

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5623

ANSWERED ON- 27/03/2026

UN CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

5623. SHRI KOTA SRINIVASA POOJARY

SHRI KRISHNA PRASAD TENNETI

DR SANJAY JAISWAL

SHRI BIBHU PRASAD TARAI

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

- (a) the status of the MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) initiative in fostering high-level maritime cooperation among Indian Ocean littoral States;**
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to ensure a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific in strict adherence to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);**
- (c) the details of recent White Shipping Information Sharing agreements signed to enhance Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and combat non-traditional threats like piracy and "dark shipping";**

(d) whether the Government has proposed a formal "Blue Economy Partnership Framework" for the BIMSTEC region to promote sustainable deep-sea mining and ocean conservation, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the diplomatic measures taken to address the challenges posed by "dual-use" maritime infrastructure being developed by extra-regional powers in India's extended neighborhood?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) India has fostered strong bilateral and multilateral partnerships with key partners and like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific and beyond to ensure Security and Growth for all in the Region (SAGAR). Expanding on this strategic vision, Hon'ble Prime Minister outlined the MAHASAGAR doctrine i.e. "Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions" in March 2025 in Mauritius. While SAGAR focuses on security and growth within the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), MAHASAGAR expands this vision to cover the broader Global South. MAHASAGAR encompasses the ideas of trade for development, capacity building for sustainable growth, and mutual security for a shared future.

In line with MAHASAGAR initiative, India continues its commitment to the well-being and progress of nations in the region as a first responder and net security provider in the region. Government of India is committed to strengthening maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and beyond, to ensure a favorable and positive maritime environment. India also participates in regional frameworks to promote maritime cooperation and exchanges in the region.

In line with this vision, India has been focusing on development assistance, capacity building initiatives, economic cooperation, connectivity, HADR support and defence & maritime security cooperation, with an aim to assist countries in the region on sustainable socio-economic development.

(b) India consistently maintains that the United Nations Convention On the Law of the Sea, 1982 (UNCLOS) is the legal basis for maritime rights, freedoms and dispute settlement, including in the Indo-Pacific. India signed the agreement under the UNCLOS on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) on 25 September 2024. This reflects

India's commitment to comprehensive, UNCLOS-consistent ocean governance that extends beyond national jurisdiction to the high seas- a concrete step towards a rules-based maritime order, including in the Indo-Pacific region.

(c) India has signed White Shipping Information Sharing (WSIE) agreements with five countries in the last five years.

(d) Government of India has not made any formal proposal in respect of a BIMSTEC Blue Economy Partnership Framework.

(e) The Government of India continues to carefully monitor any developments having a bearing on India's security and economic interests, and takes all necessary measures to safeguard them.
