

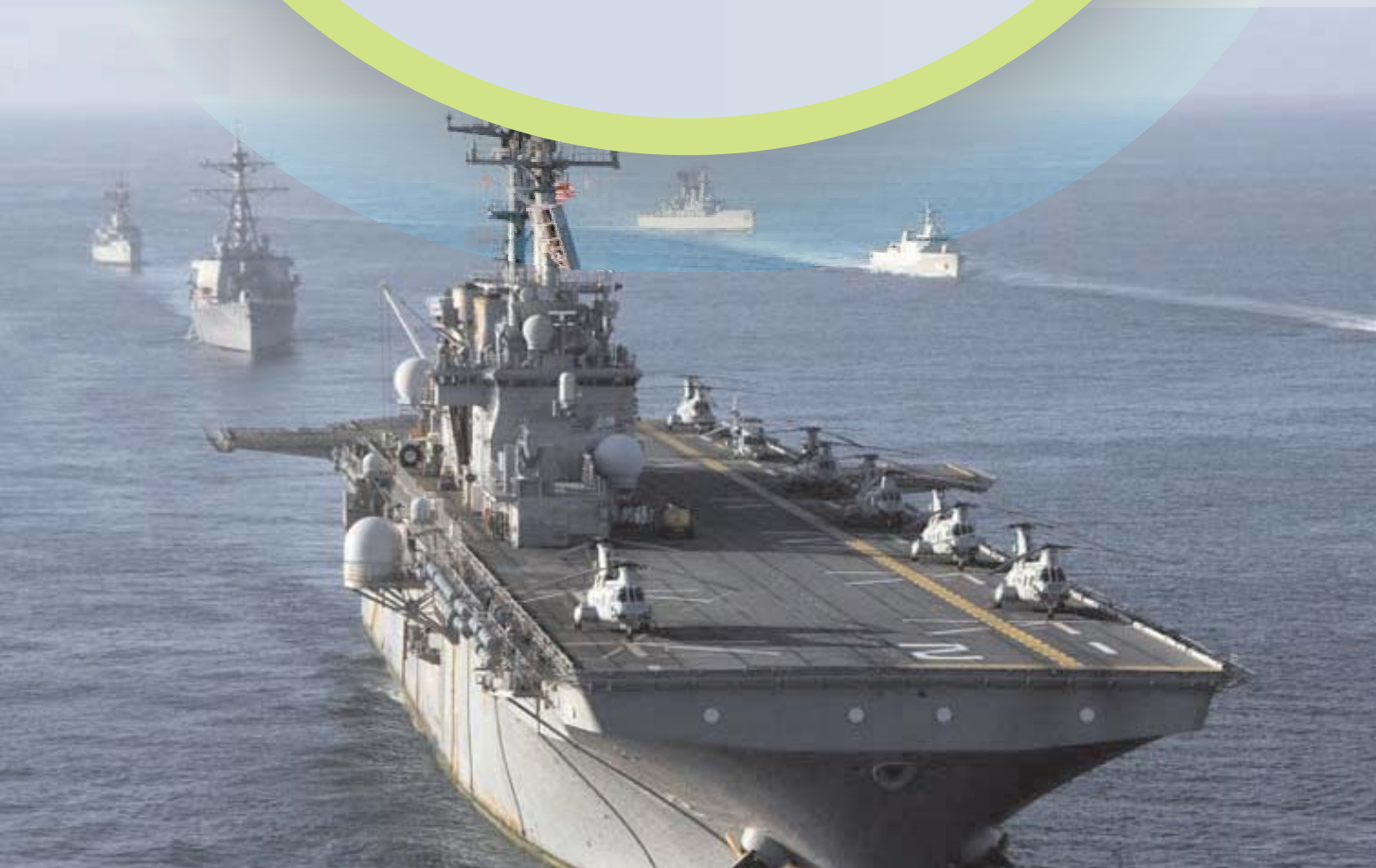
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MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES

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MARITIME SECURITY CHALLENGES

INTRODUCTION

- In this episode of The Big Picture based on Maritime Security Challenges. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has flagged India's concerns on Maritime Security.
- In ADMM-Plus Rajnath called for rule based order in Indo-Pacific and raised the issue of freedom of navigation in SCS.
- India also sought adherence to international rules and laws.
- In this episode we will discuss and analyse all aspects of this issue.

EDITED EXCERPTS FROM THE DEBATE



Major points highlighted during the meeting

- Maritime security challenges are another area of concern to India.
- India hopes that the Code of Conduct negotiations regarding the **South China Sea** will lead to outcomes that are in keeping with international law.
- India calls for a free, open and inclusive order in the Indo-Pacific, based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and adherence to international rules and laws.



What are the emerging challenges in the Indian Ocean?

- traditional maritime conflicts between nation-states
- environmental threats
- threats by non-state actors (maritime terrorism and piracy)
- maritime piracy and terrorism
- illicit maritime trades and trafficking
- **other challenges:** population growth, climate change, overexploitation of fisheries, degradation of critical habitats, pollution, and deteriorating water quality



How China is creating hurdles?

- China claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea and has overlapping territorial claims with Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Taiwan.
- Beijing's "nine-dash line" territorial claim covers 90 per cent of the 3.5-million-sq. km South China Sea, despite the Permanent Court of Arbitration in **The Hague** ruling against the claim in 2016.
- Recently, ASEAN and China agreed to expedite the resumption of negotiations on the code, which were halted by the pandemic.
- China and ASEAN started negotiations in 2013 on a supposedly binding **code of conduct** to regulate maritime behaviour in the strategically important waterway that is claimed by China as well as ASEAN members such as Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam.



Why Africa assumes significance in India's maritime security?

- The East coast of Africa is an integral part of the Indian Ocean littoral with its waters washing the shores of 10 nations in that continent., all of which are heavily dependent on the Indian Ocean for their sustenance and economic well-being .
- More than 90% of their trade travels over its waters and their resource-rich EEZ also lies in the Indian Ocean.
- They also provide access to the sea for many of the landlocked nations in the African continent which is also a significant source of revenue.
- Hence these countries share India's commitment towards ensuring a rules-based international order for the safe and secure passage of maritime trade across the SLOCs of the Indian Ocean.

Maritime security is therefore an important constituent of the India-Africa engagement.

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10 guiding principles for India's Africa engagement

- Another important milestone was the elaboration of 10 guiding principles for India's Africa engagement during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the Ugandan Parliament in July 2018.
- These pillars reflect a change in the nuances of India's priorities.
- For instance, both Indian private and government representatives consistently emphasize India's desire for its partnerships to be inclusive, people-centric, sustainable, transparent, and guided by African needs and priorities.
- These principles form the basis of a coherent and comprehensive strategy. And adding to it are security concerns. India considers African countries, especially those with coasts on the Indian Ocean, to be a critical part of its Indo-Pacific strategy.
- India shares a rich history of maritime trade with these nations in particular, and it has signed defense and shipping agreements with many of them.

AU's Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050

- The African Union has also developed an Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050, the vision statement of which reads-

"The overarching vision of the 2050 AIM Strategy is to foster increased wealth creation from Africa's oceans and seas by developing a sustainable thriving blue economy in a secure and environmentally sustainable manner".



How India can collaborate with Africa at global level?

- India must encourage greater African participation in global multilateral organisations.
- Kenya and India are presently non-permanent members of the **UN Security Council** for two years.
 - ▶ This could be an opportunity by these two large regional powers to forge a joint approach towards addressing regional maritime concerns, particularly on global issues like climate change which are posing an existential threat to the small island states in the western Indian Ocean.
- **India's forthcoming Presidency of the G20** will be another opportunity for India to strengthen its credentials as the leading Indian Ocean power and demonstrate its inclusive approach by highlighting the issues impacting this region and garnering the support of 20 of the most influential nations of the world.

African Participation

India has been at the forefront in encouraging African participation in various multilateral framework in the Indian Ocean region.

- **The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**, an Indian- led initiative headquartered in Mauritius includes eight African members including the strategic island states like Comoros and Madagascar.

The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, a multinational naval mechanism established by the Indian Navy in 2008 to develop a closer understanding amongst the navies of the region. It also includes six African member states – Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa.



What needs to be done to counter security challenges?

- **Effective cooperation:** The pace and breadth of emerging challenges in the region require regional cooperation that encourages the countries around the Bay to rise above their political fault-lines to work together.
- **Legal framework:** A clear legal framework is also critical for any successful maritime security coalition.
- **Shared charter:** The countries should develop a shared charter, led by the island and littoral states, for a free and open Indian Ocean to ensure sustainable oceanic ecosystems that would benefit the generations to come.
- **Pre-covidian attitude towards security:** Moreover, the countries will need to move from pre-Covidian attitude toward security in which national interest played the key role to post-Covidian norms in which collective security will dictate the terms of geopolitics and geostrategy.

CONCLUSION

New challenges require new solutions, new institutions, and indeed new norms with genuine commitment. The nations should focus on setting up quality maritime infrastructure, with or without support of extra-regional actors, without further delay.

VALUE ADDITION

Indian Ocean (important facts)

- The Indian Ocean is the third largest of the world's five oceans (after the Pacific Ocean and Atlantic Ocean, but larger than the Southern Ocean and Arctic Ocean).
- **Total area:** 70.560 million sq km
- **Important waterways:** Four critically important access waterways are the-
 - ▶ Suez Canal (Egypt)
 - ▶ Bab el Mandeb (Djibouti-Yemen)
 - ▶ Strait of Hormuz (Iran-Oman)
 - ▶ Strait of Malacca (Indonesia-Malaysia)
- **Major seaports:** Chennai (Madras, India); Colombo (Sri Lanka); Durban (South Africa); Jakarta (Indonesia); Kolkata (Calcutta, India); Melbourne (Australia); Mumbai (Bombay, India); Richards Bay (South Africa)



What is ADMM Plus?

- The ADMM Plus is an annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries and eight dialogue partner countries - Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.
- **Brunei** is the Chair of the ADMM Plus forum this year.
- The inaugural ADMM-Plus was convened in Hanoi in 2010. The defence ministers then had agreed on five areas of practical cooperation to pursue under the new mechanism, including-
 - ▶ maritime security
 - ▶ counter-terrorism
 - ▶ humanitarian assistance
 - ▶ peacekeeping operations

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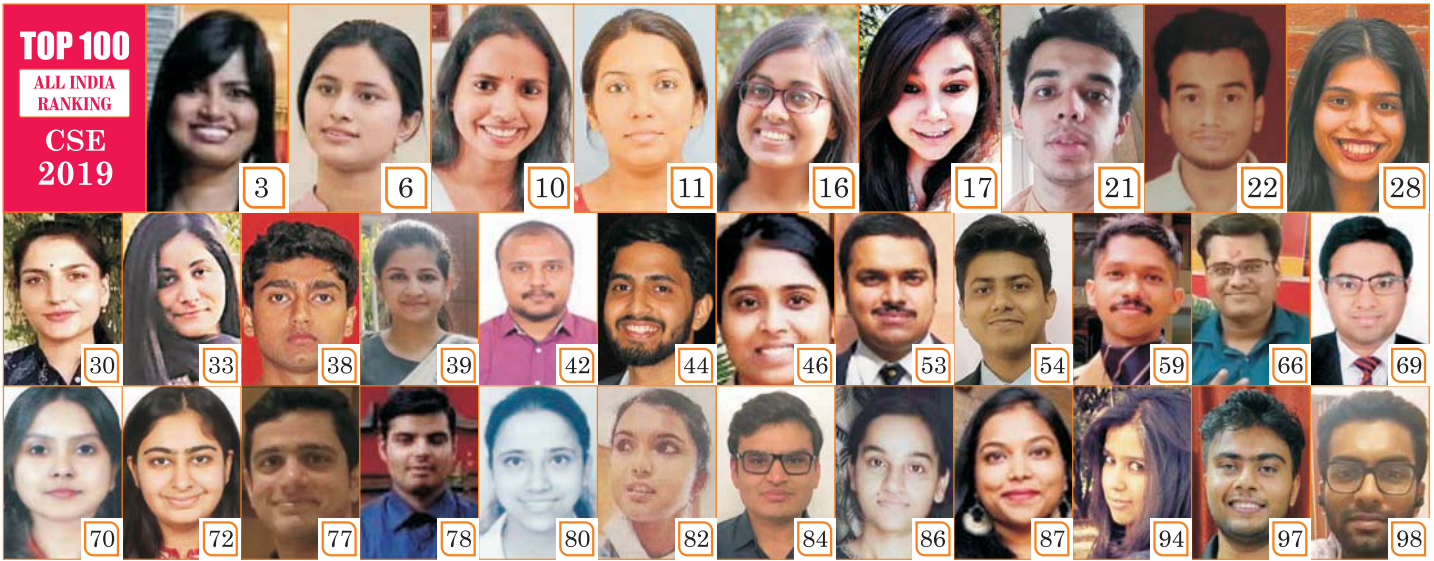
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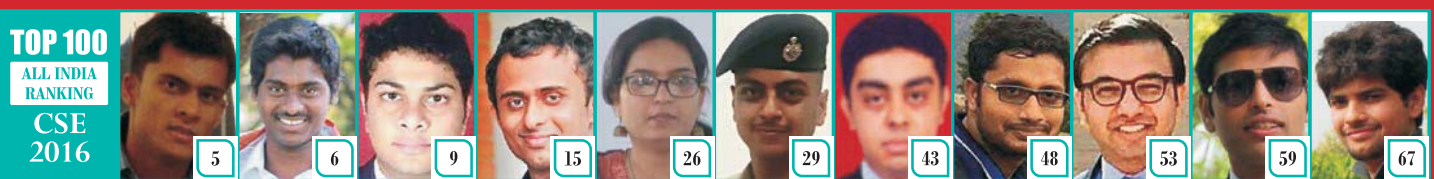
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