



INDIAN NAVY TO HOST INDO-PACIFIC REGIONAL DIALOGUE 2026 TO EXPLORE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ACADEMIC COOPERATION

Three-day conference in New Delhi from 03 to 05 Nov 2026 to bring together experts from 18 countries; deliberations to focus on academic networks, maritime science, ocean governance, climate resilience, and emerging technologies

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Over a three-day period spanning 03, 04 and 05 Nov 2026, the Indian Navy will conduct the 2026 edition of the 'Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue' (IPRD-2026), which is its annual apex-level international outreach conference pitched at the strategic level, at **the Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi**. Organised in close association with the **National Maritime Foundation (NMF)**, which is the Navy's knowledge partner and principal organiser of the event, this year's conference will be centred upon the theme ***'Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific'***.

Successive editions of this annual dialogue have examined a variety of dimensions of the seven deeply-interconnected maritime lines-of-thrust of the **'Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative' (IPOI)**, which had been promulgated by India's Prime Minister, **Shri Narendra Modi**, at the 14th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Bangkok in Nov of 2019. Importantly, the IPOI provides first-order specificity to India's maritime vision of **MAHASAGAR — Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions**. Each edition of the IPRD seeks to provide second- and third-order specificity to the country's maritime policy by translating the IPOI's broad framework for cooperation into specific, actionable proposals.

The choice of this year's theme reflects a fundamental feature of the contemporary maritime domain: the oceans are interconnected, but the scientific knowledge, technological capabilities and institutions required to understand and manage them remain unevenly distributed. Care is being taken to ensure that the word 'science' is not allowed to be restricted to the 'physical' sciences alone, (which have traditionally encompassed 'engineering' and 'technology' — the latter being 'applied engineering') but also incorporate the 'life sciences', as also the 'social sciences'. Thus, the multifarious facets of climate change, maritime trade, the maritime ramifications of supply- and value-chains

and their vulnerabilities, the ever-increasing pressure upon marine resources, and the growing threats to critical maritime infrastructure, will all form important elements of the conference. Given that all these elements transcend national boundaries, effective responses require not merely more sophisticated technologies but stronger arrangements for cooperation, information-sharing, and the development of human capital.

The three days of this year's conference will incorporate **five professional thematic sessions**. These professional sessions will address 'Academic Networks, Research, and Human Capital Development'; 'Maritime Situational Awareness and Protection of Critical Maritime Infrastructure'; 'Oceanographic Science and Climate Resilience'; 'Collaborative Approaches to Ocean Governance and Maritime Resilience'; and 'Transformative Maritime Technologies and Dual-Use Implications'. The deliberations will consider practical pathways for joint research, collaborative technology development, responsible governance, appropriate access to scientific data, and stronger institutional partnerships.

IPRD-2026 will also feature two 'special' sessions. The first of these, entitled, 'Perspectives from the Flag Bridge', will bring together **former naval chiefs from India and Sri Lanka**, to offer experience-rich perspectives on the manner in which the enormous potential of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) could best be leveraged so as to promote cooperation in science, technology, and meaningful academic engagement across the western segment of the Indo-Pacific — the Indian Ocean. The second is a special ambassadorial interaction entitled '*Sahyog Ka Samvaad*'. '*Sahyog*' is the Hindi word for 'cooperation', while '*Samvaad*' is the Hindi word for 'dialogue'.

The second day of the conference will, in addition to two professional sessions, also feature two ministerial sessions. In the first one, **Shri Rajnath Singh, the Hon'ble Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister) of India, will deliver the Commemorative Address**. The second ministerial session will feature a **special address by Dr Jitendra Singh, the Hon'ble Minister of State (with independent charge) of the Government of India's Ministry of Science and Technology**.

IPRD-2026 will offer an intellectual spectacle of rare delight, with contributions from **maritime practitioners, scientists, academicians, policymakers and experts from 18 countries across the Indo-Pacific**. This edition of the IPRD has laid very considerable emphasis upon solution-oriented dialogue. Thus, the deliberations of this international conference will concentrate upon the identification of specific, actionable measures at national, sub-regional, and pan-regional levels, which would, thereafter, be addressed in greater granularity through extant mechanisms for bilateral, trilateral, and plurilateral engagement designed to promote comity, cooperation, and collaboration, across the Indo-Pacific.



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