

## NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)

### SUMMARY OF CITATION

#### CDR RAHUL SHARMA

Date of Act : 16 March 24

1. Cdr Rahul Sharma as Commander Operations, INS Abhimanyu, led the rescue operation of MV Ruen on 16 Mar 24. The vessel had been held captive by 35 armed pirates since Dec 23, and was being utilized as a mother ship for piracy. Demonstrating extraordinary courage and decisive leadership, the officer was pivotal in successful completion of the perilous rescue operation.
2. Preparing for a mission 1400 nm off Mumbai, he showcased unmatched prowess in tactical planning and inter-agency collaboration. **He led a daring para-drop of MARCOs from C-17 aircraft deep into the Arabian Sea, coordinating with IAF for precise deployment.** The complexities of deploying a MARCOs team at such a distance, coupled with the hostage situation, **an endeavour never attempted by any other special force**, underscored the operation's extreme challenges and risks.
3. The officer prepared his team meticulously for the high-risk operation, analyzing extensive intelligence from various agencies. He ensured that his team acquired detailed layouts of MV Ruen, which facilitated exhaustive rehearsals and familiarisation with the ship's structure-elements, crucial for operational readiness. His relentless coordination with the *IAF*, *CISF* and *AAI*, was vital for the seamless aerial deployment of the MARCOs team and crucial combat loads, enabling their precise and time-sensitive deployment onto the target area via the C17 aircraft.
4. **After leading the para-drop of the team, the officer commanded the high-risk boarding of MV Ruen, personally overseeing the thorough sanitisation of the ship by splitting the teams to form three assault groups, each responsible for different sections of the ship.** His tactical acumen ensured the swift and effective clearing of the vessel, securing RPG rounds, AK Ammunition and other piracy-related stores, thereby neutralising any threat(s).

5. Under his watchful command, all 17 crew members of MV Ruen were safely rescued, and 35 pirates were apprehended. The MARCOs team gathered vital intelligence on the pirates' modus operandi, while also securing illegal arms and ammunition found onboard. **The officer's leadership was instrumental in not only neutralising a significant threat but also in strengthening maritime security protocols for future operations.** His actions exemplified bravery, dedication, and exceptional naval leadership, contributing significantly to the ongoing efforts of Indian Navy to provide safe and secure maritime environment in the Gulf of Aden as part of Anti-Piracy Operations. **For his raw courage, unwavering leadership and tactical acumen in the face of danger, he is strongly recommended for award of NM (Gallantry).**

## **NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

### **SUMMARY OF CITATION**

#### **VISHAL ME I (MCF)**

**Date of Act : 06 March 24**

1. INS *Kolkata* was deployed for Op PoG in the Gulf of Aden *wef* 01 Feb 24. On 06 Mar 24 at 1100h, the ship monitored a communication between two Motor Vessels (MVs) on CH 16 where one Motor Vessel reported being hit by a missile. There was huge explosion with massive fire onboard the hit vessel. At 1330h, INS *Kolkata* received a United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) incident warning regarding an attack in position 54nm south west of Aden. The ship proceeded with full despatch towards the likely position of attack. The sailor embarked Chetak 446 as a Free Diver Chetak 446 was launched for undertaking inspection and damage assessment of the MV.

2. During the search operation, Chetak 446 received a *Mayday* call from the liferaft of MV *True Confidence*. The Master reported that the crew had abandoned the ship view heavy smoke, fire and damage and that there were 21 survivors present in liferaft. There was extreme panic in master's voice. Chetak 446 was immediately diverted to the liferaft for recovery of personnel.

3. **The sailor was lowered into water by Chetak 446 using a winch in a position about 200m away from the liferaft. During lowering, the sailor experienced heavy winds gusting upto 35kn. Upon entering water, the sailor arduously swam in heavy weather {sea state  $\geq$  3 with long swell (2m)} and reached the liferaft position. He entered into the liferaft and spoke to crew members to understand the status of personnel *wrt* injuries sustained by them. He was told by the master of the motor vessel that four out of 21 personnel in liferaft were critically injured. First crew member had sustained a deep wound in the abdomen with intestines protruding out; the second crew member had sustained a near amputation of the right leg below the knee; the third crew member sustained a deep burn injury over his face and limbs and the fourth crew member was not having any pulse.**

4. **Without getting perturbed seeing the flesh and blood-stained personnel in the liferaft, the sailor used his right judgement and selected those personnel who could be airlifted by the helicopter, till the arrival of ship's RHIBs. He first ensured safe rescue of eight personnel by hooking on the rescue strop to each and facilitating hoisting one by one, in a total of three helicopter trips.** Thereafter, he rescued three of the four critically injured personnel by safely disembarking them onto the ship's RHIB. Finally, he rescued the remaining 10 personnel by ensuring their safe disembarkation onto the ship's RHIB. **The sailor held his position inside the liferaft during the entire evolution in rough sea and constantly pacified the terrified crew members of the MV.** Post rescuing all 21 personnel, the sailor was recovered from the liferaft by Chetak 446 at 1445h. The ship entered Djibouti harbour and disembarked all recovered personnel of MV *True Confidence* for further transfer to hospital by ambulance.

5. The sailor fearlessly braved adverse weather conditions at sea and was valourously involved during the entire rescue evolution. His dedication to the task was instrumental in ensuring the safe rescue of 21 abandoned crew members of Motor Vessel *True Confidence*. **For his unflinching act of bravery, Vishal ME I (MCF) is strongly recommended for award of Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry).**

**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**LT CDR NAVEEN RATHEE**

**Date of Act : 28 Jan 24**

1. Lt Cdr Naveen Rathee displayed exceptional courage and tactical brilliance on 28-29 Jan 24 during Op Sankalp whilst leading the MARCOS team deployed onboard INS Sumitra resulting in **successful rescue of 36 hostages and capture of 11 Somalian pirates onboard Fishing Vessels (FVs) Iman and Naeemi** under challenging operating circumstances.

2. On 28 Jan 24, whilst conducting a VBSS operation onboard FV Al Ateef, the officer received an input of a hijack attempt in progress at about 40 nm. Based on the input, FV Iman and Al Naeemi were intercepted by INS Sumitra at about 1300 Hrs. When the FVs refused to surrender, the officer recommended firing of warning shots by ALH which resulted in ditching of an undertow skiff by FV Al Naeemi. The search of ditched skiff without interrupting hot pursuit was essential yet fraught with danger of it being rigged with IEDs.

3. The officer voluntarily led an extremely swift and daring boarding operation which resulted in successful sanitisation and **recovery of the skiff with contraband**. At around 1930 Hrs, some personnel shifted from FV Iman to FV Al Naeemi and FVs started opening out in opposite directions. Thereafter, FV Iman started responding to ships warnings. However, with FV Al Naeemi continued opening out in the opposite direction. There was an imminent risk of armed pirates masquerading as victims in FV Iman. The officer understood the criticality of taking a swift decision and led a **high-risk night VBSS operation which resulted in successful rescue of 17 fishermen of mixed nationalities onboard FV Al Iman and confirmation of presence of 11 armed Somalian pirates and 19 hostages onboard FV Al Naeemi**. At around 0225 Hrs on 29 Jan 24, the pirates onboard FV Al Naeemi threatened to execute hostages if hot pursuit was continued. **The officer recommended an ingenious plan to force stop the FV by laying a rope in its path to foul its propellers. The innovative plan rendered the FV adrift without**

**power and pirates were ordered to ditch weapons.** A spotter drone was used for confirmatory recce and it was assessed whether the threat of pirates having retained some weapons or explosive still existed. This coupled with challenging sea conditions and swell of about 2 m height rendered conduct of VBSS operation extremely risky. **The officer displayed selfless bravery of the highest order in leading and successfully executing an audacious VBSS operation onboard FV Al Naemi by employing tactical manoeuvres to ensure a position of relative superiority. His bold and swift actions subdued the pirates and led to rescue of 36 personnel, capture of 11 pirates and recovery of contraband.** The officer displayed utmost bravery, selflessness and professionalism during the conduct of high risk VBSS operations onboard FV Al Naemi and Al Iman on 28-29 Jan 24 **resulting in safe release of 36 hostages and capture of 11 pirates without any casualty. Accordingly, Lt Cdr Naveen Rathee is strongly recommended for award of Nausena Medal (Gallantry).**

**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**CAPT BRIJESH NAMBIAR**

**Date of Act : 27 Jan 24**

1. Captain Brijesh Nambiar is the Commanding Officer of INS Visakhapatnam. The ship whilst deployed for Anti-Piracy Operations at Gulf of Aden, received a distress call from Merchant Vessel (MV) Marlin Luanda at 2220 h on 26 Jan 24 due to a major fire onboard post missile attack. The ship was an oil tanker **carrying highly inflammable Naphtha. In spite of the imminent danger to the ship and crew from Houthi missiles and drones, the officer decided to immediately provide assistance and reached in the vicinity of the distressed vessel at 0400 hrs on 27 Jan 24.** Due to the lack of the firefighting expertise and the increasing fire onboard, the Master of MV Marlin Luanda requested for assistance. As Commanding Officer, he decided to assist the distressed vessel which had a crew of 27 people (24 Indians, one Bangladeshi and two Sri Lankan nationals).

2. During the period of deployment there were many instances of attack on warships and merchant ships by Houthi's using missiles and drones, and stopping in vicinity of a targeted merchant vessel was extremely risky. **The Officer assessed the situation with a calm mind and considering the extreme volatility of the cargo carried onboard the Merchant Vessel and the grave danger to the crew including 24 Indians, decided to send the ship's firefighting team onboard the MV. This decision was taken in an operationally sensitive and immensely stressful environment wherein the safety of the ship and crew was under imminent threat of missile attack by the Houthi's.** Despite initial setbacks where the flames were raging high and not subsiding, he kept the morale of the crew intact and led by example. He continued to execute the subsequent actions including the reinforcements in terms of men and material. **His leadership and assurance lifted the morale of entire team and that of the crew of the MV. His decisive, firm yet calm and composed leadership, wherein the own ship was under imminent threat and yet the Merchant Vessel on raging fire was assisted, resulted in successful operation thereby saving precious lives and the MV.** The same was also reflected by the message from the master of the vessel in distress.

3. **The Officer has shown outstanding leadership qualities and immense determination in face of adversity wherein the raging flames were already creating havoc for last 18 hours. He assured the civilian crew of the MV which had lost all hopes of recovery and were considering abandoning the vessel.**

His decisive gallant act of sending the team onboard the distressed Merchant Vessel where other coalition warships despite being at the scene of action were hesitant to offer help has projected Indian Navy's image positively and has immensely amplified its reputation world over.

4. The officer's resolve, sound decision making, unwavering grit, fighting spirit and ability to lead men under adverse conditions are keeping with the highest values of service and merits recognition. The Officer is strongly recommended for **Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry)**.



**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**VEER SINGH YADAV MCPO I GS**

**Date of Act : 27 Jan 24**

1. Veer Singh Yadav, MCPO I (GS) was Ship's NBCDI onboard INS Visakhapatnam. The ship whilst deployed for Op PoG received a distress call from Merchant Vessel (MV) Marlin Luanda due to a major fire onboard post a suspected missile attack. The ship immediately responded and proceeded to provide assistance. It reached in the vicinity of the distressed vessel at 0400 hrs on 27 Jan 24. The command decision was to assist the distressed vessel which had a crew of 27 people (24 Indians, one Bangladeshi and two Sri Lankan nationals).

2. The sailor using his vast experience and expertise quickly prepared the firefighting team onboard. On reaching the MV, he used his technical expertise to quickly understand the system onboard the MV. The sailor ensured that everyone donned their firefighting rig correctly and then donned his own firefighting rig. When the initial firefighting did not yield desired results, **he realised that the inert gases used by the MV's integral system from inside the tank was creating blowback to the foam solution that was put by the team on the weather deck. He quickly directed the MV to reduce the concentration of the inert gases.** This turned out to be crucial factor that aided in the fire getting extinguished ultimately.

3. The sailor continued to personally fight fire for nearly five hours without any regard to personal fatigue. During the initial setback where the flames were raging high and not subsiding, he kept the morale of the team intact. He continued to move towards the seat of fire progressively tackling flames and finally extinguished the raging fire. **His expertise and intelligence ensured safety of all firefighters including the crew of the MV resulting in the culmination of a successful operation.**

4. The sailor displayed shown immense grit and determination in face of adversity wherein the raging flames were already creating havoc for the last 18 hours. **He retrieved the grim situation wherein the crew of the Merchant Vessel had**

**lost all hopes of recovery and were considering abandoning the vessel. He disregarded his personal well-being and safety and continued to fight fire. His gallant act and professional expertise has immensely amplified Indian Navy's reputation the world over.** The sailor's unwavering grit and the fighting spirit under adverse conditions are keeping with the highest values of service and merits recognition. The sailor is **strongly recommended** for Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry).

**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**LT CDR VAIBHAV TYAGI**

**Date of Act : 06 March 24**

1. Lt Cdr Vaibhav Tyagi was embarked on board INS Kolkata as Detachment Commander, *IN* 446 for 'OP PoG' *wef* 24 Jan 24. On 06 Mar 24 at 1345hrs, Lt Cdr Vaibhav Tyagi was ordered to launch for an aerial reconnaissance sortie in response to the information received from UKMTO of a missile strike on a merchant vessel 54 nm southwest of Aden.

2. *IN* 446 was launched at short notice within a time span of just 15 min. **The launch was executed in challenging weather conditions with strong gusting winds of the order of 30-35 knots and the ship experiencing significant roll and pitch with sea states of 3-4 coupled with the prevailing threat of attacks from hostile drones.** Displaying exceptional flying skills, Lt Cdr Vaibhav Tyagi got airborne and carried out aerial recce of the stricken vessel for damage assessment and to ascertain the status of the crew onboard. During the mission, Lt Cdr Vaibhav Tyagi, the **Pilot-in-Command, disregarding his personal safety flew in close proximity to the ship, that had the potency for a second explosion.**

3. On confirming the absence of any survivors onboard, the officer displayed high initiative and directed his crew to hail the merchant vessel's crew on MMB Channel 16, to which the Master of the ship responded indicating that 21 survivors were in a life-raft after abandoning the ship. He relayed the information to INS Kolkata and immediately initiated a search pattern for locating the liferaft. Despite strong winds and rough seas, the aircrew were successful in locating the life-raft at approximately 03 nm from the abandoned merchant vessel.

4. The officer made a quick appreciation of the situation wherein atleast three of the 21 survivors were immobile. He ordered for the free diver to be lowered to the life-raft and his crew commenced evacuation of the survivors using the recue hoist. **Despite limited lifting capacity of the hoist and the aircraft operating on restricted power margins, the officer relentlessly flew for 90 minutes**

**evacuating a total of eight personnel through multiple trips between the life-raft and the warship.**

5. Displaying rare courage, Lt Cdr Vaibhav Tyagi was directly **responsible for evacuation of the eight survivors and the safe recovery of the aircraft and crew back on deck in challenging flying conditions.** Furthermore, his resolute and decisive actions greatly improved survival probability of the other 13 survivors.

6. Lt Cdr Vaibhav Tyagi displayed indomitable courage and exceptional flying skills in executing a critical search and rescue mission in harsh weather conditions and **hostile AD environment.** His courage, presence of mind and outstanding leadership in utilising all his crew members led to the successful rescue of 21 survivors at sea. **In recognition of his gallant actions, reflecting the finest traditions of the Indian Navy, Lt Cdr Vaibhav Tyagi is strongly recommended for award of 'Nau Sena Medal (Gallantry).'**

**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**LT CDR HARSHUL BHAT**

**Date of Act : 14 Dec 23**

1. The Officer showcased exemplary leadership and bravery as the **Prahar Commander onboard INS Kolkata during the successful rescue operation of 17 crew members onboard Maltese-flagged Motor Vessel (MV) MV Ruen**. The crew members were held captive by 35 armed pirates since 14 Dec 23.

2. INS Kolkata whilst complying with HQWF directives encountered a non-AIS contact about 50 nm east of **Somalia on 16 Mar 24**. The contact was later identified as hijacked vessel MV Ruen which was held captive by pirates. The vessel was reportedly being utilised as a mother vessel, housing upto 35 armed pirates, to initiate piracy attempts on other MVs transiting through the area. INS Kolkata decided to undertake a **daring boarding operation** with MARCOS Prahar present onboard. The officer notwithstanding his limited experience in MARCOS, rose to the occasion and **conducted a swift and audacious rescue mission**. The officer undertook a snap mission planning to execute this complex operation which posed a significant risk to the hostages and his team.

3. **Leading a team of 14 personnel** against the formidable 35 armed pirates, the officer demonstrated remarkable adaptability and foresight. He led the assault team and established initial access to the vessel. He strategically positioned his team to secure vital areas which enabled cordoning the pirates, forcing them to surrender immediately. The officer ensured strict discipline and trigger control by the team and avoided any collateral damage ensuring safe evacuation of all 17 hostages who were held captive since 14 Dec 23. **Under his command, the MARCOS Prahar undertook opposed boarding of the MV. Post boarding, he maintained an audacious approach to regain control of the bridge and undertook comprehensive sanitisation of MV Ruen, deck by deck, against any IED threat or hidden pirates. Throughout the high-stakes Search and Destroy Operation (SADO), Lt Cdr Harshul Bhat demonstrated remarkable bravery and deep understanding of his team.** Navigating through the vessel's numerous

compartments, locked rooms, inaccessible areas, and corners amidst grave uncertainty and danger, **he successfully recovered two RPG rounds, about 197 AK bullets and other numerous war like stores which enabled the command team to establish the piracy character of the vessel.** Absence of pirates onboard was established post completion of SADO of every inch of the vessel.

4. For his indomitable courage, tactical sharpness and unwavering dedication under demanding and complex circumstances, **Lt Cdr Harshul Bhat is strongly recommended for the award of Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry).**

**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**LT CDR HARDEEP SINGH**

**Date of Act : 08 Oct 23**

1. INS Nireekshak was tasked for the recovery of trapped fisherman off Tuticorin from a sunken IFB (Indian Fishing Boat) Suja Mol at a depth of 60 mtrs using HELIOX dive. Lt Cdr Hardeep Singh was posted onboard as the diving officer. He carried out briefing for first set of divers and commenced the operation.

2. Preliminary Wreck investigation brought out that the boat had capsized in an unstable condition and was tilted to starboard and a large part of top deck had incurred major damage. Upon receiving the requisite information about the wreck, second set of divers were lowered to check for the body under debris. However, the diver could not locate the body but due to confined space. **After two unsuccessful dives for extraction of the body, the complexity of recovery operations required courage, seamanship, adaptation and a skilful mindset to venture into a very confined space and recover the body stuck under heavy debris.**

3. Lt Cdr Hardeep being the senior most qualified diver, took it upon himself and prepared to undertake the operation. He successfully retrieved the body and handed it over to the concerned authority. **Diving on such an unstable wreck in a hostile environment presents a grave threat to a divers personal safety. The reaction time to handle an emergency also reduces exponentially at such depths.** Despite the legacy and vintage diving system and the age of the ship, which further compounds the inherent risk of undertaking body recovery under such conditions, the officer **led from the front and attempted the recovery by improvising the available tools present with him at that depth and recovered the body safely. The officer has demonstrated unparalleled courage and professional competence in the face of arduous conditions whilst prioritising achievement of organisational goals over personal safety.** For the exceptional courage, bravery and fortitude displayed during the deepest salvage operation, **Lt Cdr Hardeep Singh, Clearance Diving Officer is strongly recommended for award of Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry).**

**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**CDR RAJABABU SHARMA**

**Date of Act : 28 Jan 24**

1. Cdr Rajababu Sharma is the Commanding officer of INS Sumitra. During the ship's deployment for Op Sankalp 01/24, the officer displayed unparalleled valour and ingenuity resulting in successful release of two hijacked fishing vessels. He augmented situational awareness and optimally utilised all available resources towards correct identification and timely interception of the hijacked vessels on 28 Jan 24.

2. **The operation was handled in the most impeccable manner, giving due regards to the safety of hostages and dangers of evolutions at sea.** Facing armed pirates and the crisis of hostages being used as human shield, the ship, tactfully handled the situation, **applied persistent and accurate fire power while coercing the pirates to release the hostages and surrender ensuring safe release of two hijacked Fishing Vessels namely *FV IMAN* and *FV Al Naemi* with 17 Iranian and 19 Pakistani crew respectively.** The intense evolution extended more than 36 hours and brought fore the best example of swift planning, effective command and control, timely adaption and accurate usage of fire power while applying innovative method to create a physical barrier by streaming INSTAR with ropes disabling the hijacked fishing vessel at sea on 29 Jan 24. **All 11 pirates were thus forced to surrender at sea, resulting in the threat being neutralised without any harm to the hostages.**

3. Throughout the operation, the officer exhibited exceptional leadership and strategic acumen, coercing the pirates to surrender without casualties and ensuring safety of all hostages. **The released fishermen expressed profound gratitude, a testament to the officer's unwavering resolve in the face of danger.** By his courageous actions, **Cdr Rajababu Sharma has not only upheld the finest traditions of naval service but also brought great pride to our nation and the Navy.** Hence he is **recommended** for Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry).



**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**AVINASH CHOUDHARY LS (GW) GI**

**Date of Act : 15 Mar 24**

1. On 13 Mar 24, INS *Kolkata* was deployed for Anti-Piracy Operations on east coast of Somalia. On 15 Mar 24, the ship intercepted MV *Ruen* which was hijacked by around 30-40 pirates and reportedly being utilised as mother vessel to further undertake piracy on other MVs transiting through the area. The ship was ordered to force surrender of pirates which mandated stopping of the hijacked vessel.

2. At the time of interception, pirates were carrying AK 47 rifles on upper decks and one pirate shot down the ship's drone. The sailor, being the FPM coordinator immediately alerted all the sentry posts and ensured proper kitting up of all sentries. **He effectively coordinated firing of warning shots onto the vessel's superstructure to intimidate the pirates. He ensured that only aimed shots were fired by all sentries to avoid any collateral damage.** Displaying foresightedness amidst such hostile environment, the sailor ensured availability of additional gears/sentries to cater for unforeseen requirements. He carried out detailed briefing of all sentries and ensured their timely positioning towards readiness for action.

3. The sailor ensured pin point targeting of specific areas and equipment which were considered critical to stop the ship, thereby ensuring achievement of aim whilst ensuring the safety of the hostages. **The sailor displayed great planning during the entire evolution that lasted for five hours. He ensured availability of sufficient belted rounds of MMG and SRCG as well as additional small arms in vicinity of bridge wings.** This ensured continuous delivery of firepower onto the ship creating a psychological impact on the pirates to stop the ship. The sailor displayed great vigour and courage and himself manned the MMG post. In the face of armed pirates, the sailor successfully targeted critical equipment like the navigational radar and communication antennae resulting in disabling the radar thereby hampering the vessel's movement. **Upon orders, he delivered concentrated firepower on the vessel's funnel in order to impact the machinery. The ship fired 2715 rounds of MMG and 2567 rounds of SRCG during the operation. During the operation, all**

**the targetted areas were in vicinity of bridge and hence safety of the hostages was the prime requirement which he very diligently ensured.** He ensured timely stopping of firing on occasions when pirates held hostages at gun point. Despite the constant threat of being within the firing range of pirates, the sailor ensured the safety of FPM sentries and maintained a constant vigil on the actions of pirates. His actions were instrumental in ensuring a taut and well coordinated FPM organisation paving way for surrender by the pirates and release of hostages.

4. The sailor showcased highest standard of bravery and exceptional intelligence during the time of conflict which resulted in mission accomplishment. **For his exceptional bravery, marksmanship and professional excellence Avinash Choudhary, LS (GW) GI is recommended for the award of Naosena Medal (Gallantry).**

**NAO SENA MEDAL (GALLANTRY)**

**SUMMARY OF CITATION**

**PAARS RANA ME I**

**Date of Act : 05 March 24**

1. On **05 Mar 24**, the sailor was nominated as part of INS Kolkata specialist firefighting team during an operation on a merchant vessel MSC Sky II. The MV had been attacked by a missile fired by the Houthi rebels while transiting through the Gulf of Aden. This had caused a major fire to break out on the ship, in one of the cargo containers.

2. On reaching the scene, it was observed that heavy smoke was coming out of a container. The sailor **was the first one who was tasked for carrying out cooling of the container's door, so as to facilitate entry into the container for locating the seat of fire**. The sailor donned the full fighting rig and continued the cooling of the container door for 20 minutes. The temperature by then had reduced considerably and the container door, could be opened. However, on opening the container door heavy smoke was observed to be coming out. **The sailor continued to fight the fire, engulfed in heavy smoke, till the time he had to be recalled view decreasing pressure of his BA set. The sailor immediately donned a new BA set and displayed readiness to enter the container for removal of flammable material**. In spite of heavy smoke, extremely low visibility and heat, he continued to remove heavy plastic and wooden boxes clearing the way towards the seat of fire for close to 30 minutes. **The sailor in a display of sheer valour, relentlessness and disregarding fatigue, kept on removing inflammable material for an hour only pausing to change his BA set**. The sailor braved the dangers of flames, heavy smoke and heat, at a close proximity. **His display of courage and unyielding determination in the face of a dangerous situation set a personal example and led to the containment of the fire.**

3. The sailor **displayed sheer courage, dedication to task and great determination throughout the operation. He was completely involved from the commencement to the end of the fire fighting which lasted for three and a half hours**. His continued presence and ability **set an example** to motivate fellow

teammates and was a huge enabler during the conduct of the entire operation. Paars Rana, ME I displayed rare bravery and unflinching courage under the most difficult circumstances. **For his gallant act in the face of flames and heavy smoke, the sailor is strongly recommended for Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry).**