

CONCLUSION OF 'EMERGING LEADERS PANEL DISCUSSION' HELD UNDER THE AEGIS OF INDIAN OCEAN NAVAL SYMPOSIUM (IONS-2025)

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The 'Emerging Leaders Panel Discussion' under the aegis of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) was held at **Southern Naval Command, Kochi from 27 to 28 Aug 2025**. The event brought together delegates from 19-member countries, providing an inclusive platform for young naval leaders to exchange ideas, share experiences, and deliberate on the future of maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.

Vice Admiral V Srinivas, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, delivered the Keynote address setting the stage for thought provoking discussions. His address underlined the Indian Navy's commitment to fostering dialogue, mutual trust, and cooperative security across the Indian Ocean Region.

The two-day event included four thematic sessions. The opening session examined the Strategic Importance of the Indian Ocean Region and the Challenges faced from the Perspective of Young Officers. It highlighted key issues in safeguarding IOR, maritime trade security, climate impact, and geopolitical dynamics while also capturing the innovative perspectives of young officers on how these challenges might be addressed.

The second session focused on 'Emerging Technologies in Maritime Security', wherein participants explored emerging technologies in maritime reconnaissance, AI-enabled systems, unmanned platforms, cyber threats, and space-based surveillance in support of maritime security.

Day Two commenced with the third session on 'Future Role of IONS in Fostering Collaboration Towards Maritime Security'. Panelists emphasised the need for greater interoperability, joint exercises and professional exchanges to strengthen regional partnerships. The final session addressed 'Harnessing Training Capabilities Amongst IONS Countries - Future Road Map'. Discussions were centred on pooling resources, expanding training linkages and developing common frameworks to enhance collective preparedness.

In addition to the panel discussions, cultural and social interactions were conducted that allowed participants to experience Kerala's maritime heritage while building personal camaraderie. Blend of professional dialogue and informal engagement enriched the overall exchange of ideas.

The two-day discussions concluded with a strong consensus on enhancing maritime domain awareness, technological partnerships, and shared training initiatives. Delegates reaffirmed IONS's role as a voluntary, inclusive initiative dedicated to strengthening collective maritime security through dialogue and collaboration.

The Emerging Leaders Panel Discussions, thus concluded with all member nations renewing their commitment to work together for peace, prosperity and security in the Indian Ocean Region.





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