

25 MARCH 2019

Tapping the blue economy

In brief:

Vice President of India Mr. Venkaiah Naidu cautioned against the further degradation of oceans and their ecosystem and called India to fully tap the enormous potential of the blue economy to achieve higher growth and initiate appropriate programmes for sustainable harnessing of ocean reserves.

Importance for India:

The Indian Ocean Region is abundant with resources, particularly in the sectors of fisheries, aquaculture, ocean energy, sea-bed mining and minerals, and provides tremendous economic opportunities to develop marine tourism and shipping activities.

Blue Economy remains a critical aspect of India's economic development agenda, and more than 95% of our trade is being carried on by sea.

In the Indian Ocean, fish production increased drastically from 861,000 tons in 1950 to 11.5 million tons in 2010 according to FAO.

Steps by India:

- Government's ambitious SAGARMALA Programme is poised to revolutionize maritime logistics and port led developments in India. The programme has identified 600 plus projects entailing a huge investment of around Rs 8 lakh crore by 2020.
- Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs) are being developed with a proposed investment of \$ 150 Million per location
- Several green initiatives are also being taken in the coastal regions like 31 MW of captive solar power generation being planned at various ports, installation of oil spill response facilities and study to identify ways to re-use waste water at ports.
- The Union Ministry of Earth Sciences has been conducting surveys for polymetallic nodules and hydrothermal sulphides in volcanic plumes in designated areas of the Indian Ocean with the International Seabed Authority. The Oceanographic Ship, 'SagarKanya', has been operating for several years now in the explorations.
- With 95 per cent of the deep sea remaining unexplored, NIOT has already developed technology that can help build a remotely operated vehicle with capability to reach 6000 metre depth. It recently signed a MoU with NRDC and the L&T Defence arm, which will build commercial versions.
- The Blue Economy is gaining increased interest among IORA Member States that are all committed to the establishment of a common vision that would make this sector a driver for balanced economic development in the Indian Ocean Rim region.

Odisha's Rushikulya rookery awaits Olive Ridleys

Why in News:

- Even after waiting for almost a month, Olive Ridley turtles have not yet arrived for mass nesting at Odisha's Rushikulya rookery and Devi river mouth. The reasons are not fully understood yet.
- Mass nesting has already occurred at the Gahirmatha coast of the State.
- Climate could be a reason for delay

Note



In Brief:

- 1. Wildlife **Institute of India's (WII)** scientist said it could not be said for sure whether mass nesting would occur or not at the Rushikulya rookery this year.
- 2. According to the WWI, mass nesting of Olive Ridley's can occur up to any time till the end of April.
- 3. This year, the Forest Department also prepared a three-km-long coast near the Bahuda river mouth, from Sunapur to Anantpur, as an alternative mass nesting site, about 20 km to the south of Rushikulya. However, except for few occurrences of sporadic nesting, mass nesting has yet not occurred at this new beach.



Prelims titbits:

- Olive Ridley Sea Turtles:
 1. Also known as the Pacific Ridley sea turtle.
 2. Second smallest and the most abundant of all sea turtles.
 3. The species is found in warm and tropical waters, primarily in the Pacific and Indian oceans.

Strait of Hormuz

Why in news?

The United States signed a strategic port deal with Oman on Sunday which U.S. officials say will allow the U.S. military better access the Gulf region and reduce the need to send ships through the Strait of Hormuz, a choke point off Iran.

In Brief:

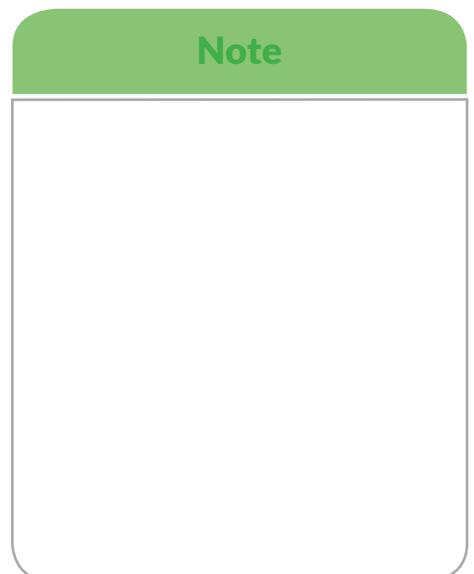
- About Strait of Hormuz:
- The Strait of Hormuz is a strait between Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.
- It provides the only sea passage from the Persian Gulf to the open ocean.
- On the north coast lays Iran, and on the south coast



the United Arab Emirates and Musandam, an exclave of Oman.

- About 20% of the world's petroleum passes through the strait, making it a highly important strategic location for international trade.

Note



Hambantota port

Why in news?

- Sri Lanka starts work on \$4 billion oil refinery near Hambantota port.

In Brief:

About Hambantota Port:

- It is a strategically located port in Southern Srilanka.
- China under its One Belt One Road initiative endeavours to develop this port.
- This development from China is being considered by some analysts that it is part of China's String of Pearls strategy.



Note

