



IONS Maritime Exercise 2022

Why in News?

The maiden edition of [Indian Ocean Naval Symposium \(IONS\)](#) Maritime Exercise 2022 (IMEX-22) was conducted at Goa and in the Arabian Sea.

What is IMEX-22?

- The exercise witnessed participation of 15 out of the 25 member nations of IONS.
- The aim of the exercise was **to enhance interoperability in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations** among member navies.
- The exercise is seen as a **significant stepping stone for regional navies to collaborate and respond collectively to natural disasters in the region** and paves way for further strengthening regional cooperation.

What is the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium?

- IONS is a premier forum for cooperation and collaboration **among navies of littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.**
 - The inaugural IONS Seminar was held in New Delhi in February, 2008.
- It is a **voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime cooperation among** navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues.
- There are **36 littoral states** in the Indian Ocean which have been geographically grouped into the following four sub-regions.
 - **South Asian Littorals** - Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Seychelles and Sri Lanka
 - **West Asian Littorals** - Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Yemen
 - **East African Littorals** - Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eriteria, France, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan and Tanzania
 - **South East Asian and Australian Littorals** - Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Timor Leste.
- The forum has enabled discussions on regional maritime issues, promoted friendly relationships, and significantly improved maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.
- It **endeavours to generate a flow of information between naval professionals** that would lead to common understanding and possibly cooperative solutions on the way ahead.

What are the Other Important Groupings/Initiatives Associated with IOR?

- **Colombo Security Conclave:** The CSC, which was formed in 2011 as a trilateral maritime security grouping of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, is expanding. It recently welcomed Mauritius as a fourth member.
- **Indian Ocean Rim Association:** It was established in 1997. It is aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean region.
- **Indian Ocean Commission:** Recently, **India has been approved as an observer of the Indian Ocean Commission**, the inter-governmental organization that coordinates maritime

governance in the south-western Indian Ocean.

- **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)**: It was launched in 2015. Through SAGAR, India seeks to deepen economic and security cooperation with its maritime neighbours and assist in building their maritime security capabilities.
- **Asia Africa Growth Corridor**: The idea of Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) emerged in the joint declaration **issued by India and Japan in 2016**.
 - The AAGC is raised on four pillars of Development and Cooperation Projects, Quality Infrastructure and Institutional Connectivity, Enhancing Capacities and Skills and People-to-People partnership.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. Consider the following in respect of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS): (2017)

1. Inaugural IONS was held in India in 2015 under the chairmanship of the Indian Navy.
2. IONS is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (b)

Source: PIB

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