



## Indo-Pacific Wing in MEA

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India has set up an **Indo-Pacific division** in the Ministry of External Affairs.

The new division is intended to give a coherent architecture to the policy, which was articulated by the prime minister at the Shangri-La Dialogue in 2018.

### Highlights of PM Narendra Modi's address at Shangri-La

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- By projecting an equivalence in ties with the US, Russia, and China – **India reaffirmed its principle of strategic autonomy** and cautioned against the return of the 'great power rivalries'.
- India's Indo-Pacific strategy is **not aimed at China's containment**.
- India sees the **Indo-Pacific as primarily a geographic domain** — a "natural region".
- The **Indo-pacific region is ultimately multi-polar, hence rejecting or contesting the idea that either China or the United States could be the one regional hegemonic power**.
- **India is indispensable to the security of the Indian Ocean**.
- Signified the **interconnectedness of the Indian and Pacific Oceans** and the importance of the oceans to security and commerce.

### Importance of Separate Division

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- **MEA's territorial divisions are crucial for policy making**, so the creation of an Indo-Pacific division is a big step by the government.
- The division **will integrate the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), ASEAN region and the Quad**.
- India is planning to put greater energy to the IORA because the core of its **Indo-Pacific policy is rooted in the Indian Ocean**.
- The US also recently renamed its Pacific Command to the Indo-Pacific Command as it seeks to give significance to its Indo-Pacific policy.

### Shangri-La Dialogue

- The Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD) is an intergovernmental security forum held annually by an independent think tank, **the International Institute for Strategic Studies in Singapore**.
- The Shangri-La Dialogue has evolved into a key **strategic gathering of the Asia-Pacific region**.
- It is attended by defense ministers, permanent heads of ministries and military chiefs of Asia-Pacific states.

### **Indian Ocean Rim Association**

- The Indian Ocean Rim Association is an inter-governmental organization which was established on 7 March 1997.
- IORA has 21 Member States, mainly littoral Indian Ocean states, and 7 other states as Dialogue Partners.

