

## **IRNSS**

### **Why in news?**

Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) was recognised by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

### **What happened?**

- The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the IMO recognised the IRNSS as a component of the World-wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS).
- After the US, Russia and China that have their own navigation systems, India became the fourth country to have its system recognised by IMO.

### **What is the IMO?**

- The IMO is the United Nations' specialised agency.
- It is responsible for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships.

### **What is the IRNSS?**

- The IRNSS is an independent regional navigation satellite system developed by India.
- The system is designed to provide accurate position information service to assist in the navigation of ships in the Indian Ocean waters.
- It is based on the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) satellites that are used for navigation.
- It could replace the US-owned Global Positioning System (GPS) in the Indian Ocean waters up to 1500 km from the Indian boundary.

### **What does the IMO's recognition of the IRNSS mean?**

- With the recognition, the IRNSS is similarly placed as GPS, most commonly used by marine shipping vessels across the world.
- Unlike GPS, IRNSS is a regional and not a global navigation system.
- This is also a significant achievement towards the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.

### **Who can make use of the IRNSS?**

- While the system will be open to all including security agencies, all merchant vessels including small fishing vessels are authorised to use the system.
- Vessels that have transponders will be tracked by satellite navigation showing accurate position in the Indian Ocean region.
- At any given time, there are at least 2,500 merchant vessels in Indian waters that can all use the IRNSS.

### **Why was it necessary for India to have its own navigation system?**

- An overdependence on one system (GPS) cannot be safe.
- The IMO encouraged countries to design their own navigation systems.
- The recognition accorded to IRNSS was in the process for two years.
- The IMO issued a circular announcing the recognition of the IRNSS to its member states.

**Source: The Indian Express**

