

MESSAGE OF CHIEF OF THE NAVAL STAFF ADMIRAL NAVEED ASHRAF ON WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY 2024

World Hydrography Day (WHD) is celebrated worldwide on 21st June each year to raise awareness about the importance of hydrography and how it plays an important role in improving our knowledge of the oceans. The theme chosen by International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) for WHD-24 is "Hydrographic Information Enhancing Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability in Marine Activities," which aptly underscores the criticality of hydrographic services in contemporary maritime affairs. Annual celebration of this day emphasizes importance of hydrography as it underpins almost every activity associated with the sea including safety of navigation, security and defence. environmental protection, ports/ harbour construction, coastal zone/ disaster management and maritime boundary delimitation.

Pakistan is blessed with over 1000 kms of coastline along with 290,000 Sq kms of sea area within its EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) and Continental Shelf (CS). Pakistan like other coastal states is responsible for hydrographic surveys and production of nautical charts/ maps of its waters to provide accurate nautical information to the mariners. On behalf of Pakistan, the National Hydrographic Office (NHO) is entrusted with this task. In this backdrop, NHO conducts comprehensive hydrographic surveys and ensures regular updating of relevant nautical products in order to ensure navigational safety of the vessels traversing through Pakistani waters. NHO is also shouldering the National responsibility of Coordinator NAVAREA-IX (comprising North Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, Red Sea region) since 1976 for promulgation of Navigation Warnings. This is indeed a great honour for Pakistan, which shows the trust of the world community on capabilities and professionalism of our hydrographers. The continued dedication to ensure production of International standard nautical products also re-affirms Pakistan's role as an important contributor to global maritime safety, efficiency and sustainability of marine activities. This relentless pursuit of excellence in hydrography is pivotal in securing national maritime interests and promoting national maritime sector.

The Hydrographers have also remained instrumental in helping us determine the maritime boundaries and in past getting Pakistan's extended Continental Shelf area of 50,000 sq Kms approved from UN in 2015. As promoter of national maritime domain, it is also worth mentioning that PN/NHO in collaboration with China has also taken a lead role in first ever systematic hydrocarbon resource mapping of Pakistan's complete EEZ. In days to come this effort shall facilitate offshore oil & gas discoveries and may provide a boost to the national economy.

Pakistan Navy celebrates this day every year to underscore the importance of hydrography towards its share in all marine and maritime related activities which are eventually contributing towards our national economy. On this day, let us collectively celebrate the strides made in hydrography and dedicate ourselves to the ongoing pursuit of knowledge and innovation in this vital field. Through commitment and foresight, let us navigate the challenges of today and chart a course towards

sustainable seas and growth of national economy through enhanced trade and exploitation of marine resources.

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