

CURRENT AFFAIRS: 18.06.2026

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

The **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** is examining **Canada's application to become a dialogue partner** at the 28th Committee of Senior Officials meeting in New Delhi, reflecting the organisation's expanding maritime engagement.

- Canada is being considered due to its **extensive maritime expertise, including large coastal zones and experience in maritime safety, security, connectivity**, and ocean governance, which could benefit IORA member states.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

- About:** The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is **an intergovernmental organisation of 23 Member States and 12 Dialogue Partners**, promoting regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.
- Origin of Idea:** The concept was **first articulated by South African President Nelson Mandela during his 1995 visit to India**, emphasising natural historical and geographical linkages of Indian Ocean states.
- Evolution:** This idea led to the **Indian Ocean Rim Initiative in 1995**, which eventually resulted in the formation of IORA in 1997.
- Charter:** The IORA Charter serves as the foundational document guiding cooperation based on multilateralism, consensus, and non-intrusive engagement among member states.
- Priority Areas:** IORA focuses on **six priority areas** and **two cross-cutting issues** to promote sustainable regional cooperation and development in the Indian Ocean region.
- Institutional Mechanism:** The organisation functions through institutional structures including the **Council of Ministers (COM), Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), TROIKA, and the IORA Secretariat**.
- Member States:** IORA includes key Indian Ocean littoral states such as **India, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Oman, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Somalia, Comoros, Maldives, France, UAE, Iran, Bangladesh, Thailand, Singapore, and Yemen**, among others.
- Dialogue Partners:** IORA's dialogue partners include major global and regional actors such as the **United States, United Kingdom, China, Japan, European Union, Russia, Germany, Italy, Republic of Korea, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt**, reflecting its widening geopolitical engagement.

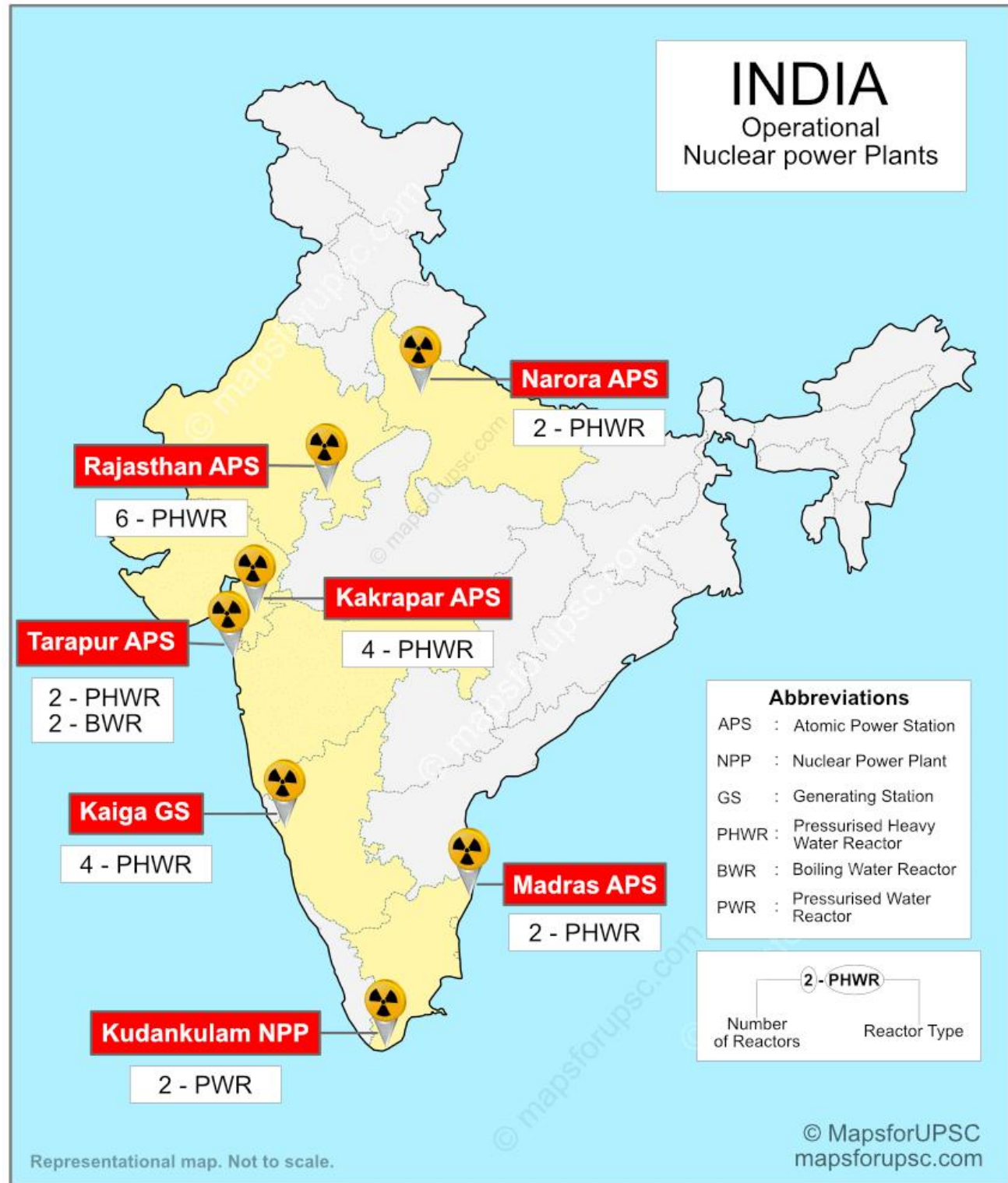


- **Global Linkages (Observer Status):** IORA holds observer status in key global institutions including the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**, **African Union (AU)**, and **UNCTAD**, enabling deeper international cooperation and representation of Indian Ocean interests in global governance.

Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project Unit-5 Milestone

The **Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL)** successfully completed the installation of the **Reactor Pressure Vessel (RPV)** at **Unit-5 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP)** in Tamil Nadu, marking a significant milestone in India's clean energy expansion with Russian collaboration.

- The development comes after the **Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)** granted clearance for major equipment erection and the installation of key nuclear island components.
- **Indo-Russian Collaboration:** The installation was executed with technical support from **Rosatom** (Russia's state nuclear energy corporation) and its engineering division, Atomstroyexport (ASE). This partnership operates under a historic **Intergovernmental Agreement** initially signed in 1988.
- **Reactor Pressure Vessel (RPV):** The RPV is a massive steel component weighing approximately 320 tonnes. Often referred to as the "heart" of a nuclear power plant, it houses the reactor core where **nuclear fission** takes place to generate energy.
- **Installation Technique:** The RPV was installed using the highly precise "**open-top**" method. In this technique, heavy equipment is lowered directly into the reactor building using a high-capacity crane before the containment dome is erected and closed.
- **Reactor Technology:** KKNPP is being developed in stages, utilizing Russian-designed **VVER-1000** (Water-Water Energetic Reactor) technology. These are a specific class of **Pressurized Water Reactors (PWR)** that use light water as both a coolant and a neutron moderator.
- **Current Operational Status:** The currently operational units (Units 1 and 2) have already generated over 127 billion kWh of electricity.
 - This has significantly reduced carbon emissions (avoiding over 112 million tonnes of CO₂), minimized coal dependence, and advanced India's sustainable development goals.
- **Significance for Energy Security:** Once all six planned units of KKNPP become operational, the Kudankulam complex will achieve a total installed capacity of **6,000 MWe (Mega Watt electrical)**.
 - The project will emerge as a major nuclear power hub, **supporting India's goal of achieving 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047 under the Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat.**



Rani Lakshmibai – Queen of Jhansi

Recently, on the death anniversary of Rani Lakshmibai (June 18), she was remembered for her enduring historical legacy.

Rani Lakshmibai	
Birth Name	Manikarnika Tambe
Born	19 November 1828, Varanasi
Trained in	Martial arts, swordsmanship, horsemanship, and fencing.
Married	Maharaja Gangadhar Rao Newalkar of Jhansi in 1842 at the age of 14
Adopted son	Damodar Rao
Died in	18 June 1858, Gwalior (age 29)
Burial	Phoolbagh Maidan, Gwalior

- **Doctrine of Lapse and Annexation of Jhansi** – It held that if a ruler of a princely state under British suzerainty died without a natural male heir, the state would “lapse” and be annexed, adopted heirs not recognized.
- It was introduced by Lord Dalhousie.
- Jhansi was annexed after Gangadhar Rao's death when Damodar Rao's claim was rejected, motivating Rani Lakshmibai to lead resistance against the East India Company.
- **Role in Revolt of 1857** – She reorganised her forces and fought the colonialists, despite her vigorous attempt at fighting the British, she lost the battle and her life in Revolt of 1857.

Revolt of 1857 started at May 10th 1857 and officially ended in July 08th 1859.

Nationalists' Recognition

- Oral traditions and folklore transformed her into India's greatest heroine.
- **Rabindranath Tagore** – Jhansir Rani (1877) was among the earliest literary works.
- **Subhadra Kumari Chauhan** – An iconic poem Jhansi ki Rani (1930) immortalised her valour.
- Vrindavan Lal Verma's novel (1946) and Mahasweta Devi's Jhansi Rani (1956) further canonised her legacy.
- **Prachi Deshpande** – Observed that her as idealised Indian womanhood in nationalist writings.
- **INA Connection** – Subhas Chandra Bose named the women's regiment of the Indian National Army (INA) as the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, cementing her place as a freedom struggle icon.

