safeguarding national interests in the Maritime Zones of Pakistan in order to makes our sea safe and secure for the country.

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