



Djibouti Code of Conduct

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Why in News

India joined the **Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCOC)** as an **observer** as part of efforts aimed at enhancing maritime security in the Indian Ocean region.

Key Points



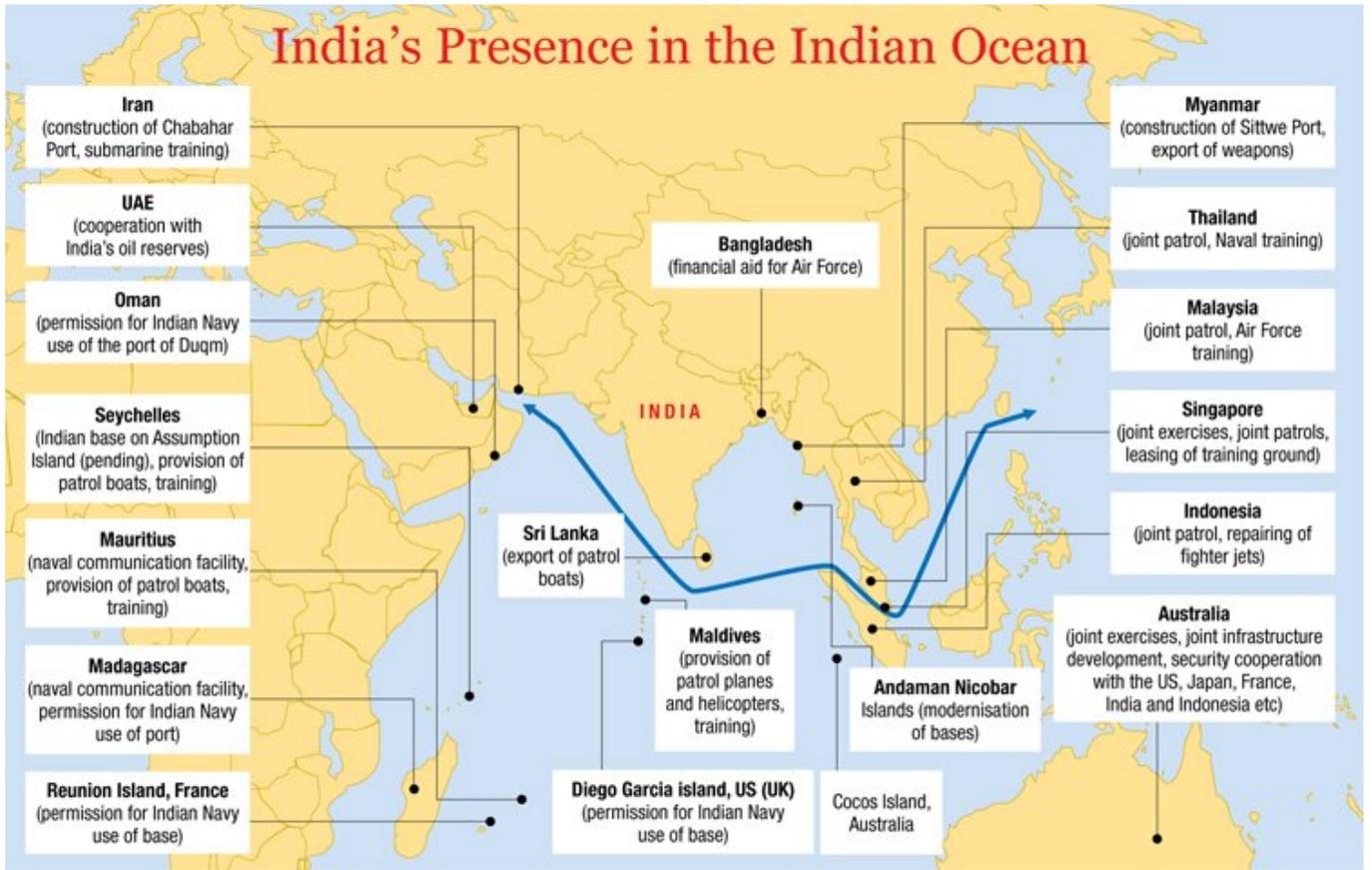
Significance of India Becoming an Observer

- **Boosting its Indian Ocean Outreach:** As India is strengthening its position in the Indian Ocean and nearby waters as part of its overall **Indo-Pacific policy**, this move will help it in **increasing its strategic footprints in Western and Eastern Indian Ocean besides Eastern African coastal states.**
- **Blue Economy:** **Blue economy** is one of the key areas of the Jeddah Amendment.
 - It refers to the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health.
 - India has also focussed on the growth of the blue economy through its framework of **Indian Ocean Rim Association** and DCOC may be another step in that direction.
- **India-China:** China's territorial claims in the **South China Sea**, its claim in the **East China Sea** and its rapid advance into the Indian Ocean through ambitious strategic and economic initiatives like the **String of pearls** and **Belt-and-Road Initiative** may pose a threat to India.
 - Further, China is modernising its military base at Djibouti.
 - Given India's stakes in Indian ocean and rising **Indo-China conflicts**, it is very significant for India to develop blue-water naval capabilities.

India in Indo-Pacific

- **Shangrila Dialogue:** India has internationally emphasized on including the western Pacific and the Indian Ocean in the concept of **Indo-Pacific**, like at Shangrila Dialogue in **2018**.
In accordance, it also set up an **Indo-Pacific division** in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- **Quad: Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)** refers to an ad hoc group including Australia, India, Japan, and the USA with a shared objective to ensure and support a “free, open and prosperous” Indo-Pacific region.
India has signed reciprocal **military logistics support agreements with Australia, USA and Japan** to increase interoperability with the navies of those countries.
- **ASEAN:** India has emphasized the centrality of ASEAN in its Indo-Pacific framework and India's **Act East policy** provides strategic direction to increase its cooperation with ASEAN members.
- **SAGAR:** The Indian government introduced the concept of SAGAR (**Security And Growth for All in the Region**) in 2015 as its strategic vision for the Indian Ocean Region.
Through SAGAR, India seeks to deepen **economic and security cooperation** with its maritime neighbours and assist in building their **maritime security capabilities**.
- India's other policies impacting the maritime domain include **Project Sagarmala, Project Mausam, Information Fusion Centre (IFC) for the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**, etc.
- India has also begun to focus on its strategic partners in the **Western Indian ocean**. It has been accepted as an **observer at Indian Ocean Commission**.

India's Presence in the Indian Ocean



Source: HT