



## Gulf of Aden and Red Sea

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### Why in News?

India's Defence Minister hinted at a possibility of an increase in threats like [maritime piracy](#), [terrorism](#), and regional conflicts in the [Gulf of Aden](#), [Red Sea](#) and the sea areas adjacent to East African countries.

- In addition, **2024** was commemorated as the '**Year of Naval Civilians**' that constitute a third of the Navy's workforce.

**Note:** Naval Civilians include **soldiers without uniforms** that play a pivotal role behind the scenes like **technical assistance**, **administrative management** and **logistics support** to provide significant strength to the troops.

### What are Key Facts About the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea?

- **Gulf of Aden:**
  - **About:** It is an **extension of the [Indian Ocean](#)**, situated between the [Arabian Peninsula](#) to the north and the **African continent** to the south.
  - **Location:** It is bounded by **Somalia** and the Socotra Islands to the south, **Yemen** to the north, the **Arabian Sea** to the east, and **Djibouti** to the west.
    - It connects to the **Somali Sea** via the **Guardafui Channel** and to the **Red Sea** through the [Strait of Bab el Mandeb](#).
  - **Economic Importance:** Around **10% of global seaborne petroleum** and over **USD 110 billion in India's trade** pass through the Gulf of Aden.



#### ▪ Red Sea:

- **About:** It is the world's **northernmost tropical sea** and is underlain by the **Red Sea Rift**, making it part of the [Great Rift Valley](#).
  - The name **Red Sea** may originate from the seasonal blooms of a **red-colored cyanobacteria (*Trichodesmium erythraeum*)**.
  - The **Red Sea Rift**, a [divergent boundary](#) between the **African and Arabian Plates**, is part of the **Great Rift Valley system** stretching from East Africa to the Middle East.
- **Location:** The Red Sea lies between **Africa and Asia** and is a **semi-enclosed** extension of the Indian Ocean.
  - It connects to the **Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea** via the **Bab el Mandeb Strait** and **Gulf of Aden** in the south.
  - In the north, it **bifurcates** into the [Gulf of Aqaba](#) and [Gulf of Suez](#) at the [Sinai Peninsula](#), connecting to the [Mediterranean Sea](#) via the [Suez Canal](#).



- **Bordering Countries:** The Red Sea borders **six countries** i.e., **Yemen and Saudi Arabia** to the east, and **Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, and Djibouti** to the west.
  - The Gulf of Aqaba is bordered by **Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia**.
- **Islands:** Prominent islands include **Tiran** near the Gulf of Aqaba, **Shadwan** at the Gulf of Suez, and Yemen-controlled **Kamaran, Perim, Hanish, and Socotra**.
  - The largest group of islands are the **Farasan Islands** in the east and the **Dahlak Archipelago** in the west.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Prelims

**Q. Consider the following pairs: (2019)**

Sea Bordering	Country
1. Adriatic Sea	Albania
2. Black Sea	Croatia
3. Caspian Sea	Kazakhstan
4. Mediterranean Sea	Morocco
5. Red Sea	Syria

**Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?**

- (a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (b) 1, 3 and 4 only
- (c) 2 and 5 only

**(d)** 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

**Ans: (b)**

**Q. Which one of the following countries of South-West Asia does not open out to the Mediterranean Sea? (2015)**

**(a)** Syria

**(b)** Jordan

**(c)** Lebanon

**(d)** Israel

**Ans: (b)**

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