

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3291
ANSWERED ON- 21/08/2025

INCREASING PRESENCE OF US AND RUSSIA IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION

3291. SHRI A. D. SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the US and Russia have been increasing their presence in the Indian Ocean Region, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the nature of bilateral and multilateral maritime exercises being conducted with both countries;
- (c) the manner in which such engagements align with India's strategic autonomy; and
- (d) whether India's Indo-Pacific strategy balances these global powers while safeguarding its national interests?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI PABITRA MARGHERITA)

- (a) US presence has been significant in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) both unilaterally as well as through constructs such as Combined Maritime Force (CMF). Russian presence in IOR has not been observed to be notable or significant other than participation in exercises with like minded partners at regular intervals. US and Russian presence in the IOR is consistent with the changing requirements of geopolitical situations including the current security dynamics.
- (b) The nature of the Bilateral and Multilateral exercises, being conducted with both countries, is to enhance information/knowledge sharing, joint training and operational coordination to enable collaborative efforts in tackling challenges to maritime security. Examples of such exercises are Malabar, Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), Sea Dragon, INDRA, MILAN, Tiger Triumph etc. India also engages plurilaterally with the US in the QUAD through the QUAD Maritime Security Working Group (QMSWG) and through CMF.
- (c) India through its Neighbourhood First, SAGAR and MAHASAGAR policies is developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all like minded countries in the Indo-Pacific. In all our engagements under the SAGAR and MAHASAGAR visions, we emphasise a free, open, inclusive and rules-based international order based on mutual respect and mutual interests, rule of law, sustainable and transparent infrastructure investment, freedom of navigation and over-flight, and sincere respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- (d) Government of India's policies/strategies are continuously evolving and we closely monitor developments in the region having a bearing on India's security and economic interests, and take all necessary measures to safeguard them. India has always adopted a pragmatic approach and our reach and range of activities is continuously expanding, in line with the changing regional and international situation.
