



INTERGRATED MARINE SECURITY SOLUTIONS

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## Pirates vow revenge after rescue mission

SOMALI pirates have threatened revenge after two separate hostage-rescue raids by foreign forces killed at least five comrades, raising fears of future bloodshed on the high seas.

The latest raid by US forces this morning saved [American hostage Capt Richard Phillips](#). Three pirates were killed and one was taken captive, the US Navy said.

That rescue mission and one by France last week have upped the stakes in shipping lanes off the anarchic Horn of Africa nation where pirate gangs have defied foreign naval patrols.

"[The French](#) and the Americans will regret starting this killing. We do not kill, but take only ransom. We shall do something to anyone we see as French or American from now," Hussein, a pirate, told Reuters by satellite phone.

"We cannot know how or whether our friends on the lifeboat died, but this will not stop us from hijacking," he said.

Sea gangs generally treat their captives well, hoping to fetch top dollar in ransoms. The worst violence has been an occasional beating.

"We shall revenge," said another pirate, Aden, in Eyl village, a pirate lair on Somalia's eastern coast.

Some fear the US and French operations may make the modern-day pirates more like those of previous centuries.

"The pirates will know from now that anything can happen. The French are doing this, the Americans are doing it. Things will be more violent from now on," said [Andrew Mwangura](#) of the Kenya-based [East African](#) Seafarers Assistance Program.

"This is a big wake-up to the pirates. It raises the stakes."

Piracy is lucrative business in Somalia, where gangs have earned millions of dollars in ransoms, splashing it on wives, houses, cars and fancy goods.

After a wane in business early this year, pirates have struck back. They presently hold more than a dozen vessels with about 260 hostages, of whom about 100 are Filipino.

Eyl, Haradheere and other pirate havens along the Indian Ocean coastline have come back to life with the windfall of successful operations.

Somalia's anarchy - whose 18 years of civil war have given sea gangs assault rifles, grenade launchers and little central control - has long been ignored by world powers.

The saga over the capture of Capt Phillips has thrown international attention on the long-running piracy phenomenon that has hiked up insurance costs on strategic waterways where warships now patrol.

"Killing three out of thousands of pirates will only escalate piracy," said Sheikh Abdullahi Sheikh Abu Yusuf, spokesman of the moderate Islamist group Ahlu Sunna Waljamaca.