International Relations · GS - II

Assess the significance of regional maritime cooperation in addressing the non-traditional security challenges of the Indian Ocean Region.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 25/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Maritime domain awareness, transnational threats, blue economy, regional institutions, strategic trust, disaster response

Model Answer

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a critical global trade corridor connecting Asia, Africa and Europe. Its security is increasingly shaped by non-traditional threats that transcend national boundaries and require coordinated regional responses.

Why regional cooperation matters

1. **Maritime security:** Information-sharing and joint surveillance can help address piracy, illegal fishing and maritime infiltration.
2. **Transnational crime:** Cooperation among countries strengthens efforts against drug trafficking, human trafficking and arms smuggling.
3. **Cybersecurity:** Protecting ports, shipping networks and undersea communication cables requires coordinated cyber threat monitoring.

4. **Disaster management:** Cyclones, tsunamis and other emergencies demand timely information exchange, humanitarian assistance and coordinated relief.
5. **Economic stability:** Secure sea lanes protect trade, energy supplies and the sustainable development of the blue economy.

Institutional mechanisms and India's role

India's Neighbourhood First policy, SAGAR vision and MAHASAGAR framework provide a basis for maritime engagement. The Colombo Security Conclave offers a regional platform for cooperation in maritime safety, counter-terrorism, cybersecurity and disaster response.

The strategic challenge

Divergent national interests, geopolitical competition, limited institutional capacity and mistrust can constrain cooperation. Smaller states also seek to preserve their strategic autonomy while engaging with larger powers.

Regional maritime security must therefore rest on sovereignty, mutual trust, capacity-building and inclusive participation. A cooperative Indian Ocean can protect shared interests without becoming an arena of geopolitical division.

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