

## India, China to join Indian Ocean exercise

PLA Navy ships, Zhenghe and Weifang, during their visit to Visakhapatnam in 2014. | Photo Credit: [PTI](#)

Despite growing tensions with China, official sources said the Indian Navy would join the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy in a maiden maritime search and rescue exercise to be chaired by Bangladesh at the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in November this year.

"Bangladesh, the current Chair, is scheduling a maiden International Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (IMMSAREX) in November in the Bay of Bengal to be attended by ships and aircraft of the members and observers of the IONS," an official source said.

The IONS is a regional forum of Indian Ocean littoral states, represented by their Navy chiefs, launched by India in February 2008. It presently has 23 members and nine observers.

### Conclave of chiefs

The exercise comes at a time of intensifying competition among regional navies for dominance in the Indian Ocean — navies of China and Japan, presently observers, in addition to member states like India, France, Iran and the U.K.

In addition, Bangladesh is also scheduling an "extraordinary conclave of Chiefs," a meeting of chiefs of Navy before it hands over the Chair to Iran next year, the source added.

Under the charter of business adopted in 2014, the grouping has working groups on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Information Security and Interoperability (IS&I) and anti-piracy now renamed as maritime security.

India has considerably expanded its engagement with countries to further its own interests as well as to check the rapid expansion of Chinese naval forays in the Indian Ocean. Other countries in the region are also engaged in rapid expansion of their military capabilities.

The working group's conferences are held annually and India had chaired the one on HADR in May this year and Pakistan had chaired the meeting on IS&I in July.

Says BJP will campaign against corruption, law and order problems and lack of development work in Himachal Pradesh

The process of holding the requisite Board Meetings and Shareholder Meetings has been completed in phases in September 2017.

Ruben George is staying at Ram Nath Kovind's house at Kalyanpur, near Kanpur

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