

## **7. Indian Ocean Rim to get boost with UAE, Bangladesh at helm**

**Prelims: International Relations**

**Mains: GS-II Regional Grouping involving India**

### **Why in News?**

- ▶▶ Indian Ocean Rim Association ministerial meeting is scheduled to be held in Abu Dhabi. The United Arab Emirates and Bangladesh, will take charge as the new chair and vice-chair of one of the largest regional maritime organizations for the duration of 2019-21.

### **Significance of Indian Ocean Region:**

- ▶▶ Indian Ocean region is a major conduit for international trade, especially energy. Its littoral is vast, densely populated, and comprised of some of the world's fastest growing regions.
- ▶▶ The Ocean is also a valuable source of fishing and mineral resources. And yet its governance and security are under constant threat of being undermined.
- ▶▶ The Indian Ocean basin is of particular importance for India, as the region's most populous country and geopolitical keystone.
- ▶▶ The Indian Ocean region is a significant region for India given that it could act as a pivot for India's growth.
- ▶▶ The concept of Blue Economy Is envisaged for India keeping in mind India's advantageous location in the Indian Ocean region.
- ▶▶ The Indian Ocean is now at the heart of global geopolitics. The Indian Ocean is likely to witness clashes of economic interests and a turbulent security environment. External powers are keen to intervene, not only to mediate or reduce this volatility but also in their attempt to extend their influence right up to the IOR through their physical presence. Ex China's growing clout in the region. India needs to guard against external influences in its immediate neighbourhood.

### **Significance of IORA:**

- ▶▶ India's Indian Ocean Region strategy conforms closely to global priorities for preserving the Ocean as a shared resource: an important channel for trade, a sustainable resource base, and a region secure from heightened military competition, non-state actors, and catastrophic natural disasters.
- ▶▶ Achieving these objectives will require further investments in capacity, greater transparency and confidence-building measures, and enhanced institutional cooperation.

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- ▶▶ The 19<sup>th</sup> IORA Council of Ministers meeting will be held on November 7 in Abu Dhabi with the theme of “Promoting a Shared Destiny and Path to Prosperity in the Indian Ocean”. This provides an opportunity for greater coordination in the Indian Ocean region.
  - ▶▶ India promotes policy of “coordination, cooperation and partnership” in this significant regional maritime domain. The rise of partner countries to the helm of affairs of IORA will help India in managing the crucial maritime region.

### **Indian Efforts:**

- ▶▶ India is aiming to use the maritime domain as a “connector” for intra-regional co-operation. The government’s SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) programme aims to make the region more inclusive.
- ▶▶ India has been trying to emerge as the net provider of information in the IOR and in that direction it created the Information Fusion Centre in Gurugram to assist member countries with real time crisis information.
- ▶▶ Joint Maritime exercises with the regional countries, naval aid to lesser developed countries in the neighbourhood and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts in the aftermath of natural disasters has gained considerable goodwill in the region for India.