



## International Conference on Maritime Trade and Civilisational linkages among IOR countries to be held in March 2015 in Bhubaneswar

Eight Ministries of India and representatives of 20 nations to participate in the Event

**New Delhi/Bhubaneswar/Kolkata, 23 February 2015:** In a first of its kind confluence of Indian Ocean Rim countries in India, an International Conference titled “**India & the Indian Ocean: Renewing the Maritime Trade & Civilisational Linkages**”, will be held from 20 March to 22 March, 2015 at Bhubaneswar, Odisha on the eastern coast of India. Twenty nations from the region, popularly known as Indian Ocean Rim Countries, will participate in this three day deliberations covering vital aspects of Trade, Maritime Security and Civilisational linkages. The conference is supported by eight important Ministries of the Government of India - External Affairs, Petroleum & Natural Gas, Power, Shipping, Commerce & Industry, Culture, Tourism and Agriculture. It is expected to be a unique event with fruitful exchanges and deliberations of ideas and experiences among participating countries.

**Shrimati Sushma Swaraj, Hon’ble Minister of External Affairs** is slated to inaugurate the Conference as the Chief Guest. **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon’ble Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas**, will be the Guest of Honour. Celebrated members including **Shri Ajit Doval, NSA** as Guest of Honour and **Ambassador Shri KV Bhagirath, Secretary General of IORA** as Speaker will also grace the occasion with their views and insights. **Shri Manohar Parrikar, Hon’ble Defence Minister** will grace the event as the Chief Guest in the Valedictory Session on the concluding day.

The Conference is being organized by the Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS) jointly with Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). The three-day conference will have parallel sessions and serious deliberations on all the three vital aspects of Trade, Maritime Security and Civilisational linkages in the region.

Elaborating on the event, **Mr. Arindam Mukherjee, Secretary, Institute of Social and Cultural Studies**, said, “Indian Ocean is unique, not because it’s the only ocean named after a country, but also for the past 7,500 years, it has been a meeting point for Western, Northern, Eastern and South East Asian countries – and a gateway to the western world for many economies. Indian Ocean Rim Countries have strategic relevance as well as socio cultural similarities, which are key to fostering sustained economic as well as trade ties in the region. This conference will set a platform for exchange of ideas and therefore re-energize the concept of linkage in the backdrop of current geopolitical developments and alignments”.

“This conference will provide a valuable opportunity to study and analyze Indian Ocean from all the aspects and perspectives -historical, economical, geo political, cultural, energy security, religion, literature, trade, migration, diaspora, etc., and rejuvenate the deep ties that bind the regional



nations”, he further added.

Representatives from more than 20 countries, including Australia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives, Thailand, Mauritius, Indonesia, Malaysia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Madagascar, Singapore, Yemen, Oman, Iran, Kambodia etc. are expected to attend the Conference.

**The collaborating partners of the conference include** Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA); XP Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India; Department of International Relations & Co-operation, Republic of South Africa; Kenya National Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Odisha Institute of Maritime & South East Asian Studies and National Fisheries Development Board.

### **Highlights**

Knowledge sessions apart, an **Exhibition on the Indian Ocean: The Seafaring Legacy** will be organized on the Inaugural occasion of IOR Conference. This exhibition will showcase the vast heritage of the region, its inter-linkages, its synergic ideologies, cultural similarities and also display various symbols and remnants of the glorious past including Socotra, Terracotta art in Bengal, Boats of India, the text of Loan Agreement on Papyrus, Ramayana Tradition, Buddhism in South East Asian Countries, Bali - Land of Enchantment, Imprint of Indian Art in SEA, Deities & temples of Cambodia, Indian Linkages with Indonesia, Vietnam & other countries.

The event will be marked by the release of a **Postal Stamp on ‘Indian Ocean and RajendraChola I’**, commemorating the occasion and the glorious past.

### **About Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS)**

The Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS) is an organization promoting research and academic activities on various social and cultural issues. It has been working with academicians, students, researchers and activists on topics of historical and cultural interests. The objectives of the ISCS are to promote national and social integration as well as international understanding, preserve and arrange for documentation of national heritage including its intangible components, organize conferences, workshops, seminars, study groups to study public policies and their impact on society, grant fellowships for research and publish journals, books etc. for furtherance of the above objectives.

### **About Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)**

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), a New Delhi based autonomous think-tank under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, is an organization that specializes in policy research on international economic issues and development cooperation. RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity building among developing countries on international economic issues. The focus of the work program of RIS is to promote South- South Cooperation and assist developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. RIS is engaged in the Track II process of several regional initiatives. RIS is providing analytical support to the Government of India in the negotiations for concluding comprehensive economic cooperation agreements with partner countries. Through its intensive network of policy think tanks, RIS seeks to strengthen policy coherence on international economic issues.

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