

Vessel Strikes Reported in the Gulf

Security concerns persist amid reported GNSS interference and maritime threat activity



Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has remained significantly reduced over the past 72 hours amid a series of security-related maritime incidents across the region.

On 8 May 2026, an Indian-flagged dhow travelling from Dubai to Yemen caught fire and later capsized. One crew member was reported killed, while 17 others were rescued by a nearby vessel. The cause of the incident remains under investigation.

A day later, on 9 May, the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UK-MTO) issued Warning 056-26 reporting that a merchant vessel was struck by an unidentified projectile northeast of Doha, Qatar. A small fire onboard was brought under control and no casualties were reported.

Authorities continue to assess ongoing risks in and around the Strait of Hormuz, where threats from mines in or near the Traffic Separation Scheme persist alongside intermittent GNSS (satellite navigation) interference.

In the Gulf of Oman and the northern Arabian Sea, merchant vessels continue to report a significant naval presence, with blockade enforcement activity ongoing in some areas.

In the southern Red Sea, Bab el Mandeb Strait and Gulf of Aden, commercial shipping remains steady. However, Houthi-related messaging continues, though without corresponding operational activity.

Meanwhile, the piracy threat off Somalia remains assessed as severe. Three merchant vessels

are currently being held in Somali territorial waters: an oil or products tanker seized on 21 26 April, and an oil tanker seized on 2 May after being diverted approximately 10 nautical miles off the Yemeni coast. The status of the latest vessel remains unconfirmed.

A previously hijacked dhow reported on 25 April is no longer believed to be under pirate control, with tracking data indicating it is now transiting safely toward the Gulf of Oman.

Separately, a report from May 9-10 indicates a merchant vessel was approached by two groups of small boats in the Gulf of Aden. Analysts continue to assess the activity as consistent with a high likelihood of piracy-related operations along the Somali coast and adjacent waters.

UAE, Netherlands align on energy and sustainability goals

The United Arab Emirates and the Netherlands strengthened cooperation in trade, water, climate and interconnected resources ahead of the United Nations Water Conference 2026, following an official visit by a senior UAE official.

Abdulla Balalaa, Assistant Minister for Energy and Sustainability at the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, concluded the visit. During the visit, both sides held discussions aimed at expanding strategic cooperation in energy, water, food security and trade.

The talks focused on translating shared ambitions into practical outcomes, according to officials.

As part of the visit, Balalaa participated in a high-level energy dialogue session in Rotterdam, where participants



discussed opportunities for deeper collaboration in the energy sector.

The visit also included the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy and the International Institute for Water Education at Delft University of Technology.

The agreement aims to enhance cooperation in water-related education and research.

Both sides underscored the importance of strengthening partnerships in addressing global challenges linked to water scarcity, climate change and sustainable development ahead of the 2026 UN conference.

GCC condemns attacks on UAE, Kuwait

The secretary-general of the Gulf Cooperation Council on Sunday strongly condemned "criminal" Iranian attacks targeting the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, accusing Tehran of pursuing policies aimed at destabilising the region.

Jasem Mohamed Al-budaiwi, the GCC secretary-general, said the "treacherous Iranian approach" was systematically seeking to



undermine security and stability across the Gulf, which he called a clear violation of international law, the United Nations Charter and principles of good neighbourliness.

He reaffirmed the full support of GCC member states for the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, stressing backing for any measures taken by both countries to safeguard their security, stability, and the safety of citizens and residents on their territories.

Kuwait, UK explore ways to boost defence cooperation

Kuwait's Chief of the General Staff of the Army, Lieutenant General Khaled Draj Saad Al-Shuraian, on Sunday received Britain's Senior Defence Adviser for the Middle East and North Africa, Admiral Edward Green, during an official visit to the country.

The meeting reviewed bilateral relations between Kuwait and the United Kingdom, and discussed a range of issues of mutual interest, according to a statement.

Talks focused on regional developments, as well as efforts to strengthen security and stability in the region. Both sides also discussed existing military



cooperation and ways to further develop it in line with shared interests.

The British delegation's visit comes amid continued defence coordination between the two allies.

Kuwait's Undersecretary of

the Ministry of Defence Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Mishal Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army Major General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and several senior army commanders attended the meeting.

Qatar condemns drone attack on cargo ship

Qatar strongly condemned a drone attack targeting a commercial cargo ship in its territorial waters, calling it a "dangerous escalation" and a violation of international law.

In a statement, the foreign ministry said the vessel, which had arrived from Abu Dhabi, was struck northeast of Mesaieed Port, causing a limited fire onboard. No injuries were reported.

The ministry said the incident constituted a "flagrant violation" of the principle of freedom of navigation and international



legal norms, warning that such attacks pose a threat to the security of maritime routes and vital supply chains in the region.

It added that targeting commercial and civilian vessels "regardless of the party responsible," represents a serious breach of international law and

undermines regional and global stability.

The statement said Doha was closely monitoring the situation in coordination with relevant authorities and international partners, and that an investigation had been launched to determine the circumstances and identify those responsible.

Qatar reiterated that safeguarding maritime navigation and ensuring freedom of passage in international waters remains a "fundamental pillar" of regional security.

Qatar, Saudi Arabia push for regional calm

Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, held a phone call on Saturday with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, the Qatari Foreign Ministry said.

The two ministers reviewed bilateral relations and ways to further strengthen cooperation between the two Gulf neighbours, according to an official statement.

They also discussed recent regional developments, focusing on the reported ceasefire between the United States and Iran, as well as wider diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating



tensions in the region.

Shaikh Mohammed stressed during the call the importance of supporting ongoing mediation initiatives and encouraging all parties to engage constructively.

He said sustained dialogue

was necessary to address the root causes of regional crises and to reach a lasting agreement that would help prevent renewed escalation.

Both sides, the statement added, underscored the importance of regional security and stability.

Jordan Backs Syria Reconstruction, Sovereignty

Jordan and Syria on Sunday discussed strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing coordination across multiple sectors, while reaffirming efforts to ease regional tensions, according to a statement.

Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Al-Safadi and Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad Al-Shaibani held a phone call reviewing progress in ties between the two countries and ways to further develop cooperation.

Both sides stressed the importance of advancing practical steps taken in recent months to institutionalise cooperation, particularly in economic, trade and investment fields, aligning with their shared vision of deeper in-



tegration between Amman and Damascus.

The ministers also reviewed the implementation of outcomes from the second session of the Jordanian-Syrian Higher Coordination Council, hosted in Jordan on April 12, 2026, and agreed to continue working through an "operational mechanism" to expand cooperation in key sectors.

Security and defence coop-

eration was also discussed security and defence cooperation, reaffirming the need to confront common challenges.

On regional developments, the two ministers expressed support for efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions in the region and reaching a political framework that ensures stability, respects international law and state sovereignty, and rejects external interference.

Al-Safadi reaffirmed Jordan's position supporting Syria's reconstruction process, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, while also condemning Israeli violations and attacks on Syrian territory.