



**SELINUS UNIVERSITY**  
OF SCIENCES AND LITERATURE

# **INDIAN OCEAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY: CHALLENGES AND PERCEPTIONS**

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## **Abstract**

The Indian Ocean has become increasingly significant in global geopolitics, particularly in the “Asian Century.” Its strategic importance is immense, attracting the interests of both regional and extra-regional actors. The region's sea lines of communication (SLOCs) are crucial for global trade and economic security, yet the area remains underprepared to tackle environmental threats. Rising sea levels, changing weather patterns, and pollution are expected to lead to severe ecological and human consequences, especially for the Indian Ocean Rim countries.

Strategically, countries in the region are pressured to align with either the U.S. or China. The Gulf states, NATO, and EU countries support U.S. interests, while China continues to strengthen its partnerships, particularly with Pakistan. Despite tensions, China is likely to avoid direct confrontation in the Indian Ocean, focusing instead on economic expansion and maintaining stable relations with India to ensure secure energy routes. China's efforts to build a maritime bridge from Djibouti to Gwadar aim to enhance trade links, but full realization of this project depends on equal development across China's provinces.

The U.S. is expected to maintain its dominance, leveraging regional powers like India, Japan, and Australia to manage influence. However, internal challenges such as nationalism and "America First" policies may impact its global standing. The U.S. seeks to increase its strategic presence, especially around the Duqm Port, to monitor Chinese activities.

For Pakistan, regional cooperation is essential. Its limited resources and economic instability necessitate strategic alliances and avoidance of the U.S.-China rivalry. Developing the maritime sector and ensuring Gwadar Port's neutrality as an economic hub are key to its interests. Collaboration among Indian Ocean stakeholders is vital to transforming the region into a zone of peace, benefiting all, including Pakistan.

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## **1. Introduction**

Most of the contemporary literature on the Indian Ocean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century predominantly focuses on the maritime interests of states. However, much of this discourse is marred by biased perspectives rooted in national interest and a simplistic view of complex maritime dynamics. Key themes in current literature include the perceived perpetual rivalries involving the US & China, India & China, and to some extent, India & Pakistan, painting a rather pessimistic outlook for the region in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

A refreshing perspective emerges from the framework of Complex Interdependence, which advocates for an analytical approach emphasizing cooperative relationships among all stakeholders in the Indian Ocean. This perspective acknowledges the diverse and often conflicting interests of these stakeholders but underscores the necessity of dialogue and cooperation despite these differences.

The study delves into economic vulnerabilities and compulsions as pivotal factors shaping future interactions. For instance, it examines the intricate economic interdependencies such as the US reliance on China, the burgeoning trade relations between India and China, and the multifaceted challenges facing the Chinese Navy in safeguarding maritime interests beyond its immediate shores. These examples illustrate the profound interplay between military and economic dimensions in a globally interconnected world. Moreover, the research pivots around trilateral relationships involving the USA, China, and India, analyzing their respective strengths, weaknesses, and contrasting perceptions versus realities. It highlights the intertwined strategic and economic interdependencies within this geopolitical triangle, offering insights grounded in

contemporary theories of International Relations. Additionally, the study provides a nuanced analysis of Pakistan's strategic imperatives and its reliance on the Indian Ocean for future strategic directions. This holistic approach contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the Indian Ocean's evolving strategic landscape in the 21st century. Overall, the literature not only critiques prevailing national interest-centric viewpoints but also advocates for a deeper appreciation of the complexities and interdependencies shaping maritime geopolitics in the Indian Ocean region.

Unprecedented technological developments have had a groundbreaking impact on foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> The “Arab Spring” in the Middle East remains a pivotal example of a time when, despite the rule of authoritarian regimes, the people expressed their political freedoms via social media platforms. It is a fact<sup>2</sup> that the non-state entities comprising of media, citizens and civil society groups have the potential to bring in the collapse of even the most powerful and totalitarian regimes of the century.<sup>3</sup> Therefore concurring with the historical pretext, the interests of people matter even in the most authoritarian and repressive states, particularly the non-democratic ones where there is an inherent sense of paranoia regarding the regime security. In the case of China, the ruling elite has a similar mindset, having ousted the Nationalist government from the mainland to Taiwan.

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<sup>1</sup> Philip M. Seib, *The Future of Diplomacy* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2016)

<sup>2</sup> Tom G. Palmer, “Why Socialism Collapsed in Eastern Europe” (Cato Institute, September 30, 1990), <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/why-socialism-collapsed-eastern-europe>

<sup>3</sup> Leon Aron, “Everything You Think You Know About the Collapse of the Soviet Union Is Wrong,” *Foreign Policy*, June 20, 2011, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/06/20/everything-you-think-you-know-about-the-collapse-of-the-soviet-union-is-wrong/>



However, over the years, they have developed a sense of security, attaining the status of an “economic powerhouse”.

From a contemporary global perspective, the diplomatic interactions would be influenced by a large number of diasporas of Indian and Chinese origin, living in countries of Southeast Asia and in the West, which is also anticipated to bring in “restraint” by all powers. Similar is the case with the United States whose consortiums have vested interests in China, and India which has growing trade relations with the People’s Republic. The interests of all these non-state entities would prove beneficial in strengthening the bond of complex interdependence.

During the last three decades, strategic literature has been published by experts belonging to different schools of international relations reasoning. The discourses that remain prevalent in the Indian Ocean (IO) are based on the Indian thought process that traditionally remained focused on principles of “Strategic autonomy”. Thus, present literature coming out of India focuses on China “strategically encircling” India. On the other hand, Western literature presents their view via the “String of Pearls”, which conforms to the idea that the People’s Republic of China’s (PRC) presence in the IO brings instability and uncertainty. However, China’s claims and visions focus on the “Peaceful rise of the country”, which it stresses is pivotal for the success of the Maritime Silk Road initiative. The Chinese literature talks about the “common destiny” of IO

countries via cooperative and multi-party development as fundamental for the smooth running of economic engines.

Other issues which are being debated amongst different schools of thought, that directly impact Pakistan's maritime interests include the impact of Gwadar Port on Pakistan's economy and diplomatic relations with the USA, Arab World, Russia, CARs, India and Iran. Furthermore, it is also important to highlight the impact of Gwadar Port on international trade/ globalization, the requirement of a strong Navy for Pakistan because of international SLOCs terminating in Gwadar, the importance of preference for Human Security in state-to-state relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and Indian naval buildup and subsequent threat to regional maritime interests.

The influence of geo-economic compulsions would act as a deterrent to, but not eliminate, the security imperatives of the big three powers, concurring with the world beset by international anarchy and realism. However, it is believed that the Indian Ocean would experience more cooperative relations among the "Big Three"<sup>4</sup> at sea in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than anywhere else on the globe. It is hoped that this dissertation will contribute positively to previous knowledge by setting aside state-biased perceptions and providing insight for policymakers, academics, and strategists.

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<sup>4</sup> Harsh Bhasin, *The Big Three: The Emerging Relationship Between the United States, India and China in the Changing World Order* (Routledge, 2010)

There are visible differences in the strengths of all three big powers, i.e. USA, China and India. There is also a wide difference between India and Pakistan in terms of size, economic strength, and military strength. *Critical vulnerabilities and geo-pol-economic compulsion will force all stakeholders of the Indian Ocean to exercise interdependent and cooperative diplomacy, turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Perceptions of animosity, war hysteria, conflicts, simmering inter-state relations and the fight for resources will continue to prevail in the Indian Ocean, but in reality, all states, their leadership and people will act rationally and continue to have peaceful relations.* Thus, all four countries have different roles to play in the world arena at large and in the Indian Ocean in particular. With particular reference to Pakistan focusing on the revival of the national economy through an emphasis on the utilization of its true maritime potentials can only then safeguard its maritime interests in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will also ensure a clear path for rapid economic growth and social development. This interplay of perceptions and realities of inter-state relations of all key stakeholders leads to generating a hypothesis: growing interdependence in the Indian Ocean Region leads to an increased possibility of cooperation and a decreased probability of war among states.

To understand the issue in totality and limit the scope of the study, the following issues have been discussed to affirm or deny the above hypotheses:

- a. How important is the control and dominance of the Indian Ocean to major powers?

- b. How do the emerging trends in Indian Ocean politics connote the concept of Complex interdependence and strengthen the viabilities for cooperative diplomacy/ behaviour?
- c. How are the major maritime security challenges in the Indian Ocean defining the behaviour of the major stakeholders in safeguarding their economic, political and strategic interests in the transforming IOR?
- d. How can the Indian Ocean materialize as a “Zone of Peace” in a 21st-century environment characterized by threat perception in the traditional and non-traditional realms?

The research further analyzes the following supplementary issues:

- a. How and why eccentricity of global and regional rationale in the Indian Ocean maritime environment will affect the behaviour of major players in the Indian Ocean?
- b. How are the major stakeholders devising strategies to maintain strategic stability in the Indian Ocean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- c. How are the emerging trends and transformations in the Indian Ocean Region in the 21st century likely to revisit the viability of “Indian Ocean” as “A Zone of Peace”?

- d. To examine the impacts of the changing Indian Ocean power dynamics on Pakistan, how developments in the Indian Ocean have presented a challenge to Pakistan's maritime interest and what are the possible remedies?

### 1.1. Theoretical Perspective

The discipline of International Relations (IR) differs in two imperative aspects from several other disciplines of academic enquiry. It is a dynamic process that is inseparable from human choice. The subject matter is constantly evolving with rapidly evolving headlines and requires any regional stakeholder to make it an inextricable part of the process to observe and keep up with the latest developments, perhaps more intimately than Eisenstein ever had imagined.<sup>5</sup> International relations is not an abstract subject and is neither the exclusive preserve of scholars caring only for the establishment of academic standards and advancement of learning. It is not a fine art, in which prudent influencer might be irrelevant to the intrinsic merits of poem or picture. It is hard for scholars of international relations to prevent their subjects from being functional in real-world politics. The data and facts are gathered from the potencies of global events and actions. The mere ordering and classification of the data, its interpretation and conclusions derived can hardly be concealed, with extended analyses often having unintended and indirect impressions. Mahan's books influenced the 'sea power' epitome of Wilhelm II<sup>6</sup> which was instrumental in the naval arms buildup that preceded the First World War. This example is a reflection of how ideas, once out would influence actions. Without an understanding

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<sup>5</sup> James Cable, *Diplomacy at Sea*, 1st ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985)

<sup>6</sup> Kennedy, Paul M. *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*. 1st ed. Allen Lane, 1976

of the philosophical conception upon which specific actions were based, the actions themselves can neither be adequately understood nor fairly judged. Any account of such political undertakings must begin with a brief review of the intellectual foundation on which those actions rest.<sup>7</sup>

The activity of theorizing in international relations provides a way for determining the rationale behind the right action in the wake of immediate problems in a political environment that is on the verge of transformation. A theoretical framework is integral to any scientific research as it provides clear explanations and guidelines for world political trends. The political realist falls short of providing an adequate basis for analyzing the politics of interdependence.<sup>8</sup> Complex interdependence is attributed to Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, considered the reverse of classical realism and is “closer to reality than realism.”<sup>9</sup> The realist paradigm is based on three foundational assumptions: Firstly, it centres on the notion of states as being the predominant actors in world politics. Secondly, force is recognized as a usable and effective instrument of policy, which is most effective and brings in the desired results. Thirdly, it is assumed that in the hierarchy of global issues, the questions of military security have unrivalled preponderance over the others. In other words, the “high politics” of defence and security dominates the “low politics” of social and economic affairs. Realism, nevertheless, remains to be the primary discourse in the politics of International Relations. States, to this day, evaluate their geostrategic

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<sup>7</sup> Nixon, Richard. 1969-1974. U. S. foreign policy for the 1970's: the emerging structure of peace. report to the Congress, United States.: [Washington: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U. S. Govt. Print. Off., 1972].

<sup>8</sup> Waheeda Rana, “Theory of Complex Interdependence: A Comparative Analysis of Realist and Neoliberal Thoughts,” *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 6, no. 2 (February 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Joseph S. Nye and Robert O. Keohane, *Power and Interdependence*, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman, 2001).

visions using the ideas of Thucydides, Sun Tzu and Machiavelli.<sup>10</sup> However, this dissertation will attempt to use a “Complex Interdependence” framework instead, so as to balance perspectives from multiple schools of thought within international relations.

Complex interdependence is based on the assumption that societies are connected by multiple channels that go above and beyond the traditional notion of states. Governmental and non-governmental elites have been given special significance as instrumental in shaping preferences. Literature on this subject matter is vastly available, indicating how governmental power has waned with the advent of globalization and a powerful private class. The inclusion of multinational corporations and banks in this bracket signifies the increasing manifold of interdependence between the state and the business community.<sup>11</sup> The significance of this can be substantiated by US-China bilateral trade amounting to \$710.4 billion,<sup>12</sup> Despite recent US rhetoric and various heated disagreements on topics such as the South China Sea, economics, and cyberspace, business relationships act as a “transmission belt,” bringing issues to the negotiating table. In this way, the impact of domestic activities has broadened, with local decisions having effects that transcend national boundaries.

In this era, foreign economic policies intersect with domestic politico-economic activities at an unprecedented scale as they include interstate relationships consisting of

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<sup>10</sup> Sylvest, Casper. “John H. Herz and the Resurrection of Classical Realism.” Sage Journal 22, no. 4 (December 1, 2008): 441–455. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117808097310>

<sup>11</sup> Kal J. Holsti, “Review: A New International Politics? Diplomacy in Complex Interdependence,” *International Organization* 32, no. 2 (1978): pp. 513-530, [www.jstor.org/stable/2706275](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706275)).

<sup>12</sup> “The People's Republic of China,” The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), accessed October 8, 2018, <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/china-mongolia-taiwan/peoples-republic-china>).

multiple issues that are not prioritized within a hierarchical order.<sup>13</sup> The absence of this indicates that military security will not always dominate the state agenda. Kissinger, in this context, provides hindsight on the 'new issues', writing that energy, environment, population and ocean space would rival competitively with state ideology and military security on the foreign policy tabloid. Complex interdependence also requires the assumption that the line between domestic and foreign issues has become blurred to such an extent that departments within the government compete for political supremacy. In short, complex interdependence suggests that offsetting traditional military interests with economic and other ties leads to a more interlinked system, and any participatory state will not resort to the use of military force towards other governments due to the adverse impact it may have on itself in the larger scheme of things. However, where relations with rival blocs are concerned, the military would continue to be an important component in balancing geostrategic rivalries.

Complex dependence theorists question the traditional character of military supremacy in global politics. It is argued that fears of attack have generally declined to a point where they are virtually nonexistent in between the great powers. The times of the Cold War, when the world was in danger of nuclear war, have long since passed, and the memories of the Cuban Missile Crisis have become distant memories not applicable in the modern era. Force is no longer considered appropriate or, for a matter, an effective way to achieve state objectives. China reiterated its commitment towards a "Peaceful

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<sup>13</sup> "A NEW NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP Address by Secretary Kissinger," vol. LXXII, 1975) Henry Kissinger, "A New National Partnership," Department of State Bulletin, February 17, 1975.



Rise” and echoed similar beliefs during the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress.<sup>14</sup> For countries whose relations follow the pattern presented by complex interdependence, two factors remain important. The first is that drastic change brought within via social and political means could invoke force to become the dominant mechanism of the state’s policy yet again. Secondly, despite the role of the commercial community and business elites, a country providing security guarantees to another would harbour increasing political influence over that country.

Concurring with the pretext, the authoritarian countries in these situations would be reluctant to use force to acquire economic gains. The imperative behind it is the ineffectiveness of the use of force, which is likely to disrupt other vital relations. In the globalized world, it is impossible to control citizens mobilized by societal developments and media by bringing in troops and weaponry. The fluctuating demarcation of power has had effects making matters more complex. It would be interesting to debate how complex interdependence would interplay in the wake of a matter that is considered life and death for the state. In this case, the realist assumption of military force would become increasingly relevant.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Zaeem Hassan Mehmood, “Xi Jinping’s ‘New Era’: International Implications in the Light of the 19th CPC Congress,” The Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research (CSCR), accessed October 18, 2018, <https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/politics-governance/xi-jinpings-new-era-international-implications-light-19th-cpc-congress/>

<sup>15</sup> Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Power and Interdependence in the Information Age,” *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 5 (1998), <https://doi.org/10.2307/20049052>

World politics is like a seamless web under the paradigm of complex interdependence where the utility of military force is diminished to subsidiary levels. In this scenario where geo-economics would prevail over geopolitics, issues of the day would be determined by the distribution of power resources, and trade volumes where shipping and essential commodities such as oil would predicate the outcomes. When economic objectives are at stake, an economically robust state would try to influence global outcomes. However, it must be noted that objectives of economic nature have political implications. Therefore, the interplay of domestic, transnational and trans-governmental actors would be significant. As the use of force comes to a 'diminishing marginal utility', other issues of non-military nature would become more significant. In this surrounding, the distribution of power within each issue will be more important. States, therefore, particularly those at a relative decline in power would try to use their asymmetrical interdependence, politicizing it to transform into a source of power. Trump administration it can be debated has used this rhetoric to bring in revision of agreements. States in this way will approach economic interdependence in terms of power formation which domestic political elites use to rally people. The "America Great Again!" slogan arguably can be termed as an example. It is proposed that concurring to complex interdependence; monetary politics, commodity trade in the forms of oil, food and the role of multi-national venture projects such as "One Road Initiative" would be at all times high on the interstate agenda. This agenda, however, would be greatly influenced by domestic factors such as fiscal growth. Discontented domestic groups would likely politicize issues that could shape and shift the distribution of power resources.

The statesmen in this context would have an important role, having the ability to calculate and manipulate the interdependence mechanism in the state's favour. Under complex interdependence, certain questions would be determined in the face of the emerging trends in the IOR. In the interplay of the interests of regional and extra-regional actors, how far can one push the adversary before it becomes counterproductive? Whether one should seek formal or under-the-table informal agreements to politically sensitive matters. The role of traditional non-military instruments of power such as Cyber warfare, terrorism and the use of proxy actors such as India and Pakistan in the overall geostrategic landscape cannot be ruled out. Robert Jervis is a notable figure in International Security and Politics known for presenting the "Cooperation under Security Dilemma" model, which illustrates the gains from state-to-state cooperation and discusses why relations turn to a point of breakdown.<sup>16</sup> The world, according to political experts and scientists, never remains static and is always on the move, dictated by geopolitics, the environment and the surrounding events. Over the years, transformations of large scale have taken place moving the world from a multipolar, bipolar and to a unipolar world with the self-claimed victory of the United States. The international power structure over the years has seen drastic transformations from multi-polar to bi-polar, and in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to unipolar, arguably a non-polar world.<sup>17</sup> Deriving from this debate, it can be argued that the world is in a constant process of evolution that is shaped largely by events and state decisions. The First World War brought an end to the imperial ambitions of Wilhelm's Germany. The Second World War led to the

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<sup>16</sup> Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 1978): pp. 167-214, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009958>)

<sup>17</sup> Richard N Haass, "The Age of Nonpolarity: What Will Follow U.S. Dominance," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 3 (2008): pp. 44-56, [www.jstor.org/stable/20032650](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20032650))

decolonization of states, whereas the Cold War led the USA to revisit its policy of isolationism.<sup>18</sup> Globalization has been the coined word since the collapse of the “Iron Curtain,” where the world has had an enhanced degree of interconnectedness and interdependence. A decision made in Dhaka over labor laws can have a consequential effect on Washington, not to mention the entire globe. In the words of Francis Fukuyama, the end of the Cold War brought unprecedented global change, with the victory of liberal-market democracy as the “End of History”. A renewed hope was ignited that geo-economics would replace geopolitics as the dominant state mindset. However, events have proven otherwise, giving greater credibility to realist notions of chaos and anarchy in the international system. Kaplan writes that American policymakers cannot absolve themselves from the ‘Cold War fog’ which continues to dominate their doctrinal thinking on significant issues, including the Indian Ocean. He argues that the Indian Ocean provides for the future of a ‘new international order’ that would be decisive for American power's future.<sup>19</sup>

Robert Jervis, in his writings, presents a blend of liberal-realist approaches that provide a framework for seeing the contemporary world transforming gradually from the American unipolar structure to a mixed-multipolar one, where the United States continues to play the leading role. Indian Ocean, in this context, provides a unique picture in which American and Asian policymakers have realized that the advantages of cooperation and

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<sup>18</sup> IANs, “India Essential Component of Multipolar World: UN Secretary General,” Business Standard (Business-Standard, October 2, 2018), [https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-essential-component-of-multipolar-world-un-secretary-general-118100200847\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-essential-component-of-multipolar-world-un-secretary-general-118100200847_1.html)

<sup>19</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN POWER* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2011)

the costs of breakdown would force the state's leader to consider the decision to wage a war carefully, rationally, and comprehensively. To further the argument, he adds that statesmen know that entering a war can set off a chain of unpredictable and uncontrollable events. This is particularly true and relevant in the case of the Indian Ocean, which is considered the most nuclearized of all oceans, where there is an active naval presence of the Americans, British, French, Indians, Pakistani, Chinese, and Israelis, as well as "rogue" regimes such as North Korea and Iran, which brings concern to the international community. The principles of "Nuclear deterrence" that have given birth to nuclear peace and international stability are also applicable in this scenario. Cooperation rather than war seems to be the order of the day, although, most times, it would be compulsive rather than voluntary. Added to that are the domestic costs of war that cannot be undermined even for stronger states, writes Robert Jervis. Wars in Vietnam and, most recently, Iraq and Afghanistan have brought in a "no ground troops" mentality among the US public. Despite the powerful American lobby of the military-industrial complex, considered the most powerful at Capitol Hill and the increased lethality of conventional and nuclear capabilities, the notions of cooperation seem to dominate the American public mindset. It should be noted that "isolationism" was the standard policy of the US State Department during the interwar years. It was gradually shifted to a policy of 'containment' during the Cold War.<sup>20</sup> US policymakers are in constant dilemma, more so after the ascendance of Donald J. Trump in the White House. According to authors such as Kaplan, the Cold War mentality must be negated as the concept and acquisition of

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<sup>20</sup> Robert Jervis and Thierry Balzacq, "Logics of Mind and International System: A Journey with Robert Jervis," *Review of International Studies* 30, no. 4 (October 2004): pp. 559-582, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210504006230>

naval bases has caused indigenous opposition and American distrust. Thirdly, Jervis believes that states with more diverse economies are likely to cooperate more. However, it is debated that there are no certainties in International Relations as the rationale of one state or leader could later turn out to be irrational in the years to come. For Hitler to open the Russian front during the Second World War seemed rational to him at that time, whereas for Saddam Hussein, the invasion of Kuwait was a sound decision. Therefore, interdependence is not a guarantee of peace. In the years before the First World War, Normal Angell argued that the war to come was impossible because of Great power and economic interdependence. The Second World War and Pearl Harbor happened despite the USA being the most important trading partner of Japan. Fourthly, "Cooperation under Security Dilemma" talks about cooperation, writing that it has a double payoff, bringing satisfaction, gains and prosperity to the other. Thus, negating the conception of a zero-sum mentality. Jervis mentions several different scenarios that provide a better contextual framework of the gains from cooperation and the costs of breakdown. He starts by mentioning the Stag Hunt, attributed to Rousseau, who professes that the primary goal of the states would be to cooperate and 'trap the stag', if they do so in this scenario, all will be satisfied. Whereas if they refuse to do so and instead chase a 'rabbit', none of the others would gain anything. Prisoner's Dilemma is the scenario that follows Jervis's writing, where he adds that the actors have a common interest in avoiding mutual non-cooperation. Chicken Game is another scenario that is mentioned, which reflects the substance that is behind complex interdependence. In this situation, if it is believed that the other side will defect, the states cooperate because cooperation is not as bad as a

total breakdown of relations.<sup>21</sup> Interest is a universal language and, if properly comprehended, can lead men to compromise principles, divide them and, if pressed, alter their different conclusions <sup>22</sup>

At the international level, states act in a highly structured, interdependent system. Morgenthau argues that the state's national interests, primarily the strategic and military ones, depend upon the political context in which that state has formulated its foreign policy.<sup>23</sup> This aspect helps the reader understand the Chinese and Indian initiatives in the Indian Ocean. Similarly, the issue of Pakistan launching Gwadar Port and handing it over to China, despite the overall design of the US in the Indian Ocean, is also worthy of studying in detail. Interdependence has been debated in the state's policy circles and by academics. James Cable has called interdependence an equilibrium that allows for the 'dependence of national decisions on foreign views to be balanced by the degree of dependence of foreign decisions on national views.'<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 1978): pp. 167-214, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009958>

<sup>22</sup> Grant Hugo and James Cable, *Britain in Tomorrow's World: Principles of Foreign Policy* (New York: Chatto & Windus, 1969)

<sup>23</sup>W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz and Edward N Zalta, "Political Realism in International Relations," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Center for the Study of Language and Information (CSLI), Stanford University , May 2017), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/realism-intl-relations/>

<sup>24</sup> James Cable, *Diplomacy at Sea*, 1st ed. (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985)

## 1.2. Literature Review

Research of existing literature provides knowledge about the key player's interests in the Indian Ocean. Similarly, an exponential amount of literature is available on the Indian Ocean, underlining the challenges and problems rather than the solutions, with various causes and conclusions. The material available, however, has been scattered in the form of books, research dissertations, interviews and policy doctrines. Guidance is scattered when it comes to the peaceful resolution of the power competition and the significance of naval diplomacy in the Indian Ocean. The data is accessible in the public domain in the form of declassified reports, and published proceedings by the various departments of related states are consulted. However, the major limitation is access to classified strategies. Nevertheless, various scholars have tried to address these limitations and produced quality arguments in literature. There remains an ambiguity in understanding the Chinese naval policy due to the language barriers and certain traditions of the state, which are shadowed by policies of secrecy and concealment.

Admiral Kohli in *Sea Power and the Indian Ocean*<sup>25</sup> (1978) argues for India to assume the role of the dominant naval power in the region in the wake of the power vacuum created by British withdrawal from the east of Suez. The author traces the strategic culture of the Indian Navy from the pre-British Raj times to the present, covering maritime law and regional customs in detail. Admiral believes in the need for a strategic shift in thinking from a continental mindset to a maritime arena. It is a well-known fact that only states with maritime power were able to dominate the world stage in known history.

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<sup>25</sup> Sourendra Nath Kohli, *Sea Power and the Indian Ocean: with Special Reference to India* (Tata McGraw-Hill, 1978)



India is also no exception. The Admiral argues that “sea power” is defined to be the notable attribute of the international system. It is argued that the Navy has the capability of projecting Indian interests beyond the immediate region. India and China both understand the importance of the maritime sector in development. It is, therefore, for the Navy, as advocated by the Admiral, considered vital for ensuring secure sea lines of communications and the safety of maritime resources.

Realism remains the predominant approach in the conduct of international affairs; the world perhaps has grown to be more intricate in the post-Cold War period, seeing the emergence of non-traditional security threats in the form of proliferation of nuclear weapons, cyber warfare and non-state terrorist actors. The equation is further complexed by the rise of India and China and the resurgence of Russia, which is giving birth to a “mix-multi polar order” where the US retains the superpower titular with an unmatched military budget. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema describes the underlying fundamentals of great power interest at the bay in *Conflict and Cooperation in the Indian Ocean: Pakistan’s Interests and Choices*<sup>26</sup>, a policy paper written in the years after the former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, provides a contextual analysis of the then prevalent geopolitical realities of bipolar world order. However, the findings remain relevant and applicable to policymakers in Pakistan. The patterns of conflict and cooperation illustrated by Dr Cheema have the same essence, with, at present, the inclusion of China and India as major players with the aspirations that once remained to be the exclusive realm of the

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<sup>26</sup> Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, *Conflict and Cooperation in the Indian Ocean: Pakistan's Interests and Choices* (Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defense) (Australian National University press, 1980)

superpowers. The author, concurring with the regional environments, suggests either bilateralism or non-alignment as the suitable way.

Pakistan needs to improve its relations with its neighbours and reconcile itself with the changed patterns in the area. To offset the economic benefits from 'special relationships' with the United States, emphasis should be placed on cultivating good relations with Europe, ASEAN and Australia, in addition to its neighbours and the Islamic world.<sup>27</sup>

The impact of technology on Military Operations cannot be over-emphasized. All powers like to accumulate power both in military and economic domains. However, military power is dependent on the advancement of technology. Geoffrey Till, in *Modern Sea Power*<sup>28</sup>, discusses the impact of technology on naval power. We know that a strong Navy acts as a significant contributor to the Sea Power. Moreover, Navies have a definite role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to safeguard the interest of the state and, accordingly, adopt changes in their operations to adjust according to the political, legal and technological environment. On the other hand, Paul Kennedy in *Rise and Fall of Great Powers*<sup>29</sup> provides an extraordinary analysis of all the dominant powers from the Muslim empires to the Spanish, followed by the bipolar world order of the US-Soviet Union. His argument

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<sup>27</sup> Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, *Conflict and Cooperation in the Indian Ocean: Pakistan's Interests and Choices* (New Delhi: Heritage, 1981), 66.

<sup>28</sup> Geoffrey Till, *Modern Sea Power: An Introduction* (Brassey's Sea Power), 1st ed. (London: Potomac Books Inc., 1987)

<sup>29</sup> Paul M Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (Vintage Books, 1989)

and critique of the naval and land schools of thought are still valid. His argument about the decline of China as a great power in the 16<sup>th</sup> century is even valid today. This occurred when China banned sea-faring naval vessels from going out to sea and far-flung areas. The indicators for powers have been broadly described, with emphasis laid from a realist-oriented perspective on securing trade, borders and frontiers. Paul Kennedy's book is very relevant in this context, as it provides answers for the present and future via an interpretation of past facts and decisions using a rational approach. His arguments also helped this research arrive at conclusive arguments that maritime power is of the utmost importance and vital for the state-seeking role at the global level. It is for this reason that modern nation-states will always endeavor to protect their maritime interests at all costs.

Realism and all its approaches help in understanding the strategic environment at the global stage of past & present and help in predicting the future. We know that power accumulation is the key and pivotal to all states, according to Realism. Morgenthau points this behaviour of the states to human nature, with the goal of power maximization<sup>30</sup>. It is believed that geostrategic and economic calculations occupied a central position in the foreign policy of the superpowers. Selig S. Harrison and K. Subrahmanyam advocated the same in *The Superpower Rivalry in the Indian Ocean: Indian and American Perspective*<sup>31</sup>. They argue that Americans were active in the area, having retained air and naval bases of the Second World War. The Soviets were latecomers in the Indian Ocean,

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<sup>30</sup>Hans J Morgenthau and Kenneth W Thompson, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955)

<sup>31</sup>Subrahmanyam K Kattumunda and Selig S. Harrison, *Superpower Rivalry in the Indian Ocean: Indian and American Perspectives* (Oxford University Press, 1989))

particularly because they had a weaker navy and Stalin showed little enthusiasm in patrolling the waters of the Third World countries. It was only after the Cuban Missile Crisis that the Soviets began investing heavily in the navy. Khrushchev realized that the only way to contain China after the Sino-Soviet split was to gain access to the “warm water ports” of the Indian Ocean, which had also been the aspiration of Tsar Peter the Great.

The development of a maritime force by China to safeguard its maritime interest in the South China Sea is being debated in military and literary circles even today. We know that countries do collect and modernize their armed forces to address their weaknesses and to maximize their power. Tokyo Foundation published an excerpt titled *Japan's Security Strategy Towards China* (2011), which describes how the military modernization by the PLA increases the sense of insecurity in Japan. Similar is the case with Pakistan, where the Indian modernization plan creates a challenge for Pakistan's security. It is added that this alone is not the only reason for insecurity, certain historical factors add to these tensions. The regional buildup of naval power by China has been blamed for the new arms race in Asia-Pacific. Similarly, the Indian purchases of modern weapons create an arms race in the sub-continent. Pakistan, due to meagre resources, cannot match such escalating conventional challenges and thus resorts to nuclear technology. In other words, suppliers of modern weaponry to India are fueling the nuclear arms race in the sub-continent. These trends in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean would change

the prevalent security architecture and regional power balance to swing towards China and India which is likely to use it to sway territorial disputes in their favour.<sup>32</sup>

China and India are two big powers in Asia. They have been trading partners for ages. Now, their trade relations, despite all frictions, are improving day by day. Mohan Malik in *China and India: Great Power Rivals*<sup>33</sup> provides a historical overview of Sino-Indian relations by tracing the inter-civilizational interactions of the past. He is of the view that the stage is set for “more competition than cooperation between Han and Hindu in the twenty-first century.” The clash is deep-rooted in the strategic cultures being played in geopolitics and geo-economics.

### 1.3. Organization of Research

This research has been divided into eight chapters. The introduction includes the literature review, which has been the basis of the research. The section covers the critical study of primary and secondary-tier data comprising strategy papers and doctrines followed by books, journal articles and dissertations from various sources. The discourse has been examined from Pakistani, Chinese, Indian and American thought processes and has been comparatively analyzed with that of neutral countries of Europe and Asia to account for any study bias. The Pakistani point of view is presented in the form of primary documents of Pakistan Navy and the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. The significant

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<sup>32</sup> “Maritime Multilateral Security Cooperation in East and South Asia: Research,” The Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, March 25, 2015, <https://www.tkfd.or.jp/en/research/detail.php?id=311>)

<sup>33</sup> Mohan Malik, *China and India: Great Power Rivals* (Boulder: FIRSTFORUMPRESS- DIVISION OF LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS, INC, 2011)

chunk of literature is attributed to Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, Khoker, Ibn Ali and Hassan Malik in the maritime realm. The Chinese writers have started publishing their literature in the English language and have borrowed from the Western thinking of Mahan, Cables and Holmes in this matter, alongside the geopolitical approaches of Mackinder. The writings considered for this study include those of Emrys Chew, Fengyin Chen, Jiejum Ni and Yufan Hao. Indian writers have written considerably on the matter, and significant concepts such as “String of Pearls” portray the PRC as an offensive power that needs to be contained in the major themes in the literature. Admiral Kohli, K. Mohan, Manoj Gupta and Malik are notable figures in the subject matter. The US approach is based on Mahan (accumulation of naval power based on big ships), while naval commanders such as Admiral Mike Mullen and Admiral James Stavridis have incorporated different ideas. In his August 2005 address at the Naval War College, Admiral Mullen proposed the formation of a global fleet or a 1000-ship Navy. He advocated for global maritime security arrangements to synergize collective security in the maritime domain. Global trade and commerce depend upon unhindered sea lines of communication. His count of 1000 ships included US and allied navies to ensure safety and security at sea for international commerce and trade. It is also a fact that the US economy has been overburdened because of military conflicts to support existing military expenditures. Therefore, the Admiral proposes increased cooperation and interdependence of like-minded states.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Bryan G. McGrath, “1,000-Ship Navy and Maritime Strategy,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 133 (January 2007)

The theoretical framework remains integral to the course of study, providing a clear and conclusive explanation. “Complex Interdependence” was utilized for this purpose which underlined how the forces of globalization have intertwined a system where geo-economic interests carry weight despite the geopolitics continuing to influence states' mindset. The section followed debates in the IR paradigm comprising the predominant realpolitik mindset propagated by Machiavelli<sup>35</sup>, Hobbes<sup>36</sup> and Thucydides<sup>37</sup>. It is believed that the States' cooperation or non-cooperation will depend on evaluating cost gains or losses. States are considered rational actors and decisions for cooperation; interdependence will be purely subject to self-interest. This also indicates that cooperation under the security dilemma is quite possible as sometimes, gains of cooperation between adversaries are greater than non-cooperation. Iran – US relations are a prime example of the same. The US has placed strict economic sanctions on Iran; however, Chahbahar Port is yet to be covered under the same sanctions. Any

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<sup>35</sup> Cary Nederman, “The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,” in The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/machiavelli/>

Niccolo Machiavelli's approaches Realism from different angle. He believed that political realism can be applied to both domestic and international affairs. He did not believe that relevance of morality in politics but advocates states should follow and practice all means (moral and immoral) to achieve political results.

<sup>36</sup>W Julian Korab-Karpowicz and Edward N Zalta, “Political Realism in International Relations,” in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Center for the Study of Language and Information (CSLI), Stanford University , May 2017), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/realism-intl-relations/>

Hobb believe that anarchy exist at inter-state & global level, where, moral values and laws have no meaning. All actors (states) can justify aggression in self-interest. He also supports theories in International relations derived out of past incidence, thus, international cooperation between like-minded states is possible. But this cooperation again will be from the prism of self-interest only.

<sup>37</sup> Thucydides argues that possibility of war exists when ambitious rising nation challenge the existing power. In this backdrop, theorists argue that US is being challenged by China, hence, possibility of conflict exist, similarly, China-India relations have similar connotation. But in view of Machiavelli's teachings and Hobbs argument, War is unlikely in present geo-strategic environment in Indian Ocean and states will continue to cooperate with each other despite simmering relations and clash of interests.

decision to put curbs on Chahbahar Port will be subject to a complete analysis of the need for a road and rail link route available in Iran to connect Afghanistan. Thus, this research uses the “Cooperation under Security Dilemma” model of Robert Jervis<sup>38</sup>. It is, therefore, despite the growing security concerns that cooperation remains the rational way forward for all stakeholders in the Indian Ocean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Chapter One* underlies the strategic significance of the Indian Ocean as being “pivotal to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” with a special focus on the issues of Maritime Security. Discussion revolves around the concept that the Indian Ocean is truly a “Global Ocean” and that the Global Economy depends upon the peaceful environment of the Indian Ocean. The challenges and opportunities are elaborated upon in a structured manner by first adding the significance of maritime power from the writings of naval commanders such as Admiral Nelson, Admiral Mahan and Admiral Gorshkov. The practitioner significance follows this via case studies and examples of major crises during the past century, there is discussion on the evolution and importance of modern diplomacy, extending the concept to maritime power by explicating it with the modern trends in the post-Cold War 21<sup>st</sup> century world characterized by mixed multi-polar order and relatively declining US influence. Important issues like the compulsions of great powers to dominate the Indian Oceans have also been included in this chapter. *Chapter Two* details the role of Maritime Power and Diplomacy in the Indian Ocean. The trends in IOR are critically seen from a historical perspective, where the region gained prominence and became the most nuclearized region of the world today. The chokepoint politics in the light of converging ocean strategies of “String of Pearls/Peaceful Rise of China”, “Look East”, and “Pivot towards

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Jervis, “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 1978): pp. 167-214, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009958>



Asia". The overarching approach of "Complex Interdependence" remains vital in the interplay, considering the mutual interests of SLOCs' stability and security, as well as the wide array of traditional and non-traditional security threats. *Chapter Three* addresses the prevailing perceptions about security challenges in the Indian Ocean in both traditional and non-traditional threats. Moreover, effort has also been made to discuss the role of great powers' maritime interests, their geo-economic & geo-strategic compulsions, the need for maritime alliances, trade patterns and vulnerabilities. This has helped in separating some of the perceptions (like mistrust, rivalry, enmity among the USA & China and chances of conflicts leading to war) from the reality of 21<sup>st</sup>-century needs. *Chapter Four* provides an extension to the preceding ones by contemplating whether the Indian Ocean has the prospective of transforming into the "Zone of Peace" envisioned by the Sri Lankan delegation in the wake of British departure and century-old security guarantees from the East of Suez. The dynamics of conflict and cooperation in the wake of "China's Dream" have also been included in this chapter. *Chapter Five* gives insight into Pakistan's maritime challenges, interests, and available options. Pakistan's maritime interests have been discussed in detail because of its growing population, scarcity of land resources, vulnerable economy, land-oriented mindset of leaders, population, available options in the fields of the maritime sector, and blue economy. The chapter also investigates the maritime security imperatives, including regional security challenges. Some possible ways to improve Pakistan's economic sector and subsequent recommendations have been included. The chapter also deals with the international maritime environment having a direct effect on Pakistan. In the *Final Chapter*, concluding

remarks about the whole research work, along with the final answer to hypotheses and research questions, have also been addressed.

## **2. Research Methodology**

This research uses the following three approaches to conclude the findings of the study:

- a. Theoretical and Conceptual Discussions. Realism and all its key approaches have been the main theoretical base for all discussions, which helped in understanding the strategic environment of the Indian Ocean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This facilitated the prediction of future courses of action by the three main powers. However, “Complex interdependence” is the key concept in framing the arguments in support of the hypothesis.
- b. Strategic Comparative Analysis. This is the key technique when comparing the strengths and weaknesses of the big three. The main comparison is derived from discussions with security experts, academia, diplomats, speeches by statesmen, literature available in print & electronic media and personnel knowledge of being from a maritime background. USA, China and India have been critically evaluated against common tools developed by the researcher, of military, economic, and diplomatic strengths in addition to their ability to influence the opinions of other significant stakeholders in the Indian Ocean. The key component of this analysis is that “*Knowledge is Power*”; the USA, being the centre of excellence in creating/producing new knowledge, has the edge over all its challengers and, thus, will continue to enjoy leadership roles at a global level in the foreseeable future. China, a challenger to the US, derived its

strength from its economy and formidable rise in the last four decades, but its experience of influencing/enforcing its thoughts over others is still weak; it may take considerable time to crack the US hegemony at the global level. This also requires solid military muscles in addition to economic strength to bear the responsibility of global policeman. On the other hand, India is a strong contender for a regional role in the Indian Ocean based on its size, population and geographical advantage. Pakistan, compared to all three, lacks in many fields, including economic and military strengths, but still can play a critical role in connecting East with West and North with South. Pakistan's geographical location, young populace and abundance of natural resources give her the requisite strength to play her role at regional and global levels.

- c. Indian Ocean Strategic Analysis. The importance of the Indian Ocean to the Global Community cannot be over-emphasized. The world economic wheel churns because of the oil and gas being exported from this area. This area connects the advanced economies with the factory areas and raw material sources available in the Indian Ocean. Any disruption in maritime sea lines of communications can act as a snowball for the world at large. Measures have been taken at both bilateral and multilateral levels to analyze regional and global dependence on the Indian Ocean.

The present research uses the qualitative approach, where the existing primary and secondary data caliber is scrutinized. The opinions of leading specialists in the field

of maritime security and strategy have been studied to form an independent argument of discussion. The primary data sources include the yearly proceedings of the International Maritime Symposium held by the National Centre for Maritime Policy Research (NCMPR) for almost a decade by the Pakistan Navy. Strategy papers, doctrines and postures of China, India and the United States have proven useful for understanding the converging geopolitical interests. The researcher has been serving as the Director for the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), Islamabad and had the extended privilege of attending seminars and conducting informal interviews with high-level leadership of the Pakistan Navy and the regional maritime partners. The study also reflects the personal sea experience of the researcher, having more than three decades of first-sight seafarer experience on various deputations where there was interaction with more than twenty-five allied nations under various initiatives, including the Combined Task Force led by the US Navy. The secondary data sources comprise published materials, including books, research journals, reports and proceedings of international organizations on maritime security. The study also contains charts, graphs and tables to analyze and validate the hypothesis stated ante using the qualitative explanation.

### 3. Research Contents

#### 3.1. The Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean occupies a crucial importance, augmented by the presence of major powers in the region alongside the potential regional powers, three of them possessing nuclear weapons: Pakistan, China and India. For these reasons and purposes, the area is an arena of contemporary geopolitics with geo-economics that provides strategic stability in the anarchic power structural world bonded with the overarching conception of complex interdependence. Admiral Mahan recognized the importance of the Indian Ocean by acknowledging that *“whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This ocean is the key to the seven seas in the twenty-first century, the destiny of the world will be decided in these waters.”*<sup>39</sup> Similarly, Professor Sanjay Chaturvedi believes that *The Indian Ocean is once again becoming an arena for geostrategic rivalry and a ‘great base race’ around the region. At the same time, there is a burgeoning concern over an array of non-traditional security threats, especially energy security.* This underscores the need for strategic planning and preparedness in the region.<sup>40</sup> The Indian Ocean, now the world’s most important route for international maritime long-haul cargo, remains vulnerable to piracy and highly unpredictable potential acts of maritime terrorism. This highlights the urgent need for enhanced security measures in the region.

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<sup>39</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Problem of Asia and Its Effect Upon International Policies* (Charleston SC, United States: Nabu Press, 2012)

<sup>40</sup> Dennis Rumley, Timothy Doyle, and Sanjay Chaturvedi, “‘Securing’ the Indian Ocean? Competing Regional Security Constructions,” *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 8, no. 1 (June 13, 2012)

### 3.1.1. Strategic Landscape of the Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean has always been a centre for economic activity. Traders from Venice used to travel through the Indian Ocean to gain access to the Far East and China. Similarly, Arab traders also used Indian maritime routes to access the Far East. The importance of the Indian Ocean and India can be gauged from the fact that even Columbus sailed to find India and ultimately established America. Haroon Ibin Ali, a retired Pakistan Navy officer, in *Uncharted Waters: A Journey Through Living History*<sup>41</sup> believed the same. The historical account provides an understanding of the past which is valuable to understand the present and anticipate the future. The author talks about the growing significance of the Indian Ocean and the need for regional economic integration, particularly between the then Regional Cooperation Development (RCD) and Islamic countries. We know that Central Asian countries having untapped natural resources in the form of oil and gas are considered the “game-changing” factors that would provide impetus for further cooperation. It is, therefore, necessary for all states to cooperate and invest in human and economic development. Ibin Ali comments that the mighty Soviet Empire came to its knees and crumbled as it lacked economic sophistication. The survival of states in the 21st century is achieved through cooperation and the exploitation of resources to the fullest, both over land and at sea, along with military dominance.

Preference for the accumulation of maritime-based power over resources derived from land has always been beneficial. In other words, focus on maritime resources has

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• <sup>41</sup> Haroon Ibin Ali, *Uncharted Waters: A Journey Through Living History* (London: Avon Books, 1998)

yielded desired results viz a viz continental mindset. Peter Padfield, in his book *Maritime Supremacy and Opening of the Western Minds*, takes Admiral Mahan's concept of maritime power to new heights. He argues that "Maritime supremacy is the key which unlocks most, if not all, large questions of modern history, certainly the puzzle of how and why we--the Western democracies--are as we are<sup>42</sup>." In other words, "mastery of the sea is a vital component to great-power status". We also know that France lost its glory against Dutch maritime power in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and Great Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, primarily because of their maritime strengths<sup>43</sup>. The difference was only the mindset of the Dutch and British who preferred Maritime development over the continental mindset of France. Again, in *Maritime Power and the Struggle for Freedom*, Mr. Peterfield provides insight into the rise of absolute British dominance over France, which he attributes to maritime development. British understood the importance of combining economics with maritime dominance and, hence, emerged as the supreme trading, financial and industrial world power. In both books, the author argued that both Britain and the Dutch followed similar policies of controlling major sea trade routes and were able to extend their

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<sup>42</sup> Peter Padfield, *Maritime Supremacy & the Opening of the Western Mind: Naval Campaigns That Shaped the Modern World*, First (Harry N. Abrams, 2000)

<sup>33</sup> Maritime Power of the Past, as per Wikipedia:

- Venice dominated trade on the Mediterranean Sea between Europe, North Africa and the Levant during the High Middle Ages.
- The Republic of Genoa was the main maritime power of the Mediterranean Sea during the Late Middle Ages.
- Portuguese Empire started the Age of Discovery and European overseas exploration.
- Spanish Empire, considered the first global empire in history, was the most powerful empire during the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries.
- Dutch Republic held a virtual monopoly in global commerce and trade routes during the second half of 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- British Empire was at one point both a Superpower and a Maritime power.
- Soviet Union. Although the USSR traditionally had a strong focus on land, a period of rapid naval expansion allowed them to dominate their area.
- The USA, the present superpower, is primarily because of the dominance of the maritime arena at the global level.

dominance over land-locked or disinterested continental powers. On the other hand, Territorial powers remained focused on governing the land masses, extending their land frontiers or putting their energies on controlling separatist movements. In the last of the series of his books, *Maritime Dominion and Triumph of the Free World*, while describing the rise of the US as a maritime power, he believed that the USA followed British and Dutch maritime dominance doctrines/concepts, whereas Russia and Germany followed French continental mindset.

Seas and oceans are vast in size, and no one nation can have “Command of the Seas”. Thus, cooperation is a necessity at sea for meeting conventional and unconventional challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While assessing the trilateral relations between India, Russia and China, cooperation amongst these states would enable them to minimize expenditure on security and enhance trade, communication, and technological exchange, along with leading to better political, fiscal and social governance. This would help in social and literary modernization. A multi-polar world order of trilateral cooperation would remain an essential dimension in defense, strategy and politics of energy. The same argument has been given by Shri Prakash in *Contemporary India-China-Russia Relations: Dimensions of a New World Order*, who analyzed the India-Russia-China trilateral and its implications for the existing power structures, besides some of the former Russian states share major points of agreement



with the United States also to include: “preservation of global peace, active opposition to terrorism, cooperation over energy”.<sup>44</sup>

Emrys Chew, in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: The Indian Ocean and the Maritime Balance of Power in Historical Perspective*, traces the historical legacy of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) from a “British Lake” into the grip of American policymakers during the bipolar nuclear age. The post-Cold War age complicated the strategic equation with the rise of regional powers that competed for hegemonic aspirations in the “Indo-Pacific”. Thus, the long-term implications of such a trend in the backdrop of globalization and nuclearization in the Asia-Pacific region have again given strength to aspirants for leadership in IOR. It is also a fact that stakes are high in the “maritime balance of power” because of an unprecedented volume of trade transiting at strategic SLOCs and the Indian Ocean chokepoints. The challenges, in the words of Chew, are intricate as well, comprising “new forms of contra-banding” that involve asymmetric conflicts, maritime terrorism and conflicts that array across the “fluid and porous borders” of the Indian Ocean littorals. The waterways holding geostrategic imperatives ensure regional and extra-territorial powers' major stakes and presence. The threats posed by trafficking in the form of conventional and nuclear weapons, drugs and piracy would justify the long-term naval presence of great powers. The Chinese idiom “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon” depicts a scenario where actors conceal their strength from others to preserve the surprise element. The current defense posture of India has been described as an “enigmatic Tiger”

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<sup>44</sup> Shri Prakash, “Contemporary India-China-Russia Relations: Dimensions of a New World Order,” *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs* 61, no. 3 (July 1, 2005): pp. 28-47

and the one withheld by China as “a reticent Dragon”. Rising power is divided between Mahan’s sea power vision and Gratian’s principles of oceans<sup>45</sup>, a challenge which has global repercussions. It is, therefore, necessary that the Association of Southeast Asian States should find ways of facilitating cooperation among them. This will ultimately contribute to balancing the regional power equilibrium.<sup>46</sup> Against the same backdrop, Rahul Roy Choudhury, in his book, *India’s Maritime Security* focuses on the need for maritime security. He thinks that maritime security is a vital component of national security, which includes all aspects of seaborne trade, commerce, energy resources exploitation from sea, and import and management of all living / non-living resources in the EEZ and continental shelf. Maritime security also extends to areas of interest and influence in addition to maritime areas under jurisdiction. Navies and para-military forces at sea are inherently guaranteed the protection of maritime interests. It is, therefore, necessary that states build stronger navies and promote maritime sectors. This will help attain actual maritime power status in the Indian Ocean, thus endorsing the concept propagated by Peter Padfield, who advocates for developing the maritime sector to help gain Maritime Power.

### 3.1.2. Globalization and Maritime Power in the Indian Ocean

Globalization has been the latest concept. Because of Realism, the same is another approach used by power states to accumulate power. However, on the face, the same provides equal opportunities to both weak and strong countries to benefit from it.

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<sup>45</sup> During the 17th century, the basic tenets of the Grotian or eclectic school, were part of the fundamental principles of the European political and legal system and were enshrined in the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. These were mainly focused on legal equality, territorial sovereignty, and independence of states.

<sup>46</sup> Emrys Chew, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: The Indian Ocean and the Maritime Balance of Power in Historical Perspective* ( S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, n.d.)

Sam J Tangredi in *Globalization and Maritime Power*<sup>47</sup> discusses the impact of globalization on the maritime sector. He relates the direct impact of globalization on naval forces, maritime aspects of commerce and international relations<sup>48</sup>. However, Globalization is another name for cooperation between states and people. This has helped the weakening of state borders, and trade has improved in many folds. Globalization cannot survive without peace at sea because most inter-state trade occurs through merchant marine operating on international sea lines of communications (SLOCs). This trade at sea needs protection from interference from other challengers; thus, navies are being strengthened around the globe. We also know that “Navies protect trade at sea”. Thus, sea power is a composition of merchant marine, maritime trade and navy. Tangredi also believed that sea power is not exclusively synonymous with naval warfare. Here, he disagrees with Mahan, who advocated the accumulation of naval strength to derive the benefits of global power status. Tangredi rightly links control of international trade and commerce, the usage and control of ocean resources, the operations of navies in war, and the use of navies and maritime economic power as instruments of diplomacy, deterrence, and political influence in times of peace as maritime power. Maritime power is a concept different from land or air power, which are military terms. Navies' role in maintaining good naval order at sea during peacetime is critical to national security. Thus, sea power should never be treated as exclusive military muscle. All organs of maritime economics are dependent on a secure environment ensured by respective navies. This is the reason that China and India are now focusing on the

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<sup>47</sup> James A Boutilier, “Review: Globalization and Maritime Power,” *International Journal* 58, no. 4 (December 2003)

<sup>48</sup> Sam J. Tangredi, *Globalization and Maritime Power: Overview and Context* (NDU Press, 2002)

development of the navy. They fear interference from extra-regional players who can impact their economic growth. Similarly, the USA, the world's superpower, understands the importance of the maritime sector and the impact of globalization on international trade. The USA is also developing maritime relations with coastal powers like Oman, UAE, India, and ASEAN countries to safeguard its maritime interest as well as continue to enjoy the status of the sole superpower. On the other hand, with the development plans of the Chinese and Indian navies, the USA felt threatened. It hence opted for cooperative engagements with India in the Indian Ocean while, trying to form a group of like-minded countries under the Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Under globalization, everything is not well either. Globalization has increased the ingress of major powers into the affairs of weaker states. Weak states thus now have limited options for independent foreign policies. Instead, they opt for coalition support or total surrender of their legitimate interests and bandwagon with the major state or power. This is another reason for the rise of the multipolar world in the recent past, where the USA faces competition due to the rise of China and other power blocks. That is why protectionist regimes are challenging the phenomenon of globalization. Lately, the withdrawal of Britain from the EU and the US from the Kyoto Protocol has also resulted in a loss for the globalization movement. Now, most countries, including the USA, are opting for a nationalist approach. They prefer state-to-state relations on a bi-lateral level rather than multi-lateral or under global arrangements. It is feared that if this trend of nationalism continues, then globalization may move downhill.

### 3.1.3. Dilemma of Energy Security in the Indian Ocean

The issue of energy security has been the major burning issue of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It can safely be said that most post-WWII wars were primarily for securing energy resources, barring very few exceptions. Energy security is now at the top of the agenda list for national security parading. The Indian Ocean is the major arena from which energy flows to all corners of the world and provides sustenance to developed and developing economies. Yergin Daniely, in *Ensuring Energy Security*, also shares the same thoughts on how energy security has become integral in the national strategy. The critical energy security stakeholder, Russia, is regaining its stronghold of hydrocarbons in global markets and would assert state control over strategic resources such as pipelines and market channels. India and China's energy security is proportionate to the degree of their ability to adjust rapidly to the new global market paradigm that has seen a significant shift from “former commitments to self-sufficiency”. The new energy framework established after the 1973 “Oil shock” needs to invigorate their strategy and policy-making. Energy security can be maintained by abiding by diversifying supply sources and maintaining adequate stocks. In addition, dependence on the type of energy sources needs to be diversified also to include Solar, Wind, Coal, non-traditional sources (like Bio-gas and energy from waste/ garbage) and Tide Energy, in addition to Gas and Petroleum.<sup>49</sup>:

The energy security challenges would be growing more rapidly in the years to come considering the sheer size of global trade in energy commodities. The inevitability

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<sup>49</sup>. Daniel Yergin, “Ensuring Energy Security,” *foreign affairs*, 2006, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2006-03-01/ensuring-energy-security>

of 'shocks' to energy markets would remain a possibility due to the potential uncertainties in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. In an increasingly interdependent world, energy security would be dependent on how states manage their inter-state relations in a multilateral framework.

Yury K. Shafranik<sup>50</sup> contemplates the vast energy resources of Russia, which provides a catalyst for industrial development in European and now growing Asian countries. The theme of whether Russia can retain a prominent stature in a multi-polar energy world order is elaborated by adding the domestic-political factors behind the embedment. The vulnerabilities of the Russian economies concerning the oil fluctuations in global oil markets are also a matter of discussion. The Caspian Sea region has been dubbed as a "zone of conflict" where the interests of the Cold War superpowers rattle. The US has an edge over Russia in terms of economic imperatives and investments. It is added that demand for energy consumption grows in proportionate to the surge in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and that oil would continue to retain its leading position in global energy consumption patterns. Shafranik mentions that in the years to come, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan would go into competition with Russia to capture global energy markets.<sup>51</sup> It is stated that Russia needs comprehensive economic and structural reforms in the long term, as hydrocarbons alone cannot guarantee a future in the competitive transitive world order.

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<sup>50</sup> Dr. Yury K. Shafranik is a Chairman at Institute of Energy Strategy, along with Chairman of 7 other oil and gas exploration companies of Russia.

<sup>51</sup> Elena Chebankova, "Russia's Idea of the Multipolar World Order: Origins and Main Dimensions," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 33, no. 3 (2017)

#### 3.1.4. US Energy Dependence on the Gulf

Kaushal Neeraj in *Slippery Forecasts on Energy* provides a global overview of the developing energy security structure. The reduction of US imports from 60 per cent in 2008 to 46 per cent by the end of 2011, shows the energy-independent posture and the growing investment in Shale gas production.<sup>52</sup> In 2018, the US total oil/ gas exports and imports made the net balance zero. This means that the US is self-sufficient and must not import oil from the Middle East. However, the US is concerned about Middle East Oil production and safe delivery to US allies. In the coming years, the US will be less dependent on oil from outside the Western hemisphere. The growing energy demands of India and China are extensively elaborated upon. The fastest-growing economies would be the major energy players that would fill in the demands.

#### 3.1.5. Diplomacy and Energy Security Politics of the Indian Ocean

Diplomacy<sup>53</sup> and energy politics of China and India in Africa are in full swing. Africa is an alternate energy source to Gulf countries, and both India and China are investing in Africa to secure future energy requirements. Investment on a large scale is being undertaken in unstable areas pacified by separatists and elements of weak governance. The “Asian giants” nevertheless, to diversify their sources of energy importations, are providing the necessary resources in exploration, production and oil transportation to what the author calls “competitive cooperation”.

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<sup>52</sup> Vidhan Pathak. "India's Energy Diplomacy in Francophone Africa: Competitive-Cooperation with China." *India Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (2007): 26-55.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

China and India's developing economies are energy-dependent and imported from foreign sources. Any threat of closure or disruption in the import of energy resources causes cold shivers in both states, which is a major vulnerability. The same issue has been discussed by Jiejun Ni and Fengying Chen in *Asian Energy Security: The Role of China and India*<sup>54</sup> (2008). They argue that energy insecurities are not exclusively due to depletion of resources but because of the inefficient and “demand-driven production” which also bears the responsibility for supply shortfalls. Global security has become indispensable due to the interlocking of energy-producing and energy-consuming nations. The enhanced degree of economic liberalization, coupled with geopolitical instability, makes it impossible for any single state actor to secure its energy supplies independently and entirely on its own. The article articulates the risks that India and China could face in the wake of a catastrophe that disrupts energy supplies. Bilateral cooperation between the “Asian giants” would strengthen “regional unity and prosperity” and significantly contribute to the international order.<sup>55</sup>

David G. Victor and Linda Yueb in *The New Energy Order – The Way to Energy Security: Managing Insecurities in the Twenty-First Century* (2010) believe that diversity and cooperation as the cornerstones to maintaining energy security in the Asia-Pacific region. The Asian members have ‘common interests’ in price stability, ensuring energy supplies and protecting the environment. It is the need of the hour to establish regional

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<sup>54</sup> Chen Fengying and Ni Jiejun, “Asian Energy Security: The Role of China and India,” *Strategic Analysis* 32 (February 2008)

<sup>55</sup> Ibid



energy security, an Asian equivalent International Energy Agency (IAE).<sup>56</sup> This new organization can play its role in price stability and controlling environmental hazards. The environmental impact of fossil energy use is a concern for 'global commons' with the growing carbon emissions. The OPEC oil cartel has little power to guarantee "demand security" for the product. There is a need to establish an intergovernmental "Energy Stability Board" in existing international institutions for effective management of energy problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### 3.1.6. China and Energy Market

China has already enhanced its position and interest in the Persian Gulf region over the past 25 years, making it an important newcomer in regional dynamics. Evidence clearly shows that it has expanded, in some cases dramatically, its diplomatic contacts, economic ties, and arms sales to regional states. This represents a novel development which is likely to accelerate in the future as China's dependence on Persian Gulf oil grows. China's rising position in the region has put Beijing and Washington at odds and could generate serious friction points in the future.

Mahmoud Ghafouri in *China's Policy in the Persian Gulf*<sup>57</sup> terms China as a major stakeholder and consumer of oil-rich Gulf States. China has been a major player in Gulf politics in recent decades. Furthermore, China is also a major importer of Gulf Energy. Recently, China has started investing in Saudi Arabia, Yeoman, Oman and other

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<sup>56</sup> David G. Victor and Linda Yueh, *The New Energy Order: Managing Insecurities in the Twenty-First Century* 89, no. 1 (2010)

<sup>57</sup> Steve A. Yetiv and Chunlong Lu, "China, Global Energy, and the Middle East," *Middle East Journal* 61, no. 2 (2010): pp. 199-218)

countries. Duqm Port of Oman is now becoming a major hub of activities, where the US, China, and India have signed logistic support agreements with Oman. The presence of China in the GCC and the Arabian Peninsula is a major challenge to US Middle East Policy also. Similarly, the US 'Pivot towards Asia' has also brought concern on the part of policy-makers in Beijing. The PLA(N) naval desires cannot be ruled out of question, where the pretext slogan is "all-weather friendship". Pakistan's closeness with China is a degree of concern and suspicion among the US and India that is also bringing them closer. The author contemplates the "aggressive interventionist" policies of the Americans, making Indian Ocean regional states uncomfortable with relying on the security guarantees and the intentions of the sole superpower. Whereas the soft-power approach of China providing "economic endeavours" is successful and is welcomed in most states, including the Islamic Republic.

### 3.1.7. Indian Energy Needs and Options

India is also critically dependent on imported energy from the Gulf. Bhupender Kumar Singh in their research article, *The Changing Dynamics: Gulf Energy Security*<sup>58</sup> states the insecurities and growing uncertainty of the Middle Eastern energy supplies. The factors such as political crises, decreasing oil reserves and patterns of increased domestic consumption play a key role in developing energy security policies in the state. It is worthwhile to mention that emerging geopolitical realities in the wake of the oil resources of Central Asian Republics and Africa will also play a key role in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century energy politics of the Indian Ocean Region. Both China and India understand the same

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<sup>58</sup>Bhupendra Kumar Singh, *India's Energy Security: The Changing Dynamics* (New Delhi, India: Pentagon Press, 2010)

and are focusing on harnessing energy resources on a long-term basis. It is, therefore, the need of the hour for all stakeholders to maintain close ties with Non-Organization Petroleum Export Countries (OPEC). This will certainly help diversify energy sources and control prices. In addition, countries exposed to Middle Eastern sources will also be able to have alternate sources, in case of any military conflict in the area.

### 3.1.8. Cooperation on Climate Change

Another field of cooperation between the two neighbours, i.e. India and China, is Climate Change. Earlier, after decades of competition to secure contracts for securing energy resources, both understood the requirement of cooperation and, thus, started a joint bidding process. Similarly, both countries are also cooperating at the global level to address the issues of developments vis a vis climate change. Both countries are not yet ready to endorse and cut greenhouse gas emissions but may do so after attaining satisfactory living standards for their respective populations. The USA has abandoned the Kyoto Protocol and asked for new negotiations. This has severely jolted world efforts to minimize the effects of global warming. China, although one of the major polluters, has shown willingness to extend and support the Kyoto Protocol to support the world's efforts to maintain the environment. On the other hand, India has supported the US stance. It may be due to the strategic alignment of India with the USA or India, in the true sense, wanting to explore other options to address the effects of climate change.

### 1.9 Territorial Disputes and Diplomatic Options for China

South China Sea is another flash point where China is head-on with most of its neighbours supported by the USA and India. Bronson Percival in *The Dragon Looks South: China and Southeast Asia in the New Century* explains the interests of China in

Southeast Asia. The South China Sea is believed to have a vast reservoir of oil and gas. Again, energy security is a major issue in the South China Sea. China has claims and controls most of the South China Sea. Unfortunately, the politics of the South China Sea is greatly linked with the Indian Ocean. This is because the USA has advocated the term Indo-Pacific and declared its interest in the Pacific once again. On the other side, China cannot ignore trade routes coming from the Indian Ocean. India has also joined the US camp to support the anti-Chinese cause, by stationing its naval units in the Vietnam waters to protect the Vietnam exploration of oil and gas in the contested locations. China understands the combined threat of the USA, India, and other regional countries. Besides diplomatic efforts, China is fast developing Islands in her control and making jet-capable runways to counter US carrier-based threats. The presence of the Indian Navy in China's backyard has added another irritant between the two countries.

Yufan Hao, C.X George and Lowell Dittmer are the editors of *Challenges to Chinese Foreign Policy: Diplomacy, Globalization and The New World Power*<sup>59</sup> provides an exponential analysis of China's foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region. The "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" remains the focal driver of the People's Republic international envisage. China has promoted economic and regional cooperation by providing funds for development. The numerous challenges that await in the form of non-traditional security threats such as non-state actors, extremism and cyber warfare further complicate the problems for China. In this backdrop, it is thus essential for all stakeholders

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<sup>59</sup> Yufan Hao, C. X. George Wei, and Lowell Dittmer, *Challenges to Chinese Foreign Policy: Diplomacy, Globalization, and the Next World Power*, 1st ed. (University Press of Kentucky, 2009)

that a collective effort be launched to ensure long-term stability in the region. China's integration into the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and enlarging the canvas of the Cooperation Organization (SCO) are diplomatic initiatives that have been launched by China to address this issue. These initiatives will provide a platform for all stakeholders to dialogue, cooperate, and have stable relationships among the states.

### 3.2. Political Landscape of the Indian Ocean

Modern literature<sup>60</sup> is full of writings about the significance of the Indian Ocean in light of emerging geopolitical realities. Geopolitico-economics of the Indian Ocean remained neglected in the previous century; hence, efforts are being made to ensure that globalization and capitalist economic models continue to drive a variety of nations to secure an influence in the region. The increasing consumer market and industrial bases are considered tantamount factors in closely connecting the supply source chain through the sea lanes. The rise of India, China, and now Myanmar has been termed the regional equivalent of hegemonic challenges from global or regional powers. This is also important because of the interests of great powers in the Indian Ocean political landscape, which makes the ocean prone to strategic instability.

#### 3.2.1. Indian Politics of Diplomacy

India has been following a successful diplomacy while dealing with Iran viz a viz USA- Iran confrontation. However, after the recent imposition of US sanctions on Iran, India is now not importing oil from Iran. Moreover, Indian treatment of Muslim minorities in Kashmir and India has also not gone well with Iranian leadership. These developments

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<sup>60</sup> David Michel and Russell Sticklor, *Indian Ocean Rising: Maritime Security and Policy Challenges* (Washington, D.C., United States of America: Stimson, 2012))

are not going to be resolved in the near future. Similarly, India has cordial relations with both Arabs and Israel & US and Russia. India, being a big country with a big market, has a position to dominate the relations with opposing camps. The same was narrated by K. Pasha in *New Directions in India's Role in West Asia and the Gulf*. He was of the view that successful diplomatic Indian ventures have balanced Indian strategic interests despite the antagonistic politics between two opposing camps. India diplomacy, nevertheless is required to rise in the events of challenges and opportunities presented in the 'unstable' Gulf. In the wake of growing Indian energy needs, securing ties with oil producers in the region should be a priority. It is therefore necessary for Indian policymakers for the Gulf to reflect the "strategic autonomy" from the American directives. India, nevertheless, needs to be careful in the wake of internal instability, religious extremism and terrorism that have the potential to spill over in South Asia.<sup>61</sup>

### 3.2.2. Pakistan and Energy Security

Javed Anwar in *An Analysis of Energy Security Using Partial Equilibrium Model: A Case of Pakistan* (2010) states that two policy-options for improvement of energy security is the restrictions imposition of energy imports and controlling the primary energy supplies. The first reduces the energy dependency that leads to diversification of energy resources and the second allows for the efficient technology mix.<sup>62</sup> The analysis is based on the long-term effects of policy from the period 2000-2035 with the examination of energy import restrictions, supply diversification of energy resources and technology in

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<sup>61</sup> A.K. Pasha, "New Directions in India's Role in West Asia and the Gulf," *Sage Journals* 47, no. 2-4 (April 12, 2012)

<sup>62</sup> Anwar Javed, "An Analysis of Energy Security Using the Partial Equilibrium Model: The Case of Pakistan," *Pakistan Development Review*, December 12, 2012

the demand and supply side using recognized energy efficient and conservation methods that form the cornerstone of energy security regime.

Manoj Gupta in the *Indian Ocean Region: Maritime Regimes for Regional Cooperation* believes that Indian Ocean is one of the least understood region of the world.<sup>63</sup> He assesses the reasons behind the complexities of the regional order with 'regime theory' and 'structuration theory'. Analyzing his thoughts, it can safely be said that the insufficient leadership of Indian Ocean states is considered to be the main reason for the conflicts. Therefore, the 'one-ocean, one region' approach may be effective in dealing with maritime challenges in the 21st century. It is also believed that the 'international maritime environment' is ripe enough for restructuring a new platform of regional cooperation.

### 3.2.3. Indian Energy Needs

India is an energy-hungry country. Tanvi Madan in her article *India's International Quest for Oil and Natural Gas: Fueling Foreign Policy* discusses the Indian activities in the region and beyond for her growing appetite for energy needs to continue the increasing demand with the growing population and industrial caliber. China and India, in the years after 2030, would be consumers of around 50 percent of the global energy, increasing annually at a rate of 8 percent per annum. India's oil import needs will continue to rise, which compels the Indian Govt to follow a diversification policy for the importation

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<sup>63</sup> Manoj Gupta, *Indian Ocean Region Maritime Regimes for Regional Cooperation* (Springer, 2010)

of petroleum products from a number of different producers<sup>64</sup>. Other countries, especially Pakistan and China, also need to ensure multiple suppliers for their energy needs. In addition, efforts should be made to utilize resources available within the country or in EEZ. Moreover, with the world moving towards alternate energy sources, a serious effort is needed to locate and utilize new technology in this regard.

#### 3.2.4. Indian Ocean As The Global Ocean

The warm and rich embayed Indian Ocean covers 20 per cent of the earth's water, approximately 28 million square miles, and laps the shores of three continents. Although geographically the smallest, it has emerged as the most strategic waterway covering 30 littoral and 11 landlocked countries.<sup>65</sup> The region is home to one-third of the population, one-fourth of the landmass, three-fourths of strategic reserves in form of oil<sup>66</sup>, iron-ore and tin. The states based around the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) are disproportionate when it comes to their basic societal outlooks and vision, which are reflected in their size, population and per capita income. The region is cradle of all major religions and is 'kaleidoscope of isms' including, fundamentalism, tribalism, socialism, and communism.<sup>67</sup> The political spectrum varies from democracies and monarchies to authoritarian dictatorships. IOR has six subregions: South Asia, the Gulf, East Africa, Southern Africa, Chagos, Seychelles, Mascarene group, and South East Asia.

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<sup>64</sup>Tanvi Madan, "India's International Quest for Oil and Natural Gas: Fueling Foreign Policy?" *India Review* 9, no. 1 (February 8, 2010)

<sup>65</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon the Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* (New York: Random House, 2011).

<sup>66</sup> Eleanor Albert, "Competition in the Indian Ocean," Council on Foreign Relations (Council on Foreign Relations, May 19, 2016), <https://www.cfr.org/background/competition-indian-ocean>

<sup>67</sup> Mihir K. Roy, "Looking East: Maritime Co-Operation In The Indian Ocean," *African Security Review* 4, no. 3 (1995): pp. 44-49, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.1995.9627795>



Maritime Security is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted involving military and non-military issues.<sup>68</sup> The former includes naval threats and challenges, whereas the latter is in the form of arms and narcotics trafficking, piracy along with issues involving shipping, fishing, sea-bed minerals and offshore oil and gas resources, and vulnerabilities of sea lines of communication (SLOC). Environmental protection, nuclear politics and an increasing military build-up have added a cascade of problems to the seas. Maritime cooperation is the need of the hour to ensure the stability and security of the strategic SLOCs. Pakistan, in this scenario, along with all the stakeholder nations, should demonstrate their capabilities and capacity to secure and stabilize the region and ensure 'order at the sea.'<sup>69</sup>

The emphasis has shifted from Euro-Atlantic to Asia-Pacific which has been greatly accelerated with the creation of trading blocs.<sup>70</sup> Pakistan needs to plan strategically for a better future by focusing on upgrading its port infrastructure because of the increasing global trade in the region and building capacity to facilitate it and earn vital revenues. Militarization of the Indian Ocean will continue, with an active presence of the United States and the naval buildup by China and India. The Middle East will remain the hotspot in the region as the source of energy to Europe and Asia, including countries of India and China. Pakistan Navy may soon be required to play a major part in the region

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<sup>68</sup> Natalie Klein, *Maritime Security and the Law of the Sea* (Oxford University Press, 2011)

<sup>69</sup> Hasan Yaser Malik, "Beginning of an End in Indian Ocean," *IOSR Journal of Humanities And Social Science* 14, no. 3 (2013): pp. 100-111, <https://doi.org/10.9790/1959-143100111>)

<sup>70</sup> Zhao Huasheng, "The Indo-Pacific Strategy: China's Perspective — Valdai Club," *Valdai Club*, November 27, 2018, <https://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/the-indo-pacific-strategy-china-s-perspective/>

to ensure the sustenance of their national interests.<sup>71</sup> The geopolitics of oil are likely to exacerbate regional instability. Regional countries' naval build-up poses a grave threat to SLOC. It is estimated that 200-250 major warships are planned to be procured by Asian countries. Analysts confirm that 30 modern submarines have been ordered by Asian countries in the coming decade.<sup>72</sup>

Sea lines are central for the endurance and affluence of all stakeholders, particularly a common factor that induces cooperation among the states of the region. It is said that the oceans are indivisible, underlying that no single country can alone defend the extensive sea-lane radius. SLOCs provide a classic example of the practice of a 'multilateral maritime matrix,' as generally, merchant ships are manufactured in one country, maintained and owned by another, underwritten by a third, registered in a fourth and crewed by subjects of another.<sup>73</sup> In this scenario, the nation's maritime security and interests would extend beyond its maritime boundaries. There is an immediate need to adopt cooperative approaches to safety and protection as outlined under UNCLOS. The dramatic increase in commerce volume calls for raising the security stake of maritime trading nations across and beyond the Asia-Pacific region. It is noteworthy to mention that energy supplies in East Asia have reached a critical level, which has transformed the region into a major security concern, particularly when China is reasserting its claim over island territories in the sea.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Mustansar Hussain Tasir, "Indian Ocean: Militarization and Regional Implications," Global Village Space (New desk, April 5, 2018), <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/indian-ocean-militarization-and-regional-implications/>

<sup>72</sup> Zhao Huasheng, "The Indo-Pacific Strategy: China's Perspective — Valdai Club," Valdai Club, November 27, 2018, <https://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/the-indo-pacific-strategy-china-s-perspective/>

<sup>73</sup> James Cable, *Navies in Violent Peace* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989)

<sup>74</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, "The Geography of Chinese Power: How Far Can Beijing Reach on Land and at Sea?" *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 3 (2010): pp. 22-41, [www.jstor.org/stable/25680913](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25680913)

Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan gave importance to the Indian Ocean a century ago and predicted that “Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This ocean is the key to the seven seas in the twenty-first century; the destiny of the world will be decided in these waters.”<sup>75</sup> Perception, therefore, exists that all major powers compete to control the Indian Ocean. Thus, the possibility of conflict exists. On the other hand, the Indian Ocean is greatly connected to the world economy, and any hindrance or conflict is likely to have global effects. It is, therefore, presumed that all stakeholders will join hands to keep the Indian Ocean peaceful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The reality is that both China and India are dependent on maritime resources for the well-being of their large population. It is also a reality that both are economically and strategically linked and are interdependent.<sup>76</sup> Both need a peaceful environment in the Indian Ocean to sustain economic stability for a peaceful rise as a major power. However, Neo-realists theorists believe that without central authority at the global level, it is difficult for states to trust each other and cooperate. In such an environment, states follow the realist paradigm of power maximization to address their security dilemma.<sup>77</sup> Perception also exists that India fears Chinese military built-up and physical presence in the Indian Ocean whereas China fears India because of her alliance with the USA and threats to its economic interests in the Indian Ocean, thus paving the way for antagonizing relations. India and China are acting

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<sup>75</sup> Toshi R. Yoshihara and James Holmes, “China and the United States in the Indian Ocean,” *Naval War College Review* 61, no. 3 (2008), <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol61/iss3/4>

<sup>76</sup> Gordon C. K. Cheung, “Interdependence: Regional and Global Levels,” *China Factors*, 2017, pp. 53-80, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315081342-3>

<sup>77</sup> Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (Boston, MA: Longman, 2012)

aggressively on both diplomatic and security fronts. They are building up their military muscles as well as luring other states to their folds to strengthen their position at the global level, especially in the Indian Ocean.<sup>78</sup>

The twenty-first Century will witness a special arrangement of interstate relations between the United States, China and India based on a compulsive mix of realism, liberalism and constructivism theories of international relations. These countries will have alliances with IOR countries to gain power. However, the balance of power between the two sides, i.e. China viz-a-viz India/ USA, will remain intact as the combined effect of economic, military, diplomatic and other elements of national powers will not give any side a clear advantage. Their strength will be measured through the lens of elements of national power, including certain elements of maritime power advocated by Admiral Mahan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Following the Realism paradigm, they will cooperate in self-interest only and to maximize their respective powers. Their cooperation in the fields of economics, security and issues of strategic importance will all be in self-interest only. The fact is that people-to-people contact and business interests will shape their economic relations, with minimal interference by the government, thus following economic liberalism theory. It is anticipated that geo-economic interests will supersede the urge for rivalry and physical conflict at sea.<sup>79</sup> Later, the success of economic liberalism may pave the way for

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<sup>78</sup> Harsh V Pant, "India's Indian Ocean Challenge," YaleGlobal Online, May 2018, <https://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/indias-indian-ocean-challenge>)

<sup>79</sup> Sören Scholvin and Mikael Wigell, "Power Politics by Economic Means: Geoeconomics as an Analytical Approach and Foreign Policy Practice," *Comparative Strategy* 37, no. 1 (2018): pp. 73-84, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01495933.2018.1419729>)

interstate relations under the neoliberalism paradigm, which further guarantees the government's role in relaxing internal markets for imports and helping the business community in search of new markets.<sup>80</sup> They will interact with each other in a highly responsible manner and deal with issues on merit, safeguarding their self-interests only. Thus, all stakeholders will live in tense, sometimes even hostile, environments and even give way to the dominant party in a particular case. Their military muscles will continue to grow to maximize essential components of the realist paradigm.<sup>81</sup> They will station naval forces and operate in each other's areas of influence and interests challenging sea control. Another important factor in their relationship is the availability of nuclear power in all three states. Thus, nuclear power will put restrictions on levels of conflict, and wars will be restricted to the cognitive domain only.<sup>82</sup>

Scholars, policymakers, and statesmen are debating whether the Indian Ocean should or can be recognized as a "region."<sup>83</sup> Since the ocean has become significant in geostrategic calculations, a variety of terminologies have been used to describe the extended region. Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific are terms used to describe the region.<sup>84</sup> T.B Miller believes that there exists no such thing as the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), which remains a cartographic expression.<sup>85</sup> An American study has reached a similar

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<sup>80</sup>Andrew Hurrell, "Rising Powers and the Emerging Global Order," *The Globalization of World Politics*, December 8, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780198739852.003.0005>)

<sup>81</sup> Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 1978): pp. 167-214, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009958>)

<sup>82</sup> Lawrence Freedman, "Prevention, Not Preemption," *The Washington Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (2003): pp. 105-114, <https://doi.org/10.1162/01636600360569720>)

<sup>83</sup> Ferenc A. Vali and R. K. Ramazani, "Politics of the Indian Ocean Region: The Balance of Power," *Naval War College Review* 31, no. 2 (1978), <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol31/iss2/25>)

<sup>84</sup> Graeme Dobell, "Indo-Pacific versus Asia-Pacific as Makinder Faces Mahan," *The Strategist*, June 5, 2018, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/indo-pacific-versus-asia-pacific-as-makinder-faces-mahan/>)

<sup>85</sup> Thomas Bruce Miller, "Indian and Pacific Oceans; some strategic considerations," *Adelphi Papers*, No. 57 London, May, 1969

conclusion, stating that the Indian Ocean lacked the pre-requisite of having a common political, economic, religious and ethnic outlook. Added to that, the region was intermingled by divisions in interests and remains “vulnerable to disruption from within and without”. The question of coherence in economic, cultural and strategic unity brings forward a question of fundamental interest for the study as of what constitutes a region in the politics of international relations. F. A Vali considers an area a region that embraces territories of three or more states that are bounded by common interests and geography. According to this definition, to be contiguous or in the same continent is not a requirement for being categorized as a region. Vali considers the Indian Ocean a region, stating that geographic and geo-strategic as the imperatives that make IOR treated as one unit,<sup>86</sup> despite of the diverging set of cultural, ethnic and economic essentials.

A regional analysis of the four criteria: geography, political, strategic, economic and social will be elaborated. Geographically, the Indian Ocean represents states which are contagious in a ring-like shape. Except for Australia, all other states lie in the continent of Asia, which has 25 states, and Africa has 21 states. The total makes it 46 littoral and 11 hinterland states that remain well connected via air, land and maritime routes. From strategic and political insight, the Indian Ocean has been singled out by all the external powers, in their policymaking as one region.<sup>87</sup> The littoral states have a lot of common values, instigated long-time ago with the ‘monsoon winds’ that provided an interchange of ideas, culture, trading commodities and religion. The Indian Ocean states during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century pursued “Non-Alignment” as the policy in the wake of

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<sup>86</sup> Ferenc A. Vali and R. K. Ramazani, “Politics of the Indian Ocean Region: The Balance of Power,” *Naval War College Review* 31, no. 2 (1978), <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol31/iss2/25>)

<sup>87</sup> Christian Bouchard and William Crumplin. "Neglected no longer: the Indian Ocean at the forefront of world geopolitics and global geostrategy." *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, no. 1 (2010): 26-51.

superpower rivalry in the region. The demand for a “Peace zone” by the states provided a tantamount and distinct identity as a region.<sup>88</sup> The economic homogeneity remains a factor missing in the link. However, a close observation would make a set of emerging patterns to be made apparent that show countries have a narrow economic base that remains interdependent and, at times, vulnerable to downturns in the international financial system. The states located at the Indian Ocean realm have common interests, face similar problems and aspire for strategic objectives that have mutual and region-inclusive solutions. They have been segmented well by the centuries-old cultural ties that, although remaining varied, are an important source of linkage to the Indian Ocean.<sup>89</sup> The above analysis provides that the Indian Ocean, indeed, fulfils the requisites laid to be called a region.

### 3.2.5. Maritime Imminence of the Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean is on the verge of becoming the new epicenter of economic pull, tying together the fortunes of rising Asia, the United States, and Europe. Revival of maritime contentions is an indicator of revival in great power politics, overshadowed by characteristics of a mix-multipolar world. The US is retaining its military might and superiority, although its sphere of influence is on a relative decline.<sup>90</sup> In the future, the trajectory of events would be eclipsed by major disagreements relating to strategic and

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<sup>88</sup> Sourendra Nath Kohli, *The Indian Ocean & India's Maritime Security*, (United Service Institution of India, 1981).

<sup>89</sup> Sara Keller, *Knowledge and the Indian Ocean: Intangible Networks of Western India and beyond* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

<sup>90</sup> David Scott, "The “Indo-Pacific”—New Regional Formulations and New Maritime Frameworks for US-India Strategic Convergence." *Asia-Pacific Review* 19, no. 2 (2012): 85-109.

economic importance. The choke-point politics, accelerating maritime build-up, regional insecurity, piracy and terrorism. The developments in the IO over the coming decade would influence international security and the maritime business market.

The safety and stability of the Indian Ocean SLOC would remain to be of vital importance to the international economy. The choke points would likely remain susceptible and troublesome in the wake of attacks from state and non-state entities. The latter, in the form of piracy and terrorism-related incidents, have been on the rise. Events leading to disruptions can have a 'shockwave' effect on the international market, oil prices and global production networks.

The Indian Ocean would remain to be a "major testing ground" for the interplay of great powers.<sup>91</sup> The US, alongside likely regional contestants such as India and China, is ambitious to accelerate their naval manifestation. Over the years, mutually embedded mistrust has encouraged suspicions that could trouble the waters considerably. On a more positive angle, the two have started to assume responsibilities for the maintenance of SLOCs, accepting the framework of "complex interdependence" that remains pivotal to providing the engines of economic development "a smooth running". The conditions remain fundamentally correlated with the stability and security of these strategic waters.

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<sup>91</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the future of American power*. Random House Incorporated, 2011.



Maritime build-up on a large scale is undertaken in the following broad sets: SLOC protection, maritime supremacy, power projection, nuclear second strike-capable submarines, and dominance in space.<sup>92</sup> The Americans are way ahead of all the chief players in the region, far beyond the modernization of China and farther ahead of India in the above categories. 21<sup>st</sup> Century China is levelling the playfield in maritime dominance by surging its sea denial and power projection capabilities. The balance of power can be drastically in favor of these regional hegemony in the backdrop of predictive American disengagement and a relative decline in terms of influencing global events.

Indian Ocean is expected to continue its trajectory as a central shipment pathway for regional and inter-continental trade in a wide range of commercial and fossil fuel commodity products. The studies anticipate almost unanimously that the IO will continue to grow as a global hub for trade and shipping in the decades to come.<sup>93</sup> The condition, however, is that China and India continue on their journey of economic growth and increasing interdependence on international trade via the liberal-market approach that was responsible for generating a tremendous amount of wealth and development. The emerging trends comprise of resource exploration, probing of new export markets and port facilities that would strongly bridge the oceanic ties from Africa and the Gulf to India

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<sup>92</sup> Tim Swejts, "The Maritime Future of the Indian Ocean: Putting the G Back into Great Power Politics". Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, September 13, 2010, accessed November 22, 2018, [https://hcass.nl/sites/default/files/files/reports/HCSS\\_FI-13\\_09\\_10\\_Indian\\_Ocean.pdf](https://hcass.nl/sites/default/files/files/reports/HCSS_FI-13_09_10_Indian_Ocean.pdf).

<sup>93</sup> Amit A. Pandya, Rupert Herbert Burns, and Junko Kobayashi, "Maritime Commerce and Security: The Indian Ocean. Stimson Center," Stimson Center, February 2011, <https://www.stimson.org/content/maritime-commerce-and-security-indian-ocean>

and beyond in the east. These transformations would allow the Indian Ocean to be the “strategic heart of the maritime world.”<sup>94</sup>

The astonishing sustained growth rates of the Asian-Pacific economies in the last few decades have brought back the international focus in the East. The export-led growth and investment by the ‘Asian Tigers’ remains to be the cornerstone reason for their success. However, at the same time noteworthy to mention is that the countries, including China and India, are also heavily dependent on imports to meet the rapidly surging ‘energy resource appetite’ and populations.<sup>95</sup> In the years to come, the two would be highly dependent on Middle Eastern and African hydrocarbon resources to fulfil their energy requirements. The strategic significance of Indian Ocean SLOCs would increase even further, which would drive the rising ‘Asian leaders to move closer to guaranteeing their influence in Africa and the Middle East, along with increasing their presence in the Indian Ocean via naval assets to secure the sea lanes.’<sup>96</sup> Added to that, around thirteen of the busiest cargo ports are located in Asia that are directly preponderant to the safety, security and stability of the IO. It is also a reflection of the interplay of ‘complex interdependence’ that allows for unlikely bedfellows to form partnerships to ensure mutual gains. At present, grander than 90 percent of the world’s trade is undertaken by the sea. The figure of seaborne trade saw a surging of more than 35 percent between 1998 and

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<sup>94</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the future of American power*. Random House Incorporated, 2011.

<sup>95</sup> Jacques Jausaud, and Serge Rey, "FDI to Japan and Trade Flows: A Comparison of BRICs, Asian Tigers and Developed Countries." (2018).

<sup>96</sup> Geoffrey Kemp, *The East Moves West: India, China, and Asia's Growing Presence in the Middle East*. (Brookings Institution Press, 2012)

2008<sup>97</sup> and is expected to grow even further with the revival of the “Maritime Silk Route” under the China sponsored “One Road Initiative.”<sup>98</sup>

Concluding it, the Indian Ocean’s SLOC, with an increase in use, would put further pressure on the regional maritime choke points, providing for state impetus to control the ‘high-way of the seas.’<sup>99</sup> It must be noted that the greater the reliance on the Indian Ocean, the more the states would be vulnerable to regional instability orchestrated by actions of state and non-state actors in forms of piracy, terrorism and criminal network organizations. The strategically important SLOCs are located alongside ‘failed states’ and areas with ‘frail governance’. The areas likewise are susceptible to disruption with no availability of cost-effective and alternative shipping routes. The transit to Bab-el-Mandeb remains the only maritime connection from Aden to Europe and adjacent to Somalia and Yemen; the former is a case of a failed state, whereas the latter is seeing a civil war between factions with competing claims of governance backed by adversary states. On the other end of the Ocean, the Malacca Strait connects IO with the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean. The historically unstable area has competing claims which brings China head-to-head with Southeast Asian states. The argument would remain incomplete without the inclusion of Hormuz Strait, the single water passage providing a vibrant link of IO to the Persian Gulf hydrocarbons. Twenty percent of the entire oil supply passes

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<sup>97</sup> World Trade Organizations (WTO), World Trade Statistical Review 2017, accessed December 2, 2018, [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/wts2017\\_e/wts2017\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/wts2017_e/wts2017_e.pdf).

<sup>98</sup> Tian Jinchun, "One Belt and One Road’: Connecting China and the world." Global Infrastructure Initiative website (2016).

<sup>99</sup> Juha Käpylä, and Harri Mikkola, "Contemporary Arctic Meets World Politics: Rethinking Arctic Exceptionalism in the Age of Uncertainty," In *The Global Arctic Handbook* (Springer: 2019) pp. 153-169.

through this strait, consisting of seventeen-million barrels in a single day.<sup>100</sup> Any disruption in the choke point would have the severest impact on global financial infrastructure.<sup>101</sup> Finally, several of the littoral including Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Myanmar have had their troubles over the years. The internal conflicts have a destabilizing impact on the Indian Ocean's security and stability. States need to maintain their control along the Ocean lines as not withholding such could potentially allow for the creation of violent state actors. Among them, the most dangerous are terrorists, pirates and international criminal syndicates. The growing strategic and commercial significance of Indian Ocean SLOCs provides violent non-state actors an attractive target that could disrupt international trade.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> "Strait of Hormuz: the World's Most Important Oil Artery," Reuters (Thomson Reuters, April 23, 2019), <https://in.reuters.com/article/usa-iran-oil-strait-idINKCN1RZ23J>)

<sup>101</sup> Qura tul ain Hafeez, "Indian Ocean Politics and Pakistan's Economic Interests," *Modern Diplomacy*, July 28, 2018, <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2018/04/13/indian-ocean-politics-and-pakistans-economic-interests/>)

<sup>102</sup> "Seminar: Indian Ocean Politics in the 21st Century," Cornell University, December 1, 2017, accessed December 02, 2018, <http://www.cornell.edu/video/indian-ocean-politics-21-century>.

### 3.2.6. Security Of The Indian Ocean Maritime System

Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean, which connects eastern economies to the West. It is generally believed that during the last 30-40 years, the centre of economic activity has shifted to the East. China, Japan, South Korea, ASEAN and other economies of the East are acting as the factory area and sustaining the world economy at large. They import raw materials from all corners of the globe and export finished products. Thus, the safety of trade routes that cross the Indian Ocean choke points (Straits of Hormuz, Red Sea, Malacca, Sunda and Lombok) becomes important for all stakeholders. These trade routes also pass through the South China Sea, to the western Pacific Ocean, to North Asia, and across the Pacific to North America. Against this backdrop, the USA coined a new term, Indo-Pacific, to acknowledge the Indian role in the Indian and Pacific Oceans as a net security provider. India has been partnering with the US in efforts to control and limit the access of China in US areas of interest. The Indo-Pacific idea was, therefore, well played at the high-politic level. The region holds several of the most militarily and economically powerful nations, the United States, China, India, Japan, and Australia, alongside other middle and smaller nations.<sup>103</sup>

.US government has declared “The Indian Ocean region will play an ever important role in the global economy, providing vital sea lines of communication that are essential to global commerce, international energy security and regional stability.” It is now

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<sup>103</sup> Dennis Rumley, “The Rise and Return of the Indo-Pacific,” September 2019

representing the “geographic nexus of vital economic and security issues that have global consequences.”<sup>104</sup> The past notions of Indian Ocean as a peaceful and largely unclaimed maritime thoroughfare has been faded into history. The water body has been earlier described as “well-integrated interregional arena of economic and cultural interaction and exchange.”<sup>105</sup> During the inter-war years, it was designated as a “British Lake”; however, these perceptions have faded in history.<sup>106</sup>

In the present 21st Century, these reflections may not be entirely accurate or applicable. However, to understand the futuristic emerging trends, it is necessary to be familiar with the history. For centuries, the Indian Ocean has been the centre of activities based on different religions. Similarity and differences in languages, dialects, culture, eating habits, traditions and way of life have been witnessed across the Indian Ocean. However, this diversity has also been instrumental in uniting the people across the shores of three continents sharing the Indian Ocean and beyond. Although people have been interacting with each other for ages through business relations, unfortunately, the maritime history of the area has not been documented formally. Hence, formal learning from history is not an option available to people of the Indian Oceans. It is also a fact that no Indian Ocean power of the old or present era has been considered a maritime power like Spain, Belgium, British, Portuguese, Netherlands, or the USA. Although China was a

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<sup>104</sup> John J. Garofano and Andrea J. Dew, *Deep Currents and Rising Tides: The Indian Ocean and International Security* (Georgetown University Press, 2013)

<sup>105</sup> Sean Sullivan and Lee Cordner, “Maritime Security Risks, Vulnerabilities and Cooperation: Uncertainty in the Indian Ocean,” *Naval War College Review*, 2020

<sup>106</sup> Lee Cordner, “Indian Ocean Maritime Security Cooperation Needs Coherent Indian Leadership,” *Journal of Defence Studies* 8, no. 3 (n.d.), accessed July 2014

maritime power in the 15th century, it was lost because of internal politics. Bose argues that the peoples living along the vast Indian Ocean rim shared “extraterritorial identity and universalist aspirations bound in a strong symbiotic embrace” where the sea provided the common medium. The historical identity offers hope for a “new cosmopolitanism in a post-colonial setting.” Unfortunately, after the industrial revolution in the West in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Indian Ocean lost its formal glory as a world economic hub. Therefore, it became really difficult for the people of the Indian Ocean to revive their status at the world level without modern advancement and education. This difficulty is even though Indian Ocean littorals had a decent past to be proud of. The impact of colonization (extensive and uneven) and resistance to change, primarily because of religious stubbornness, lack of education and colonial mindset, mixed with local traditions and culture, harmed the Indian Ocean states, keeping them under the pre-modern influences. Globalization and shifting of the centre of excellence in modern education and Finance to the West and USA further complicated the problems for Indian Ocean inhabitants. Indian Ocean public does not understand the real value of their physical location, abundance of resources and population strength. However, literature is full of hope for the Indian Ocean region gaining past glory in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Kaplan in his famous book “Monsoon”<sup>107</sup> predicts the future for the Indian Ocean as:

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<sup>107</sup> “Center Stage for the 21st Century: Rivalry in the Indian Ocean”.  
[https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/03/rivalry\\_in\\_the\\_indian\\_ocean.html](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/03/rivalry_in_the_indian_ocean.html), accessed on 13 September 2019.

“More than just a geographic feature, the Indian Ocean is also an idea. It combines the centrality of Islam with global energy politics and the rise of India and China to reveal a multilayered, multipolar world.”<sup>108</sup>

### 3.2.7. China – India Security Relations

With the economic rise of China and India, the “maritime space” of the Indian Ocean is shrinking fast in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is argued that an enduring security dilemma is embedded within the Sino-Indian relationship, called the “unrelenting logic of geography”. It is prophesized that India and China expanding their “maritime footprint” in the Asia-Pacific would make them “step on the toes of each other and on those of the Americans<sup>109</sup>.” The Indo-US partnership is a by-product of the Sino-Indian power struggle; however, it would bring in countermeasures by China. The island states of Maldives, Sri Lanka alongside Seychelles, Madagascar and Mauritius are termed as vital in the power play of one regional power against the other.<sup>110</sup> *Samudra Manthan* propagates the development of “confidence-building measures” and regional maritime security cooperation for containing the escalation of Sino-Indian rivalry. It is therefore assessed that the direction of Sino-Indian relations would be molded by the strategic landscape of the Asia-Pacific, with the US having a decisive part. Despite the relative decline, the US would be the dominant state in the Ocean and would define the regional security arrangement for the Asia-Pacific. The three probable outcomes in the coming

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<sup>108</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, “Center Stage for the 21st Century,” *Foreign Affairs*, April 15, 2009, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/east-asia/2009-03-01/center-stage-21st-century>

<sup>109</sup> C. Raja Mohan, *Samudra Manthan Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific* (Brookings, 2012)

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid* p. 123



decades are summed up as cooperative security, a great power concert and a balance of power system.

### 3.2.8. Historical Perspective

The Indian Ocean Region has witnessed the rise and fall of several maritime powers. The transformations in the regional power realm have been conditioned with various impediments that resulted in the rise of some and the decline of other empires and navies. Summing up the historical precedents, it was either that navies were built on maritime trade and to conquest adjoining regions and empires on the basis of trade voyages with long endurance of warships and merchant marines. The ancient naval powers in the Indian Ocean can be categorized as either Littoral Power states or Extra-regional powers. In the Indian subcontinent, the naval powers of the Mughals and Marathas held sway over the ocean through maritime trade with other areas of West and Southeast Asia. China, on the other side, being the extra-regional power, commenced their presence in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century under the Ming Dynasty, under Admiral Zheng He. In the centuries to come, the Portuguese entered the waters in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, followed by the Dutch in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the French and British in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The naval strategy adopted by littoral navies such as the Mughals was greatly oriented towards naval defense that can be termed as “Command of the Coast”. The succeeding Emperors were focused on points instead of sea lines, controlling ports, fortresses and other strategic locations instead of patrolling the high seas. The operations conceived involved close cooperation between the ships and the land forces and relied heavily on fortifications. The medieval navies of Asian states, though, commanded the ocean, their operational scheme involving securing commerce and suppression of piracy from India and Sri Lanka

as far and wide as Arabia and Vietnam. The constant flow of maritime trade brought in the navies of colonial powers which dominated the high seas in the Indian Ocean and the littoral regions.

The Indian Ocean region did not have a single regional power that entirely dominated the sea lines before European colonial power's arrival. The arrival of the Portuguese with Vasco da Gama brought in their maritime dominion in the region. The modern European ships monopolized the ocean ways and the ports that provided linkages of India to East Africa and the Middle East. It is noteworthy to mention that the trend of collecting revenues and taxes from passing by ships was already introduced by powerful indigenous rulers whereas some Arab rulers attempted to control the shipping lanes crossing the Red Sea. They were all gradually being replaced by the Portuguese by in the following periods. Naval power during this period was used incredibly to seize trading ports along the coasts of East Africa, the Persian Gulf and in the regions of India, notably Konkan, Malabar and Saurashtra. Portuguese, to secure their interests, established a line of fortified coastal settlements which has strong naval patrols that had firepower beyond the Asian counterparts.

Portuguese imperial strategist, Albuquerque defined the Indian Ocean as 'mare clausum' (closed sea), advocating for a strong naval deployment to interdict any Arab and other European colonial power center to abrupt trade<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>111</sup> Christopher Michael Crum, "Following Intellectual Genealogies: The Construction of Mare Liberum and Mare Clausum, 1603-1652" (2017). Honors Theses. 200. <http://scarab.bates.edu/honorstheses/200>, accessed on 17 March 2018.

Portuguese, by the mid-16th century, had control over Malacca, Mozambique and Hormuz, a feat that later only the British Empire and presently, the US had to its name by having sizable presence and strategic posts in Goa, Colombo and Mombasa were ensuring the European colonial economic and strategic domination for the times to come. Portuguese domination was taken over by the Dutch, and later by the English. Fort building began their littoral front fortifications. Dutch dominated the shipping of Gujrat and Sindh.

Dutch East Indies Company was formed in 1602 with 7 million florins. It was registered by Royal Dutch Government and exclusive rights were granted for the area. It supported the Royal Dutch State in its war against Spain and Portugal. The expeditions in the Indian Ocean began in 1605 when the company started to operate in the Malay Peninsula and mainland India. English East India Company at the time was also on the rise and consolidating its gains against Portuguese and French. English East India Company was established in 1607 with half of the cash invested by the Dutch. Although the English were limited in naval power, they at first aligned themselves with the Dutch to counter the Spanish and Portuguese naval firepower in the region. Later, the English countered the French where Dutch tried to neutralize the Portuguese power in the Asia-Pacific region<sup>112</sup>.

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<sup>112</sup> Rupert Emerson. *Malaysia: A Study in Direct and Indirect Rule*. Kuala Lumpur, 1964. A constitutional history of British rule in the former Malay states and the Straits Settlements.

The rivalry between the French and English in the Indian Ocean, Dutch and Portugal in the Strait of Malacca was prominent at that time. The French East India Company was formed in 1642. French established outposts at strategic locations in the Indian Ocean. There was direct competition with the Dutch and English in South Asian trade. France was the last European power to compete for Indian trade. They first settled in Surat in 1666, and then in 1673, they moved to Pondicherry.

### 3.2.9. Dynamics of Maritime Security

Indian Ocean Region, although considered a pivotal maritime region, has not yet been accorded due importance as an entity in the geostrategic realm. The 'sandwiching' of the oceanic region between the 'hot spots' – the South China Sea and the Persian Gulf highlights the liabilities that have for years diverted the attention of states from this area. The diverging set of competing nation interests collaborates on matters such as freedom of navigation and piracy. The security picture is pretentious to the presence of nations such as China and India alongside the US. The strategic interests of these nations affect the maritime security conundrum. Maritime security consists of convergences and divergences where strategic interests encounter the laws of the sea. The former consists of laws long recognized as 'customary' and have since then designed international agreements and conventions. The 'mare liberum' and 'freedom of navigation' are some of the accepted connotations that form the agenda over which states converge their maritime rights and interests. The divergences, on the contrary, are brought by discrete national securities that affect the maritime realm and drive the course of national actions of diverging states. Such a situation creates intricate circumstances that question the

freedom of navigation. Non-state actors, with their non-recognition of accepted laws, have added to the growing complexities surrounding the maritime security architecture<sup>113</sup>.

The Indian Ocean provides the “global commons”, a link between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, in the form of vital sea lanes of communication that support the world economies. Around 80% of the international sea-borne oil trade passes through the choke points of Indian Ocean. Despite its strategic location, the Indian Ocean has been the centre of focus, especially the Persian Gulf and South China Sea. However, because of world economic dependence on Gulf oil and gas, all stakeholders keep this area relatively safe. However, with the economic stakes of China and Far Eastern economies increasingly dependent on trade passing through the Indian Ocean, greater interest is being evinced in India’s geo-politico-economics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by all international and regional powers.

#### 3.2.10. Sea Power and the Indian Ocean

The study of the Indian Maritime past conforms to that the sea is a preponderant influence on the destiny of the state.<sup>114</sup> The Indian Ocean is the world’s third largest ocean, after the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. The Indian Ocean is dominated by the Indian sub-continent, after which it is named. It is bounded by the African Continent and the Middle East to the west, towards the north is Pakistan in the Arabian Sea and

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>114</sup> Admiral S.N Kohli, “Naval Power”, The Economic Times, (New Dehli), Nov 23, 1980, p.4.

Bangladesh in the Bay of Bengal, and Southeast Asia and Australia are to the east. South of the Indian Ocean is the Southern Ocean, surrounding Antarctica<sup>115</sup>. Among the four major oceans, the Indian Ocean is more strategically important for the region as well as the globe. There are five passageways which allow entry into the Indian Ocean, called choke points. Any choking or disruption to any one of them creates ripples in the world economy. Even a sustained blockade of the Strait of Hormuz could trigger a 50% increase in oil and gas prices with a full-scale global recession or depression setting in. The Indian Ocean is the one with the shortest mean distance away from the continents. With a very long coastline and 36 states surrounding its shores, it is the busiest commercial and trade passage and petroleum transportation passage at sea in the world. Throughout history, sea routes have been more important than land ones because it is cheaper to move goods over sea than over land and by air, as stated by Professor Fernández-Armesto.<sup>116</sup> In old times, established sea routes where merchantmen used to ply were from Venice to Japan across the Indian Ocean. Two proverbs can easily explain the importance of the Indian Ocean:

- a. Whoever is lord of Malacca has his hands on the throat of Venice<sup>117</sup>
- b. If the world were an egg, Hormuz was its yoke<sup>118</sup>.

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<sup>115</sup> S-23, International Hydrographic Office Publication, Draft 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1986

<sup>116</sup> Professor Felipe Fernández-Armesto (born 1950) is a British historian and teaches history at Oxford University. He has authored many popular works of history, prominent to include The Canary Islands after the Conquest: The Making of a Colonial Society in the Early Sixteenth Century and Before Columbus: Exploration and Colonization from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic 1229–1492.

<sup>117</sup> Tome Pires (1465-1524), a Portuguese apothecary (a person who prepared and sold medicines and drugs) from Lisbon, wrote this in his book "The Suma oriental of Tomé Pires", during his voyage (1512-15) to Southeast Asia after the Portuguese conquest of Malacca.

<sup>118</sup> *ibid*

Due to the significance of its geographical location, the security of the sea lane on Indian Ocean not only directly concerns the interests of the countries and regions surrounding Indian Ocean, but also is an issue that the countries using the sea lane on Indian Ocean pay high attention to. Maintaining the security of sea lane on Indian Ocean is the common duties and obligations of international community.

The ocean contains some important minerals including resources for 80.7% of gold extraction from the ocean floor. Tin contents are estimated at 56.6 %, and other minerals are magnesium at 28.5 % and nickel at 25.2%. This area also provides 77.3 % of natural rubber. Maximum tonnage of the world goods passes through Indian Ocean routes. Around 65% of world oil and 35% of the gas sources are in the IOR littoral states. Furthermore, the Indian Ocean sea lanes of communication share in world commerce is around 33%. An estimate suggests that around 50% of the world's container traffic and 40% of seaborne crude oil also ply on Indian Ocean routes. Approximately 50% of the world's merchant fleet is operated by IOR and other Asian countries<sup>119</sup>.

It is also envisaged that the world will experience increased demand for fossil fuel, piracy, terrorism and naval build-up in the 21st century, especially in the Indian Ocean. Moreover, the clash of strategic interests, competing economies and power struggle is likely to continue. In addition, delimitation of boundaries, the proliferation of

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<sup>119</sup> Salman Rafi Sheikh, "Evolving Strategic Competition in the Indian Ocean", *Iran Review*, (16 April 2013): <http://www.iranreview.org/content/Documents/Evolving-Strategic-Competition-in-the-Indian-Ocean.htm>, accessed on 16 June 2017.

WMDs besides naval build-up & a large number of failed or failing states have rendered IOR a simmering cauldron of non-traditional & traditional security challenges. The Indian Ocean is also likely to act as the playground of clash of strategic interests, competing economies & power struggles between regional & extra-regional powers<sup>120</sup>. Defense analyst Thomas P.M. Barnett, in his book *Monsoon*, has expressed similar views: *No ocean requires strategic stability more than the Indian Ocean, which is arguably the most nuclearized of the seven seas*. He further clarifies that *among the nuclear powers whose navies ply this ocean are the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and Israel*.

Indian Ocean region has 36 littoral states bordering its shores. However, most of these nations do not have wherewithal or no capacity for managing marine zones effectively. They cannot restrict or control the exploitation of marine resources in the Indian Ocean. Similarly, pollution is also an important phenomenon in the Indian Ocean. In addition, very few regional countries have individual capacity to deal with human tragedies & environmental damage. Even so, regional capacity to mitigate risks from climate change is grossly inadequate. The prime examples are widespread coastal devastation & loss of life during the 2004 Asian tsunami and the 2007 & 2009 Bangladesh cyclones<sup>121</sup>. In the 21st century, activities of violent and extremist non-state actors have become a challenge for all nation-states. They influence the international order of

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<sup>120</sup> Conference on Indian Ocean was held on 18-19 November 2014 at Serena Hotel, Islamabad, organized by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) and the Hanns Seidel Foundation, (HSF), Islamabad. Conference Papers were printed by IPRI under the title “Major Powers’ Interests in Indian Ocean: Challenges and Options for Pakistan”.

<sup>121</sup> South Asian Disaster Report 2016, [https://www.gndr.org/images/newsite/News\\_items/SADR\\_2016\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gndr.org/images/newsite/News_items/SADR_2016_Final.pdf), accessed on 17 April 2018.



security both on land and at sea. However, their activities overland are usually confined to a particular area, but if they succeed overseas, the consequences can be at an international level. A prime example is the piracy close to Somalia's coast, which has compelled a response at the global level. Similarly, a collective security mechanism has been in place in the Gulf of Aden, Malacca Strait, Strait of Singapore and the Persian Gulf to neutralize any possibility of their activities against international shipping. It is therefore necessary for Indian Ocean littorals to join hands in mitigating the inter-state rivalry and negative effects of piracy, ecological degradation, climate change and other issues.

### 3.3. Great Power Interests and Rivalry at Bay

There are some other critical reasons for the importance of the Indian Ocean at the global level. These include:

- a. It is also a fact that land resources are depleting fast due to the increase in population. The world population has already crossed the 7.8 billion mark in 2019 (World Population n.d.) with a forecast of around 10 billion mark in 2050 “thus putting strain on available resources. As per Malthus<sup>122</sup>, an increase in population will always tend to outrun the growth of production. We have consumed so much of our resources over land that our survival as a species is at stake. Malthus believed that if a population is allowed to grow unchecked, people will begin to starve and will go to war over increasingly

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<sup>122</sup> Thomas Robert Malthus was the first economist to propose a systematic theory of population. He wrote book titled, *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), describing his “Theory of Population Growth” arguing that human populations grow exponentially while food production grows at an arithmetic rate.

scarce resources. Countries with greater populations are already finding difficulty in developing and providing adequate levels of human security to their people. Most of the populous countries<sup>123</sup> of the World lie in IOR<sup>124</sup> or are connected to its economy. China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh are all dependent on the maritime resources of the Indian Ocean to sustain and develop their economies to ensure a better life for their people (Human Security). This is one of the prime reasons for race amongst states at global as well as regional levels to secure resources, away from their shores. Likewise, both China and India are already focusing on the Indian Ocean to secure their maritime interests.

- b. The world at large is interconnected for its survival because no state or nation can survive on its own. It is also important to mention that the survival of the human race is getting priority over other issues, including

<sup>123</sup> Most Populous Countries

#	Country	Population (2017)	Yearly Change	World Share
1	<u>China</u>	1,388,232,693	0.43 %	18.5 %
2	<u>India</u>	1,342,512,706	1.18 %	17.9 %
3	<u>U.S.</u>	326,474,013	0.73 %	4.3 %
4	<u>Indonesia</u>	263,510,146	1.12 %	3.5 %
5	<u>Brazil</u>	211,243,220	0.8 %	2.8 %
6	<u>Pakistan</u>	196,744,376	2.03 %	2.6 %
7	<u>Nigeria</u>	191,835,936	2.59 %	2.6 %
8	<u>Bangladesh</u>	164,827,718	1.18 %	2.2 %
9	<u>Russia</u>	143,375,006	-0.05 %	1.9 %
10	<u>Mexico</u>	130,222,815	1.24 %	1.7 %
11	<u>Japan</u>	126,045,211	-0.22 %	1.7 %
12	<u>Ethiopia</u>	104,344,901	2.45 %	1.4 %
13	<u>Philippines</u>	103,796,832	1.51 %	1.4 %
14	<u>Vietnam</u>	95,414,640	1.03 %	1.3 %
15	<u>Egypt</u>	95,215,102	1.96 %	1.3 %

Source: **Worldometers** ([www.Worldometers.info](http://www.Worldometers.info)), accessed on 11 Sep 2019

<sup>124</sup> A population of around 2.5 billion, projected to pile up another 689 million by 2030

inter-state conflicts. India / China and USA / China Trade (Approx. 660 billion US \$ in 2018, estimated to be over 1 trillion by 2024)<sup>125</sup> despite geostrategic competition is a prime example of interdependent relations. Acquiring resources for the future generation is being pursued with more vigor and enthusiasm. Individual states and countries are joining hands with like-minded states with common goals and objectives, including shared values of social life and justice. States at the global level are also addressing major problems like food shortages, diseases, and environmental hazards. It has been understood that these problems have global effects even if states do not share borders or are not on the same continents. Tackling problems which require a global response is getting attention at both state and individual levels. A case in point is plans for controlling carbon emissions and control of fossil fuels by using alternate energy resources like solar or wind. Unfortunately, the major powers have yet to formulate their response and share their global burden. It is also the fact that no meaningful results can be achieved without their wholehearted participation in the global response mechanism. The withdrawal of the US from the Kyoto Protocol is a major setback to global efforts to control rising temperatures. It is thus more important in the 21st century to achieve basic geopolitical stability, especially on key issues being faced by the global community. The USA, being an acclaimed superpower since the downfall of the USSR, carries more responsibility in this regard. In addition, G+20

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<sup>125</sup> Chinese Commerce Minister Gao Hucheng, in USA Today, [http://www.china.org.cn/business/2015-09/24/content\\_36665831.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/business/2015-09/24/content_36665831.htm), accessed on 11 Sep 2019.

countries, including other developing countries, must try to control this alarming situation. The USA and China (a rising global player) have a critical role in leading others by example. Their mutual relations will decide the fate of the key issues being faced by the global community.

- c. The world is witnessing a paradigm shift in maritime security concepts. The doctrine of open-ocean wars, like during WWI & II, is giving way to naval power projection at sea <sup>126</sup>and subsequently influencing events on land<sup>127</sup>. That is why China, India and other potential great powers are in a hurry to develop their navies and set up permanent infrastructure in the Indian Ocean for subsequent naval deployments to address their vulnerabilities in the area. The twenty-first century is no different from past centuries as far as War, conflict, and instability are concerned. These issues have so far been inherent features of the world in the 21st century, as the nature of warfare and conflict between nations & states is not changing; hence, military forces remain the means for achieving political ends by other means. Although the character of warfare is changing just as societies, political entities and technologies change, we can observe that a paradigm shift has occurred as the world has moved from the industrial age to the age of information and globalization. We can also see that the landscape of threats is also changing in the 21st century, where conventional threats

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<sup>126</sup> Gulf War I & II.

<sup>127</sup> Maritime or Naval Strategy is getting prominence as leading strategy of all powers, whereas, those who follow and still believe in Land strategy as dominant strategy are under threat.

have been relegated, though not fully diminished, by emerging unconventional and asymmetric threats both over land and sea. That is why Admiral Mahan, in the 19th century, advocated that maritime Development – is the key to the dominance of the world. He believed that *sea control was the cornerstone of maritime strategy and stronger navies protect trade.*

d. The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has witnessed growth in economic activity throughout recorded history. In the 21st century, global geostrategic and economic interests are critically dependent on the Indian Ocean Region as Ocean littorals are also rich in energy resources and the main source of energy (Oil and gas) to the world<sup>128</sup>. Energy is a crucial ingredient of development for most major powers. It is also believed that the World has already entered a Geo-energy era in which questions of energy security (security of demand and supply) are conditioning both inter-state relations and will lead to the re-configuration of the world power hierarchy. Recent wars in Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Ukraine and Yemen all have direct linkage with energy security for interested parties. Developing scenarios in the South China Sea, Indian Navy deployment in Vietnam waters and recent development of construction – plans of floating docks for Spratly Island by China are some of the latest developments in the energy security arena. Energy security will play a decisive role in creating conflict

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<sup>128</sup> Persian Gulf caters for 61% of oil reserves and 26 % of gas reserves of the entire world.

and cooperation situations. The Country which holds a paramount position in the Indian Ocean is likely to control the flow of energy not only to East Asia, the future centre of the world economic power but also to other regions.

e. USA, being the world's sole super power, maintains credible naval presence in the region to safeguard her interests. This mere presence in area/ choke points pulls response from other regional and global players; thus, China, India, Australia, Japan and other stakeholders also maintain a visible maritime presence in the Indian Ocean. It is a fact that the development of the state is not possible without the free flow of trade and energy supplies, which is mainly through the sea. Admiral Mahan<sup>129</sup> advocated that a nation can't develop without a significant maritime power. He believed (Mahan 1918) that *Greatness and strengths is the product of wealth, derived from sea and trade; navies facilitate and protect trade*<sup>130</sup>.

f. Thus the issue of unhindered sea access and safety of Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) has gained exponential significance in today's

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<sup>29</sup>. Alfred Thayer Mahan (September 27, 1840 – December 1, 1914) was a United States naval officer and historian. His book Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660–1783 (1890) won immediate recognition, especially in Europe, and with its successor, The Influence of Sea Power Upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812 (1892), made him world-famous and perhaps the most influential American author of the nineteenth century.

<sup>130</sup> Vijay Sakhuja, *Asian Maritime Power in the 21st Century: Strategic Transactions China, India and Southeast Asia*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 9.

maritime environment. Free flow of trade over the sea is vital for globalization phenomenon and allows cheap imports of raw material from one country, converting raw materials into valuable goods by a second country, transported by sea by a third country and available in a fourth country for commercial/ domestic user thus creating a complex web of interdependence in terms of international relations as reality. This interdependency has gained impetus due to the paradigm shift in the global security calculus and view of the asymmetric dimension of threat. It is also believed that no nation can single-handedly cope with the new security challenges involving a host of new threats to her SLOCs / sea trade. This necessitates Collaborative Maritime Security arrangements between states, wherein maritime forces of various nations depend on collective efforts<sup>131</sup> to guard their maritime interests in the region. IOR is an exception to this phenomenon. Admiral Roughead<sup>132</sup> while addressing a regional symposium in Argentina in April 2006 further confirmed the idea of collaboration amongst states to achieve results. He said, ' no nation can do everything, but all nations can do something'. In Indian Ocean, we can witness formulation of two distinct power blocs; one led by USA with support from India, Australia & others and China leads second. The USA exercises her power through a strong military presence in the areas of

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<sup>131</sup> For Example, Task Force -150, Task Force -151, Task Force 152 are in Indian Ocean, organized by USA, India helping Vietnam in South China Sea, Joint patrolling of Malacca Strait by regional / extra regional countries. Pakistan has also set up Task Force 88 to guard its interests in Gwadar Port and beyond.

<sup>132</sup> Admiral Gary Roughead, USN (Ret.), the twenty-ninth chief of naval operations US Navy.

interest along with influence in decision-making at the global level, whereas China uses its economic strength to lure states into her fold. Experts predict that with dependence on Middle Eastern energy resources and economic needs set to grow<sup>133</sup> in the 21st century, the strategic environment of the Indian Ocean may remain unstable and challenging for all stakeholders.

g. Most of the states of IOR exhibit prefer land over sea. It can be said that the land-centric approach of states of IOR is because of the strategic nature of their leadership, who cannot see beyond their population. This may primarily be because of interests or lack of dependence of their population on sea resources. However, this may be considered an unwise, short-sighted approach to developing their nations without benefitting from maritime resources. The leadership and population of IOR lack an understanding of the significance of the maritime environment in the 21st century and the role it can play in economic growth and development. Admiral Mahan in his famous book, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783* emphasised that sea power is central to the rise and decline of great nations. No land power in history could put up resistance to invading maritime powers. Both China and India have understood the importance of the maritime sector. Both are focusing on the development

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<sup>133</sup> Japan and China are heavily dependent on imported energy from Gulf, passing through Indian Ocean and Malacca Strait. It is estimated that China needs of energy will grow to 80%, by year 2020, whereas, Japan is already touching 80%. Around US\$ 80 billion of oil is transported thorough Malacca Strait every year. On average, 10 million tons of oil every day crosses this strait towards east.



of this sector, including their navies. Both these countries are setting up offshore naval bases, acquiring landing rights, setting up listening posts and signing pacts with host nations to supply and maintain logistics for overseas deployed maritime forces. Both realised it the hard way, historically speaking. India was colonised by Europeans who came by sea, whereas China, being an inferior maritime force, could not come up with much resistance from Britain and Imperial powers.

### 3.4. United States – A Global Maritime Power

The United States is a global maritime power and enjoys global influence through its powerful Navy. The USA understands and practices dominance of the maritime environment to have command of the seas. Admiral Mahan's thoughts are visible in developing its great naval power status. The country, at the same time, also has incorporated the beliefs of Sir Julian Stafford Corbett to "utilise command of the sea to achieve supremacy on the land".<sup>134</sup> Her world dominance is due to four factors: first, the USA is a centre of excellence for the creation of new knowledge (world-dominant education sector); second, her military power and reach; third, her geopolitical-economic influence on International Organizations; and lastly, her geography. She can build bilateral defence, security alliances, and partnerships with other countries, exploiting common objectives of national security.

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<sup>134</sup> A naval force has command of the sea when it is so strong that its rivals cannot attack it directly. Also called sea control, this dominance may apply to its surrounding waters (i.e., the littoral) or may extend far into the oceans, meaning the country has a blue-water navy.

The USA considers the Indian Ocean vital for its interests both from economic and strategic points of view. She perceives threats in both domains, i.e. State-based threats (China, Iran) and from non-state actors. Her security concerns also include SLOC protection, nuclear proliferation, terrorism and failed states. In the Indian Ocean, the USA also shares the commonality of views with a number of states, including India, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE, etc. Both the USA and India have a common perception of the rising China. The Americans consider India their strategic partner at the global level and are ready to share some of their responsibilities with India to maintain order in the Indian Ocean. Both countries view Chinese endeavours in the Indian Ocean with suspicion. India considers the Indian Ocean “India’s Ocean” and its strategic backyard. Prime Minister Modi of India states, “We seek a future for the Indian Ocean that lives up to the name of SAGAR - Security and Growth for All in the Region”<sup>135</sup>. He has further elaborated his priorities in the following words; “Our goal is to seek a climate of trust and transparency; respect for international maritime rules and norms by all countries; sensitivity to each other’s interests; peaceful resolution of maritime security issues; and increase in maritime cooperation.”. India Navy has recently published a vision for maritime security in a policy document titled Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy (IMSS-2015) in 2105. The policy document declares India’s vital areas of interest in the Indian Ocean include the Red Sea, the Gulf of Oman, the Gulf of Aden, IOR Island nations, the Southwest Indian Ocean and East Coast of Africa littoral countries. Secondary interest areas include the South & East China Seas, the Western Pacific

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<sup>135</sup> Indian PM Mr. Modi speech during launching ceremony of Offshore Patrol Vessel MCGS Barracuda in Mauritius on 12 March 2015, reported in epaper The Hindu, 15 March 2015. <https://epaper.thehindu.com/Home/Index>, accessed on 17 June 2017.

Ocean and their littoral nations. They have some very legitimate economic & strategic interests and challenges in the Indian Ocean. IMSS's list of challenges for Indian Maritime interests includes the security of the Indian Ocean Sea lines of Communication (SLOCs), the preservation of national influence in the maritime neighborhood, and the protection of overseas investment and Indians residing abroad. The document also indicates the Indian Government's preference to prioritise non-traditional threats over other traditional threats. Indian Government is, therefore, following a comprehensive policy of beefing up its navel and maritime resources to deal with new challenges of the 21st century in the Indian Ocean.

The USA has been the dominant power since World War II. US power is not only in the military domain, but the USA has been successful in setting the world's financial and political orders. The USA successfully defeated its arch-rival after a long Cold War and was successful in disintegrating the USSR into several independent countries. During the 90s and later, the USA enjoyed the absolute status of Hageman in world affairs till around 2008, when the US also started feeling the heat of its responsibility as world leader financially crashed due to its military muscles in long and never-ending conflicts in Iraq, Syria, Libya and other parts of the world. Presently, the USA is considered a status co-power as the US interests are to keep other emerging powers under specific control but, at the same time, like to share some of its responsibilities in the administration of world affairs but under his total guidance and control. The USA believes that the preponderance of power at the hand of the dominant power is well suited for avoiding world conflict, following a power transition theory of International Relations. With the rise

of China as an economic power and increasing military muscles at sea, the USA views China as its political rival in world affairs. It thinks that instability may set in times to come. The USA believes that the rise of China may create a rough parity between the two powers, thus resulting in conflict or war. In the Indian Ocean, the USA has selected India to assist its ambitions and share specific responsibilities, primarily focusing on China (US Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Super Power, October 2007). Thus, the USA and India have developed certain common interests in the Indian Ocean. This nexus will have direct consequences for littoral states in addition to China's maritime interests in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan, which historically disagrees with Indian dominance in the Sub-Continent, will also feel the pinch of this development and undoubtedly side with traditional and long-standing friend China in pursuit of its maritime objectives. US maritime interests can be well defined by President John F. Kennedy of the United States as the key to world dominance. In these words, Control of the seas means security. Control of the seas means peace. Control of the seas can mean victory. The United States must control the sea if it is to protect our security. Gilbert Rozman has advocated the same concept in the book *Common Roots and Chinese Exceptionalism and National Identities and Bilateral Relations: Widening Gap in East Asia and Chinese Demonization of United States*<sup>136</sup>. He puts forward the argument that foreign policies have been shaped by the way the national identities of Japan, South Korea and China have been augmented. National identities influence foreign policies. Cold War diplomacy and critical

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<sup>136</sup> Gilbert Rozman, "Common Roots and Chinese Exceptionalism and National Identities and Bilateral Relations: Widening Gaps in East Asia and Chinese Demonization of the United States

examination of the US during decolonisation, nationalism and national identities will set the tone of US behaviour in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Indian Ocean.

US national objectives implications provides a useful guide to understand US role in Indian Ocean. Their main focus seems to be on control of seas and prevention of emergence of challenger at global level beside other strategic objectives.<sup>137</sup>

The analysis of the US policy documents highlight following important issues and possible options to deal with the emerging scenario. These are:

- a. World economies are driven and critically dependent on energy resources of Indian Ocean, especially Middle East resources. Chinese and other Far Eastern economies like Japan and South Korea import more than 80% of their energy requirements, which pass through Indian Ocean. US needs to support and guard the crucial sea lanes of communication for her allies survivability at cost.
  
- b. Second option with US policy makers is to leave Indian Ocean management to India, as regional policeman, this can only materialize after the total exit of

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<sup>137</sup> The Commission on America's National Interests, July 1996, [https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/americas\\_interests.pdf](https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/files/americas_interests.pdf), accessed on 14 May 2015. The core objectives are:

- a. Prevent, deter, and reduce the threat of nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons attacks on the United States.
- b. Prevent the emergence of a hostile hegemon in Europe or Asia.
- c. Prevent the emergence of a hostile major power on U.S. borders or in control of the seas.
- d. Prevent the catastrophic collapse of major global systems: trade, financial markets, supplies of energy, and environmental.
- e. Ensure the survival of U.S. allies.

US from Afghanistan and requirement of energy from Middle East drops to bare minimum. US Indo-Pacific Strategy has already been launched to acknowledge the Indian role in management of Indian Ocean.

- c. US can also utilize Re-balancing Strategy in which multiple players / like-minded countries, i.e. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, ASEAN, etc. can be given regional roles in a multilateral arrangements. However, this arrangement cannot be on permanent basis. This is also worthwhile to mention that in state to state relations, there are no permanent friends or foes. This strategy will release the pressure on US economy and military to some extent but US will continue to lead the world affairs at large.

USA, China and India all have legitimate interest in peace in Indian Ocean Region. World economy at large and China and India in particular are critically dependent on oil supplies passing through Indian Ocean, thus, convergence of interests in Middle East and stability in supply routes exists. Moreover, USA needs Pakistan as a stable partner in solving Afghanistan problem of extremism. Although, India and Pakistan are close to point of no return over Kashmir issue, but it is in the interests of the World peace that both these nuclear states continue to wait rather than using military muscles to solve their problem. Both USA, China and other World players are also worried about inter-state relations between India and Pakistan. On the other hand, it is in the interest of India also that Pakistan should have stable Government which can control its borders so that any threat of terrorism and extremism arising from Afghanistan should not pass through Pakistan. India is also energy starved country. Turkmenistan-Afghanistan Pakistan India

(TAPI) oil pipeline has also been planned since long but because of unstable Afghanistan, no physical work has started yet. To materialize this mega project, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India needs to cooperate and guard the pipeline infrastructure.

Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, in an article titled *Indian Ambitions in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Rim: The Response of Global and Regional Powers* explains the convolving interests of the regional and extra-regional actors as they upbuild their naval presence in the Indian Ocean. The major players include Russia, France, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Australia, alongside the EU, China and the USA.<sup>138</sup> Superpower's interest lies in securing the freedom of seas and making sure that SLOC remains far away from any influence of the competitive power state. The US policy includes the "containment of China" whereas the latter has the common interest in keeping the flow of energy supplies and lanes uninterrupted, along with detesting any domination attempts by regional or global power for control. The rise of India as a regional maritime power is a fact that cannot be denied and ignored by any side, including Pakistan. Gwadar port, with China's investment, is destined to be the "region's maritime and energy hub." All the powers are actively pursuing their core interests in the Ocean. Any attempt to repudiate them has the potential for conflict at sea in the most nuclearized region. Both US-China hold the very keys to stability and prosperity at the global level. We know that the South Asian Free Trade Agreement signed in 2004 was a precursor to Asia as a 'Free Trade Zone'. The Asian avenues have been broadened with the compression of the economic

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<sup>138</sup> Parvez Iqbal Cheema, "Indian Ambitions in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Rim: The Response of Global and Regional Powers," *Journal of European Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (July 2012).

disparity between the US and China. This statement was another recognition of the Chinese challenge to US interests in the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean and its vital choke points have gained further importance because of the “new confluent interest” that also encompasses the SLOC, multilateral trade and investment, which shows the growing stakes of powers beyond the region.

Pakistan and China share a common perspective on world issues. Pakistan has been instrumental in establishing diplomatic relations between the USA and China. Pakistan has also supported China on Taiwan and South China Sea issues. Similarly, Pakistan has agreed to provide access to the Arabian Sea to China through land routes (CPEC) for BRI projects. CPEC is considered a jewel in BRI projects. On the other hand, China has always stood fast with Pakistan in all times of crisis. Although, both China and Pakistan need each other. However, Pakistan is playing a crucial role in Chinese Indian Ocean strategy. It is, thus, safe to state that Pakistan is necessary for China, especially when the US has already ingress in all countries bordering China in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. Pakistan is the only country left south of China in the Indian Ocean, which is, in absolute terms, a friend of China.



### 3.7 China – Maritime Power in 14<sup>th</sup> Century

China has been a great maritime power for ages. China had trade relations with India and Arabs as early as the early 14<sup>th</sup> century. Fifty years before the arrival of the Portuguese, who first entered the Indian Ocean circumventing the African Continent in 1488, the Chinese boats/ships (multi mast) were already present and trading with all coastal nations of the Indian Ocean. China and India have been peaceful neighbours for at least two millenniums. They have enjoyed maritime trade relations also. In the days of the Chinese maritime industry in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Chinese ships used to visit Indian Ports regularly. However, at present, both countries have become strategic competitors. David Arase<sup>139</sup> in *Sino-Indian Strategic Relations: What Should India Do?* suggests a realist posture on the part of India to secure core politico-economic interests. Therefore, a defensive strategy based on “deterrence must be the tool to gain strength” is a better option. However, this also requires political stability. At present, India is facing trouble/ insurgency in many parts of the country. Similarly, China has problems in Tibet and Muslim-dominated areas of Xinjiang Province. Both countries need to adopt policies to settle core issues of population. Similarly, Pakistan is also facing internal problems because of internal/external factors, including the universal fight against terrorism. India is pursuing the policy of “like-minded and democratic states” to build a strategic linkage to remain relevant in the wake of regional developments.

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<sup>68</sup>. David Arase, “Sino-Indian Strategic Relations: What Should India Do?”,(Tokyo: JPRI Critique Vol. XIX No. 9 (November 2013)

At that time, China was under the rule of Ming Emperor Zhu. He used his maritime potential to extend his reach and economic dominance to Sumatra, Ceylon, India, Arabia and East Africa. He had organized seven naval expeditions from 1405 to 1433 to explore the Indian Ocean. These expeditions used the traditional route starting from the South China Sea, passing through the Singapore Straits, Malacca and subsequently ending in Ceylon. During this phase, the Chinese also captured various South China Sea Islands, exported their workforce to far-flung countries and established their foothold as a great trading nation from the east. From Ceylon, they used to interact with Indian merchantmen and Arabs and later developed links with the African continents. China views the Indian Ocean as its strategic backyard. China depends heavily on raw materials and energy resources from the Middle East and Africa. Moreover, China's major export market lies in Europe and the Americas also uses the Indian Ocean route for trade. China also has major interests in the Middle East and Far Eastern countries bordering the Indian Ocean as its economic partners. Recent increases in Chinese Navy muscles, like the induction of Aircraft Carriers and ballistic missile submarines and prolonged overseas deployment in the Indian Ocean, have demonstrated her intentions as an upcoming power at the global level. In addition, China's scheme for constructing a naval base in the Indian Ocean appears quite relevant. On December 14, 2011, China announced that it was establishing its naval base in Seychelles Island in the Indian Ocean<sup>140</sup>. This development for the construction of a seaport on the southern coast of Myanmar, support to Sri Lanka

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<sup>140</sup> The Wall Street Journal on 14 December 2011 carried a news report citing Foreign Minister of Seychelles that his country has offered to China to develop its naval base in Seychelles Island in the Indian Ocean. According to news, Chinese navy ships to use its ports to rest and take on supplies while participating in antipiracy patrols, according to both governments. The Seychelles has also proposed that China base military reconnaissance aircraft and personnel at its main airport, from where the U.S. operates surveillance drones.

in the construction of ports (Hambantota and Colombo) and acquisition of Gwadar Port amply demonstrates Chinese interest in securing its energy supplies and other imports/ exports. These developments in addition to projects like the canal through Thailand and the oil pipeline through Myanmar, were named as Chinese strategy of string of pearls by western/ Indian media. Chinese has named these developments as the new “Maritime Silk Route” and declared it as part of her economic necessity. However, the Chinese base in Seychelles will be near of US naval base at Diego-Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

China, a rising challenger to US global power status, has been able to ingress in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Europe through her Belt and Road Initiative. This Chinese initiative is a global development strategy for infrastructure development and investments in 152 countries of the world. This project will have road, rail and sea routes for uniting various economies of the world. China started this initiative back in 2013, primarily on its economic strength. China has also launched the Maritime Silk Road Initiative<sup>141</sup> in the Indian Ocean to unite the Indian Ocean region. This move will further increase Chinese dependence on the Indian Ocean. China needs raw materials from the African continent, Energy from the Middle East, and export destinations of Europe and the Americas in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to sustain its growth and economic dominance at the world level. It is, therefore, not in the interest of China to disturb the harmony and equilibrium presently prevailing in the Indian Ocean. It is therefore assumed that China

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<sup>141</sup> Policy Paper on “China’s Maritime Silk Road Strategic and Economic Implications for the Indo-Pacific Region – March 2018”, produced by Center for Strategic International Studies, Washington, USA, edited by Nicholas Szechenyi , [https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/180404\\_Szechenyi\\_ChinaMaritimeSilkRoad.pdf](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/180404_Szechenyi_ChinaMaritimeSilkRoad.pdf), accessed on 29 Nov 2019.

will be able to accept even a low-key role in Indian Ocean politics, for the time being, to safeguard its global economic interests. China has also set up a naval base in Djibouti, Red Sea. This is the first naval base away from home shores. Similarly, the leasing of Sri Lanka Port at Hambantota for 99 years, and developments in Colombo, Gwadar, Duqm Port of Oman, Mombasa and Dar es Salam Ports are also preserving her strategic interest. China has also constructed a railway line connecting Djibouti with Addis Ababa. This new development will make a naval base in Djibouti a commercial hub for the import/export of Chinese goods for/ from African countries. It is also possible that China build the maritime bridge between Gwadar and Djibouti Ports for import/ export purposes. Unfortunately, both the USA and India view Chinese ingress in the economic domain as a challenge to their strategic interests and hegemony in Indian Ocean politics. It is, therefore, that the Indian Ocean strategic environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be shaped by interstate relations among the big three, i.e., India, China and the United States.

China's maritime strategy comprises four key components. First, it will channel naval reinforcements to secure its maritime trade and economic interests in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), even as it strengthens the Maritime Silk Road initiative. Second, to develop logistical and operational capacities for a permanent far-seas presence, including preparedness for maritime combat and non-combat operations. Third, to undermine India's geo-strategic influence in the IOR as the two lock into a near zero-sum game maritime competition. Fourth, to overcome the threat of US naval dominance and deter its coercive tactics by enhancing the costs of military conflict. Beijing's ultimate objective

is to emerge as a 'global maritime power' capable of commanding the far seas and oceans.

China is pursuing a developmental strategy for achieving the security of its maritime interests. China's broad maritime interests include its growing reliance on the global sea lanes for its trade; access to ocean resources, countering "hegemonic" interference in Chinese affairs, security of the sea lanes, potential for military conflict arising from conflicting claims over maritime frontiers or islands, and the Taiwan issue. China has now clearly defined the objectives of its maritime policy based on the following cardinals:

- a. Protecting China's maritime authority over "relevant waters."
- b. Developing China's maritime economy.
- c. Strengthening ocean use and island management.
- d. Improving China's contributions to global oceanography.

Strategically speaking, this permanent Chinese base in the Indian Ocean will be counter to the US-India nexus in the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, Indo-US ties will have direct consequences for Pakistan. The Chinese presence in the region with little support from Pakistan would be counter-balance to the Indo-US partnership in the Indian Ocean. However, China has been following a non-confronted approach for the last 4 decades. It is not likely that China will challenge US might in the Indian Ocean till she

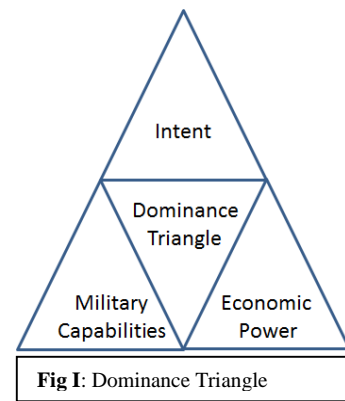
can flex her naval muscles adequately. In the Indian Ocean, China just needs peaceful SLOCs, unhindered flow of energy and the import/ export of its cargo. Probably, the Chinese believe in the ideas of Admiral Jackie Fisher of the United States Navy, who, while stressing the dependence of his country on sea lanes, once remarked, *"It's not an invasion we have to fear if our Navy is beaten; it's starvation."* On the other hand, the USA will also not indulge in confrontational games in the Indian Ocean as the Chinese economy is also essential to its economy and the world at large. Any ripples in the Chinese economy will have severe economic repercussions for the US economy. Remember, during the recent recession in the US in the year 2008, the Chinese poured more than 1000 billion US \$ into the US economy to support the international financial system. It is, therefore, safe to state that both the USA and China will share the bounties of the Indian Ocean for the time being due to their own compulsions. This arrangement between two states can be classified as complex interdependence.

### 3.8 India as Maritime Power

India views the Indian Ocean as its lake. Although the Indians do not use this phrase, but claim the Indian Ocean as India's Ocean. Indian Navy Vision Statement 2006 describes clearly the role of the Indian Navy as.... of *safeguarding our maritime interests on the high seas and projecting combat power across (and around) the (Indian Ocean) littoral*'. Indian maritime interests can be summarized in the words of its ex-prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, *...we cannot afford to be weak at sea. History has shown that whatever controls the Indian Ocean has, in the first instance, India's seaborne trade at her mercy, and in the second, it's very independent itself.* India is an energy-hungry country. It depends on imported oil for the sustenance of its development. Estimates

suggest that the Indian economy will be the fourth largest in the world by 2030. India therefore, needs to protect its vital SLOCs and also its mineral-rich EEZ extending around 2 million sq km.

India, in past, has traditionally acted independently from the influence of the US/ USSR. However, economic recovery and military and technological strength only require intent/ambition to play a particular role in the Indian Ocean. In the past, India had tried to dominate all her neighbours, be it Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka or even had border clashes with China. We also know that it will take decades to improve the economy or technological strength, but ambition or intent can change overnight. It is up to the leadership or wish of people to seek a particular role at the regional or international level. India is seeking a role at the international level like claiming a permanent seat in the UN



Security Council or a policing role in Vietnam waters in conjunction with US interests.

India sees itself as a regional power with the aspiration of great power status at the global level. India already possesses great land mass with great geographical location, proficient high and medium industry, large population, and large military as well as nuclear power. Indian Naval buildup, especially Aircraft Carriers and nuclear submarines, makes Indian Navy a formidable force in the Indian Ocean. Indian Navy's total strength outweighs the combined naval strength of all littoral navies' strength.

Furthermore, democracy is well entrenched in the country and the USA has accepted India as the regional leader in the Indian Ocean and a counterweight to China at the global level. This acceptance gives India confidence to act as the sole guardian of the Indian Ocean. However, India understands the challenge posed by China's economic rise and military buildup. But at the same time, India- China economic cooperation is on the rise. Presently, their economic cooperation is around 80 billion US \$ mark annually. Hence, India cannot afford to antagonize China at the behest of other powers. That is why India has recently joined China in launching the International Infrastructure Development Bank (with a capital of US \$ 100 billion), which is considered against US interests. In the recent past, high-level delegation exchanges and Indian- Chinese Navies collaboration and port visits are all in the same direction of complex interdependence in the international state system. It is also observed that Indian students are availing maximum options in China for higher education which will further cement the relations between two neighbors. It is therefore safely concluded India, although aspiring to be the sole power in the Indian Ocean, will not try to annoy or create hurdles in the Chinese maritime interests in the Indian Ocean, although, both China and Pakistan must be cautious of the Indian change of intentions.

### 3.9 Pakistan Maritime Challenges

Pakistan has been a maritime nation as it depends on 91% of its trade through the sea<sup>142</sup>. Its maritime area is the source of energy, and food and is of strategic importance. It is thus safely said that Pakistan has some crucial maritime interests to safeguard in the

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<sup>142</sup> Policy Paper on "Calculation of Freight Charges on Import/ Exports of Pakistan" by National Institute of Maritime Affairs, Islamabad, Pakistan, 2019.



Indian Ocean. The lifeline for Pakistan's economy passes through the Indian Ocean which is crucial for the human security of Pakistani people. With the development of China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Gwadar Port (Jewel in the CPEC crown), Pakistan's maritime interests in the Indian Ocean have gained strategic importance, as Pakistan consider CPEC as game changer for its economy and crucial to her role at international level. Any change in the strategic stability of the Indian Ocean directly affects Pakistan. It is, therefore, the need of the hour to study and analyze the Indian Ocean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to safeguard Pakistani maritime interests. This research intends to understand the importance of the Indian Ocean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the role of various powers viz-a-viz Indian Ocean region (IOR) countries maritime interests. It is also intended to understand and clarify threats perceptions from various regional/extra-regional powers operating in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan understands that the USA, China and India all have interests in the Indian Ocean; however, the focus will be to understand their legitimate interests, their complex inter-dependence relations, and their perceptions about command and control of the Indian Ocean to draw and clarify realities of truth. Special focus will also be on the India – Pakistan relations in the Indian Ocean and it's far-reaching effects on Pakistan's maritime interests.

In addition, the Indian concept of the “Indian Ocean as India's Ocean” and Pakistan's fear of the Indian Navy buildup in the Indian Ocean raises questions about the intent of India in the strategic domain. Pakistan cannot remain aloof to these developments taking place internationally as well as in the immediate neighbourhood. Moreover, Pakistan needs to stay abreast with the existing and emerging maritime/naval

trends. The need is felt to analyze and differentiate perceptions from realities from all major stakeholders' points of view in the Indian Ocean and suggest a way forward for Pakistan.

The USA, leader of the free world, Superpower and world hegemon has enjoyed unchallenged strategic leadership of the globe since the fall of the USSR in 1989. However, perception has been built that China will challenge the dominance of the USA in the near future, thus, making the US nerves shaky. However, Chinese leadership has repeatedly stated that the common interests of the US and China far outweigh their differences. But, with President Trump and President Biden in the driving seat, the USA is more likely to take the Chinese challenge very seriously. It is believed that Mr Trump and Mr Biden both understand that neglecting US pre-eminence in the Asia-Pacific region will have deep economic and strategic consequences for the US. Thus, the USA will not let China dominate the South China Sea as was witnessed during the presidency of President Obama. But according to Zbigniew Brzezinski<sup>143</sup>; the National Security Advisor to President Carter,

“One has to understand what the enemy is all about: the enemy's history, the enemy's culture, the enemy's aspirations. If you understand these well, you can perhaps move towards peace.”

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<sup>143</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski is a CSIS counselor and trustee and co-chairs the CSIS Advisory Board. He is also a senior research professor of international relations at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, in Washington, D.C. and a member of the International Advisory Board of the Atlantic Council.

China has been a classic example where good economic policies resulted in improving the overall social standards of living of a large population. However, China's Western portion has not been developed at par with the developments in the Eastern portion. It is thus feared that China, if pushed to a wall in the South China Sea to use military muscles to safeguard its maritime interest, will definitely affect its internal development. The swings in the People's Republic's economic growth would also influence civil-military relations. A slackening economy may create anxiety among the top brass of party leadership and the general population may also feel the heat. These internal dynamics could create conditions in which an otherwise manageable incident in the South China Sea to "spiral out of control" towards conflict. Similar is the case in relations between China and Japan over the Diaoyu Islands. However, Chinese leadership have shown maturity over the years and it is difficult to lure China into military conflict. Moreover, China has substantial funds available as a Foreign Reserve, which can always expedite the development within China and sustain military developments at the same time. Currently, China is pursuing the policy of bringing its Western portion at par with the rest of the country in development. Once China completes its development plans of Western China, it will give a real boost to Chinese GDP growth. In addition, the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative will also mature in the next 10-15 years, in which 162 countries are likely to benefit, it will translate into China as a real superpower with global influence on people's lives. On the other hand, US policies of nationalism, challenging friends to re-negotiate economic arrangements, building walls, restricting immigration,

white supremacy movements and the falling number of US students in universities will hurt her status as the global leader.

## Chapter 4

### 3.5. Maritime Power And Diplomacy In The Indian Ocean

Diplomacy remains a significant position in the art and practice of International Relations, where states continue to use it as a tool to further their national security objectives in a changing geopolitical world characterized by complex interdependence. The transition in international power corridors has had profound effects on shaping the diplomatic mechanisms that include a wide range of non-state entities such as global financial conglomerates and institutions. Traditionally, diplomacy was thought to be the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of state-to-state relations by peaceful means. Harold Nicolson has called it 'the process and machinery by which negotiations are carried out.'<sup>144</sup> For Peter Barber, a renowned European historian it is the 'peaceful management of international relations.'<sup>145</sup> James Der Derian called it the very process of mediation that facilitates estranged individuals and entities. The role of diplomacy in this context would be to facilitate in opening spaces for cultural exchange.<sup>146</sup> However, concurring to the changing character of the 21st Century, which has seen the 'Rise of Asia,' diplomacy consists more of being a general system that provides for information gathering in a world challenged and flashed by media manipulation and disinformation operations that have the potential to trigger hostilities between adversaries.<sup>147</sup> The

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<sup>144</sup> Harold Nicolson, "Diplomacy Then and Now," *Foreign Affairs* (Foreign Affairs Magazine, October 22, 2019), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1961-10-01/diplomacy-then-and-now>. (39-49)

<sup>145</sup> Peter Barber, *Diplomacy: The World of the Honest Spy*, 1979).

<sup>146</sup> Peter Sharp, "For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations," 1999, pp. 33-57)

<sup>147</sup> Jeremy Black , "Jeremy Black, 'Essay and Reflection: On the 'Old System' and the 'Diplomatic Revolution' of the Eighteenth Century,'" May 1990)(301-23)

chapter will address how diplomacy could play a major role in providing for a collaborative and peaceful mechanism in order to address the issues of potential conflict in the ocean. It should be noted that the region has attained a prominent stature at the global chessboard where interests of regional and extra-regional actors converge on major sea lines of communications. The maritime realm of security in the Indian Ocean is on the surge, whereas regional cooperative security arrangements are still in a nascent stage.

### 3.6. Strategic Landscape of the Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean has been on the map of travelers, explorers, merchants and state dignitaries for many parts of recorded history. The sea lines have been crisscrossed in all directions by commercial goods vessels transposing from different ideologies, political systems, technologies, fora and a great number of languages. These maritime exchanges are matters of profound interest to historians, geographers, anthropologists and research scholars, particularly when the ocean has been declared 'central to global power nexus'.<sup>148</sup> It is home to resources such as fish, seaweed and sea minerals, providing livelihood to millions of people. Many of these are of incremental importance to industries and are used as a source of products in various foods, cosmetics and industrial chemicals. The discovery of various metallic minerals, such as nickel and cobalt, along with sediments of phosphorus, have added a two-fold significance. Oil and gas products worth billions of dollars are extracted from the different offshore zones lying on the ocean bed. Mineral commodities form an annual \$600 million industry from the territorial waters.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Martin Walker, "Indian Ocean Nexus", 2008, pp. 21-28)

<sup>149</sup> KA Miller, "An Overview of Seabed Mining Including the Current State of Development, Environmental Impacts, and Knowledge Gaps," December 6, 2017)

Although the Indian Ocean is the smallest of three large oceans, it commands a prominent place on the geopolitical landscape. It covers an area of 73,600,000 sq km, which equals almost one-seventh of the entire global surface. The Indian Ocean, which is 9500 km wide and represents 20 percent of the total oceanographic area, is located between the southern tip of Africa and Antarctica.<sup>150</sup> It steadily narrows towards the north where it is intersected by the Arabia Sea and the Bengal Bay. The Strait of Bab El Mandeb connects the Arabian and Red Sea to the Persian Gulf. The oceanic region is bounded on the north by Iran, Pakistan, India, Burma and Bangladesh, whereas on the west by the Arabian Peninsula and Africa; on the east side by the Malayan peninsula and the continent of Australia; and on the south by the icy continent of Antarctica. Indian Ocean is at times considered as a tropical ocean, but it extends from 70°S to 30°N. It has an average depth of 12,700 ft (3890m) with a volume of 70,086,000 cubic miles and a maximum depth of 24,442 ft (7450m) located at the Java Trench.<sup>151</sup> It is the only major ocean that does not extend from pole to pole; at the same time, it is large enough to extend from the Indian peninsula to Antarctica. The world's oldest and most densely populated countries fringe the northern part of the Indian Ocean rim. Unlike the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Indian Ocean is unique as it is closed from the north by the Asia continents but open in the south. Vulnerable, this is the place from which invasions have occurred. European colonists came from the sea from this place. The Indian Ocean is symmetrical in the sense of a 'north-south axis,' running down the length of the archipelago of Maldives.

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<sup>150</sup> Malti Geol, *Energy Sources and Global Warming*, 2005) (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 196.

<sup>151</sup> T.S Rao and Raymond C Griffiths, *Understanding the Indian Ocean: Perspectives on Oceanography*, 1998) (Paris: UNESCO Publishing)

The Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal have their special unique features. Grand rivers such as the Indus with its major tributaries, Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum, bring in an incredible amount of detritus material from the Himalayan range. This enormous load is poured into the Arabian Sea at the mouth of the River Indus near the port of Karachi. The 'Indus fan' is the term used for the detritus material depositing in form of large sediment piles. Similarly, in the Bay of Bengal, the Sunderban delta region near Calcutta at a very rapid rate, generation of detrital material by Ganges and Brahmaputra is developing. This forms the largest-deep sea fan called the deep-sea fan of the Bay of Bengal. Geologists and earth scientists have derived a relationship between the history of the deep-sea fan of Bengal and that of the River Indus from the times of the formation of the Himalayas. The sediments of the Bay of Bengal are predominantly of clay and silt, brought by this river system. These extend in the south until it meets with the deep-sea calcareous sediments. Therefore, sediments from deep-sea provinces makes up 80 percent of the ocean. In the Arabian Sea, they are over lined with non-biogenic clay derived from Indus and Bengal fan. Some of these deposits have attained great thickness and strength. Their organic content is a potential reservoir for hydrocarbon and natural gas. A number of explorations conducted by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Indian Oil Limited have located numerous gas reservoirs in the Godavari delta region. It was during the 1960s, the International Indian Ocean Expedition, which included countries such as Australia, Germany, United Kingdom, Japan, France, Russia, and Portugal, alongside Pakistan and India. Great number of knowledge regarding Indian Ocean's oceanographic, geological and geophysical parameters got an impetus from this



expedition. India, at present, has prioritized ocean science; according to a report, several Indian ships are operating around India to produce scientific knowledge. Indian Ocean has three types of sediments: in the Western region, calcareous ooze sediments, whereas in the east red clay province, whereas in the center, a diatomite zone.

### 3.7. Indian Ocean and Climate Change

There has been a gradual shift in the international political opinion regarding the threat global warming and climate change pose. In the Indian Ocean, fresh evidence has been found by scientists as to how global warming is starting to detriment the food chain. It is now known that at least 90 per cent of the extra heat generated from greenhouse gases is absorbed by the oceans and is warming them. The Indian Ocean, during the past century, has witnessed greater warming than the other oceans. The warming in the past century has been estimated as 1.2°C, as it is greater than compared to global surface warming of 0.8°C.<sup>152</sup> The warming is affecting the marine ecosystem with food planktons and fish production being greatly reduced. The phytoplankton has been reduced up to 20 percent during the years with the warming up of the oceans. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) data indicate that the Indian Ocean accounts for over 20 per cent of the global tuna catch. According to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the tuna catch rates have declined by 50-90 per cent during the last five years.<sup>153</sup> The changing

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<sup>152</sup> MD Palmer, ““Isolating the Signal of Ocean Global Warming,”” December 16, 2007) Geophysical Research Letters 34, no. 23.

<sup>153</sup> Emmanuel, Bodin, Chassot Fany, Sardenne Iker, Zudaire Maitane, Grande Zahirah, Dhurmeea Hilario, and Murua Julien, "Ecological data for western Indian Ocean tuna," Ecology (2018).

monsoon pattern in the southwest concerns food production, which is directly related to rainfall. The land-sea surface temperature difference, particularly greater in South Asia, has been decreasing due to rapid warming in the Indian Ocean, although there are regions in the subcontinent where cooling is also taking place.

The IO has emerged as the most important geopolitical arena in the century, dubbed as that belonging to the great continent of Asia. The coalescing factor in the regional systematic dynamic is that global, regional and national strategic objectives come together. The strategic interests of the major multiple actors overlap and, at times, converge at the sea. Freedom of navigation is to be protected as it is the driving stone behind global trade, large chunks of which is taken over by energy security<sup>154</sup>.

The landscape of IO Marine is overwhelmingly dominated by challenges in the climate change domain caused by pollution and excessive exploitation of seabed residues. The sovereignty of the littorals remains critical to the integrity and security architecture of the region. The imperils of sea law and order for the effective working of maritime matters required to be employed. George Christou argues that the complex environment would induce a “collective and cooperative security” mechanism by regional stakeholders. However, from a more realist perspective at present, there exists no such architecture nationwide or in the Asia-Pacific region. This remains to be a confounding

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<sup>154</sup> Christopher Lee, "The Indian Ocean and China's Expanding Influence: Prospects for Cooperation among the Key Asian Energy Importers." *Maritime Governance and South Asia: Trade, Security and Sustainable Development in The Indian Ocean* (2018): 181.

challenge as the key actors, despite their critical vulnerabilities and mutually shared risks, are not willing to “compromise on their national sovereignty and security”. To address these problems, there is a need for “strategic risk assessments” that would provide perspective in key decision-maker areas.

IO has enhanced its significance as the pivotal area of geopolitics, well-recognized by all parties, extending and beyond international states. Nevertheless, IOR remains intermingled with history, culture, racial and ethnic politics, and economic, ideological and political factors, making conceptualizing the as a unified entity a highly problematic task. External powers for years have viewed the third-largest Ocean as primarily a marine trade route serving as a “bridge between East and the West”. Contemporary geopolitical emerging. However, in emerging geopolitical terms, there is a developing consensus that the Ocean, as a vital component of the Indo-Pacific, will play a greater role in shaping contemporary and future International order than it has done for centuries.<sup>155</sup> The notion of merged ‘Indo-Pacific’ has gained currency, although the term is not precisely defined.

### 3.8. Diffusion of Maritime Power

In the subject matter of international relations, there are varying accounts about the absolute definition of power. James Cable has defined it as the capability to use a force of fitting response in each situation. Over the years, theorists have devoted considerable efforts to refining and elaborating as to what benchmarks power. This definition extends to characteristics about the realms of technology, economy, military and geography. In

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<sup>155</sup> Geoffrey Till and Patrick Bratton, *Sea Power and the Asia-Pacific: The Triumph of Neptune* (London: Routledge, 2013), 243.

contemporary times, the extension has been due to factors that were less noticeable previously, such as organization and way of political formation, morale, motivation, and foundations of the state. These studies were undertaken to provide a “comprehensive definition of power,” that would be reliable enough for inter-state comparison of power factors. In the context of maritime power, the studies undertaken recognize around forty such elements that substantialized the naval aptitude.

Maritime power today is dispersed for two noteworthy elucidations. The paramount is related to the aspects of technology, which, despite the unprecedented firepower and sophistication, provides the limitation, reflected by the fact that ships of even the most advanced nations are prone to be vulnerable at sea. They are not immune from prospective opponents to the weapons that are cheap, readily available and widely diffused. From purely the point of equipment, the gap between a superpower and a minor nation is more catholic than ever. However, the combat openings have contracted at all levels, excluding the highest one. Sea power can be economically employed by a state ‘single-mindedly’ with some sophisticated weapons to deny to a distant adversary the use of adjacent waters within the accessible range of shore-based aircraft and artillery. The Ottoman Empire's resistance to the Dardanelles in 1915 is a peculiar example, dependent on a few fortress guns and mines.<sup>156</sup> Another prominent example would be the UK, which had the strongest naval fleet in the years before World War I. However, Germany's U-boat capabilities during the war, to some extent, prevented no escape from the prospects

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<sup>156</sup> James Cable, *Diplomacy at Sea* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985), 52.

of decisive defeat in naval operations. The US, the sole superpower, was demeaned in 1968 by the North Koreans in the *USS Pueblo Affair* and by the Iranians in the 1980 hostage crisis.

There is no single answer to the question, “*Power to do what?*” It was believed that command of the sea provides the flow of other recompenses that would sustain naval susceptibility. The concept has since then evolved from the Mahanian to the times of Colbert and Holmes, with aggregate credentials and certain omissions. The use of fitting power was traditionally recognized to permit the extension of national interests and power projection. It was for this reason that Bismarck afforded to proclaim his intent of sending counterforce if the British fleet blockaded the coast of Pomerania in the “Schleswig-Holstein affair”. The “appropriate force” mechanism in such instances provided an edge against those who were exposed at sea.

Since then, the latitude of these weaknesses has been overcome by the advancing political organization systems and global communication infrastructures of littoral nations. The changes in what command of the sea can do are nevertheless less fundamental than the new obstacles to its creation.

Previously, the case was that sea fleets were considered benign from everything but a sturdier flotilla. The sea command, therefore, allowed for an appropriate-sized force to achieve the aim of an uninterrupted occupation of naval strength. Additionally, the sea's

strong capabilities were thought to bring in all the benefits affiliated with the command as the predestined reward of a sufficiently superior fleet. Mines, torpedoes, aircraft, submarines and missiles have all changed the equation. Admiral Turner: "It is no longer conceivable, except in the most limited sense, to control the seas for one's use or to deny the enemy." He added that the US Navy, at best, could hope for "realistic control in limited areas and limited periods".<sup>157</sup>

At present, force is used on, over, and under the sea to protect or deny a particular use of the sea. The US can do best "in a limited area and for a limited period."<sup>158</sup> It is imperative to postulate the use of sea power as a tool for containing disputes. For this purpose, there is a need to measure the power in the maritime realm. There are several yardsticks for this purpose, conforming to various preceding disputes. An interesting example is that of the British Royal Navy, which, despite superior capabilities, had been overwhelmed to a significant extent by two rather subsidiary power countries. The first one is Albania, which in the year 1946 caused austere casualty damage to British destroyers. The following one is Iceland, which efficaciously affirmed her prerogative of exclusive fishing rights with the help of a gunboat. The two conflicts ended without the occurrence of war or continuing conflict. It is a fact that neither possessed naval power analogous to the UK, yet each prevailed and was able to make use of "appropriate force". The conservative estimate of contemplating sea power relates to the counting of ships whereby, by comparing and analyzing the scale and grandeur of the mission's operational

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<sup>157</sup> A. Nathan and James K. Oliver, *The Future of United States Naval Power* (Indiana University Press, 1979) p. 48.

<sup>158</sup> James cable, *Diplomacy at Sea*, 1985).

capacities, capabilities are derived. A former US Secretary of Defense categorized this as the knack to fight “2 ½ or 1 ½ wars”.<sup>159</sup>

### 3.9. Functional Definition of Maritime Power

The peculiar task of contemplating the factors of maritime power is supplemented by following five factors in definition and operations. They are a place of the skirmish, the periods, the motivations of rivals, the international setting, and the level of conflict struggle:<sup>160</sup>

#### 1. Place of the Skirmish

The location of the conflict is a fundamental feature that provides insight into the working definition of power in the maritime domain. It is abstracted that the force needed is unswervingly proportionate to the aloofness of the base with the prospected action site; whereas the force is understood to be inversely related in the sum equation. The Falkland Crisis provided an important understanding of this approach for the navies of the developed world. It was contemplated that the navy operationalizing from a distance needed “special kind of ocean-going ships” to match the adversary's deployment of equal power force. They were identified as carrier ships, warships and fleet trains with advanced sea-faring capacities.

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<sup>159</sup> James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy (1919-1991) Political Application of Limited Naval Force*, 1971) p. 145.

<sup>160</sup> James Cable, *Diplomacy at Sea* (1985), 40.

Those navies operating in their indigenous sea on the other side after the incident were reflected to be more capable of making snootier use of cost-effective vessels such as firing missile patrol craft, whose limited sea-keeping abilities would not be proven to disablement in closing off-shore. Concurring to the pretext, mining would be easier for the littoral state. Lastly, a state piloting conflict in its waters has the competence to pledge all of its services, whereas the state at a distance from the struggle will practically reserve some for battlements at home.

## 2. The Periods

Time constraints are inextricably related to distance. They can be broadly diffused into two types. The nature of the clash would call for the solicitation of maritime power to be abrupt if it is to provide effective results. The seizure of the *USS Pueblo* by North Koreans remains a classic example. The US deployment of a three-aircraft carrier fleet in the aftermath embodied the ineffectiveness and feebleness in the wake of the belated event. The second constraint is the period in which conflict can be either “sustained, deterred or threatened”. The recognised principle for sea-based operations in such a scenario is based on the calculated estimate for the distance and protraction whereby three ships are to be devoted for everyone that remains betrothed. However, the ratio is relatively lower for a littoral state that is proximate to the ongoing conflict.

## 3. Identity and Motivation

Stress has been laid by various preponderances of naval strategists on the adversary in terms of the relationship between his identity and the capacity of the nation to use the required amount of force needed in conflict. The motivation of the naval admirals is an important subject in such situations. At high levels of tense escalations, it



is advantageous to be single-minded in politics and the military. A stable degree of civil-military relations would bring in a “naval equaliser” that would allow for the employment of steady forces, whereas, on the contrary, the adversary facing confusion at the home front would reduce the potential losses and may keep some off the bay. It is, therefore, the uneven inspiration that, in some instances, deprives the more formidable force coalition of trumping on to escalation. In these situations, the navies of relatively smaller states would be less likely to get preoccupied by other foes. This would be so as countries weaker in naval arms have a better chance and opportunity to see clearly in the geopolitical arena, foreseeing certain patterns and trends in the wake of regional and beyond disputes. Their navies would

#### 4. The International Setting

The settings prevalent at the global levels have an impact on the components of maritime force. The geopolitical atmosphere exercises checks and balances on the use of force. The economic and diplomatic constraints are stringent; customers or creditors may be alienated, friends, patrons, or influence lost. Censure by the United Nations, foreign governments, and the international media can also adversely curtail domestic support. When using force, some states are more exposed to international constraints than others. The sensitivity to international constraints is generally more proportional to the international involvement of the states considered (global stake).

#### 5. The Level of Conflict Struggle

When kept low enough, the level of conflict is generally favourable to small states and causes few casualties via measures such as 'obstruction and harassment.'<sup>161</sup> may get away, whereas indulging in costly and sophisticated warships would find it difficult without raising the level of violence. Developments in maritime technology and the law of the sea are increasing the scope of maritime disputes that confront opposing political interests and aspirations. In some disputes, escalation would be irrelevant and counterproductive, for instance, the US concerning Iran and North Korea.

## 6. Limitations to Diffusion

Maritime conflict does tend to be limited; the role of maritime forces in total war is uncertain, and the decision is an unreal concept in total war. All maritime conflicts in the last half a century have been limited. The Falklands War remains the first of these examples, and despite possessing nuclear assets and submarines, it did not indulge them. It is the most extended period in modern history of anything that could reasonably be described, and even that description is not uncontested as a naval war. The Falkland War has been described as limited. Britain did not overtly attack mainland Argentina or its warships in territorial waters. Argentina did not attempt to widen the war by attacking British merchant ships or their nationals. Prisoners were freely returned with few exceptions. Media enjoyed a surprising liberty to report and comment from hostile territory.

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<sup>161</sup> James Cable, *Diplomacy at Sea* (1985), 44.

The limited character of the only naval war in recent history is tantamount to the fact that conflict at sea is inherently more controllable than it is on land or in the air.<sup>162</sup> Civilian populations for instance need not suffer unless a deliberate decision of making them the target is made. Moreover, warships can pose and sustain an implicit threat without a single warlike act. Deterrence is stronger and more credible. They can deploy on the neutral grounds of the high seas and if needed conduct their operations without infringement of territorial rights. Their ability to wait allows the government that controls their movements to gain time and make rational decisions, reflect, prepare and negotiate via diplomatic means. Above all the warships can be easily withdrawn, even when they have engaged in a conflict. Maritime power is thus a flexible instrument that is inevitably a tool of choice, whenever circumstances permit for the government intending the threat or use of limited force.

### 3.10. Maritime Diplomacy In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Maritime diplomacy encompasses wide spectrum of activities from cooperative behavior such as port visits, and humanitarian assistance to coercive and persuasive deployment of naval destroyers. In the contemporary era, the activity is no longer confined to only the naval force where civilian vessels and non-state groups such as multi-nationals have a growingly important role to play. The chapter will analyze and describe, the evolution of maritime diplomacy and how it could prove to be a mechanism for bringing stability to the Indian Ocean Region. Admiral Sergei Gorshkov of the USSR in 1979 once

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid, 48.

said “The Navy has always been an instrument of the policy of states, an important aid to diplomacy in peacetime”<sup>163</sup>.

### 3.10.1. Gunboat Diplomacy

The age of the ‘gunboat diplomacy’ which brings up images of European warships bombing and coercing states via acts of naval intimidation is generally thought to be long gone in the age of unipolar that is relinquishing towards more multipolar. Yet, gunboat diplomacy is not an activity confined to the past, as the former Asian victims of imperialism are now able to deal with their colonial rulers. Several states have understood the utility of ‘gunboat diplomacy’. Gunboat diplomacy allows for actors to use coercion to pursue the state’s objectives while at the same time having to avoid large-scale cost and conflict. In recent times, Iran held VELAYAT naval exercises in January 2012, the USS George Washington carrier participated in what is known as Invincible Spirit exercises in the Sea of Japan followed sinking of a South Korean corvette. Gunboat diplomacy has never disappeared from the inter-regional scene. The phrase seems unsuited to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with drones, missiles, and satellites. Gunboat diplomacy is now just a subset of a much wider group of operations short of war undertaken by navies, which comes under the definition of maritime diplomacy. Renowned German theorist Wolfgang G Friedmann claims that there is ‘a state of intermediacy’ between peace and war, characterized by hostility between opposing parties but with the absence of intention or decision to go to war.

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<sup>163</sup> Gorshkov Sergeĭ Georgievich., *The Sea Power of the State* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979)

Maritime diplomacy is an important tool of statecraft for the prevention of war, it signals to the adversary one's policies and capabilities bringing into play the interplay of deterrence and compellance. An excellent measure which provides a valve for stress relaxation in the international system. Incidence of maritime diplomacy can mitigate potential conflicts likely to occur, deterring adversaries, removing threats and solving disagreements through the threat of limited force. A predictive and preventive tool, used to avoid and deter conflict, and also make a political point. Maritime diplomacy is of particular relevance to the current global international system. In the last decade, the US has bolstered its presence to reassure its allies, and China on the other side is engaging regionally to assert posture.

### 3.10.2. Cooperative Maritime Diplomacy

Diplomacy is the management of international relations; concurring to this definition, maritime diplomacy is the use of maritime assets to manage relations between states. This includes port visits, joint exercises and training, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. Naval forces' flexibility is tantamount to their ability to operate in politically neutral international waters. In recent years, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities have added a soft-layered element, resulting in the evolution of the term 'gunboat philanthropy'.

Cooperative maritime diplomacy uses soft power elements, which, in the words of Joseph Nye, induces others to do what you want them to do. It is an attempt to support soft power through the use of hard-power naval assets. The regular port-to-port visits by

naval forces are often intended to build diplomatic influence and reassure allies. Training and diplomatic exercises provide for capacity building and the creation of knowledgeable navies, apart from reinforcing friendship with more compatibility. Rear Admiral Bob Davidson of the Royal Canadian Navy has called this 'maritime influence operations' and his sailors 'mini-ambassadors, representing the country, its interests and values in every port of call'. This illustrates that modern navies have potential far beyond the limited concept of gunboat diplomacy.

Geoffrey Till notes that naval forces have more excellent attributes and abilities than the other armed services, which provide for an expansive and flexible reach along with strategic mobility, which is not available to large formations of infantry troops or fighter aircraft. Peace Ark, the first Chinese hospital ship, was sent on a tour of Africa to administer nursing and medicinal facilities to the indigenous population. The vessel was able to transmit a message of peace, build influence, strengthen partnerships, and enhance the PLN as a benign military force. The Zheng He is another example of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), which has conducted two global goodwill voyages, the first one to Hawaii as early as 1989. The gesture built influence among the allies and reassured potential rivals and enemies as a potent symbol of 'Peaceful rise'. However, Lord Nelson, in 1801, while dealing with Denmark, said, "I hate your pen-and-ink pen; a fleet of British ships of war are the best negotiations in Europe"<sup>164</sup>.

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<sup>164</sup> Christian Le Miere, *Maritime Diplomacy in the 21st Century: Drivers and Challenges* (New York: Routledge, 2014)

### 3.10.3. Persuasive Maritime Diplomacy

Navies and maritime agencies have long been used for further political purposes in times of peace. These forms, however, are not cooperative as they lack collaboration in the diplomatic effects. It is differentiated from cooperative by lack of cooperation and from coercive diplomacy as it is not aimed to deter nor compel the other. They are intended to increase one's recognition of national power and build prestige for nations on the global stage. It is neither directed towards a particular recipient nor intended to strike fear into potential opponents. Aim to persuade others that the navy is present and effective. It is similar to what is known as 'showing of the flag' whereby naval vessels signal for presence and capability without influencing the policy of the other. Great White Fleet circumnavigated the globe from December 1907 to February 1909. Consisting of two squadrons of battleships and their escorts, US President Theodore Roosevelt painted these ships white to indicate their peaceful purpose and sent them off on a round world tour. The image of the US Navy built with this voyage was instrumental in projecting the maritime might and power during the Spanish-American War of 1898, which resulted in the occupation of Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico. The prime aim was America's rise to the top table of world powers. 'Speak softly and carry a big stick.'

Persuasive maritime diplomacy is practised less commonly than the other two, as its effects are vague. A modern-day example is that in February 2011, the Iranian navy sent a small flotilla through the Suez Canal for the first time since the country's revolution against the Shah in 1979. The voyage was intended to build stronger relations with Iran's single Arab ally, Syria, by visiting its Mediterranean coast. However, a more general goal

of the flotilla was to demonstrate Iran's ability to present in the Mediterranean Sea. In the words of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei: 'The world should know that the presence of Iranian warships in the Suez Canal has taken place through the deep guidance of the Supreme Leader'<sup>165</sup> The then-Israeli Vice President Silvan Shalom commented that the goal of the Iranian flotilla was to indicate to Arab states 'who is the new leader in the Middle East'.<sup>166</sup> Designed to show Iranian strategic reach, although it had little deterrent or compelling effect.

#### 3.10.4. Coercive Maritime Diplomacy

Coercive Maritime diplomacy resembles most gunboat diplomacy. It was defined and instrumented by events. The Don Pacifico affair of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century is most cited. Where a Royal Navy squadron was dispatched to seize Greek ships and property in 1850. The squadron blockaded Athens until a settlement was reached on the Don Pacifico affair. The dispatch of the German SMS Panther to Agadir in 1911 provided for a circumstance of threat but not the use of violence as a form of gunboat diplomacy. Amid the growing naval competition between the UK and Germany at the start of the twentieth century, and Berlin's desire for a share of imperial spoils globally, the gunboat was sent to the Moroccan port while a rebellion settled on the land. Germany now had aspirations as an imperial state and the means to pursue them.

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<sup>165</sup>Yusri Mohamed, "Iran Ships Pass via Suez, Israel Says Provocation," Reuters (Thomson Reuters, February 22, 2011), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-iran-suez/iran-ships-pass-via-suez-israel-says-provocation-idUUSTRE71L4D920110222>)

<sup>166</sup> Richard Boudreaux, "Iran Sends Two Naval Vessels Through Egypt's Suez Canal," The Wall Street Journal, (February 23, 2011).



North initiated a form of gunboat diplomatic event in 1968 which targeted the USS Pueblo, an intelligence-gathering vessel with use of limited and containable use of force. The Pueblo remains moored on the Taedong river today, where it is used as a propaganda tool for domestic and foreign visitors alike. In the words of James Cable, “it is the threat or use of limited naval force, to secure advantage or to avert loss, either in the furtherance of an international dispute or else against foreign nationals within the territory or the jurisdiction of their state.”<sup>167</sup> Gunboat Diplomacy was first written in the 1970s. In the present era of the post-Cold War world, where non-state actors have assumed a greater role at the helm of global affairs despite the US and its allies specifically waging a war against non-state actors, they have nevertheless gained unprecedented power managing to have carved even a state of their own, the dreaded ISIS caliphate. Apart from that other non-state militant actors such as Hezbollah and the now defunct Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were perhaps the first ‘navy’ to be operated by an insurgent group. On the “Heroes’ Day celebrations” on 27 November 2005 where lightly armed patrol boat displayed their power force in Kallapadu, Mullaitivu. The idea was to demonstrate their capabilities to the Sri Lankan government and deter aggression from them, a clear case of gunboat diplomacy.<sup>168</sup> This would be evidence of

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<sup>167</sup> James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy, 1919-1991: Political Applications of Limited Naval Force* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1994).p.4

<sup>168</sup> An anonymous pictorial of the events were posted online at “Martyrs Day 2005 - Sea Tigers,” Martyrs Day 2005 - Sea Tigers (blog) (Blogspot, November 27, 2005), <http://seatigers2005.blogspot.com/> ; Christian Le Miere, *Maritime Diplomacy in the 21st Century: Drivers and Challenges* (New York: Routledge, 2014)

Defining maritime diplomacy p.29 22 This tallies with the idea that diplomacy is no longer strictly the purview of nation states, as non- state actors, particularly non- state armed groups, non- government and commercial organizations, all affect and attempt to influence the international relations of state actors. See for instance Langhorne, ‘Diplomacy’, and Hocking, ‘Privatizing Diplomacy?’, pp. 147–52.

why non-state organizations would not engage in some form of gunboat diplomacy. The target of maritime diplomacy would not necessarily be state actors.

#### 3.10.5. Modern Trends in Diplomacy

The International political system is always in the process of evolution being shaped by events and decisions taken by statesmen. The bipolar global system came into place largely because Hitler decided to invade Europe which brought in all the major players culminating in the deadly Second World War. The end of the Cold War was brought about by the economic crisis in the Soviet Union, brought in with the mishandling of the crisis by Gorbachev and his predecessors, jostling it with the War in Afghanistan and the nuclear arms race, alongside the political repression of domestic political dissidents. The modern century is it is argued by the wise decisions of Asian statesmen, notably Deng Xio Ping who avowed to bring in reforms in the People's Republic of China despite opposition from hardliners. On the other side, India too entered the game at the geopolitical level by diversifying its economy, valuably learning from the Western approach to knowledge economy which greatly tapped into the Indian human resources.

International relation theorists have great difficulty coming into conformity with each other on providing policy analysis due to different sets of assumptions approbated by competing schools of thought in the discipline. The realist would interpret the events differently taking into the notions of state supremacy, anarchy and power politics, whereas liberalism would stress the role of multilayered actors comprising of institutions, multinational corporations, and financial institutions alongside states where anarchy is

manageable and peace is a reachable goal.<sup>169</sup> Therefore, in this context, the theorist would provide for competing trends in their level of international system analysis. Contemplating the above, the next two decades would be deciding times as at the moment there seems to be complex interdependent relations among the powerful states however at the same time there remains to be the core issues of the security dilemma and increasing militarization in the Indian Ocean. A trend therefore that seems apparent at one moment appears to vanish the very next year. It is thus a complex task difficult to distinguish between competing interpretations. Fukuyama's 'End of History' and Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' seem to be redundant requiring greater clarification with the coming of the present century.<sup>170</sup> Jeremy Black argues that neither of these concepts was new as both had been in frequent use by both sides during the Algerian independence against the French. The latter concept evolved because of the détente between China and the USA and then later between the Soviet Union and the USA. By the collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1989-91, the diplomatic version of globalization emerged providing for homogeneity of global diplomatic order. However, the system since then has been confronted by non-state actors whose nature can be distinguished from being peaceful to of being violent. The former category includes Nongovernmental organizations such as international charities, and financial and economic conglomerates whereas the latter includes terrorist groups.

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<sup>169</sup> Jeremy Black, *A History of Diplomacy* (London: Reaktion, 2011)

<sup>170</sup> Glen M.E Duerr, "Huntington vs. Mearsheimer vs. Fukuyama: Which Post-Cold War Thesis Is Most Accurate?," *E-International Relations*, April 22, 2018, [www.e-ir.info/2018/04/22/huntington-vs-mearsheimer-vs-fukuyama-which-post-cold-war-thesis-is-most-accurate/](http://www.e-ir.info/2018/04/22/huntington-vs-mearsheimer-vs-fukuyama-which-post-cold-war-thesis-is-most-accurate/)

Since the cessation of Cold war hostilities, the diplomatic situation has to some extent eased down. There is no apparent threat of 24/7 nuclear war as was also feared between the US-Soviet bloc. Despite this Cold war, considered the most dangerous conflict of unprecedented nature because of the huge nuclear arsenal held by each superpower that had the potential to blow up the entire world many times; diplomacy remained the central means to wind down escalations. Willy Brandt's 'Ostpolitik' is a noteworthy mention, the West Germany government under his Chancellorship sought a more benign relationship with the Soviet bloc. This brought stability to Europe and enabled West Germany to take on a more central role on the world stage. The policy shift was radical, as previous statesmen refused to consider détente with the East. However, the approach failed to bring in conducive results. Ostpolitik reflected a great degree of assertion based on West German economic recovery and political stability, and rejection of the previous generation's nostrums. Similar is required in India, equipping oneself with modern techniques, and conforming to changing geopolitical developments. The only means for state progression. Those nations that fail to consider such an approach, fall in the perils of history. In 1970, West Germany signed treaties with the Soviet Union and Poland, recognizing the existing borders. It recognized East Germany. It remains the key approach that allowed for the resurrection of European preference for diplomacy as a means of influence for relatively weaker powers. Diplomacy served as a major political alternative to the military logic of the arms race. The strategy was found to be advantageous and was employed by the superpower during the Helsinki Accords. Declassified reports suggest that the Accords were instrumental in bringing the collapse of the 'Iron Curtain' from Europe. President Nixon formally accepted the Ostpolitikian

approach in his policy-making in Europe and Asia. Mikhail Gorbachev was elected the youngest elected Secretary-General of USSR, vowed to transform foreign policy by subordinating diplomacy to politics. The protégé of Andropov, confronted the Cold War architecture by various agreements on arms control. In 1987 in Prague, he declared departing from the feared 'Brezhnev Doctrine' for the forceful upholding of communist values that instigated the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The collapse of Communism in Europe and the disintegration of the USSR created new contexts for diplomacy.

The pertinence of recent international developments for the future is unclear and reflects questions about the likely character of future crises. It may be so that shifts in geopolitical circumstances would move to emphasis from an idealist to a realist level of policymaking. If the scenario is based on Great Power competition between China and the USA, or regional stability in South Asia and Middle China, the more conventional notions of diplomacy would come into practice with a strong military dimension. The offering of slogans has become part of the contemporary discourse of politics where politicians and statesmen use jargon terms such as 'Make America Great Again' and 'Peaceful Rise of China' or in the words of adversarial camp the 'String of Chains and Pearls' which provides an additional foggy vision for researchers. In Asia and around the continents, the forces of globalization are being overrun by jingoistic nationalism and coming into power of right-wing governments.

#### 3.10.6. Power in Diplomacy

Power is accepted in diplomacy as the manager that can provide a transition to stable times. For instance, Turkey for years has rejected diplomatic relations with Armenia

partially because of its control over Nagorno-Karabakh in the 1993 war from Azerbaijan. The border has been closed since then, in 2009 Turkey drafted a document to establish diplomatic ties however it refuted it when Azerbaijan was keen to turn to Russia for military protection—ending the draft agreement. American diplomacy creation and maintenance of NAFTA, ANDEAN and MERCOSUR, and discussion about their extension. Diplomatic trends in 2009: Presidents of Brazil, China, and Russia, along with the Prime Minister of India, met the states, calling themselves 'BRICS' and calling for a 'greater voice and representation in international financial institutions.' They represent 42 per cent of the global population and 15 per cent of GDP and hold 40 per cent of gold and hard currency reserves. The diplomatic initiative was significant as it included India and China, whose growth rates are higher than both the USA and Europe—however, there are differences in political and economic consolidation. Terrorism can have a detrimental effect on exacerbating relations between impeding states. The November 2008 attack in Mumbai led to India calling off the four-year Pakistani attempt for normalisation of relations. Previously, the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament had reversed the ties until the 'composite dialogue' of 2004 brought a degree of stabilisation.

In the present era of globalisation, diplomacy has incorporated the issues of the day to foster greater collaboration in the global international arena. After revelations of global warming and climate, environment conservation is an essential area of state-to-state cooperation. The agreements range from a bilateral form of diplomacy to a global level based on summits such as the Kyoto Accords. Another development is the account of international relations that is on the move towards a more multipolar world, with a

relative diminish in American supremacy. Black argues that this decline is not a result of the US military's over-commitments and recent fiscal challenges but is due to less focus on diplomacy. He predicts that in the years to come, there could be a transition in great power status from the USA to China, in his words, the end of 'Chimerica.' Alternatively, a more peaceful shift could be a multipolar international order where China and the USA both play significant roles.<sup>171</sup> There is a major need for diplomacy in the two likely scenarios to manage the transition. It is argued that if China assumed the status of a great power in the 21st century, it would be an empire very different than it used to be in the earlier period of the eighteenth century and earlier. The world China would be engaging in is very different; therefore, the classical sense of spatiality, geopolitics, and universal kingship would not apply.<sup>172</sup> China is extending its influence into Central Asia; however, this means today is different, consisting of shoring up financial incentives to win support and secure energy supplies. This engagement with the world beyond China is distinct from the earlier times, and the construction of big embassies in places where Classical China did not extend its influence is noted. Malabo is such an example, the capital of oil-rich Equatorial Guinea. In the early 1970s, the People's Republic offered diplomatic support to African nationalism, blended with military support and ideological affinity.<sup>173</sup> The transformation in diplomacy indicates contrasting demands placed on changing power politics in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. It is also a reflection of China's flexibility in attaining national interest goals. In future developments, the USA would

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<sup>171</sup> C. Dale Walton, *Geopolitics and the Great Powers in the Twenty-First Century: Multipolarity and the Revolution in Strategic Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2009); William H. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)

<sup>172</sup> Luke S. K. Kwong, "The Chinese Myth of Universal Kingship and Commissioner Lin Zexu's Anti-Opium Campaign of 1839," *The English Historical Review* CXXIII, no. 505 (November 10, 2008): pp. 1470-1503, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/cen275>

<sup>173</sup> Philip Snow, *The Star Raft: China's Encounter with Africa*, 1st ed. (Cornell University Press, 1989)

remain a major part of the multilateral structure and diplomacy, particularly as it remains unrivalled on the global military power chessboard.

### 3.10.7. Maritime Diplomacy – A Wholistic Review

Alfred Mahan, the doyen of naval and strategic analysis, defined sea power as “not just a nation’s power at sea but the power that is hailed from the sea.” Thus, it combines maritime trade, overseas bases, merchant vessels, and naval shipping.<sup>174</sup> Geoffrey Till notes that a virtuous circle of sea power where maritime trade would lead to the discovery and exchange of maritime resources would lead to greater funds at the disposal of the naval arm, thus allowing for greater potential for maritime supremacy, which would, in turn, ensure the protection of marine trade. Admiral Gorshkov of the Soviet Navy stressed the significance of fishing, mercantilism, and oceanographic fleets as part of the maritime culture that contributes to the overarching sea power of a state.<sup>175</sup>

For China, as a rising great power, it is ‘comprehensive national military power’ that would be instrumental in allowing for progress and development. Comprehensive national power would include both military and non-military modes of power. In sea power diplomacy, consider civilian and non-naval assets as key tools in maritime diplomacy. Naval power in this context would be the ability to control the Indian Ocean maritime environment. The navy, in this context, would be instrumental in influencing the policy and ability or rather the military posture of another state. Gunboat diplomacy occurs

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<sup>174</sup> Christian Le Miere, *Maritime Diplomacy in the 21st Century: Drivers and Challenges* (New York: Routledge, 2014)

<sup>175</sup> Gorshkov Sergeĭ Georgievich., *The Sea Power of the State* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979)



outside of the war. Any use of armed force during the war would come under military operations. Therefore, it would be operational only during peacetime. The sinking of Belgrano during the Falklands War would not thus be classified under this heading. Similarly, the torpedoing of HMS Conqueror successfully by the Argentinians, though it sent a strong political message, was essentially military. Gunboat diplomacy is not the pursuit of wartime goals but peacetime diplomatic goals. War would start only when diplomacy, gunboat or persuasion would fail. In international relations, gunboat diplomacy would manage state differences without resorting to war.

The cable suggests that gunboat diplomacy would involve the threat of force. They add that the danger does not need to be explicit. It is possible that states, particularly those that are subsidiaries in power relations, affect and amend their foreign policy. However, there is a need to distinguish between capability and intention. The definition would suggest that in the event of gunboat diplomacy, there must be the ability to wage violence or at least signal to use naval force for such diplomacy to be successful. The naval parade by China's People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) on account of the sixtieth anniversary in April 2009 is an example of successful diplomacy. No threats were declared, but the parade of muscular nature involving a nuclear submarine along with 52 other vessels was an indication to foreign powers that China was not to be trifled with. Similarly, Iran's Velayat 90 exercise is a demonstration of intent and capability aimed to reveal the Islamic Republic's capabilities that could be used to disrupt the Strait of Hormuz. Therefore, the definition by Cable would incorporate all naval operations where violence or threats of violence are declared against other states that do not lead to war.

It is suggested that gunboat diplomacy in the post-Cold War world is ever increasingly relevant, particularly in the face of non-traditional national security threats, notably piracy, trafficking, pollution control and illegal immigration. Counter-piracy operations have a military goal at the core, which is to stop pirates from attacking international shipping. A modern-day example would be the Chinese non-combatant evacuations in Libya in 2011, which involved the People's Republic's first use of a warship beyond the country's sea. Such actions are designed to prevent harm to citizens; however, they do not manage international relations or, to a large extent, affect the policy of another actor.

Military exercises, however, do have a specific target in mind. The US *Invincible* Spirit exercises of 2010 were, according to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, a response to China's 'greatest ever level of operational flexibility with simultaneous deployment of underwater, surface and air assets' that took place in April 2010. US Navy Admiral Turner outlined four missions for the US Navy: strategic deterrence, sea control, power projection and naval presence. He defined naval force as instrumental to achieving political objectives in short-of-war situations. In the past, gunboat diplomacy has supported allies and friends to deter rivals by demonstrating support. Friendly support visits in this context would have a two-pronged effect. The first would be to reassure allies, and the other would be to deter rivals. The most cited example is the visit of the USS *Missouri* to Turkey in April 1946 to deliver the remains of the Turkish Ambassador to the US, who died while serving in the office. The 19-gun salutes provided for reassuring Turkey that was under pressure from Stalin to renegotiate the Montreux Convention of 1936, signaling the Soviets against any military adventurism. The deployment of the

Soviet Fifth Eskadra during the 1973 Yom Kippur War to counter the US Sixth Fleet that was deployed to reassure Israel is another example of naval assets used for diplomacy to cease hostilities. Maritime forces in diplomacy, therefore, remain increasingly significant as they provide the necessary deterrent policy objectives.

### 3.11. Emerging Trends In Indian Ocean Power Politics

Admiral Mahan's prophecy regarding the 'epic-centrality of the Indian Ocean' for a long time had remained ignored by strategists as an exaggerated or duly overstated presumption. The superpower rivalry that fairly remained contained to the Atlantic and Pacific considered the only major theatres, was an embodiment of this approach. The changing geopolitical realities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century have reinvigorated the "Mahanian wisdom," with major powers viewing their destinies in the waters of the third largest Ocean. Since then, IO has been accorded increasing geopolitical importance with its role as a transit zone, which holds critical points for global energy security. The Strait of Malacca and Hormuz are two critical chokepoints providing more than 50 per cent of petro-mineral trade. The increasing stake has brought in all sorts of players, including the non-state actors. One example would be piracy which in the last few years is growing off the coast of Somalia. The increasing military activities of China have come on the radar in Western and Indian strategic political thought. The latter is most concerned with the 'Chinese circle' gaining diametrical strength in the IOR, making India rethink its "strategic autonomy" on the verge of probable collapse by allying with the Americans.

The IO's economic importance is growing and will continue to advance in the succeeding years. The "preeminent energy and trade sea" is attributed to providing the world with 50 per cent of its container traffic and 70 per cent of all oil trade via its strategic seaways. However, sadly, the IOR accounts for a mere 20 per cent of IO commercial activity. Several trade agreements have been signed between and among IOR states, which are expected to bolster the economic progression to greater levels. India is

forecasted to experience 7.4 per cent growth in 2018. The significance of chokepoints in the IO would increase and not diminish due to “complex interdependence” at work. The Hormuz and Malacca Straits would grow in importance, particularly in the wake of a futuristic scenario where China 2030 would overtake the Americans as the principal oil consumer. India, on the other side, is also anticipated to be not far behind; by 2025, it is projected to grow at a pace faster than China. Another trend in motion is the interconnectivity of ingenuities in the form of corridors that would revolutionize regional political and economic image. The lack of infrastructural development in the developing IOR nations provides an impetus for such initiatives to bring a strong culture for economic integration. However, the possibility of increased political and other strategic affluence cannot be ruled out in a realpolitik world. The key actors are India and China, which, in the decades to come, will see an intensity in the rivalry for geo-economics.

The “Maritime Silk Road” is a China-sponsored strategy that is envisioned to bolster infrastructure development in IOR. A sea-based component of the grandeur “Belt and Road Initiative” (BRI), although the latter is a land-based project with mega corridors for increasing Chinese exports to new markets and expanding in the existing. On a political front, it would increase the influence of China in the region. At home, it is directed to enable the relatively backward western zone of China that would also address the “Malacca dilemma”. For this purpose, the country has focused its attention on investment in infrastructure projects on the maritime supply routes, such as expanding port facilities and constructing new oil and gas pipelines. Critics have questioned the projects' economic practicalities and the geopolitical imperatives behind the hefty investments. The

concern for the trade corridors taking on a militaristic approach has been debated in the literature. The possibility of leverage over domestic and foreign policies of indebted countries cannot be ruled out. Western writers have contested the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to fall within such an ambit where strategic intentions overlap with economic ones. The Xinjiang province of China would be provided access to the Indian Ocean via the Gwadar port. The geographical proximity of the Port with the “main supply line” for China’s Persian Gulf oil imports raises questions about the official statements that state the exclusiveness of economic interests.

The investment by China in the ports undertaken for commercial reasons is questionable in light of port calls and visits of warships and submarines in Djibouti and Colombo. An added concern is the high interest rates on loans that have caused “debt-trap cycles” in developing states on the edges of the Silk Road project. Sri Lanka has been conditioned to such situations whereby the Chinese have asked for more rights and control to accumulate the invested reserves. The government in Colombo, to address the concern of the People’s Republic, had to convert the debt into an equity stake. Thereby allowing the Chinese space to maneuver in the Hambantota port strategically.

The rivalries of the Indian Ocean are being fueled by insecurity, and the risk of confrontation, despite the huge stakes involved, continues to grow at a surging rate with the absence of any robust security mechanisms. The IORA is short of a security association that includes the major bordering countries as member states. The major

limitation of the organisation is that it is dependent and, at times, follows the policy agenda of the nation-state that leads it. However, hopes are being laid for the IONS, which has, over the years, brought a degree of coordination by bringing in a top brass of naval personnel from across the globe. From a critical lens, it has also failed to develop an effective mechanism of consultation.

The anti-piracy missions had for over the years provided impetus for institution building and strengthened cooperation, which is at present on the verge of fading away. This is despite the evidence that the stability and security of SLOCs are the common interests of varying powers. The prominence of IO as the major transit zone for global commerce would continue to be on the surge, pressing states to protect their sea routes. At present, despite the forces of globalization working in parallel, the stakeholder states have not yet realised that stability and security would be more comprehensive due to “collective security efforts”. The PRC’s activities in the IO ring an alarm bell in the Western states, along with some of the regional power states such as India and those of the South China Sea. These developments have fostered a geopolitical setting consisting of distrust and uncertainty. The country's “strategy” of “debt-trapping” states and using economic leverage to transform port infrastructural facilities for military tenacities stir up unwanted troubles. Added to that, the Indians, particularly in recent years, have shown concern for the PLA (N) submarines patrolling in the IO waters under the cover of combating piracy. Such an approach may impede “combined security efforts” as the deployment of submarines is unsuited for piracy patrols. This indicates that China is intent on amassing its power at the security expense of regional compatriots.

China continuing the path of “naval expansionism” will increase the threat perception of states such as India, which will, as a result, give birth to an unending arms race and a cycle of “prolonged security dilemma”. It is suggested that the impervious motives of the PRC would be “self-afflicting” the country as regional resentment goes against the interests of China, which would be detrimental to the grandeur of the country's multi-billion-dollar projects. In such a situation, there is the possibility of creating “counter-coalitions” in supposedly endangered states. States in competition, such as the US, may cash in the situation, playing a role as a “spoiler” by depicting it as a struggle between the “free vs. the exploiting non-democratic regime”. In the years to come, the picture will be clear as to whether the PRC continues to follow the path trajectory which escalates the conflict by aggravating reactions from other competitors.

It is noteworthy to state here that it was the rules of the “liberal world order” that paved the way for the “Rise of the PRC”. Furthermore, it would be interesting to note whether the country remains in the framework as the great-reformer leader Deng Xio Ping advised or will the country aggressively make way for an alternative international order, which the Western writers anticipate with the PRC's growing interest and involvement in IO.<sup>176</sup> In the form of state and non-state actors involved in the region, the international community would pave the way for economic interests to prevail. The EU would have an

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<sup>176</sup> Bastiaan Van Apeldoorn and Naná De Graaff, “US–China Relations and the Liberal World Order: Contending Elites, Colliding Visions?,” *International Affairs* 94, no. 1 (January 2018): pp. 113-131, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix232>



essential role in increasing commerce and shipping interdependence. Furthermore, it remains to be the embodiment of the “liberal values” in the wake of the US administration’s taking a step back to conservatism and “America First!”

### 3.12. Trends in Worldwide Trade

The contemplation of the worldwide sea trade trends is vital for understanding the contemporary crux behind the ‘complex interdependence’ that binds major powers towards a degree of cooperation due to the tremendous economic stake. Global sea trade has recorded expansion, with India and China fueling revenues in shipbuilding, port expansions and developments. The freight rates have conformed to this trend and are steadily rising upwards. The World Trade Organization (WTO) reports the monthly aggregate trade volume. In the previous decades, the total volume of exports by sea fell by 10 per cent, the most significant drop since the Second World War and with the start of the 2009 financial meltdown. The containerised trade which features 16 per cent of trade by sea, recorded the sharpest decline. The steady increase in worldwide economic activity, contributed significantly by India and China, has provided fuel via domestic and foreign investments in shipbuilding, port development and expansion.

Global trade has become firmly more interlinked than at any point in human history in terms of volume and capacity. The global flows of these goods and services have reached the value in trillions of dollars while continuing to be upward. The government and large international consortiums have occupied commercial trading with each other for centuries. The trend has now extended to small business enterprises who, taking advantage of the “globalised lays of trade networks”, have joined in the global commercial

line. Several factors have been responsible for the smooth transition, including the technological advancements provided by the internet, which allows SBEs to conduct their activities. It was thought certain that air freight would diminish the significance of the sea lanes as the former could transport faster and directly between the respective countries. However, seaborne continues to be relevant and essential in terms of both being cost-effective by allowing bulk transportation. The Internet can be termed as the “digital trading empire”, which weaves bonds and interconnections on levels never experienced in human history. It has refined the sense of commercial buying and selling as within the “blink of an eye” transactions are conducted. The process has been developed to be secure, reliable and cost-effective, a situation that sometimes depicts the Smithsonian's vision of “perfect-market competition”. Selling platforms such as Alibaba and Amazon provide the facility to buy and sell despite geographical constraints. China continues to hold its more than a thousand years of traditions by standing third in the list of countries with the most important. It is currently valued at \$ 1.59 trillion, whereas the European Union takes the first two spots with \$2.312 trillion and the United States with \$2.273 trillion annually. In the exports table, China is at the top with \$2.21 trillion, while the EU stands second with \$2.173 trillion and the US with \$1.575 trillion.

### 3.12.1. Geography of Raw Materials

The IOR is home to many strategically vital industrial materials such as petroleum, uranium, titanium, iron ore and bauxite. Therefore, understanding their location helps form the geo-strategic picture of the Indian Ocean. It provides foresight into the country's available resources for exports. Additionally, such resources contribute significantly to building maritime linkages and trade patterns within and beyond the immediate region.

The region's value exports are currently led by crude oil and Petrochemicals byproducts. Other substantial exports are machinery, equipment, manufactured products, wheat, and timber.

The majority of the states in the Indian Ocean are net importers. The significant import and transshipment countries are Singapore, India, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Egypt, and Indonesia. The most considerable importing and transshipment countries within the Indian Ocean region are India, Singapore, Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, UAE, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Iran, Israel, and Egypt. The net exporters comprise KSA, Sudan, UAE, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, and Myanmar.

#### 3.12.2. Key Indian Ocean Trades

The Indian Ocean consists of "bulk cargo" comprising seven distinct categories – loose cargo, containerised cargo, pallets and flats, pre-slung, liquid refrigerated and wheeled cargo. It is the dominant mode of transport in the Indian Ocean for semi-processed and finished products. The bulk cargo category includes liquid bulk, dry bulk and specialist bulk. The industry provides for specific carrying vessels according to the shipped goods. They are tankers, bulk carriers, combined carriers and specialist bulk carriers. Most bulk cargoes are formed around the raw material (bulk commodities) trades such as iron ore, petroleum, grains and coal.

#### 3.12.3. Major Ports and Terminals

The location and geography of ports are pivotal factors that influence the sea lane patterns that constitute the strategic power of the state in the maritime realm.

Maritime commerce is subject to rapidly changing processes of supply and demand dictated by technology, geopolitics and economics.

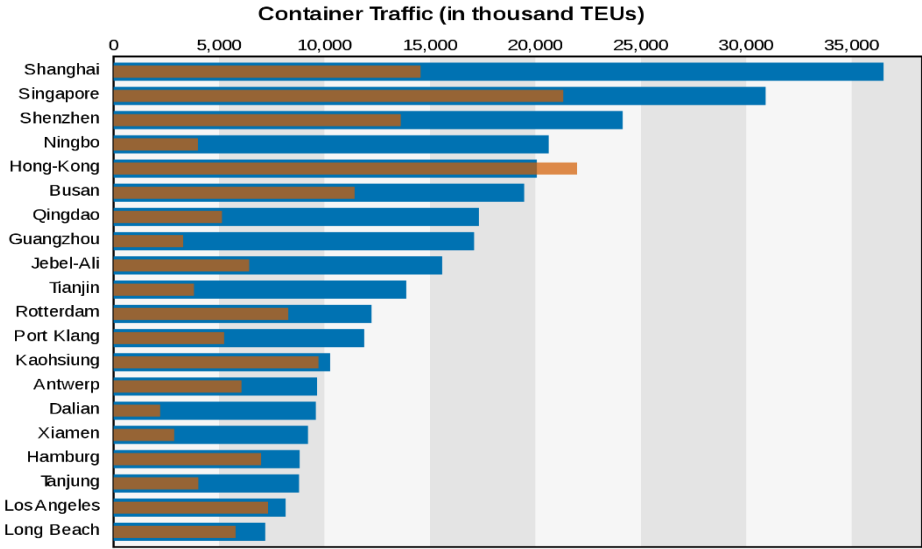


Figure 1: Container traffic for major global ports  
 Source: Statista, <https://www.statista.com/topics/1367/container-shipping>, accessed on 21 July 2019

The conversions in the relative importance of the ports in the last few decades have been brought by shifting trading patterns brought by the availability of superior technical services and facilities. Port of Aden in Yemen is one such example; half a century ago, it enjoyed the grandeur stature as a “lynchpin of the Indian Ocean,” at present, its position has waned in favour of new ports along the Gulf, which were previously marginal coastal villages. The transition is not merely because the country is unstable and engulfed in a civil war but because of a lack of competitive infrastructure. The ports with the most significant trading portfolios belong to the countries of Australia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and UAE. Second-tier

countries that are increasingly important to trade in at least one particular commodity belong to Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar, South Africa, and Sri Lanka.<sup>177</sup>

In recent years, the Indian Ocean has witnessed a surge in the importance of petrochemicals, with a large number of suppliers and consumer companies entering the market. This has led to a growing strategic significance for terminals that export crude oil and byproducts such as liquefied natural gas. The location of these specialized ports and terminals has elevated the coastal states' status, and the increasing traffic volumes have added to the Indian Ocean's strategic calculations. The rise in maritime trade volume and complexity has been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the technical sophistication of vessels and ports. This has spurred major infrastructural developments at ports, including the expansion of land transportation networks. While most port developments are driven by commercial imperatives, some, such as the Chinese initiatives in Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Gwadar in Pakistan, and Lamu in Kenya, are viewed in the Western media as having political and strategic implications.

Another trend in the Indian Ocean region is expanding and developing new ports financed by foreign and "quasi-sovereign" conglomerates from China, Singapore and the Emirates. Traditionally, these areas were considered sensitive and strategic infrastructures for public entities. However, the lack of investment capital by the state and

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<sup>177</sup> Amit A. Pandya, Rupert Herbert Burns, and Junko Kobayashi, "Maritime Commerce and Security: The Indian Ocean • Stimson Center," Stimson Center, February 2011, <https://www.stimson.org/content/maritime-commerce-and-security-indian-ocean>)

the economic opportunities offered by globalisation have eased the financial restraints. Among the significant expansions underway are those in Dubai, Bahrain, Djibouti, Karachi, Mumbai, Duqm, and Mombasa. The new port developments that have the potential significant game-changing characteristics are:

- a. The deep-water port of Ehoala in Madagascar was opened in 2009. Funded by the global mining syndicate Rio Tinto, which provided \$270 million. The 15.7m berth port exports ilmenite and is a servicer of cruise liners, containerships and refrigeration vessels, which has prospective opportunities for local and regional economies.<sup>178</sup>
  
- b. Lamu is a proposed major port in norther Kenya which would dwarf. The project includes the construction of the Lokichar-Lamu Crude Oil Pipeline for 2022 as part of the South Sudan Ethiopia Transport Corridor Project (SETCP).
  
- c. Gwadar is on the western coast of Pakistan.
  
- d. Hambantota in Southern Sri Lanka adds to the port capacity available in Colombo and Trincomalee.

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<sup>178</sup> MARTIN CREAMER , “Mining Weekly,” Mining Weekly - Rio recalibrating understanding of Africa, working on Africa strategy, December 19, 2017, <http://www.miningweekly.com/print-version/rio-tinto-2017-12-18>)

e. Duqm Port. The strategically located port of Duqm in Oman is a new addition to the major ports of the Indian Ocean. This port can accommodate 18-meter-draft ships, including aircraft carriers. Both the USA and India have inked logistic base agreements with Oman for the stationing and repair/ maintenance of their warships. China has also invested in the Port Infrastructure of Duqm Port. It is expected that Omani Ports will also address the Hormuz Dilemma for Middle Eastern Oil exporters soon.

f. Chabahar Port of Iran. Chabahar Port is located 76 km west of Gwadar and has been constructed with the help of India. India has provided US\$ 85 million for its first phase with the promise of an additional US\$ 500 in times to come. This port is related to Iran's national road and railway infrastructure. This port also connects Afghanistan and ultimately provides access to the Central Asian States. This port has also been exempted by the USA from economic sanctions. Geographically speaking, this port is in the Gulf of Oman, well outside of Hormuz. Recently, China updated its deal with Iran, initially signed in 2016, to invest US\$ 400 billion in 25 years, during which the port, communication infrastructure, and oil/ gas industry will be upgraded. This development is being called “a potentially material shift to the global balance of the oil and gas sector” and could mark a “seismic shift in the global hydrocarbons sector”. The most important part of the deal is that US\$ will not be used for commodity transaction payments.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> “China Updates Deal to Invest \$400 Billion in Iran: Report,” The Iran Project, September 4, 2019, <https://theiranproject.com/blog/2019/09/05/china-updates-deal-to-invest-400-billion-in-iran-report/>

China is progressing to be the foremost player in the port shipping sector, in untapped and largely ignored Eastern Africa. PRC's role is colossal buying raw materials and supplying them with commodity goods. It provides them with ample job opportunities by investing in infrastructure in the forms of railways, roads, airports and not to mention ports. The country according to a modest estimate has invested around \$40 billion into the region.<sup>180</sup>

### 3.13. Pakistan's Maritime Interests: Challenges and Opportunities

Indian Ocean challenges require close attention from decision-makers at the highest level of strategy. The Foreign Ministry of Pakistan should recognize the IO as a region that deserves attention in its own right. Indian Ocean is a test zone for the rules of the game in a nascent multi-polar world order. It is of utmost importance to establish a degree of governance that would allow prosperity and growth to take place if not the idealistic notion of peace. The region has the potential to facilitate the integration of rising powers by regulating order and upholding the principles of an open economy. The safety and security of SLOCs hold tremendous importance on this account which is key for sea-based trade that holds to its chunk the global economic growth. States need to attach high priority to the vulnerable choke points as the international repercussions of any disruption in the Indian Ocean supply lines can send shockwaves to the entire trading structure. The multi-state maritime cooperative regimes are most suited to ramify to the

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<sup>180</sup> " Guide to Chinese Private Investment in Africa: Insights from SME Competitiveness Surveys.," ITC (International Trade Centre, December 2018), <http://www.intracen.org/publication/Chinese-private-investment-in-Africa/>)



present needs. An agenda needs to be built on a regional framework that extends to areas such as anti-piracy, marine ecology, seabed exploration and joint search and rescue. All the countries involved need to be conscious of the cooperative approaches which alone have the guarantee to provide for sea lanes long-term safety. For this purpose the understanding of the UNCLOS stipulations is vital. Countries reaching agreements need to be mindful that reaching cooperative agreements for law enforcement on the high seas would provide guarantee of international navigation on the high seas. The island disputes that overlap maritime states claim can come to a resolution via a joint patrol approach and

#### 3.13.1. Pakistan's Maritime Compulsion

Pakistan has been blessed with 1001 km long coast line, 290,000 sq km EEZ (including the extended Continental Shelf - area more than the combined area of two provinces – ranked 65<sup>th</sup> as per size of its EEZ at global level), warm waters, all weather running ports and closer proximity to strategic Gulf Region. Pakistan's sea frontage is studded with pristine beaches, has Indus Delta descending into sea as the 5<sup>th</sup> largest delta in the world with exquisite fish and seafood varieties. Its 7<sup>th</sup> largest mangroves of world act as fish hatchery for North Arabian Sea. Pakistan is also blessed with good quality sea products which include fish, sea bed resources and other hydro-carbons assets.

Approximately, 91% of cargo is ferried over the sea from/ to Pakistan. Some of her critical SLOCs pass closer to age old rival India. Pakistan is aware of its immediate and

extended neighborhood in IOR. Pakistan has to evaluate its options and come up prepared to face any challenges that IOR might offer in the near future.

### 3.13.2. Pakistan and Indian Ocean

Pakistan has been blessed with 1001 km long coastline (Pakistan 2002), 290,000 sq km Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), warm waters, all weather running ports and closer proximity to strategic Gulf Region. Gulf houses a number of world Navies with permanent bases, i.e. United States of America (USA), France and United Kingdom (UK). Arabian Sea has the presence of around 15 international navies operating under the flag of Commander Task Force (CTF)-150 (operating in and around Persian Gulf) and CTF-151 (operating close to Somali Coast). It is worthwhile to mention that navies operate virtually just 12 NM from Pakistan's coast, making them our neighbors in technical sense (Bilal 2012).

Some of Pakistan's critical SLOCs pass closer to aged old rival India. Similarly, Pakistani port approaches are vulnerable to blockades due to combined air, surface, and sub-surface threats. Pakistan is also blessed with good quality sea products, including fish, mineral resources and other hydrocarbon assets. Pakistan, thus, defines its interests in two naval terms:

- a. Area of Interest. Around 500-600 NM from Pakistan's coast is an area of interest for Pakistan. Pakistan needs to defend this area against aggression at sea well.

b. Area of Influence. Pakistan needs to have influence in all areas north of the Equator in the Indian Ocean, from the African/ Arabian coast to the Indonesian coast. Pakistan gets edible oil from Malaysia and other goods from the Malacca Strait route. Similarly, Pakistan's main export area is Europe, and Gulf Aden and Red Sea routes are her priority. It is, therefore, necessary that Pakistan have some influence in the area.

Pakistan has failed to capitalise on its true maritime potential since independence. Pakistan's maritime sector is in a poor state and unable to contribute positively to the national economy and security. Short details of Pakistan's naval sector are appended below:

a. Shipping Sector. Pakistan inherited a few old vintage ships at the time of partition. However, the the shipping sector grew with trade between East and West Pakistan and reached 74 by the late 60's. However, after the breakup of East Pakistan in 1971 and the nationalization of private shipping companies in 1974, the shipping sector shrunk considerably. Now, Pakistan operates only 11 ships (01 Bulk carrier, 06 Oil tankers and 04 multipurpose ships) with a total Dead weight carrying capacity of around 830,681 metric tons. Pakistan can lift around 34% of liquid cargo and 1.5% of total dry cargo, making an average of 13-14% of total lift capacity against world standards of 40%. This is an inherent weakness for national security also, as, during a national emergency or war, Pakistan will not have adequate Pakistan flagships to carry goods to Pakistan in a war zone. Moreover, world insurance companies will also charge heavy premiums as war risk surcharges.

- b. Ship Repair and Maintenance. Pakistan has only one shipyard with a maximum capacity of 26000 metric tons shipbuilding capacity. This is also a big handicap in Pakistan.
- c. Ports and Harbours. Pakistan has three commercial ports capable of handling all types of cargo. They are Karachi (Karachi Port Trust), Port Qasim, and Gwadar Port. Karachi and Gwadar Ports are deep-draft ports that can accommodate 14-16 m draft ships.
- d. Maritime Tourism. Maritime Tourism does not exist in Pakistan despite all weather 1000 km long coast. This is a neglected sector that can bring in foreign exchange if adequately developed. Maldives, a tiny Indian Ocean nation, has been successful in making the country a popular tourist destination for Western and CAR states. Similarly, the Indian state of Kerala earns US\$ 5 billion annually from this sector
- e. Ship Breaking Sector. This is another sad story in Pakistan, as Pakistan was once considered the leading nation for shipbreaking. Around 100 ships used to be dismantled at one time, engaging a direct workforce of over 30,000, whereas the indirect workforce was estimated to be more than a million. Unfortunately, now this sector is on the decline because of poor safety records, negligence by the Government, US \$ - Rupees parity and environmental hazards. The need of the hour is that Pakistan should declare this as an Industry and formulate policies for Green Shipyards.

f. Fishery Sector. Pakistan has the potential for more than one billion US\$ export capacity in the fishing sector. At present, Pakistan was able to export only 451 million US\$ fish in 2018. This sector can also contribute to food security.

### 3.14. Major Port Development Trends: Indian Ocean Region

The global economic crisis led to a significant decline in cargo volumes and revenues at many ports. Dealing with conjunctions, keeping up with new information, technology and equipment, and improving port services, port security, environmental protection, and regional cooperation remain key challenges. For emerging ports To a large extent, opportunities and challenges for port development go hand in hand.<sup>181</sup>

Threats to security and safety have become a major concern in the decade. Policymakers and analysts have intensively addressed this area since the September 2001 attacks.<sup>182</sup> The International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) was formulated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in response to perceived threats. The code provides a comprehensive set of measures to enhance the security of ships and port facilities. There are now 148 parties to it. When port authorities in Tanzania, Kenya, and Mauritius were asked about port security, they claimed that they were fully compliant with the code.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Hilde van de. Meersman, Eddy van de. Voorde, and Thierry van de. Vanelslander, Future Challenges for the Port and Shipping Sector (London: Informa, 2009)

<sup>182</sup> Henry H. Willis and David Ortiz, Evaluating the Security of the Global Containerized Supply Chain (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004)

<sup>183</sup> Amit A. Pandya, Rupert Herbert Burns, and Junko Kobayashi, "Maritime Commerce and Security: The Indian Ocean. Stimson Center," Stimson Center, February 2011, <https://www.stimson.org/content/maritime-commerce-and-security-indian-ocean>) P. 69

### 3.14.1. South Asia

The principal drivers behind the port development initiatives in the South Asian belt of the Indian Ocean remain to be the converging strategic Indo-China interests fueled by the “wealth creation” and tremendous economic engines. In this scenario, states within the region, such as Sri Lanka and Pakistan, are aspiring to be “maritime egress for the trade links.” The presence of the People’s Republic capital has been a source of irritation in India’s relations with the countries. The Gwadar port development is seen with tension as it straddles the Indian energy supply routes from the Gulf. The South Asian ports have yet not experienced the degree of prodigious growth and investment.

#### a) India

India is home to a dozen major ports and close to two hundred minor ports across the Indian Ocean coast. Most of these are undertaking modernization and expansion, whereas in addition to the above new ones are being built in pace with the economic development and trade prospects. The Indian Government had aimed to increase the cargo capacity of the major ports to 1.5 billion metric tons in 2012. To generate an investment of this level 25\$ billion has been generated from Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). India since 2009, has committed more than \$4 billion to 28 port investment projects.

Traditionally, the port shipping realm was dominated by state-owned enterprises; recent governments have encouraged the private sector to take the lead in port development initiatives. Major ports feature international port operators who have taken control after the submission of competitive bidding for terminals. Dubai Ports International has a substantial presence in Cochin and Vishakhapatnam, whereas Maersk is based in

JNPT, Mumbai, and PSA Singapore at Tuticorin. India faces long-term challenges in policymaking for trade facilitation, hiring and training officers, and enhancing roads and rail connectivity to ports.

b) Pakistan

For long, the Karachi Port and Port Qasim have been providing access to Pakistan for maritime trade since long, as all maritime traffic used to end up at the Karachi Ports Complex, which is well connected to the hinterland through road and railway infrastructure. Both Karachi and Port Qasim have also been upgraded in the recent past. Karachi Port has now a deep seaport terminal to berth deep drafty ships. Port Qasim has been modified to unload LNG, Oil and coal, in addition to normal bulk and containerized cargo. water

Statistic details of both Karachi and Port Qasim Port indicate that both ports handled 91% of Pakistan's total trade, about 100 million tons of cargo (Liquid/ Dry) worth US\$ 85 billion during 2017-18. Details of these port activities are appended below:



# KARACHI PORT TRUST

GATEWAY TO PAKISTAN

## CARGO / CONTAINER HANDLING AND SHIPS MOVEMENT AT KARACHI PORT DURING THE PERIOD 2016-17 & 2017-18

TYPE OF CARGO HANDLED	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	%age GROWTH
<b>IMPORTS (Million Tons)</b>			
Dry General Cargo	18.575	18.530	- 0.24
Dry Bulk Cargo	10.059	9.116	- 9.37
<b>Total Dry Cargo</b>	<b>28.634</b>	<b>27.646</b>	- 3.45
Liquid Bulk Cargo	14.004	14.023	+ 0.14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42.638</b>	<b>41.669</b>	- 2.27
<b>EXPORTS (Million Tons)</b>			
Dry General Cargo	7.923	9.620	+ 21.42
Dry Bulk Cargo	0.616	1.889	+ 206.66
<b>Total Dry Cargo</b>	<b>8.539</b>	<b>11.509</b>	+ 34.78
Liquid Bulk Cargo	1.316	1.507	+ 14.51
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9.855</b>	<b>13.016</b>	+ 32.08
<b>TOTAL IMPORTS &amp; EXPORTS (Million Tons)</b>			
Dry General Cargo	26.498	28.150	+ 6.23
Dry Bulk Cargo	10.675	11.005	+ 3.09
<b>Total Dry Cargo</b>	<b>37.173</b>	<b>39.155</b>	+ 5.33
Liquid Bulk Cargo	15.320	15.530	+ 1.37
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>52.493</b>	<b>54.685</b>	+ 4.18
<b>CONTAINER HANDLING (TEUs in Million)</b>			
No. of Import	1.077	1.118	+ 3.83
No. of Export	1.031	1.133	+ 9.89
<b>TOTAL TEUs</b>	<b>2.109</b>	<b>2.252</b>	+ 6.79
<b>SHIP MOVEMENT (In Nos.)</b>			
Container Ships	757	973	+ 28.53
Bulk Cargo Ships	244	244	-
Gen. Cargo Ships	379	334	- 11.87
Oil Tankers	541	577	+ 6.65
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,921</b>	<b>2,128</b>	+ 10.78

Figure 2: Cargo Statistics at Karachi Port – Source: KPT Annual Report



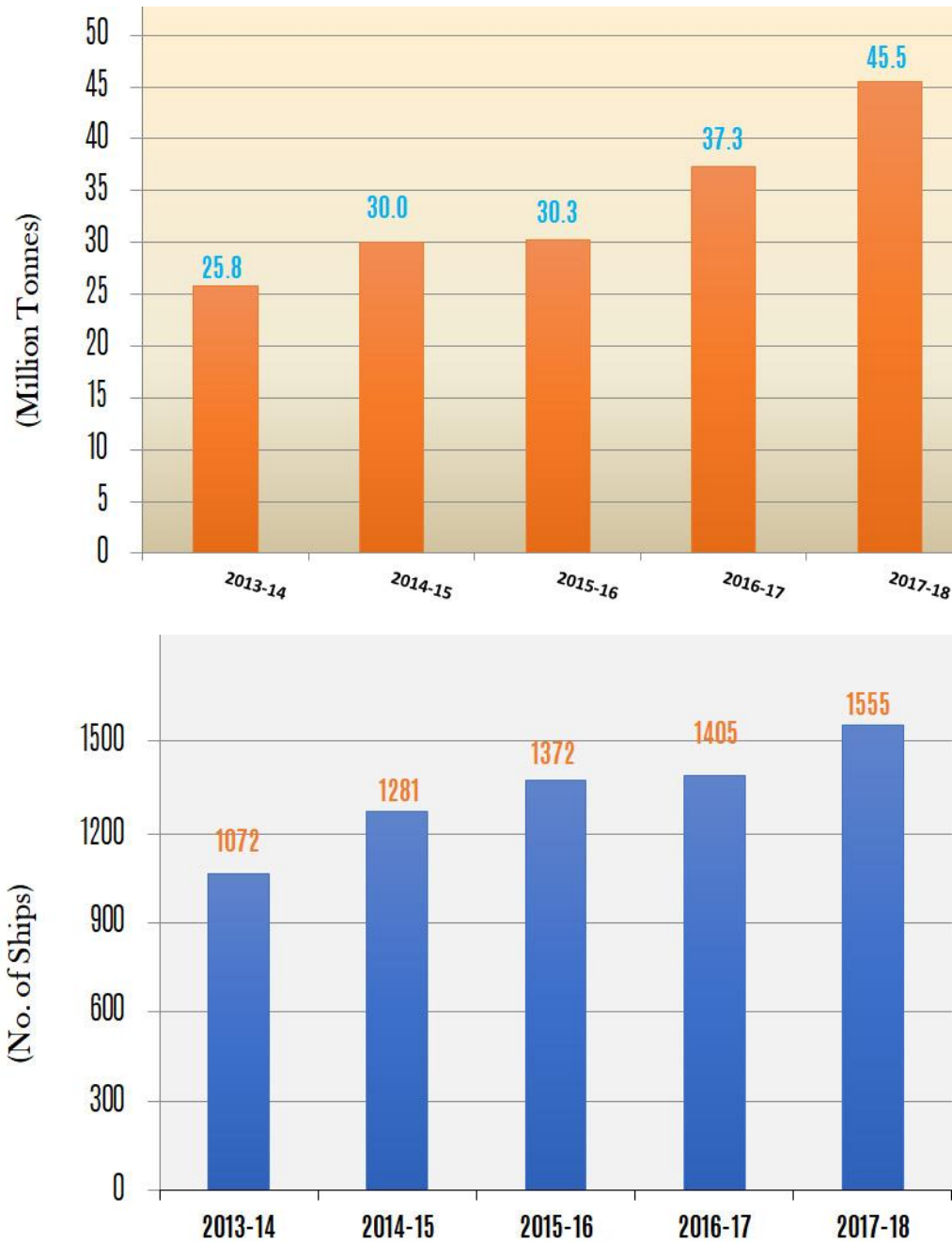


Figure 3: Maritime Traffic to Port Qasim, Pakistan  
 Source: Port Qasim, Annual Report 2018

There have been monumental changes in the maritime landscape with the development of the new port in Gwadar in Pakistan. An important gateway is now being made available to former Soviet Republics of Central Asia with huge energy resources

and consumer commodity markets. It is also an emerging shipping hub for traffic from the Hormuz Strait to Southeast Asia. The challenges consisted of the province being volatile in the wake of non-state actor terrorist activities from Afghanistan. Another challenge was the absence of standardized infrastructure in Baluchistan province. However, now China has provided adequate funding under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that, new roads are being built to connect Baluchistan province with China. Similarly, a feasibility study to connect Gwadar with national railway infrastructure has been completed and contracting processing for the construction of the railway line has begun. This will also address the lawlessness and ingress of Afghanistan-based terrorists. In addition, Pakistan is constructing a physical barrier all along the Pak-Afghan border to stop this ingress. Pakistan has also raised a special security force of Division size to protect the CPEC and Gwadar infrastructure. Pakistan Navy has also initiated a separate Task Force- 88, exclusively to look after the maritime threats and challenges at sea to approaches to Gwadar Port.

The strategic edge has been added to the port by the combination of Chinese investment in port development and its location astride the sea lanes that carry the crucial energy supplies to India from the Gulf. This port will connect Western China through a road and railway link passing to the Himalayas and Karakorum mountainous region of Pakistan. In future, China may have even oil and gas pipelines passing through the same routes, getting energy resources from Middle Eastern countries.

It is also worthwhile to mention that Gwadar Port has been conceived for a dual purpose role, i.e., a Container Transshipment hub as well as providing an import/ export facility to China. This will shorten the distance by thousands of miles and save approx. 20 days of sea voyage by a merchant ship, coming from Shanghai to the Middle East. Furthermore, Gwadar Port will address the Chinese Malacca dilemma also to some extent. However, at present, China does not need raw materials to be imported from Western China, nor does it have sufficient cargo for export from that region. Hence, port activity at Gwadar is slow and bare minimum. However, it is estimated that China will be able to upgrade its Western region soon, and Gwadar Port is likely to play a crucial role in the sustenance of economic activity in Western China.

Construction of Gwadar Port was initiated during the General Pervaiz Musharraf regime in Pakistan. The Pakistan Government provided limited funds for the port development of Gwadar, the majority of which have come from China. The 2002 Agreement stipulated that Beijing would invest \$198 million, whereas Islamabad would pay the remaining \$50 million, to complete the first phase of the port, which was completed in 2006. The port was then given to Singapore-based firm PSA under a competitive bid for a 40-year lease agreement for the operations and management of Gwadar. However, rights of usage of Gwadar Port were transferred by PSA, Singapore to China under the trilateral agreement between Pakistan, China and Singapore. The agreement conditions remained intact while operations were transferred from Singapore to China. The port is being considered a game changer in the Indian Ocean Maritime environment; it will connect China, Russia, Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics, and

even India and Nepal. The beauty of this project is that the former USSR had an eye on the warm waters of the Indian Ocean when it walked into Afghanistan in 1979. However, now, due to the Chinese BRI project, the same access is being made available with war to Russia, creating win - a win-win situation for all.

c) Bangladesh

Chittagong Port handles 90 per cent of the international trade in Bangladesh. There has been considerable growth in the last decade with an increase in container traffic. However, it has resulted in congestion with the port operational space seeming to be insufficient. The maritime shipping trade faces key challenges in the form of complex and inadequate customs procedures and transport networks of roads, railways and waterways that need modernization to be comprehensive. World Bank has stepped in, having offered aid to develop Chittagong and Mongla as transshipment ports.

d) Sri Lanka

Colombo Port has recorded an upward surge in the last decade. In 2008, the country had the highest recorded annual cargo. The port expansion has been a major agenda of the policy-makers. The government has undertaken work on the construction of breakwaters and dredging to as high as 18 meters, at a cost of \$345 million. China has invested in the Hambantota port, which has raised Indian concerns. The question of the project's commercial viability is put forward by Western observers and the media, considering the recent developments and in view of the existing ports, capacity and anticipated demands of Sri Lanka.

Port Statistics					
Year	2013	2014	%	2015	%
Transshipment TEU	3,208,117	3,699,710	13%	3,888,321	5%
exports TEU	256,632	269,931	5%	263,369	-2%
Imports TEU	476,661	518,951	8%	573,518	10%
Empty TEU	298599	338,103	12%	381,090	11%
Total TEU throughput	4,306,206	4,907,915	12%	5,185,467	5%
Total tonnage	66,291,672	74,430,925	11%	77,611,072	4%
Total ship arrivals (All ports)	4,024	4,298	6%	4,760	10%
Colombo	3,667	3,742	2%	4,197	11%
Hambantota	139	335	59%	295	14%

Source: SAC- research Daily GraphicsDesk

Figure 4: Sri Lankan Port Handling Statistics

### 3.14.2. Middle East

The ports in the Gulf, despite the instability and regional tension, have had steady growth and investment, with a prodigious increase in the imports of capital and consumer goods that have had their share of infrastructural development in the Middle Eastern region. In stark contrast with the South Asian port and trading patterns, the expansion has been substantial in the sophistication of shipping vessels in size and capacity specifications. Petrochemical trade tends to dominate maritime trading. In the strategic port cities of Egypt and Yemen, the trends have been less vibrant being close to the volatility of the prevalent conflicts. In the long term, any drastic changes and uncertainties are anticipated to be few, if any, considering the military presence of the Americans.

There have been trade expansions in the ports of Middle Eastern states, particularly those situated in the Gulf. The goods volume surged from 15 million tons recorded in year 2004 to 30 million close to 2010. The oil-rich states, in order to diversify

their economies and reduce dependencies on oil exports, are planning to multiply port initiatives and expansionism in KSA, Dubai and Oman. Other notable developments are taking place in the Bubiyan Port Island by Kuwait and in the Khalifa Port of Abu Dhabi. Another Middle Eastern country noteworthy to mention is Egypt, which remains at the forefront because of the Suez Canal, where several dozens of shipping conglomerates provide services to more than 500 ships at the container port. Investments have been undertaken by the private sector to modernize the shipping lanes in the “busiest shipping route”.

### 3.14.3. East Africa

East Africa, at present remains to be lagging in the relative development of ports and maritime commerce. However, the forces of “capitalist-market development” responsible for the huge amount of wealth creation in India and China seem to be at work in the African states. The extent to which the Asian economies depend on the trade of raw materials, the comprehension of port development seems to be short of only a few years’ time. India and China are diversifying their energy sources from the Middle East to the East African nations of Ethiopia and Sudan. It is noted that Sudan has seen major investments by South Koreans and Saudi Arabia, not to mention India and China, who are major investors in Ethiopia, Madagascar and South Africa. The complex links bring into the mind complex interdependence. However, there remain certain drawbacks due to which the region is unable to exert its full potential in the maritime realm. The East African ports are reportedly facing increasing congestion with the cargo and shipping load, which they clearly remain incapable of until the private sector and other states come up with the magnitude of investment. Africa at present shares less than 4 per cent of the

shipping traffic. This is because of a lack of infrastructural sophistication and services. The dwell time is recorded to be an average of 20 days, whereas in most ports, it is not more than a few days.

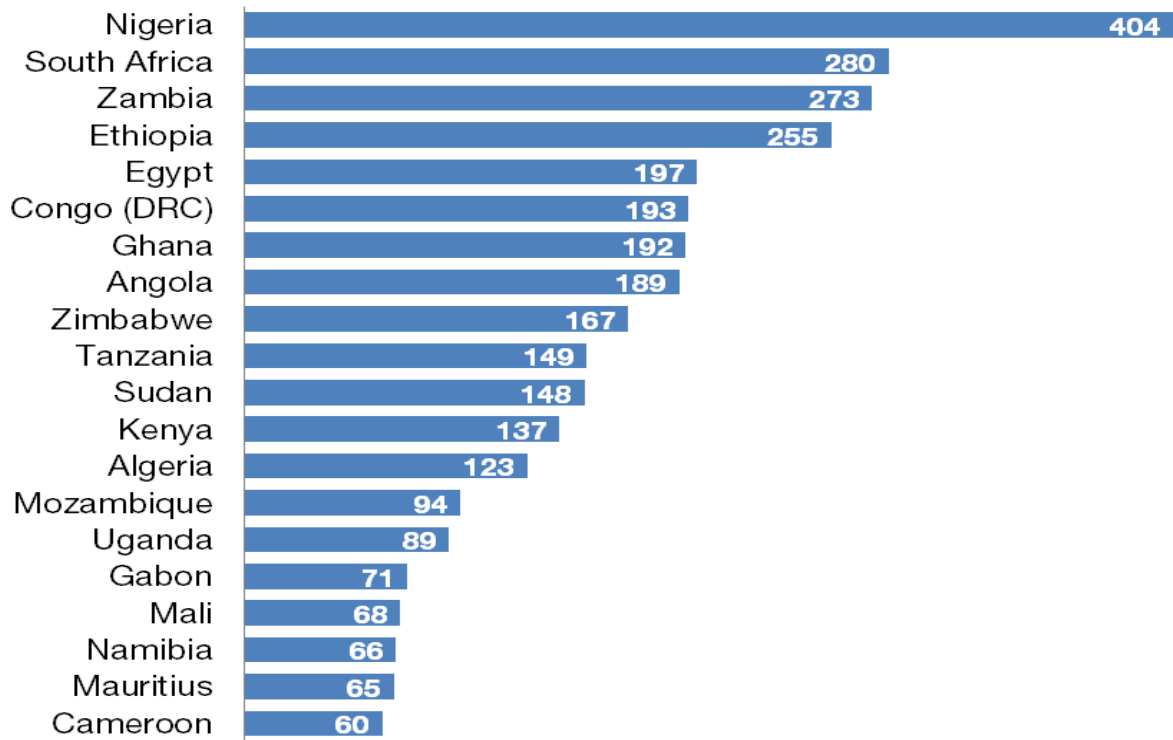


Figure 5: Foreign Investment in Africa.  
 Source: The World Bank (data.worldbank.com)

The increase in containerized traffic has not met equal expansion of port facilities and operational capacity. Added to that, the inadequate yard containers, technology backward, shortage of trained service providers, slow cargo tracking and customs clearing process and poor road and rail transportation networks. Port congestion is largest

in the port of Dare-Salam of Tanzania and at Mombasa in Kenya, which have slightly fared a little better at present. The turnaround time, PIL estimates is 3-4 days in Mombasa, which earlier was more than two weeks. The relaxation was brought in by introducing communication technology and improving the customs-clearing process. The port authorities in the two countries credit the Inland Container Depots (ICD) and Cargo Freight Stations (CFS), which are temporary store containers outsourced to private companies for decongesting the ports by moving cargo from the port area. The 2008 Financial Recession had a nominal effect on the regional maritime trend that continued to increase, although not at the pace of the Asia-Pacific states. The resource-rich countries topped the charts with economic growth. Africa is on the verge of leaning towards business by adapting the 'liberal capitalist model' more towards the Asian economies than its traditional and proximate European partners. Statistics confirm that such a trend exists with an increase in container traffic from Africa to the Asia-Pacific. Trade between China and Africa was \$55 billion in 2007 which doubled in 2008 alone. Trade between China and South Africa is also on the rise, which has contributed greatly to the development and trade flows from the African continent ports. The trend in East Africa is increasing towards privatization. Talks and agreements are underway regarding the privatization part of the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) and the Mauritius Cargo Handling Corporation (MCHC). Another trend that is featured in East Africa is the development of intermodal transport. Road infrastructure has seen expansion largely as a result of foreign donors, aid and investment.





Source: <http://brook.gs/1KWTFcX>

Figure 6: Destinations for Chinese Investment in Africa

The railroads of Tanzania, the Chinese are showing interest to reinvigorate the railroads between Tanzania and Kenya, that has been in neglect despite promising prospective and at present carry only 4 percent of cargo via Mombasa and Dar-es-Salam.

a) Kenya

The country is home to Port Mombasa, the largest of the East African coast. The port has had expansion. Mombasa handles Kenya's foreign trade along with those of the landlocked Congo, Burundi, South Sudan, Rwanda and Uganda. Ethiopia and Somalia

also rely on Mombasa for better infrastructure. In 2007, the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) was provided a loan worth \$235 million from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for development and expansion of port facilities. The government has plans to expand Kenya's colonial-era rail network to Burundi, Rwanda and Congo. The initiative would provide relief in form of lower transportation charges. Retain its competitiveness against other ports in the region.

b) Djibouti

Port of Djibouti is strategically located at the crossways of Europe, Africa and Asia. The location is adjacent to what is the busiest sea route that provides hinterland access to Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan and Ethiopia to name a few. It is the only port in the immediate region that has access to both road and rail access to Ethiopia. The area has attracted the presence of foreign powers, particularly Japan, the US and China for being centrally positioned towards the Common Market for Eastern and South Africa (COMESA), a 400 million consumer market.

At present, there are some challenges in the form of piracy and the technological barriers which have since last few years addressed by the Dubai Ports World since it took the management from Djiboutian authorities. The port has experienced steady growth in container traffic which has contributed to overall prosperity of the society and region. This is largely the result of the development of modern facilities which has made the service efficient and reliable.

	DCT						PDSA			
YEARS	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2011	2012	2013	2014
TOTAL	519,500	406,407	703,617	743,273	743,793	793,317	40,361	48,190	50,938	70,710

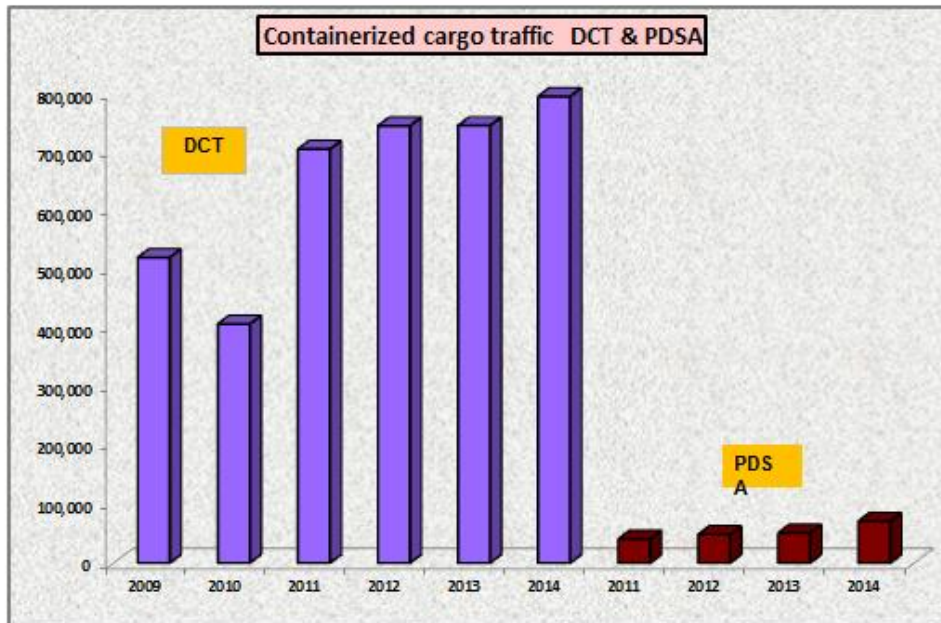


Figure 7: Containerized Cargo at Djibouti's Port Doraleh Container Terminal (DCT) and Port de Djibouti SA (PDSA)

### c) Mauritius

The expansion of Port Louis has added to the commercial strategic nature of the IOR. It reflects the emergence of the previously "isolated island" port as centrally positioned when it comes to providing the economic, legal and politically stable regional base for investments in Africa. China has been conscious of this factor. The location of the crossroads sea post has is vital for trade routes approaching Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. Mauritius has experienced sustained economic growth at an average of 5.7 per cent in the past two decades. Port Louis is the only seaport in the country that handles almost 99 per cent of the external trade. Mauritius envisions developing Port Louis into a hub for regional maritime and business logistics. For this purpose in the long term, the

Port needs significant upgrades to make it par with some of the world-class maritime hubs.

#### 3.14.4. Southeast Asia

##### a) Singapore

The globe's busiest container harbour, the Singapore Port, is in the region. It handles seven times the cargo handled by the second busiest, Port Klang Malaysian port. Singapore is at the centre of the shipping routes, being connected to more than 600 ports in 120 countries and handling 140,000 vessels annually. Additionally, the country operates the advanced ship-building and ship-repairing facilities in the entire region, serving as Asia's largest port. In terms of commodities, it is a major player in the offshore and marine engineering industry. A staunching fact is that despite the marvelous credentials to its name, the Singaporean Port is entirely owned by the national government, which has undertaken a remarkable job over the years to successfully capitalize on its strategic location and other strengths, which include the highly skilled officials and facilities that have transformed it into a major hub of international business and finance. Nevertheless, despite retaining the highest hierarchical position, the policy-makers understand the competitive shipping markets and are investing in innovative infrastructure, modern facilities and "cutting-edge" mechanized systems. Several institutions keep up with the growing cargo management, including the Maritime and Port Authority (MPA), the Association of Singapore Marine Industries (ASMI) and the Singapore Maritime Foundation (SMF). The world-class maritime services in shipping, law, finance, brokerage, and insurance also have kept their pace. For this purpose, Singapore remains the prime choice for the headquarters venue of shipping consortiums.

International maritime associations such as the Baltic Exchange, Asian Ship-owners Forum, International Bunker Industry Association, Independent Tanker Owners and International Maritime Council are in the hub. The country has taken growing characteristics that were long affiliated with the British when they dominated global business. Singapore has thus, for these reasons, emerged as the “Maritime Capital of the Indian Ocean”.

The country faced several setbacks at the trigger of the global financial meltdown. It was the worst hit, with ship demand diminishing to a historic low and contracting by two digits. The first quarter of 2009 saw a 17.9 per cent shortfall, with the TEU falling to 6.02 million. The government bankrolled specific measures to evade the effects of the global crisis. The port duties were reduced considerably to comfort the shipping industry.

b) Malaysia

Malaysia is a major hub of shipping in the Asia-Pacific region, having surpassed Singapore in the areas of logistics and marketing. The biggest Chinese shipping company has relocated from Singapore to Port Klang in Malaysia in response to effusive governmental incentives. It is anticipated that major shipping lines will shift their operations to the country’s hub; in comparison to Singapore, it has better storage capacity in the form of warehouses and mills.

Malaysia has since a considerable period of time, been a major distributor and producer of ‘halal food’. The country has become a global ‘halal hub’ in these

connotations. The modern Muslim country, with a developed infrastructure and vibrant economy, is a factor that could pull in investors from the Islamic world. In the past few years, the government has taken steps to ensure its competitive advantage in the 'halal food' trade. It is home to the largest 'halal' cold storage facility in Asia.

Port Klang is one of the largest and busiest ports in the Indian Ocean, connected with 120 countries and 500 ports worldwide. The Malaysian port is aided by three gateways: the Southpoint, North Port and Westport. They have a total of 48 berths facilities. Most of the shipping activity is undertaken in the North Port and Westport, which are also privately owned. In 2009, at US\$ 28 million, dredging of Port Klang's south channel was undertaken, which deepened it from 15.5 to 16.5 meters and widened it from 365 to 500 meters. This channel widening has enabled it to host the largest super-Panamax container vessels to transit safely. Hanjin Shipping, the largest carrier in South Korea, offers a direct service from Southeast Asia to the US, which reflects the growing dimensions of complex interdependence.

### 3.15. Privatization and Public-Private Partnerships

A trend increasingly seen in the IOR states is the privatization of port operations and management. Traditionally, governments considered ports as strategic assets of the nations whose control was vital for national interests. There is growing speculation that in the years to come, the ownership of the ports would be more of a "public-private partnership." At present, there remains to be a separation of the roles of port authority and operators. The authorities are focused on the policy and regulatory edges, whereas port operators are service providers of a wide array of amenities.

The trend has been driven by the high premiums associated with modernizing port facilities in line with the requirements of efficiency, sophisticated technology, and expertise. According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 42 per cent of world container throughput passed through state-owned terminals in 1993, but this figure was down by 19 per cent by 2006. Privately owned terminals have been growing rapidly.<sup>184</sup> Leading lines such as Maersk and APC have expanded into managing container ports. Maersk and APL are examples of private ventures that are significant stakeholders in container management operations at various locations in the IOR. The Malaysian Port of Tanjung Pelepas is an example where Maersk's shipping line owns 30 per cent. Although privatization has remained an essential trend since a few decades after the liberalization of trade, against the backdrop of varying and geostrategic visions of Indo-US and China, it has captured a pivotal position summing the 'mutual interests and stake' that signifies the IO on the chessboard.

### 3.16. Environmental Considerations

In light of port developments in the region, the environmental impacts need to be studied for the long-term sustenance of shipping and trade. They threaten the social consensus and stability upon which the ports depend. Environmental changes can impact the physical and natural features such as port channels upon which the entire operationalization of the port relies. In a global market that is sensitive to minor shocks and changes, such incidents could adversely for this purpose initiatives such as the Green Port International has been formed, working since 2005 is a forum where major

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<sup>184</sup> “UNCTAD XII Pre-Event: ‘Globalization of Port Logistics: Opportunities and Challenges for Developing Countries’” (Geneva: United Nations, 2007)

stakeholders from private and public segments, including the port operators, regulators, government officials and traders meet to train and share their expertise on the environment issues enfolding the ports. A number of environmental regulations and technological innovations owe their pedigrees to this forum. There are reasons to believe that port developers and government ought to take the issue of the environment seriously since the rising temperatures would pose a considerable threat to the infrastructure and maritime logistics at bay due to the changing patterns in sea level rises, floods, extreme weather and coastal ecologies. Tragedies caused by environmental disasters include the cyclone of Bangladesh that damaged the ports. Floods during the seasons have caused disruptions of magnitude to container terminals around the Indian Ocean. Mauritius is an example. The Port authorities have constructed a concrete wall infrastructure to prevent disruptions along the terminal. The development of port infrastructure is itself an acute problem that damages the environment. The IOR, which is dominated by developing nations, is negligent in such critical assessments and evaluations. Their capacity is limited when it comes to anticipation of the problems. Indian Ocean environmentalists protested against the Tanga port expansion in Tanzania, which endangered the habitat of rare fish. Similar had been the case in Dhamra Port in India, which posed a danger to the second largest mangrove forest of India, the *Bhitarkanika Mangroves, Odisha* and to the adjacent nearby nesting grounds of the 'Olive Ridley turtle'. 185

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<sup>185</sup> “Vulnerable Olive Ridley Turtles Find Diverse Support in Orissa, India ”, The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, March 2009), <https://www.iucn.org/km/node/3346>

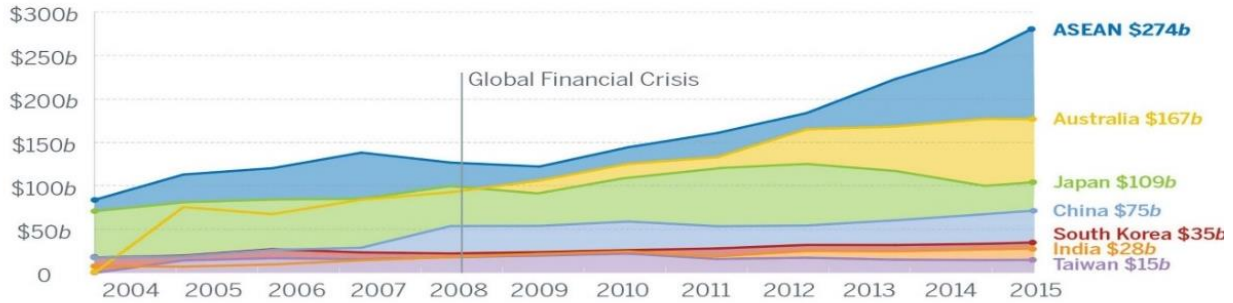


### 3.17. Conflict and Competition in the Indian Ocean

The strategic risk in the IOR is increasingly becoming complex which in the future is expected to continue as such. The coming two to three decades would be decisive in terms of the emerging power structure. The 'Asian Century' as it is called, concurring with the present trends, would continue to take its shape. It is noteworthy to mention that three of the top five economies rest in this part of the world. Additionally, five of the world's biggest militaries are located in the same region. The rate of population boom is one of the greatest, and soon, more than half of the global population will be residing in the IOR.

How the US, being the sole superpower, responds to changing geopolitical scenarios would determine the IOR conflict and cooperation opportunities. The Americans need to be conscious of the divergent political, social and economic sensitivities of the regional states. It is growing to be a reality that in any future developments, the rise of Asia's largest country, China, is a fact. Western policymakers need to understand its motives, priorities, and interests and respond to future developments in a way that keeps the overview of mutual stakes and risks.

*US investment in ASEAN increased at an average annual rate of 9% since 2004*



Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis



Figure 7: Cumulative US Direct Investment (Stock) in Asia

The interests of the states can be summed up into the categories of security, economics, and prestige. The first one is based on the military security that guarantees state safeguarding, whereas the second is based on economic development, prosperity and growth. Prestige is more related to the international standing and influence in major political events. It is the national interests that generate the three for states, the latter of which is influenced by history, past actions, and leadership vision, to name a few. The foreign policy goals underpin states' position to respond to specific issues. It is argued from a complex interdependence approach that domestic pressures are an important factor that is the intervening factor between the foreign policy objectives and national interests. The goals can be altered owing to domestic pressures in even those systems that are non-democratic and authoritarian. The constraints of such can change the nature of the very national foreign policy objectives.

Whether it is conflict or cooperation that would domain the state interchange relation would be detrimental to the working of these interests. The role of leadership,

along with the media, is important as they have the power and influence to shape public opinion. It is interesting to note that it is only when the interests of states lead to different preferred outcomes that the prerequisites for conflicts are created. The difference in preference leads to states with divergent interests being threatened. When the interests of the state align, all parties involved would benefit from the same outcome. It is also true that leaders make decisions. The determination of goals, issues and constraints at bay in the regional political context needs to be straightened out to develop an interest-based integration that is the foundation of Complex Interdependence. Such an approach would be incremental in informing how the states view the factors for risk and opportunities. Risks to national interests would be defined as those situations, events or actions that threaten a state's achievement or protection of an interest. Opportunities on the other side would be the pursuant of national interests in situations that help to safeguard or further an interest. States, in most cases, have multiple interests and stakes in any single issue. The assessment of states' preferences. When states have multiple interests and stakes, there are increased chances of trade-offs and mutually beneficial outcomes. In convergence, states having a single stake or interest in a particular issue Would perceive their losses and gains from the single-issue perspective. In these scenarios, a 'zero-sum' approach would emerge, making negotiations difficult. When states have multiple interests at stake, there is more bargaining space for the location of outcomes that benefit all actors.

### 3.17.1. Regional Power Poles

China is unsatisfied with its current stature in the global commons and seeks to regain the cultural prestige and international influence it once enjoyed in the region.

Although the US and China have a common interest in stabilizing the regional balance of power, the very outcomes on the 'global chessboard' they seek are divergent. The Americans believed that stability and prosperity would be guaranteed at best by its role as the guarantor of maritime security, having an unrestrained economic and political power influence. China, on the other side more of a believer in a multi-polar setting where several states balance each other with a resolution of differences peaceably via bilateral negotiations or within a multilateral/international institutional framework.

There are certain major challenges, when seen from a zero-sum perspective provide a bleak regional picture. In such a scenario the competing interest would create risk that would bring in instability. Risk management needs to be practiced by the two powers, along with the third most important, which is India. An assertive China is likely to pursue a more resilient and aggressive foreign policy, particularly when it comes to territorial aims that challenge the US alliance and commitments in the IOR. In this matter, there would be an intensification of the security competition and instability. However, it cannot be ignored that China regards "regional stability" as crucial for any prospective for economic growth. For this purpose, China will try to mend its relations with adversaries and competitors to come forward with regional security cooperation. These priorities would dominate the long-term regional trends. China's rise is an integral part of the "China Dream," a failure of which would be mutually improper to the interests of all major powers as it is likely to put such economic and domestic pressure that the leadership would be forced to pursue an aggressive policy. Historically speaking, it is regime insecurity that is

the factor that has most often caused China to make significant compromises and concessions abroad.

### 3.17.2. Economic Competition

Economics, in particular resource security, would dominate in the shaping of regional power dynamics. The imperatives for closer cooperation would surge when, in the long run, some of the states fill in their 'economic appetite' in the wake of slower growth. It is a priority for all the contending that developments remain peaceful. The concept is integrated with the regional strategy of CCP, which has linked major projects such as BRI with the presumption. The "China Dream" concept laid out by Xi Jinping remains the guiding principle for the state. It broadly refers to those goals that will bring in by the end of 2049 a "moderately prosperous society", thereby allowing regional supremacy. In the wake of an economic downturn in China. It is likely to trigger aggressive foreign policy by China and greater regional instability. It is often the case that insecure regimes to strengthen popular support lay emphasis on nationalist objectives and interests. Territorial claims and resistance to "foreign intimidation". Energy security is crucial, considered an equivalent to national security, is critical to economic growth, and is also the underlying factor behind the domestic stability of a number of IO states. Nevertheless, energy needs and security are a possible trigger for competition between the states. China and India, with their growing dependence on imported energy, will likely increase the escalation in disputed maritime territorial disputes.

### 3.17.3. Nationalistic Tendencies

There has been a rise in nationalist tendencies in states of the IOR, including in the PRC, which would diminish the environment necessitated for cooperation. In the event of such a situation with the absence of a crisis management mechanism and joint security systems, the developments might cause undue escalations. The area where such is most probable remains to be the territorial and maritime quarrels that have been witnessed in a sea of South China. During the sequence of study, it was found that domestic conditions of economic slumps and social surroundings remain a matter of concern for non-democratic regimes, affecting their legitimacy. In this way, the domestic settings may be the drivers of jingoistic tendencies in the IOR states. The development would impede all stakeholders, including the US, whose interest lies in regional stability. There is a need to develop, as also mentioned previously in the study a “combined security framework” in order to maintain the “non-zero-sum” setting. There is also the concern of the leadership elite, more so in authoritarian regimes in the neighbourhood, to maneuver more openly in the escalation ladders as it has the probability of diminishing their legitimacy and public support.

China remains to be a peculiar case. The economic model is based on the liberal ideals of Adam Smith and David Ricardo. However, the system remains to be governed in line with the Marxist-Leninist or, arguably, Mao-Deng vision. The system, nevertheless, cannot be called one that falls within the paradigm of traditional Western democratic governance. Concurring to this pretext, China, to some extent, fears regime insecurity, which could be exponent in the scenario of economic downturn, which would likely bring

in domestic political discords. For this reason, the People's Republic has allowed for major concessions to take place abroad to stabilize the external environment and allow for the Party to focus on in-house complications. It is concluded that although domestic instability and rising jingoism could produce a belligerent and rigid policy to crises, the feat is unlikely to cause Chinese leadership to initiate conflict with other regional counterparts.

The regional trends dominated by military balancing, economic growth and development, and territorial and maritime disputes, alongside growing non-state entity threats, are likely to aggravate the balance of power equation in the Indian Ocean region. It is, however, important to note that furthering the forecast brings less certainty to what the future holds regarding the anticipations. It is, to a large extent, nevertheless, an agreement that China and India will continue to lead the power trajectory in Asia. Competition would be likely fueled between the two states in the resources domain and in the economic rejuvenation despite the structural similarities. The former and the latter are both rising and developing to middle-ranked powers. The two have insufficient national oil resources and a large worker pool of migrants; economies are both export-driven. While China is constructed by India to pose as a security threat in the naval domain, it is a fact that the two share a history of collaboration on issues such as terrorism and smuggling. United States interests in these "waters" would be better served via regional security stability where Sino-Indian cooperation in defense and economics are secured, and rigidities and rivalries are kept off from the bay.

### 3.18. Maritime Balance of Power

The Western literature forms a consensus that China would be stronger, capable and militarily active in the Asia-Pacific region. The PLA(N) would have sufficient capabilities in the form of warships, submarines and aircraft, matched by the PLA, which has plans to incorporate ballistic missiles, anti-aircraft long-range systems, anti-ship cruise missiles, space and cyber systems which would bolster the qualitative as well as quantitative capacities. These sturdy developments will put into question the American commitments to allies in the wake of crises. Experts contend that the rapid modernization of military and paramilitary forces have significant implications for transforming the security perceptions of all stakeholder states.

The regional issues pertaining to territorial and maritime disputes present a zero-sum conclusion for the regional actors. However, outcomes that would remain mutually advantageous have the probability of happening in the non-traditional realm of security. The threats of smuggling, terrorism and piracy can bring in rival states. A multilateral approach for strengthening national ties is proposed as a means to coordinate policy action and dialogue. A rational suggestion for this purpose is to utilize the soft-power elements of the navy in order to foster a degree of cooperation that would maintain relative stability. For this purpose, “multi-lateral exercises” can strengthen the regional capability to deal with such threats alongside natural disasters. Crisis management can be facilitated by the local bodies of the regions, such as SCO and ASEAN; the latter already has exclusive management for resolving member disputes, which has for many years remained a cornerstone of its success. An extension can be provided, one can hope in



the succeeding times by ASEAN by exemplifying solutions via a multilateral approach to issues of energy security and disputes pertaining to the territory.

## 6.28 Conclusion

The ASEAN needs to be looked upon as a platform that could strengthen regional partnerships among the contentious states. Added to that, such an approach would allow for disputes to be taken in its realm, which would decrease the likelihood of unravelling it unilaterally or bilaterally, lessening the probability of US involvement that has intensified tensions on the part of the PRC. The region would be conditioned to engagement, paving the way for US-China to follow in the lead. The US, nevertheless, from a realist perspective, holds considerable influence despite the literature concluding that the sole super-power is facing a decline in aggregate power strength. The findings of the study reflect that regional states continue to see the US as the “balancer” of threats, which guarantees, at least for the short-term, their economic and security interests. However, the trend emerging is that the regional states are playing “US-China” smartly by extracting that maximum out of their contentions and rivalry. It is so that they are relying on the US for military equipment and security, whereas with China in parallel, they are exploiting the economic leverages and perks.

The nations that remain “China dependent” for trade and commerce will remain more susceptible to dictations from the PRC, whereas those who have differentiated trading relationships will be less so. It is concluded that the US's capabilities to preserve its security might be dependent on its economic influence in the region. It is likely that

with the diminishing influence of the latter, the former impact may dilute. The US continuing to rely only on a military-oriented power approach in the financially constricted setting would not be the best of the approaches. The country, in order to maintain its influence in the long-term, should invest in areas that allow for multi-lateral solutions and strategic communication amongst allied nations, which allows for their individual capacity building.

### 3.19. Contemplating The Prospectives Of Indian Ocean As A Zone Of Peace

The Indian Ocean has become an area of acute tensions with conventional and nuclear assets of major powers plying in its waters. The area has hosted number of exercises in the precincts to show the treaty alliances of the Indian Ocean littoral. It is an axiomatic reality that naval forces can be deployed freely and without any hindrance than other forms of military power as the oceans are regarded “international waterways.” Naval task forces constitute a powerful projection of military might. The very nations that pontificate about the principle of “freedom of the seas” themselves maybe guilty of malevolent designs.<sup>186</sup> At the Commonwealth Conference in 1971, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Bandaranaike proposed that Indian Ocean be converted into a nuclear-free zone. The succeeding year, Sri Lanka sponsored a resolution at the 26<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly to support the concept of Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The resolution called all the major powers to negotiate with Indian Ocean states for the elimination of military installations, nuclear weapons and great power rivalry. It was favored by 95 votes; but 23 nations including USA, USSR and France abstained.<sup>187</sup> Rivalry and competition

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<sup>186</sup> Hasan Malik Yaser, “Role of Pakistan Navy in Indian Ocean Blue Diplomacy,” *Defense Journal* 21, no. 8 (2018): pp. 33-35)

<sup>187</sup> Sudhir T. Devare, “The Arc of Peace and Prosperity in the Indo-Pacific Region,” in *The Indo-Pacific Axis Peace and Prosperity or Conflict?* (Routledge, 2018), pp. 27-32

since then have become the new trend in IOR. In international relations, 'Zone of Peace' is defined as: "A discrete geographical region of the world in which a group of states have maintained peaceful relations among themselves for a period of at least thirty years." Such a region maintains harmony, discipline, profound relations to avoid any sort of conflict. Arie M. Kacowicz in *Explaining Zones of Peace: Democracies as Satisfied Powers* argues that true democracies do not fight hence the region becomes a zone of peace. The aspect that these countries do not engage in conflict is due to the satisfaction from status quo of all states. Arie ascribes that these nations follow maximum level of liberal tendencies which repeatedly call for ample trade and complex interdependence among them.<sup>188</sup>

### 3.20. Geopolitical Implications of China's Dream

The ways in which the "China Dream" adds to the geopolitical configurations would be contemplated in this section. The concept was proposed by Xi Jinping as the "guiding principle policy for the nation" envisioning to achieve a society based on "moderate prosperity" by 2021. The goal to regain regional predominance is set to be achieved by 2049. The narrative has been pressed widely in the governmental circles, platforms and the media which remains in line with the Party-policy. The "Chinese Dream" has four basis objectives.<sup>189</sup> The first is the economic development, followed by the "reinvigorate the strength" component. Third, is the cultural prestige, succeeded by ideological unity which remains to be so in most non-democratic governance styles.

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<sup>188</sup> Arie M. Kacowicz, "Explaining Zones of Peace: Democracies as Satisfied Powers?" *Journal of Peace Research*, August 1, 1995

<sup>189</sup> Robert Lawrence Kuhn, "Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream," *The New York Times*, June 4, 2013, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/05/opinion/global/xi-jinpings-chinese-dream.html>



Figure 8: Major Pillars of the Chinese Dream

The economic revival to a length greater than presently achieved by the regime is the most important component that has the potential to disarray the present geopolitical realities.<sup>190</sup> From a complex interdependence perspective, economic growth in a globalized world provides prosperity not only for China and its citizens but for global commons, particularly those countries that are knotted with the trade networks in the form of bilateral and multilateral arrangements. The scenario provides benefits to the developing countries of the world, whose economies can be boosted by the tremendous Chinese investment. However, at what cost is a question that has been discussed in previous sections. The “reinvigoration to strength” is a component that remains strong in China’s cultural history in the wake of the Opium Wars and the Japanese aggression that brought a degree of humiliation, which to this day shapes the country’s national security mindset.<sup>191</sup> China's defense forces, keeping this in mind, are determined to put the

<sup>190</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, “China's Peaceful Rise in Current History,” *Current History* 105, no. 690 (n.d.): pp. 160- 162

<sup>191</sup> Zheng Wang, “The Chinese Dream: Concept and Context,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 19, no. 1 (2014): pp. 1-13

imperative behind them by increasing the national ability to protect its territory. It is important to note that without security, the economic components and all overarching projects under the “Belt and Road Initiative” (BRI) will not be fulfilled.<sup>192</sup>

The cultural heritage part of “China’s Dream” rests and operates on “soft power” elements in the region and beyond.<sup>193</sup> This includes literature, philosophy, art and historical achievement. The prerequisite for acquiring “geopolitical prestige” reserves on the China’s successful exploitation of its cultural heritage. However in this matter, there is an increasing relevance of the present ideology of the party leadership. The Chinese Communist Party would continue to adhere to what are the “core socialist principles” despite the growing economic and military might, alongside the rich “5000 year cultural legacy”. The discourse set by the party elites is that it is the socialist principles that have provided the very foundation for national reinvigoration. It provides justification and legitimization for the One-Party rule. It also stresses that in the past when the country was rich and powerful, it had been weakened by foreign adversaries. However, at present, the CCP leadership has steered the country away from such storms and malicious plans by bringing a sustained return to past cultural, economic and political glories.<sup>194</sup>

The “China Dream”, as per the official narrative, would prove resourceful to the world by providing all stakeholders and investors with an “equal player” relationship in global

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<sup>192</sup> Josef Gregory Mahoney, "Interpreting the Chinese dream: an exercise of political hermeneutics," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 19, no. 1 (2014): pp. 15-34

<sup>193</sup> Zheng Wang, “Not Rising, But Rejuvenating: The ‘Chinese Dream,’” *The Diplomat*, February 5, 2013, <https://thediplomat.com/2013/02/chinese-dream-draft/>

<sup>194</sup> “Foretelling 19th Congress of the CPC from an International Perspective,” Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research, August 2, 2019, <https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/politics-governance/foretelling-19th-congress-cpc-international-perspective/>

governance. The media in China has propagated a new concept termed the “new style of great power relations”, which provides an alternative model for the rise of a great power where there are minimum chances of conflict with the existing powers. The notion has been used primarily in connection with the US advocating for new styles of cooperative relations rather than one based on incensing competition.<sup>195</sup> A great number of articles in Chinese literature are themed on identifying common grounds that would allow collaboration and cooperation to take place on a vast array of international and regional issues.<sup>196</sup> There are also studies undertaken that sought to identify those very areas where the potential for cooperation exists and how to extend them to other areas such as economics and defense, which at present are focal of competition. Cooperation in the economic realm would provide overarching benefits, paving the way for détente in the military realm of affairs. The former potentially can include bilateral investment agreement and infrastructure development in the conflict-prone developing IOR, which would lead to increased trade. The latter has the ability to allow for improved military-to-military ties and collaboration in areas of combating terrorism. In future such an approach can be extended to issues such as North Korea, environmental and energy issues.<sup>197</sup>

The US needs to also act thoroughly and sensibly; it should come out of the “Cold War” mentality of containment as has been advised by academicians such as Robert Kaplan. It should account for the position of China and its “legitimate” national interests,

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<sup>195</sup> Zheng Wang, “The Chinese Dream: Concept and Context,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science/Association of Chinese Political Studies*, 2013, pp. 1-12

<sup>196</sup> Joshua A. Tucker et al., “Social Media, Political Polarization, and Political Disinformation: A Review of the Scientific Literature,” 2018

<sup>197</sup> Charles Grant, Katinka Katinka, and Mark Leonard, “Embracing the Dragon: the EU's Partnership with China. Centre for European reform” (Centre for European Reforms, 2005)

including actions such as the arms sales to Taiwan and the American stance in the South China Sea dispute, which is seen as the US's unwillingness to engage with China as an equal geopolitical power. Such US actions undermine the parameters, failing to live up to Chinese expectations. The US is overwhelmingly the key focus for China in international relations.<sup>198</sup> The regional disputes, although important, matter less when it comes to US resolves. The Chinese geopolitical thinking is oriented strictly according to the party norms and traditions. However, it has proven flexible to accommodate pressing new issues; China's thinking reflects its rise to geopolitical prominence without the necessity of conflict with existing powers.<sup>199</sup> The US policy priorities in relation to China are "responsible stakeholder" and "human rights" are at variance with China.

### 3.21. Dynamics of Conflict and Cooperation

The changing naval capabilities of the smaller powers in the IOR remain a subject matter that has remained behind the spotlight. It is important, however, for countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore in the wake of transforming strategic security imperatives where the interests of the US and China coincide on the jolt lines. The IOR littoral states are at the frontlines of maritime shipping traffic, which has, with the extension of piracy in the region, posed a serious threat to vital sea lanes. The definition of piracy is extracted from the UNCLOS which has defined it as any illegal acts of violence, detention or depredation committed against the crews of private aircraft and ships.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Nathan King, "US \$716 Billion Defense Bill Focuses on China, Russia 'Power Competition'," CGTN America, August 13, 2018, <https://america.cgtn.com/2018/08/13/us-717-billion-defense-bill-focuses-on-china-russia-power-competition>

<sup>199</sup> Zaeem Hassan, "Xi Jinping's 'New Era': International Implications in the Light of the 19th CPC Congress," Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research, November 01, 2017, accessed December 19, 2018, <https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/politics-governance/xi-jinpings-new-era-international-implications-light-19th-cpc-congress/>.

<sup>200</sup> Michael H. Passman, "Protections afforded to captured pirates under the law of war and international law." Tul. Mar. LJ 33 (2008): 1.

Nevertheless, maritime organizations across the world have their own set of definitions, due to which there exists a lack of consensus on the anti-piracy enforcement strategy. Since the year 2000, there have been a recorded number of piracy events near the coast of Indonesia, numbering 1,282.<sup>201</sup> In 2013, it was reported that 145 attacks took place. The region, in the past decade, has seen an increasing rise in piracy, which is also tantamount to the area's growing geopolitical significance.<sup>202</sup>

The Southeast Asian region has seen a great surge in maritime commercial activities. However, at present, the littoral states of Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia are required to invest even more in the naval arm to address some of the weaknesses that are proving to be a hindrance to counter-piracy activities. Malaysia has been using its older vessels in a commission that, as per expert estimates, has long passed their life. It is without vessels to replace them; the majority of the fleet has passed the 30-year mark.<sup>203</sup> Indonesia is relatively better equipped with a substantial navy, which is necessary for any archipelago state, but it is still ill-equipped when it comes to large-scale counter-piracy operations. In addition, the country is dependent on foreign powers and training to maintain its anti-piracy component and capacities.<sup>204</sup> The Singaporean Navy is largely composed of corvettes and frigates which was a major limitation to the

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<sup>201</sup> Bridget L. Coggins, "Global patterns of maritime piracy, 2000–09: Introducing a new dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 4 (2012): 605-617.

<sup>202</sup> Jun Nam Mak, "Securitizing piracy in Southeast Asia: Malaysia, the International Maritime Bureau and Singapore." In *Non-Traditional Security in Asia*, (Routledge, 2017) pp. 78-104.

<sup>203</sup> Stach Lukasz, "Malaysia's Maritime Security Challenges and the Development of the Royal Malaysian Navy: Old Problems and New Threats," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 30, no. 3 (2018): 423-436.

<sup>204</sup> Nugroho, Sukmo H., Kazan Gunawan, and R. Madhakomala, "Policy Evaluation Of Performances Allowance using System Dynamics Approach: Case Study Of Indonesia Navy," *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, no. 03 (2018).



operational capacity. However, since then, the country has embarked on a program for commissioning patrol boats to supplement its combat piracy.<sup>205</sup> Since 2008, the country has invested to build and support indigenous Naval Platforms that include AWS, corvettes and patrol boats. Counter-piracy is a bright spot of cooperation between states competing in other areas of Asia. Non-state actor threats, particularly piracy and smuggling, are issues of significant concern to all regional actors.<sup>206</sup>

Threats presented by non-state actors in the form of smuggling and piracy remain contentious issues for states. Cooperation in the field interestingly began with the impetus of Japan and China.<sup>207</sup> The peak of cooperation in counter-piracy began with the 2004 Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (RECAAP), which was signed by 16 countries.<sup>208</sup>

### 3.22. Foreign Military Sales and External Influences

The area has seen an unprecedented surge in sophisticated weaponry, utilized increasingly on naval surface platforms. A recorded growth of 8.4 per cent was seen in the interval years from 2012 to 2016.<sup>209</sup> This was also the highest volume of weapon transfers to Asia, the Middle East and Oceania. Surprisingly, there was a decrease in the

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<sup>205</sup> Ursula Daxecker, and Brandon Prins, "Insurgents of the sea: Institutional and economic opportunities for maritime piracy," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57, no. 6 (2013): 940-965.

<sup>206</sup> John Kleinen, and Manon Osseweijer, *Pirates, ports, and coasts in Asia: historical and contemporary perspectives* (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010).

<sup>207</sup> Edith Terry, *How Asia Got Rich: Japan, China and the Asian Miracle: Japan, China and the Asian Miracle* (Routledge, 2015).

<sup>208</sup> Tamara Renee Shie, "Maritime piracy in Southeast Asia: The evolution and progress of Intra-ASEAN Cooperation," *Piracy, Maritime Terrorism and Securing the Malacca Straits* (2006): 163-189.

<sup>209</sup> Richard Bitzinger, "Asia's Arms Bazaar: Growing Market for China, US," (2018).

flow of arms to Europe, Africa and South America during the same time lapse. The five biggest exporters are responsible for the tremendous increase were classified as the US, China, Russia, France and Germany, with accumulating a total summing of 74 per cent of arms exports.<sup>210</sup>

India remains the largest importer of arms and weaponry since the last decade, attributing to 13 per cent of the global share. The increase from 2007-2012 was a staggering 43 per cent. The imports from India are more significant than that of its perceived regional competitors, notably Pakistan and China. South East Asia has favored rather negatively, contributing to an increased arms import followed by a 6.2 per cent increase from the 2007-2011 to 2012-2016 levels. Vietnam has risen in the ranks from the 29th biggest importer during the time period 2007-2011 to the 10<sup>th</sup> biggest in the years leading to 2016. The arms imports have been increasing at a staggering rate of “202 per cent,” Wezeman of SIPRI writes. He is of the opinion that unlike China, which is rapidly substituting arms imports with more indigenous systems, India remains dependent on Western technology apart from Russian and Israeli weapons.

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<sup>210</sup> Evan Laksmana, "Why Is Southeast Asia Rearming? An Empirical Assessment," (2018).

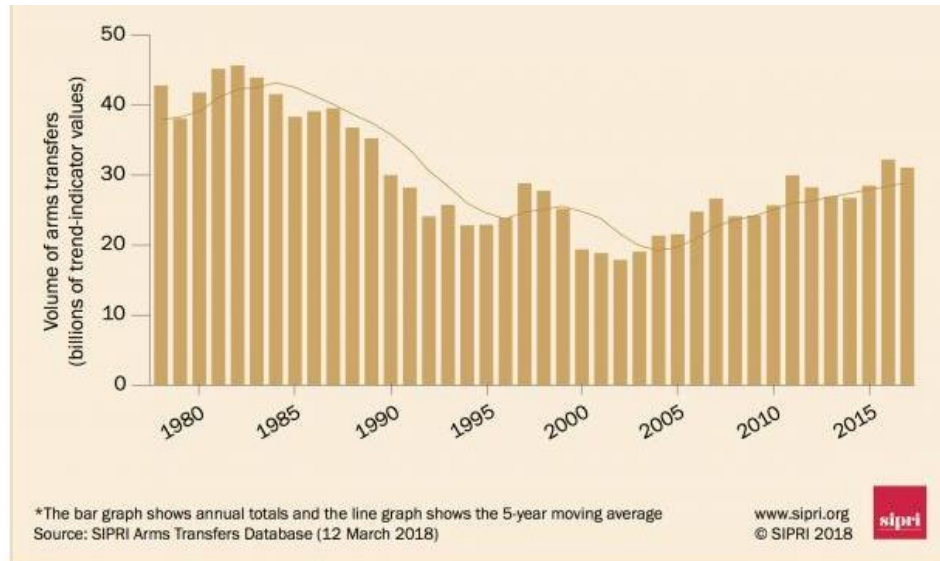


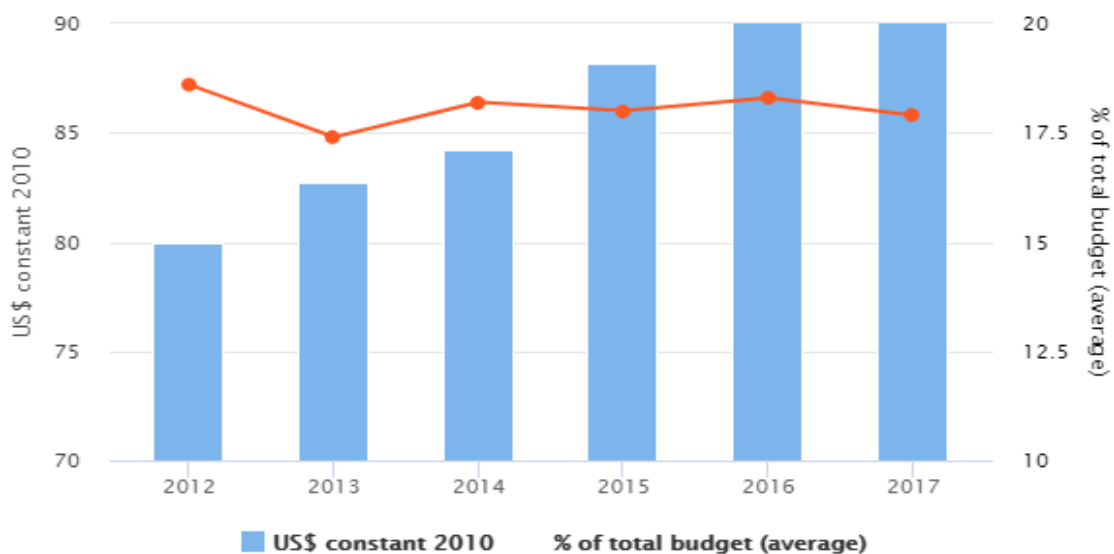
Figure 9: Global trends in weapons transfers

Between 2007–11 and 2012–16 arms imports by states in the Middle East rose by 86 per cent and accounted for 29 per cent of global imports in 2012–16. Saudi Arabia was the world’s second-largest arms importer in 2012-16, with an increase of 212 per cent compared with 2007–11. Arms imports by Qatar went up by 245 per cent. Although at lower rates, the majority of other states in the region also increased arms imports. ‘Over the past five years, most states in the Middle East have turned primarily to the USA and Europe in their accelerated pursuit of advanced military capabilities’, said Pieter Wezeman, Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Arms and Military Expenditure Programme. ‘Despite low oil prices, countries in the region continued to order more weapons in 2016, perceiving them as crucial tools for dealing with conflicts and regional tensions.’<sup>211</sup>

<sup>211</sup> Tian, Nan, Aude Fleurant, Alexandra Kuimova, Pieter D. Wezeman, and Siemon T. Wezeman, “Trends in World Military Expenditure,” *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, 2018.

The US obtained the top spot in exporting arms globally in the years that accumulated to 2016. The arms export surged by 21 percent compared with the time from 2007 to 2011. Half the exports were destined for the “unstable” yet oil-rich Middle East. It was moreover, supplying over 100 countries with military hardware ranging from the most sophisticated and latest to that of naval platforms. India has obtained advanced strike aircraft with cruise missile technology, whereas previous deals have allowed collaboration over precision-guided munitions and state-of-the-art Missile Defense Systems. Russia was in second place with an astounding 23 percent of the global export share in the period 2012-2016. More than 70 percent was headed towards China, Vietnam and India alongside African countries led by Algeria. China commands the third position, destined majorly towards developing country states of the “Third World”. The share has also risen from 3.8 to 6.2 per cent between 2007-2011 and 2012-2016. It has ascended above that of European suppliers in France and Germany, which, during similar periods, shared global weapon exports of 6 per cent and 5.6 per cent.

Figure 3. Asian defence investments as percentage of total budget, 2012–2017



Sources: Government figures except China, Singapore and Vietnam where secondary sources only were available

Fig 9: Asian Defence Investment as Percentage of total budget

The External Weapons Transfer (EWTL) database has since 2005 covered more than 600 transactions that cover weapon sales to Asian countries. Those dominating the tables include China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, North Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.<sup>212</sup> The trend configured is based on modernisation and expansion of the region's military capabilities, which extends to all three armed forces. It was during the course of the study that the IOR states laid a special emphasis on naval procurement and upgrades. The developments were aggravated by China and India, who are expanding their domestic weapons production capacities for naval platforms such as submarines, destroyers and frigates

<sup>212</sup> Mark Phythian, "The politics of the contemporary trade in major conventional weapons," *The Ashgate Research Companion to Modern Warfare* (2016): 165.

while relying heavily on foreign purchases for radar systems and air defense.<sup>213</sup> The next in line are Indonesia and Singapore, which are also dependent on foreign military equipment, including naval systems, to ensure peace and safe Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs).



Fig 10: The Attack Submarines of Asia & Australis

Despite the relative trend in the modernisation of regional naval capabilities, the expansion differs state by state. Many of the navies in the IOR countries are ill-equipped

<sup>213</sup> Thean Potgieter, "Assessing China's naval power—technological innovation, economic constraints and strategic implications," (2018): 270-272.

to deal with lingering non-traditional security threats, such as the maritime piracy growing in the Indian Ocean and plaguing the Straits of Malacca.<sup>214</sup> China is modernising at a faster rate than its neighbours. The vessels China has been acquiring since 2000 are more sophisticated and have great firepower projection than those assimilated on average by Japan, Korea, Australia, and India. China has 302 vessels, and Japan has 89 vessels. However, the latter has a greater number of destroyers and submarines than the other vessel types, suggesting its naval expansion efforts are aimed at maintaining its naval military predominance in the region. Relative to other countries, India has more vessels suited to anti-piracy and anti-smuggling missions. It has a high number of smaller warships designed to protect sea lanes and to patrol against enemy submarines, such as corvettes and conventional patrol vessels. However, despite the large numbers, it is still not enough to protect India's 7,517km coastline from piracy, smuggling or terrorist intrusions.<sup>215</sup> North Korea's naval power is illusory, having 236 vessels and standing fifth in the quantitative table. However, the power ratio remains weak due to the wear and tear that older ships exhibit, which reduces their seaworthiness and the lack of modern technology. The submarines of North Korea are small and outdated and represent little competition to the more modernized fleets. The country has neither the GDP nor the diplomatic relations to acquire new powerful vessels other than what it can develop indigenously.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Michelle Voyer, Clive Schofield, Kamal Azmi, Robin Warner, Alistair McIlgorm, and Genevieve Quirk. "Maritime security and the Blue Economy: intersections and interdependencies in the Indian Ocean," *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 14, no. 1 (2018): 28-48.

<sup>215</sup> Patrick Bratton, "Warring Navies: India-Pakistan; Indian Navy's Role in the Indo-Pak Wars," *Naval War College Review* 70, no. 3 (2017): 155.

<sup>216</sup> Arnab Dasgupta, "India's Strategy in the Indian Ocean Region: A Critical Aspect of India's Energy Security," *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 22, no. 1 (2018): 39-57.

### 3.23. Managing Conflict and Cooperation

It is anticipated that the region across the Indian Ocean would remain restrained on an approach based on non-confrontation and orientation towards development. This would be ensured by high levels of engagement in the realm of economics and politics, which would provide management of issues of regional magnitude. However, the uncertainties and suspicions fostered by international anarchy and the growing capabilities of China and the US in the long term would strengthen the security dimension in bilateral relations. The military-centric approach would lead to the two countries counterbalancing each other's military might, which adds to defense spending at levels unheard of in the IOR.<sup>217</sup> In this scenario, the engagement elements would remain, with military competition and rivalry intensifying. The environment would be influenced by the trends set forth by domestic political events. The growing jingoistic tendencies would put pressure on key countries, including China, India, and the US, whose response might create a degree of social unrest.<sup>218</sup>

The environment would be radically altered if the ultranationalist elements triumph over the forces of globalization.<sup>219</sup> It is the very forces of interdependence that bring in the stability providing a status quo to the mixed multi-polar environment. The coming of jingoistic leadership might not affect the economic growth patterns, but it nevertheless would bring in domestic unrest and elite rifts. The example of India is significant in this

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<sup>217</sup> Geoffrey Till, *Asia's naval expansion: an arms race in the making* (Routledge, 2017).

<sup>218</sup> Atul Kohli, "Nationalist versus dependent capitalist development: Alternate pathways of Asia and Latin America in a globalized world," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 44, no. 4 (2009): 386-410.

<sup>219</sup> Sudhakar Patra, "Trend and Impact of Military Expenditure on Economic Growth in South Asia," In *Handbook of Research on Military Expenditure on Economic and Political Resources*, pp. 253-269. IGI Global, 2018.



issue, the politicians to rally people count on the “anti-Pakistan card” to gain votes.<sup>220</sup> The approach in the long-term brings in animosity and instability in the region termed as ‘most vital to any power shifts’. The economic growth nevertheless has a side effect, it would directly add to the military spending. India, China and the US are, with the newfound wealth, steadily modernizing their conventional and nuclear capabilities.

This would contribute to security competition being heightened, which could, in the coming decades, escalate to higher levels, thus destabilizing the region. The scenario brings to mind the memories of the Cold War. However, any “new Cold War” would be more deadly and dangerous, considering that the world is no longer bipolar with new poles emerging.<sup>221</sup> China would continue to further its strategic and economic objectives in the IOR states, which would fuel a counter-reaction by India, giving birth to a rivalry. The political and diplomatic realm.

The perception of the assertiveness of Chinese power fuels Asia's strategic and economic rivalries. The regional actors fear zero-sum repercussions in the domains of the diplomatic realm, particularly over critical areas of North Korea and the issue of integration of Taiwan with mainland China. China's competition consists of an array of alliances with the regional powers, involving the Indian pressure of a “strategic alliance” against the PRC in the wake of the tough stance of the country in the South China Sea

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<sup>220</sup> Marie Lall, "Educate to hate: The use of education in the creation of antagonistic national identities in India and Pakistan." *Compare* 38, no. 1 (2008): 103-119.

<sup>221</sup> David Rothkopf, "The cool war," *Foreign Policy* 20 (2013).

and adjacent territories. India perceives such activities on the part of China as the prologue towards greater domination at important multilateral forums in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. There are concerns of an “Asia-Pacific Cold War” emerging in the backdrop fueled by the intensive rivalry of both countries involving trade wars and disputes over investment, energy, and technological intellectual property violations to name a few. The result ahead is likely to be increasing military and defence spending, intensifying security competition and the arms race and the belief in Sino-US relations that the two can protect its interests by containing the other side.”<sup>222</sup>

### 3.23.1. Asia-Pacific Cold War

A regional equivalent of the Cold War environment is most likely to prevail in the immediate region that waters the Indian Ocean.<sup>223</sup> The occurrences of conflictual trends and features are leading to the disappearance of the positive ones that prevailed impressively after the demise of communism. This would be so if the competition over resources continues to build pace and free trade gradually replaces closed trading systems. The regional tensions fueled by the PRC’s exerting influence of military and economic, at the same time those of the US diminishing, would intensify the security competition, paving the way for an arms race.<sup>224</sup> An increase in military spending is likely to contribute to an environment of “Cold War”, which would be determined by the vision and decagons of the leadership, regional and international developments in power structure and the reactions to the political and military crises. The crises are likely to be

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<sup>222</sup> Till, Geoffrey, "Growing a Navy: Problems and Prospects, An Introduction." In *Naval Modernization in Southeast Asia*, pp. 1-13 (Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2018).

<sup>223</sup> Joseph Bosco, "In the New China-US Cold War, Will Xi or Trump Blink First?" *TheHill*, November 26, 2018, accessed December 21, 2018, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/418050-in-the-new-china-us-cold-war-will-xi-or-trump-blink-first>.

<sup>224</sup> David Rothkopf, "National Insecurity. Can Obamas Foreign Policy Be Saved," *Foreign Policy* 9 (2014).

expounded by the misperceptions and improper calculations that are to be created in the absence of security mechanisms and lack of CBMs.

The Asia-Pacific setting is categorized by an augmented U.S.-China rivalry that would be determinant to any forms of regional collaboration and condensed stiffness. This atmosphere would demonstrate a vibrant and unrelenting reduction in the integers that undermine actions across the Asia-Pacific, encompassing crises in political and military realms, transformation in alliances relationships, trade wars and conflicts that would provide an impetus to the management of existing security issues at helm of regional and global levels.

Nations such as these would be influenced by domestic social and economic matters that would further the peaceful resolution and management of common transnational threats and issues of concern. Nevertheless, significant disputes and differences would remain on the key front and could add to the zero-sum equation. The environment, however, can be stalled by a “balance of power” proving to be a stabilizer for the region in the US-China relations. The trust and confidence, if gained, would be beneficial to all existing stakeholders. However, that can be gained in the wake of long-term resolutions of the Korean dispute, providing the conducive grounds for enduring and positive cooperation. Such progress would necessitate the reversal of the existing negative vigour that is fueling antagonism in the region. A more cooperative atmosphere can be witnessed despite the surging military capabilities where domestic consensus of

what comprises “interests” is undertaken. This would provide an understanding as to how the states would react in the wake of particular developments in the national security apparatus.

### 3.23.2. Asian Hot Wars

The scenario is built up in the wake of the escalation of the crisis that could lead to military exchange and conflict over the “hotbed regional issues”. The approach is an extension of the Cold War-like tendencies in the Asia-Pacific region. The likelihood of these situations can be deliberate or unforeseen as a result of uncontrollable circumstances where the marines and commanders of naval vessels need to be cognizant of the facts.<sup>225</sup> The Taiwan dispute has the potential of transforming into one such issue, bringing players from the South and East China Seas to loggerheads. The Americans, on the other hand, are likely to be more concerned with subjects revolving around the freedom of the high seas and nuclear proliferation at the behest of North Korea in the Peninsula.<sup>226</sup>

Sino-US mindset would likely cultivate mawkishly tilting towards the “war-oriented” military doctrinal approach lined in with national objectives. This would lead to the two engaging in an enhancement of competitive behaviour to amass influence across the Asia-Pacific.

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<sup>225</sup> Duara, Prasenjit, Nationalism and development in Asia. No. 2018/95, WIDER Working Paper, 2018.

<sup>226</sup> Kori Schake, "America Faces the Stakes and Style of a Cold War in Asia (May 2018)," Texas National Security Review (2018).

Such developments are likely undertaken via the US-Sino political, military and economic policies regarding the friends and foes of the region. There is a growing degree of anticipation that defence spending will continue to rise on the ladder and that all the substantial powers will maintain the arsenal involving conventional and possessing nuclear systems. The question that remains interesting during the study is whether the alterations and conversions of the alliances in a geopolitical setting converge by growingly adversarial behaviour. The domestic-political environment will likely play an instrumental role in easing or making the existing situation more severe. The tendencies for the realpolitik approach of relying increasingly on military force might advance the interest of a particular power at the immediate time. Still, in the long run, such an approach would be detrimental to the common interests that call for collaborations and diminishing mutual susceptibilities.

The determinants of the imitation of a “Cold War” or “Asia-Pacific Hot War” are, in essence, the same.<sup>227</sup> The environment is likely to be heralded by “perceived” disputes in the realm of economy, politics and military. However, the role of leadership, particularly the diplomats and policy-makers in China, would be significant, particularly with the restrictions and imposed limitations on democratic freedoms. In this case, the media will add a “multiplier effect” whereby perceptions regarding the benefits of mutual trade investment and commerce would be constructed and shaped. The picture can be different should China choose to present a negative “construction” of its relations with the US or

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<sup>227</sup> Jamie Shea, Keeping NATO relevant. Vol. 19. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012.

resentment against the present world order system, characterized by the emergence of multiple poles; however the Americans retain an edge for technological edge and R&D spending at the military realm of affairs that remain unmatched even by that combined of second and third-most powerful military.

Additionally, questions can be raised over controlling the escalation of conflicts, particularly when there is a lack of multi-lateral or even bilateral, as the case may be of an overarching security infrastructure dedicated to bringing in security assurances and managing crises. Furthermore, the deterrence of major powers in the conventional domain can be debatable because of the sentiment of the public nationalist bolstered by the media in an undemocratic regime. Hence, in the strategic landscape in the decades to come, increased defence spending would likely proliferate to other IO nations, particularly in South Asia, where the nuclear power rivals of India and Pakistan are also located in geographical proximity. It is added that in the wake of naval expansion by all powers, there would be an enlargement of sea-based law enforcement agencies and citing the geo-economic significance, bringing in more mercantilist players. This would frequent happenstances of encounters in the contested waters, providing an opportunity for conflict. The most important factor underlying the emergence of any futuristic geopolitical setting would be determinant to Sino-US leader-to-leader relations that could endure or obliterate the existing power balance that has largely favoured the Americans.

### 3.24. Challenged Region

With Europe largely pacified and the risk of state-on-state war minimal, the United States has re-balanced its geopolitical posture towards the vast Asia Pacific region. Driven by economic motivations and the need to prioritize their policy investments after the devastating financial crisis of 2008, the US encounters a region with significant insecurity. The ascent of China as an economic and political power is a source of concern for its neighbours to the east and south. Meanwhile, Japan is taking steps away from its post-war pacifism and moving towards a more activist security policy. The region is in the midst of an arms race accelerating in quantity and quality. Historically and ideologically amplified island disputes bear a considerable risk of unwanted escalation, lacking established security structures and discussion forums. Indeed, the whole region is facing profound security challenges, mainly maritime in nature.<sup>228</sup> The section will analyze the development in relation to all relevant maritime, non-state and energy issues within the region.

The wide variety of issues affecting the regional dynamics extends to a diverse set of issues, including the cultural, political, and economic traditions that are being battered by an array of forces, struggling to deal with the fundamental transitions.<sup>229</sup> The study debates the guiding principles of changing international order by scrutinizing problems of localized conflicts and the role of multidimensional institutions. During the course of the study, it was recognized that Americans have the lead as the preponderant power across

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<sup>228</sup> Basrur, Rajesh, and Sumitha Narayanan Kutty. "Conceptualizing Strategic Partnerships." In *India and Japan*, pp. 1-11. Palgrave Pivot, Singapore, 2018.

<sup>229</sup> Pant, Harsh V., and Abhijnan Rej, "Is India ready for the Indo-pacific?" *The Washington Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (2018): 47-61.

the world, including the Asia-Pacific region, and in the anticipated future, it is likely to be so. The questions remain interesting yet are speculative by policy makers belonging to different calibre and allegiances.<sup>230</sup>

- a. US retains the overwhelmingly dominant position in relation to power capability that remains unmatched by any other contender. However, in recent years, the ability to influence events and desired outcomes has waned. A key factor in this buildup will be what Washington thinks would be limit of its influence which may give birth to perceptions of “appeasement” or “weakness” on the side of potential adversaries.
- b. The forces of globalization have eroded the authority of regional states. It is now a trend that external players are increasingly influencing decision-making processes. It is anticipated that the state in the succeeding years would be required to exploit prospects offered by globalization.
- c. PRC is on a future power trajectory that compounds to a challenge of daunting abilities for the Asia-Pacific regional order. The official Chinese narrative consists of trying to prove that the country is misperceived and

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<sup>230</sup> Christopher Fettweis, *Psychology of a Superpower: Security and Dominance in US Foreign Policy* (Columbia University Press, 2018).



misunderstood. It poses no significant threat to the current order or to regional stakeholders. The modernization of the armed forces is regular, considering the changing political realities and emerging threats in traditional and non-traditional domains. However, a growing number of states see the “rise of China” as spraining the existing relationship arrangement.

- d. Citing the enhancing degree of “complex interdependence” and nuclear deterrence security extending to allies in Asia-Pacific along with the existing nuclear-possessing power, there is less likeliness of a major state-to-state “conventional” conflict between the states. However, the “low-intensity conflict” within the states is on the rise. Threats faced by the region are of a multi-spectrum nature to which strategists need to conform.
- e. It is an understandable fact, tallying the peculiarities of sea power and rationalism in line with the SLOC's stability and security, that there is no alternative to global collaboration and synchronization of mutual interests, with most security challenges comprising of transnational environment.
- f. Regional miscellany is diverse, which requires establishing a security framework for successfully handling disputes. Solutions for this purpose cannot be imported due to the distinctive stature, approach, and sensitivities

of the regional culture. A “NATO” -like organization would help pacify the situation.

The power equations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century remain in the transition phase, where smaller states are inclined to align themselves with powers beyond the region to address their concerns in the wake of security dilemmas. The Belt and Road Initiative of China has come under scrutiny because of its competing ramifications in terms of security and developmental nature. BRI and the newly minted conception of the “Indo-Pacific” arguably come head-to-head to what is considered as the “Clash of the two”. The countries of the region are asked to choose between the two visions, a decision which can radically alter the power equilibrium that has allowed for relative peace for the past few decades. The US is a waning power, whereas China and India are mounting their influence in Asia with active engagements. The Chinese way of playing a constructive role is outlined by Wang Yi, Foreign Minister of the PRC, as “actively exploring and pursuing the Chinese way of helping to find solutions to hot topics and issues”.

Most countries of the region fear an imbalance of power, whereby states are forced to align towards a single geopolitical polarity. Restoring balance in the formal sphere needs visionary leadership and persuasive diplomacy—neither of which is evident at this point in time. It is important to generate trust and confidence using ideas developed from informal dialogue. The congenial habit of multilateral engagement must be preserved.

The social and cultural sphere presents a major challenge to the security dynamics of the region. The present age is growing, and a rise in religiosity across the region is seen. The great religions have coexisted for a considerable period in close proximity; Southeast Asia hosts a sizable number of Buddhist and Muslim populations. A divide has alarmingly opened up between the two communities. The increasingly conservative practices alongside communal conflict events such as the one in Myanmar's Rakhine State are troublesome.

To address the issue, communities need to start looking inward at themselves to resolve the pivot. Buddhists, Muslims, and other faiths need to reflect within their communities on the dangers of polarization that lie ahead. It is not an easy task, as the long-laid traditions of faith are not easily moderated as they lack coherent leadership; moderate views are easily hijacked by extremists, reflecting a growing insecurity in society fueled by political uncertainty and alarming economic inequality. In the wake of prospering economies which improve the living standard, there is a possibility of the communities and their leaders reaching a consensus on the need to preserve traditional customs and laws that reinforce tolerance

### 3.25. Diplomatic Recommendations

The US is poised to be the major influencer in the IOR for the foreseeable future. However, it is crucial for the Americans to understand that not all developments require a response, especially those that are a result of actions by previous US administrations

or the present. This understanding is particularly important in the face of the complex challenges and opportunities that the IOR presents.<sup>231</sup> They should also realize that despite the fact that the Americans retain their supremacy as the most powerful and largest in relative influence in the IOR, their ability is diminishing marginally, particularly when a case of rising China is put forward. The US would need to develop a long-term strategy, keeping in view all the complexities and benefiting from any emerging security infrastructure.

An inter-governmental cooperative approach is essential for the smooth working of the IOR relations; the role of regional and supranational organizations would be crucial in this regard. A “Public Private Partnership”<sup>232</sup> would strengthen the “complex interdependence” and provide for an arrangement of “strategic reassurance” between the varying IO states. The strategic dialogue between the emerging “US, India and China” triangle needs to be on the radar for addressing the emerging long-term constraints. The dialogue need to be integrative by clarifying the misconceptions and misperceptions that is the source of all tensions. The proposition would provide a means for each side to acknowledge its core interests, providing a “détente” like situation between the powers.

Thirdly, there is a need for dialogue and strategic reassurance between the US and China in order to redress the core issues, including each side’s vital interests. Efforts to curtail piracy and maritime terrorism, along with other non-traditional illicit activities,

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<sup>231</sup> David Rothkopf, "Obama's 'don't do stupid shit' foreign policy," *Foreign Policy* 4 (2014).

<sup>232</sup> James Stavridis, "James Stavridis: A Navy Admiral's thoughts on global security," [Online] TED, June 2012."

have the potential to initiate joint maritime agreements and exercises. Indian Ocean states and stakeholders, including foreign powers such as those of the US and Europe, can, on these grounds, establish a joint force for the defense of SLOC against non-state actors. It is a major opportunity that can help build mutual trust and a collaborative maritime mechanism for cooperation.

### 3.26. South Asian Challenges

India and Pakistan have been the traditional rivals long after the seeds of hatred were sown when the two became independent state entities. It has been almost a decade since the two invested in strategic nuclear deterrents at sea. In July 2009, India launched its first ballistic missile submarine (SSBN). Whereas as early as 2012, Pakistan inaugurated its Naval Strategic Force Command Headquarters. In the words of Iskander Rehman, the two are since entering what he calls 'increasingly murky waters.' However, he offers an optimistic analysis, concluding that the navies of the two, by establishing institutionalized relations, would succeed in adding a greater degree of stability to a volatile maritime environment.<sup>233</sup>

The ongoing Naval Nuclear dynamics in South Asia are such that India has been in pursuance of a sea-based nuclear strike force for assured retaliatory response and has since then conducted a series of notably the firing of Dhanush-class short-range ballistic missiles, whereas the submarine-based India's nuclear triad would have instrumental effect on the existing balance of power. To have an effective sea-based deterrent for

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<sup>233</sup> Iskander Rehman, Murky waters: naval nuclear dynamics in the Indian Ocean, (Carnegie Endowment: Washington, 2015).

China, considered another of India's prospective adversaries, it has developed a larger SSBN with greater yield and carriage capacity. Pakistan's naval nuclear ambitions are fueled largely because of the sense of growing conventional offset between Islamabad and New Delhi. It is, therefore, dispersing low-yield nuclear weapons across a variety of naval platforms, aiming to acquire escalation dominance and strategic depth. It is argued that such an approach would reduce any misgivings and incentives for India to launch a 'preemptive strike' on its nuclear assets. Over the past few decades, the Coast Guards of the two South Asian rivals have come up with a number of confidence-building measures. It is hoped that as a way forward, similar reciprocation might be seen by the navies of India and Pakistan.

IO, in the larger part of contemporary history, has remained free from nuclear abrasion even during the heightened period of bipolar rivalry between the Soviet Union and the US, where the two did maintain a substantial military presence at sea. However, their nuclear contact was made elsewhere in Finland, where the frosty sea of Okhotsk is located. The nature of military struggle was undertaken in the telluric realm rather than at sea. The nuclear postures of India and Pakistan since their open declaration and major tests in 1998 revealed a similar mindset. However, there was common awareness that the nuclear submarine program of India dated way back to the 1970s, whereas air and land-based apparatuses were also considered. India, in July 2009, revealed its first ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), INS ARIHANT, with the state-of-the-art equipped Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) S-2. There was a reported incident in August 2013 where the nuclear reactor went critical. In 2014, there was an announcement made for

unveiling of a second SSBN which remains in production at the time of this study. In response to these developments, Pakistan declared that it would build its sea-based deterrent, the operationalization of which began under the Naval Strategic Force Command (NSFC). However, as per expert assessment, there remains a reliance on present conventional platforms under “dual use”, and the general policy of “strategic ambiguity” seems to dominate the security mindset.

Maritime space constitutes the only medium in which South Asian nuclear platforms are likely to find themselves in frequent interaction. Therefore, awareness of these issues needs to be raised as they are destined to be of great importance in the intersections of naval and nuclear strategy. Nuclear naval interactions might also lead to friction, misperception and escalation. Therefore, strong measures need to be taken to forestall such developments. As India and Pakistan develop their naval deterrents, they will enter increasingly murky waters. By further institutionalizing relations between both navies and by insisting on stronger transparency concerning naval nuclear developments, both countries will enter increasingly murky water. There is a great need to institutionalize relations between the two navies and agree towards forms of transparency that would help strengthen deterrence and stability in a highly volatile maritime region.

### 3.27. Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace – A Pakistani Perspective

Pakistan has, historically speaking, shown considerable disarmament initiatives, including regional disarmament in the region.<sup>234</sup> It was the first country that proposed the South Asian region as a “Nuclear Free Zone” until the Indians tested their nuclear device in 1974.<sup>235</sup> The country has supported the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace since the decision was made in 1971. It has been forty-two years since the General Assembly declared the IO a Zone of Peace. Adopting the declaration in the Cold War dynamics was a difficult and peculiar task. However, since then, the region has changed significantly. At present, there is also a rise in non-traditional security challenges that reemphasize the importance of the Declaration's goals.<sup>236</sup>

Pakistan, despite the growing challenges, has reiterated its support for ensuring peace, security, and stability in the region at various forums. The President of Pakistan recently gave the government a policy vision stating that the country is not in any arms race in the conventional or nuclear domain with any country, including India.<sup>237</sup> However, he has stressed the Indian Navy modernization, particularly in the sub-conventional nuclear-powered submarines and carriers, which would be detrimental to the deterrence stability<sup>238</sup> that has averted war between the antagonistic neighbours.

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<sup>234</sup> Peter Lavoy, "A conversation with Gen. Khalid Kidwai," In Transcript of a session at the 2015 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference, Washington DC. 2015.

<sup>235</sup> Samina Ahmed, "Pakistan's nuclear weapons program: Turning points and nuclear choices," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (1999): 178-204.

<sup>236</sup> Hasan Yaser, "Role of Pakistan Navy in Indian Ocean Blue Diplomacy," *Defence Journal* 21, no. 8 (2018): 33-35.

<sup>237</sup> Ikram Junaidi, "Pakistan Won't Join Nuclear Arms Race: President Alvi," *Dawn News*, October 16, 2018, accessed December 19, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1439305>.

<sup>238</sup> Naveed Siddiqui, "Pakistan Is against an Arms Race in the Region: FO," *Dawn News*, October 11, 2018, accessed December 19, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1438344>.



Piracy poses a serious threat that has the capability of disrupting commercial relations between the states. Pakistan has highlighted its commitment to combating piracy at various forums including the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Pakistan has been combating terrorism for more than a decade, and its efforts have been appreciated and acknowledged by the international community. For this purpose, the law-enforcing agencies, with the help of the Pakistan Navy, have been securing their sea boundaries and tracking any illegal activities that comprise weapon and drug trafficking. At the International Maritime Symposium held in Islamabad, the high-level ranking officials hoped that the IO countries would unify and work towards an integrated approach to work towards the common challenges. A step-by-step cooperative approach between the Indian Ocean countries would be the right way to move forward towards fulfilling the aspirations of the “Indian Ocean as a zone of Peace”.

#### 4. **Results: Comparative Analysis of Social Standards And the Military Domain**

Comparative Analysis of USA, China, India and Pakistan Powers in Social Standards and Military is the total of all discussions held in various earlier chapters. Moreover, to further clear the ambiguity and state of confusion, informal interviews and discussions with national policymakers of Pakistan, electronic and print media publications, opinions of leading media personalities, serving and retired military leadership and academia of relevant subject specialists have been consulted. Input to the following graph is also based on interactions with international scholars during various seminars held by the National Institute of Maritime Affairs, Bahria University, Islamabad, and National Defence University, Pakistan. Seminars, conference reports, and policy papers published by various Government and institutions were also consulted. Efforts have been made to insert impartial opinion/ grading as much as possible, keeping the above discussion in mind. It is worth mentioning that while comparing the states in the following graph, a comparison has been made with the individual country's past, present and future outlook. Based on this input, comparison and forecast of the future, keeping competitors' strengths and weaknesses have been incorporated in opinion. The purpose of this analysis is to remove the misconception and find the answer for the following few questions:

- a. Out of the USA and China, which country will dominate the 21<sup>st</sup> century and Why?
- b. Out of China and India, who has the dominant position in the Indian Ocean and Why?

- c. What are Pakistan's strengths and weaknesses in meeting the Indian challenge in the Indian Ocean?

This comparative analysis has been undertaken to finalize the research's outcome and arrive at a concluding opinion about the hypothesis adopted for this research. The discussion on the graph is appended in the ensuing paragraphs.

Figure 11: Comparative Analyses  
Classification Standards: Excellent - Good - Moderate - Adequate - Weak

S.No	Domain	USA	China	India	Pakistan
<u>Social Standards</u>					
<u>Political System</u>					
1	Global Leadership Experience	Excellent	Adequate	Weak	Weak
2	Quality of Leadership	Good	Excellent	Good	Good
3	Justice System	Excellent	Good	Weak	Weak
4	Strength of Economy	Good	Excellent	Good	Weak
5	Party/ Political System	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Weak
6	Media Strength/ Global Reach	Excellent	Adequate	Excellent	Weak
7	Population and Quality	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Weak
8	Social Standards of Life	Excellent	Adequate	Weak	Weak
9	Relations with Neighbours	Good	Adequate	Weak	Weak
10	System of Government/ Decision Making Procedures	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Weak
11	Alliances	Excellent	Good	Good	Weak
12	Nationalism	Excellent	Excellent	Weak	Weak
13	Control of Poverty	Excellent	Good	Weak	Weak
14	Jobless Individual/ Under Poverty line	Excellent	Good	Weak	Weak
15	Globalization	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Weak
16	Ability to control Environment hazards/ Challenge	Moderate	Moderate	Weak	Weak
17	Quality of Youth	Moderate	Good	Moderate	Weak
18	Education Standards	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Weak
19	University Education	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Weak

20	Rule of Law within the country	Excellent	Excellent	Weak	Weak
21	Culture	Moderate	Excellent	Moderate	Weak
22	Language Strength/ English	Excellent	Weak	Good	Weak
23	Religion Acceptability/ Harmony	Excellent	Weak	Weak	Weak
24	Family Values	Weak	Good	Good	Excellent
25	Geography/ Advantage	Excellent	Moderate	Good	Good
26	Availability of Energy Resources inland	Excellent	Weak	Moderate	Weak
27	Availability of Food	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Moderate
28	Role of Diaspora	Moderate	Good	Excellent	Weak
29	Internal harmony/ Unity	Good	Excellent	Weak	Weak
30	Control of Freedom Struggle campaigns	Excellent	Moderate	Weak	Moderate
31	Leverage at Regional/ Global Level Decision Making	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Weak
32	IT Sector	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Moderate
33	Services Sector	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Moderate
34	Sports Infrastructure	Excellent	Excellent	Moderate	Weak
35	Natural Disaster Handling Capacity	Excellent	Excellent	Moderate	Weak
36	Agriculture Sector	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good
37	Fresh Water Resource/ Storage	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Weak

<u>Military Strength</u>					
1	Conventional Military Strength Overall	Excellent	Good	Good	Weak
2	Army	Excellent	Good	Good	Moderate
3	Navy	Excellent	Moderate	Good	Weak
4	Airforce	Excellent	Good	Good	Moderate
5	Space Technology	Excellent	Good	Good	Weak
6	Nuclear Capability	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good
7	Surveillance Capability	Excellent	Good	Good	-
8	Military Technology	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Weak

9	Military Knowledge/ Strategy Operational Plans/ Executions	Excellent	Good	Good	Weak
10	Will to interfere / Take Bold Initiative alone	Excellent	Moderate	Good	Weak
11	War Experience at Global Level	Excellent	Weak	Weak	Weak
12	Military Reach outside home	Excellent	Adequate	Good	Weak
13	Aircraft Carrier Operations / Strength	Excellent	Moderate	Moderate	-
14	Nuclear/ Ballistic Missile Submarines Experience/ Strength	Excellent	Moderate	Moderate	-
15	Conventional Submarines	-	Good	Good	Weak
16	Naval Bases, away from Home Waters	Excellent	Moderate	Moderate	-
17	Professionalism in Armed Forces	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Good
18	Diplomacy	Excellent	Good	Good	Weak
19	The ability of Armed Forces to Influence State Decision	Excellent	Moderate	Good	Excellent
20	Intelligence Forces	Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent
21	Creative Chaos Ability	Excellent	Moderate	Good	Weak
22	Dependence on imported Energy – Vulnerability (Yes/ NO)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
23	Dependence on SLOCs for Import/ Export (Yes/ No)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
24	Power in World Institutions	Excellent	Moderate	Moderate	Weak
25	Blue Economy Strength	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Weak
26	Merchant Marine, Ports and harbours, Ship Construction	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Weak
27	Missile Warfare capability	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Adequate
28	Anti-Missile Defence	Excellent	Good	Adequate	-
29	2 <sup>nd</sup> Strike Capability	Excellent	Good	Good	-
30	Tactical Nuclear Weapons	Excellent	Excellent	Weak	Good

<u>Future Outlook</u>					
<u>S.No.</u>	<u>Domain</u>	<u>USA</u>	<u>China</u>	<u>India</u>	<u>Pakistan</u>
1	Economy	Good	Excellent	Good	Weak
2	Military	Excellent	Good	Good	Moderate
3	Leadership	Good	Excellent	Good	Good
4	Knowledge	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Weak
5	Alliances Strength	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Weak
6	Maritime Economy	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Weak
7	Nuclear Capability	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
8.	Size and Resources	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Moderate
Overall Strength		Excellent	Good	Good	Weak

Salient of the above have been discussed in detail in the ensuing paragraphs:

- a. Leadership Experience at the Global Level. The USA, the sole superpower, has vast experience in managing world affairs. Since the end of the nineteenth century, the USA has been a power to be reckoned with; luckily, the USA was not physically involved in World Wars and did not bear destruction like Europe, Africa and Asia. Hence, her leadership capability remained intact. Likewise, post-World War II, the USA saw the USSR as a strategic competitor in all domains and ultimately was able to defeat the social ideology as well. From 1991 onwards, the USA has experience in managing world affairs. It has managed two Gulf Wars on its own. On the other hand, China has been building its economic muscles only and, thus, has not intervened with the USA's management of world affairs. Her

capacity to challenge the USA is not adequate at present. However, with Russia backing China and economic strength, China has now started to interfere and disagree with US decisions on strategic issues. India is a new aspirant to become the first regional and global player. However, India does not have economic strength like China nor military muscles like the USA, and it is plagued with internal freedom struggles, which means it cannot act independently in global leadership. At present, India is trying to get favours from the USA and cash on historical linkage with Russia to get recognition at the global level. However, with US patronage, India is likely to get enough recognition at the regional level. Pakistan does not merit at the worldwide level except for negative impressions like Terrorism and nuclear capability. However, Pakistan does have a weight in Islamic countries as well as like-minded countries resisting the expansion of the UN Security Council. Pakistan also does not see its role beyond its immediate neighbourhood; hence, it will cooperate with all major superpowers as much as possible without compromising its national interest.

- b. Quality of Leadership. President Trump of the USA had challenged the traditional wisdom of the US approach towards world affairs. Though President Biden has ensured a return to the status quo, he is widely expected to be followed by another Trump presidency post-2024. On the one hand, he is trying to limit the US role in world conflicts; on the other hand, he is busy tackling Iran and North Korea. Moreover, the US leader is

not having cordial relations with other US power centers, facing impeachment threats, problems of immigrants and wall issues with the US Congress is hurting the US image as a global player. On the other hand, China selected Mr. Xi Jinping for prolonged duty as Secretary General of the Communist Party of China in 2017. This provides stability in decision-making also. India has recently re-elected Mr Modi as Prime minister for the next 5 years. However, because of his background and connection with Indian Hindu Nationalists, he is being targeted within the country. His economic policies are also not yielding the desired results, and India's neighbours are also not feeling safe. The recent revoking of Kashmir Special Status Article 370 has also created trouble within Indian Held Kashmir as well as Pakistan. Pakistan is also going through a leadership crisis, with disputed elections yielding a widely unpopular system amid claims of intervention by non-democratic forces such as the establishment.

- c. Justice System. The US Justice System ensures meritocracy in the public and private sectors. The system is powerful enough that even the President of the US is answerable to the system. Although the US is also one of the top countries in terms of crime, the justice system ensures equality and fair trials. China's justice system is also robust and was able to even convict more than 400 people for death sentences for corruption. These 400 individuals were high-ranking Communist Party leaders holding minister-level portfolios within Federal and Provincial governments. It is believed that a nation can only survive and prosper if the Judiciary is



independent and fair to all. Both India and Pakistan inherited the British Justice System. Unfortunately, the Justice system is hostage to the Government, influential people and the mafia, who seldom allow the judiciary to dispense justice to the commoner on the street. This is one of the significant failures observed throughout third-world countries.

- d. Strength of Economy. The USA, the leader of the free world and the centre of capitalism, has enjoyed a booming economy since the dollar was accepted as a universal currency. At present, the US GDP is around US\$ 20 Trillion. Despite this, the US is one of the countries with the highest indebted debts. However, according to its wishes, the US economy can sustain minor jolts and influence the world financial markets. China, an economic powerhouse, has more than US\$ 4 trillion in Foreign Reserves, and its total GDP is around US\$ 13 trillion, with a growth rate of around 6.5% in 2018-19. China has shown economic wonders by sustaining around 9-10% GDP growth for over 3 decades. China has also instituted the Infrastructure Development Bank, challenging the hegemony of the World Bank and IMF. China can interfere in all countries based on surplus foreign reserves. The Chinese economy is energy-starved, but China has greatly influenced all oil and gas-producing countries based on its economic strength. Lately, since 2103, the Chinese BRI program, which will connect 160 countries worldwide through rail, road and maritime routes, is another showing of her economic dominance at the global level.

India has also been gaining strength because of its economic success in the last 25 years. She has more than US\$ 400 as foreign reserves, and her GDP is now considered to be around 1.3 Trillion US, with a growth rate of around 7% per annum. This has also enabled India to undertake mega projects in both civil and military fields, including SAGARMALA (Ports Development Project) and the construction of indigenous Aircraft carriers and Nuclear Submarines. However, India cannot overtake China, nor can it match China's ability to influence other countries as China can. Pakistan is highly vulnerable because of its poor economy. Unfortunately, Pakistan has been facing a war scenario since 1979 when the USSR walked into Afghanistan, and Pakistan became the frontline state against the spread of communism. Later, Pakistan also joined US efforts to eliminate the Taliban and Terrorism. During this campaign of more than 40 years now, Pakistan's economy has suffered more than US\$ 200 billion in losses, and about 70000 innocent civilians lost their lives. Armed Forces were also drained because of the continuous fight against terrorism and lost around 7000 officers and men. Another issue is corruption by the elite in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the elites of Pakistan have joined hands with the corrupt mafia and made Pakistan a highly corrupt country. The growth rate is also stagnant at 3-4% against the minimum requirement of 7-8% to maintain the existing standard of life. Pakistan needs foreign loans to pay back the interest on previous loans.

- d. Political Party System. The political system in the USA is well mature and has a history of more than 300 years. This system has complete checks and balances on the political leadership. The political system ensures an inclusive approach to decision-making at all levels. China has had one-party rule since her independence. This system is working fine for Chinese people. Human rights watchers may have some observations about this system, but the same system has ensured unprecedented development and made China a worthy contender as a world leader. India claims to be the biggest democracy in the world and has matured the political party system since its independence. No military intervention has ever taken place in India. On the other hand, Pakistan's Political culture and party system are again hijacked by elites and people with money. Parties do not observe democracy while selecting their leaders, and family culture prevails and is dominant. More so, Pakistan has four military interventions which disrupted political maturity. However, during the last decade, Pakistan has seen two consecutive political government completing their tenure, and now a third government is in place. It is hoped that political parties will also eliminate family politics and adopt democratic principles within their parties.
- e. Media Strength/ Global Reach. The USA is a global leader in media management. Hollywood and electronic and print media have been the cornerstones of US thinking. The USA has used this pillar of state to the

best of its ability to mould perceptions of states and individuals. There TV channels like Fox News and CNN have global audiences. China is handicapped because of language barriers in media management. Moreover, China was quite late in understanding the strength of the management of media at the global level. Now, China has also embarked on launching English Channels, movies and print editions for global audiences. India, although a third-world country, has a very powerful cinema which has a global audience. Furthermore, the Indian diaspora is spread around the globe. Hence, Indian TV channels are also now available through satellites. Indian media management is also quite good as it is linked to big broadcast houses that project Indian points of view. Pakistan's print and electronic media, although freer than the USA's, has very little audience at the global level. Primarily, Pakistan media is in Urdu, which is not an international language, and cultural restrictions on the content being shown are also a big barrier to global reach.

- f. Population and Quality. US has been a migrant populace country over the centuries. These hardworking and intelligent migrant workers were the backbone of the strength of the US today. The USA has been an attraction for the world brain drain, which added quality to the US population. Now, the USA faces the hard reality that the new generation is not very hardworking and very few per cent reach degree programs. Furthermore, with new restrictions imposed by the present regime, the USA is likely to

be at a loss in times to come. The USA has around 300 million people and extensive resources available. Hence, the quality of life and population are much superior to those of the rest of the world. China has been able to lift 700 million people out of poverty. China is endeavoring to transform its 1.5 billion population to better standards. India, 2<sup>nd</sup> most populist country after China, has a mediocre population, with more than 400 people living below the poverty line. Wealth distribution is not adequate. Hence, the quality of the population is also directly affected. Pakistan, another country with 240 million, has the highest birth rate in the world. Estimates suggest that Pakistan's population will double in the next 25 years. Unfortunately, the government does not have any intention of controlling the population. Thus, the quality of life is going down day by day. Pakistan is blessed with 60% of the total population below the age of 35 years; hence, its strength is rightly utilised; otherwise, it is a ticking bomb which will hurt Pakistan from the inside.

- g. Social Standards of Life. The social standard of life of the commoner in the USA is much better than that of others. Although China has been able to improve its quality of life because of its large population, the effects of economic strength have not yet trickled down to all the nooks and corners of China. India, again, is facing a harsh reality to upgrade its quality of life. In India, people sleep on footpaths and in parks with their families. Similarly, a major chunk of the Indian populace lacks toilet facilities. The quality of

life in Pakistan is a little better than in India. However, much work is required to make it at a satisfactory level.

- h. Relations with Neighbours. The USA is a blessed country because it has only two friendly neighbours who depend on the US economy to progress. The USA has friendly relations with both its neighbors, although President Trump's policies have created based taste in the recent past. China has 13 neighbours sharing land borders, whereas maritime neighbors' list is also very large. China has a friendly neighbourhood except for Taiwan and, to some extent, India. However, China has good trading relations with both countries. Chinese maritime neighbours in the South China Sea are not satisfied with Chinese e claims on a large area of the South China Sea. However, China manages its relations through diplomacy and trade. India is a big country but has had wars with all of its neighbours since its independence. The problem is that India is a regional leader and hegemon while dealing with its neighbour. India- Bangladesh relations are sore because of population and riverine water issues. Nepal is a landlocked country and is totally dependent on imports/exports from India. India uses this as leverage to deal with Nepal. India and Pakistan had four full-fledged wars on the issue of Kashmir since independence in 1947. India blames Pakistan for all its internal problems and is not willing to dialogue on the issue of Kashmir, an unfinished agenda of partition. This issue is a major

stumbling block between the two neighbours, and even South Asia is hostage to their relations.

- j. System of Government/ Decision Making Procedures. The USA follows two approaches to arrive at a decision. One is through Congress and Senate, whereas the other executive, i.e., the President of the USA, has independent power to announce and execute decisions. Both are under the US Constitution and under checks and balances. China has a 9-member committee that takes all the executive decisions on behalf of the Chinese Government. Chinese President, as Secretary General of the Communist Party, chairs that committee and is responsible for executing the decisions. Both India and Pakistan inherited the British form of government and followed democratic procedures when arriving at decisions. Parliament is the supreme institution where decisions are made. However, the prime minister also makes executive decisions through Cabinet approval. All four governments are answerable to the public under their respective constitutions and government rules.

- k. Alliances. The USA is the sole superpower and has the capacity to make alliances with like-minded states. The USA is part of NATO in a military alliance. Similarly, the USA has a quad Alliance with Japan, Australia and India. The USA spearheads maritime security arrangements

in the Indian Ocean and Malacca Strait through alliances. The USA was able to achieve a big alliance against Iraq in the first Gulf War. China makes friends through her economic donations and loans. China is also a big trader of raw materials from the third world and readily invests in those countries. China does not give a “To-do list” with an aid package. India has been very successful in forming alliances with like-minded countries. During the Cold War period, India was able to extract maximum benefits from both camps, i.e., the USSR and the USA. Now even India is very successfully following the policy towards Russia, China, and the USA and getting the benefits. Pakistan has not been successful in making a formal alliance with any country.

Even Muslim countries are reluctant to support Pakistan in Kashmir. In the recent past, Pakistan has lost considerable space in friendly Middle Eastern countries. The space has been occupied by arch-rival India.

- I. Nationalism and Globalism. All world-leading economies have been trying to promote globalization for the last two decades. This was a compromise on some of the sovereign rights of individual states. However, with President Trump advocating in favour of Nationalism and rejecting globalism, the future of the world looks to nationalists gaining strength. This will be a catastrophe for the peace of the world as, usually, nationalists have a very hardline approach towards religion, sect, caste, language or immigrants. In China, nationalism and globalization function simultaneously. However, very few people dare to challenge the existing



setup in China. India has also seen the rise of nationalist leaders, i.e. Mr. Modi, who has ditched the idea of secularism propagated by Gandhi and Nehru. This adoption of a nationalist agenda in India may create a non-tolerant society against Muslims, Christians or Sikhs. Pakistan has been a liberal society as no Islamic party has won any substantial vote in any election. People of Pakistan believe in nationalism to limit loving their country, but they are also global citizens. They feel the pain of Palestinians as well as Rohingyas.

## 8.1 Conclusions

Based on the analysis above, it is evident that the USA will continue to dominate world affairs despite all talk of China's rise. The US economy is robust, and the gap between the two countries is still quite large. It is not possible for China to dislodge the USA as global leader merely on the basis of economic power. The US, a center for creating new knowledge, will keep its present status as global leader.

China, although catching up with the USA very fast on almost all fronts, lacks the will and experience to interfere in the issues at the global level. Moreover, China lacks a physical presence in all areas of the world compared to the USA. The Chinese military is good enough in their home theatres, but long overseas deployment carries a big question mark on their capability and experience. China is also investing heavily in the Knowledge arena, but the results of this investment are still to come. China needs a peaceful rise at the moment, without entering into physical conflicts with any state, so

that its energy is not wasted on pity issues. China is also benefiting greatly from her BRI initiative. This initiative will provide China with an added advantage compared to the USA, but not in the early time frame. It may take the next 20-30 years before China actually sees the fruits of today's investment.

Compared to India, China is way ahead in almost all spheres, but India has US blessings on strategic issues. This US-India alliance is a challenge for China. China also cannot afford any disruption to its trade routes in the Indian Ocean. It is thus conceived that China will avoid confrontation in the Indian Ocean with India but expects the same from India in the South China Sea. It is envisioned that China will follow the policy of appeasement towards India in the Indian Ocean but will challenge her on all other issues.

India is nowadays internally unstable because of communal riots and Prime Minister Modi's policies against minorities in India. This has hurt the Indian objectives of attaining world recognition as the sole leader of the Indian Ocean arena. Indian Government options for adopting Hindutva policies and Hindu nationalism are likely to hurt her from the inside, and insurgencies and communal disharmony will continue to surface time and again. This will hurt India's status as a global player despite her strong military, space power, economic rise and IT industry.

Pakistan is a weak country compared to these three. However, no country is weak if it is internally stable and moving on the road to progress. Pakistan has been blessed with a strategic location, which provides her with a more significant advantage. With peace in Afghanistan, economic vulnerability addressed and success against mafias and corruption, Pakistan will be a major player in the Indian Ocean. However, Pakistan needs to keep a check on its population growth rate, which is one of the highest in the world. This alone factor will not allow Pakistan to attain the desired fruits of all other efforts in realm of economy, military, diplomacy and physical location advantage.

## **5. Discussion and Findings of Research - Perceptions and Realities**

Conclusions from the Geo-Strategic Environment of the Indian Ocean in the 21st century reveal that the Indian Ocean has gained prominence in the international geopolitical discourse in the century dubbed as the 'Asian Century'<sup>239</sup>. It is becoming a showground for major competition between the new and existing great powers. We also know that the interests of regional and extra-regional actors converge on the sea. The sea lines of communications are the world's most important trade routes being vital to global energy and economic security. Analysis of the Indian Ocean also reveals that the Indian Ocean is considered the most nuclearized region<sup>240</sup> of the world. All declared and un-declared states are present in the Indian Ocean. Similarly, chokepoint politics is on the rise in the light of converging ocean strategies of "String of Pearls/Peaceful Rise of China", "Look East", and "Pivot towards Asia" policies. All maritime nations who can afford to establish footprints away from home shores are once again in search of permanent setups. A prime example is Djibouti, where 6 different powers (United States, France, Italy, Japan, China and Saudi Arabia). have permanent setups. Similarly, Duqm Port of Oman is also another strategic port where all three powers, the USA, China, and India, have inked formal arrangements for stationing the naval vessels for logistic support. India has also established 4 listening stations on permanent bases in the Indian Ocean on vital sea lanes of communication. Probably, history is repeating itself as in the old colonial era, maritime powers used to occupy major ports along the trade routes to supply their ships

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<sup>239</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/10/has-world-entered-asian-century-what-does-it-mean>, accessed 17 Oct 2019.

<sup>240</sup> India, Pakistan, China, Russia, USA, UK, France, and undeclared nuclear power Israel, all have physical presence in Indian Ocean.

with coal, water and other essentials besides giving shelter to shipping against bad weather. These facilities were then recognized as “Coal Stations”. The same phenomenon has resurfaced in the 21st century with more lethality, but the only change is that now nations are negotiating with each other for the facilities required, which proves the theory of compulsive behaviour of complex interdependence. Despite all these military arrangements, it is believed that the overarching approach of “Complex Interdependence” is the only way forward for peace and development of all stakeholders. This will, however, compel countries like Pakistan to adjust their perspective according to the changing geopolitics with the realities of the Indian Ocean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

While debating various scenarios of the Indian Ocean in the 21st century, it is assessed that the Twenty-first Century will witness a special arrangement of interstate relations between the USA, China and India based on a compulsive mix of realism, liberalism and constructivism theories of international relations. These countries will have alliances with IOR countries to gain power. However, the balance of power between the two sides, i.e. China viz-a-viz India/ USA, will remain intact as the combined effect of economic, military, diplomatic and other elements of national powers will not give any side a clear advantage. Their strength will be measured through the lens of elements of national power, including certain elements of maritime power advocated by Admiral Mahan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>241</sup>. They will cooperate with each other but as per the realism paradigm, in self-interest only and for maximizing their respective powers.

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<sup>241</sup> Mahan for the Twenty First Century: His Principles Still Apply to National Power.

In the 21st century, Indian Ocean sea-lanes will play a crucial role in the survival and prosperity of all stakeholders<sup>242</sup>. SLOCs are the classic example of a 'multilateral maritime matrix' as generally merchant ships are built in one country, owned by another, insured by a third, registered in a fourth, crewed by nationals of the fifth and pick up cargo from the sixth and delivered it to the seventh country. During their voyage, they pass through the waters of various countries and get logistics from different ports. Furthermore, as the world's oceans are indivisible, no country can defend the wide radius of the sea lanes by itself, which will bring in the need for security through cooperation. Combined Task Forces 150, TF-151 and TF-152 are prime examples of such cooperation in the North Arabian Sea and the Gulf. Moreover, the nation's maritime security and interests would extend beyond its own maritime boundaries. This need will compel all stakeholders for cooperative approaches of safety and protection as outlined under UNCLOS. Sarabjeet Singh in *Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean: A Changing Kaleidoscope* states that the oceans remain to central to security and commercial interests of the all states. The emergence of 'new maritime architecture' is tantamount to these developments, whose stability and sustainability are dependent on the freedom of navigation. IOR is relatively peaceful despite being 'sandwiched between the Persian Gulf and the South China Sea'. However, the presence of diverging interests of major powers has transformed the area into a 'contesting arena'. The growing presence of China has diluted the Indian stance as a "net provider of security" in the Indian Ocean. It is thus imperative for all stakeholders that IOR remains the "Centre-stage of the twenty-first

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<sup>242</sup> A. T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* (Little, 1980))

century,”. Thereafter, we may see developments in the strategic and security realms. The issue of maritime security and cooperation between like-minded states can only be achieved if IOR states and extra-regional players have the common objective of keeping this area under vigilance and peaceful. In that, apparatus of “regions maritime security architecture”.<sup>243</sup> Can also be proposed.

The growing presence of extra-regional powers and nuclear-capable nations has further altered the existing security framework in the Indian Ocean. Perception has been built that the Indian Ocean requires new security architecture that could handle the security scenario of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, the reality is that the economic upsurge of some nations and the stagnation/slowdown of others is affecting regional and international markets. The recent outbreak of Coronavirus is a prime example of global interdependence. Within a few days, the whole world has been exposed to the virus, and now efforts are in hand to collectively defeat this threat to mankind. The negative impact of this virus is slowing down Chinese economic activity and its impact on the global economic arena. All countries which have trade relations with China are feeling the heat. Even, hotel and airline industries have also been negatively exposed. Europe's largest regional airline, Flybe, which was under economic stress because of other reasons, has collapsed. The collapse of the airline was triggered and further expedited because of a lack of passenger load due to a major outbreak of coronavirus at the global level, which has affected the global tourism industry. China has a major contribution to the world

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<sup>243</sup> Sarabjeet Singh Parmar, , *"Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean A Changing Kaleidoscope,"* , 2016).

tourism industry,<sup>244</sup> as China's share in global tourism is around 20%. This indicates one thing very clearly: even Europe is not safe internally if the economic power of China is disrupted in any way. This is interdependent and creates a compulsion to cooperate amongst even the worst of enemies. Another example is of India and Pakistan. Pakistan's medicine industry is dependent on Indian raw materials and some vital life-saving medicines. Pakistan and Indian relations have been at the lowest ebb since 27 Feb 2019, when Pakistan Airforce shot down two Indian Airforce jets, violating its airspace. However, Pakistan's need for crucial medicines has been met by China since then, in lieu of India. However, with the outbreak of the Virus in China, Pakistan has again turned towards India for the import of vital raw materials used in the medicine industry and some finished products like vaccines, etc., despite the total disruption of trade, sports and people-to-people links. We know that the lack of intra-regional trade as compared to the extra-regional trade has limited the relations between nations in the region, and the development of the entire region remains hostage to bilateral inter-state relations. The reality is that the Indian Ocean is greatly connected to the world economy, and any hindrance or conflict is likely to have global effects. It is also believed that a reality exists in which all stakeholders in the Indian Ocean are more likely to join hands to keep the Indian Ocean peaceful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This will be in their own interests. Similarly, we understand that both China and India are totally dependent on maritime resources for the well-being of their large population<sup>245</sup>. It is, therefore, both China and India are economically & strategically linked and interdependent. Both need a peaceful

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<sup>244</sup> <https://www.traveller.com.au/chinese-tourists-global-economy-impact-how-chinese-tourists-are-taking-over-the-world-h0vx5z> accessed on 19 Dec 2019.

<sup>245</sup> "United Nations Population Division | Department of Economic and Social Affairs," United Nations (United Nations), accessed March 10, 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/index.asp>



environment in the Indian Ocean to sustain economic stability for a peaceful rise as a major power.

On the other hand, the perception that all major powers are in competition to control the Indian Ocean is considered correct; thus, the possibility of conflict exists. This perception is because Neo-realists theorists argue that without central authority at the global level, it is difficult for states to trust each other and cooperate. In such an environment, states will follow a realist paradigm in which they opt for power maximization to address their security dilemma.

Perception also exists that India fears Chinese military built-up and physical presence in the Indian Ocean whereas China fears India because of her alliance with the USA and threats to its economic interests in the Indian Ocean, thus paving the way for antagonizing relations. A study of the international strategic environment reveals that both India and China are acting aggressively on both diplomatic and security fronts. They are building up their military muscles as well as luring other states to their folds to strengthen their position at the global level, especially in the Indian Ocean. But the reality remains that People's contact and business interests will shape their economic relations, with minimal interference by the government, thus following economic liberalism theory. That is why, China- India trade volume is hovering at more than the US\$ 80 billion mark since

2017<sup>246</sup>. This implies that geo-economic interests have superseded the urge for rivalry and physical conflict over land and at sea.

Perception has also been built that the success of economic liberalism may pave the way for interstate relations under the neoliberalism paradigm. It is believed that states will interact with each other in a highly responsible manner and deal with issues on merit, safeguarding their self-interests only. Thus, all stakeholders will live in tense, sometimes even hostile, environments and even give way to the dominant party in a particular case. At the same time, the reality is that the military muscles of the main powers will continue to grow to maximize essential components of the realist paradigm. They will station naval forces and operate in each other's areas of influence and interests challenging sea control. In addition, the availability of nuclear weapons with major powers in the Indian Ocean dictates peace among them. Nuclear power has already acted as a shield, and restricted levels of conflicts and wars would be restricted to the cognitive domain only.

Strategic analysis of the global environment creates many wrong perceptions, such as China will replace the USA as a global power in the near future. Similarly, the Indian economy and the size of the country will make these countries a formidable challenger to each other. International literature portrays the USA as a declining power and will not be able to retain its central position at the global level. Another perception has been built that India is balancing power with China and will guard US interests in the

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<sup>246</sup> <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/world/china-india-trade-volume-grows-15-in-q1/article23683858.ece> (Business line, April 26, 2018))

Indian Ocean. Similarly, Russia is tilting towards Pakistan at the cost of India, as India is supporting the USA. Another wrong calculation is that the Chinese Navy is developing its bases and presence in the Indian Ocean on a permanent basis and will be able to challenge the US/ Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean in the near future. Gwadar Port has also been in the limelight in the recent past. Perception has been created that Gwadar Port has solved Chinese Malacca Dilemma<sup>247</sup> and Chinese Navy will use Gwadar as its naval base.

Analysis of the above-mentioned perception is different. We know that the USA derives its strength from a knowledge base economy, military might, the experience of strategic leadership at the global level and home for the creation of new knowledge at the University level, which attracts the best brains in the World. Moreover, the advantage of the English language over Chinese or Hindi at the global level also provides her an adequate advantage. The USA has been leading the world for more than a century now, and her readiness to interfere and take strategic decisions and risks puts her much ahead of its competitors. In addition, the USA enjoys excellent long-term relations with NATO, EU, Australia, Japan, Britain, the Middle East, South Korea, some of the CARs, the Far East, India, and Israel. The important and exclusive asset of US influence over the global arena has been due to the presence of her naval, air and land forces in all theatres on a permanent basis. The USA has a permanent basis away from home waters and has also inked long-term military to military relations with friendly countries to use their land, air

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<sup>247247</sup> Marc Lanteigne, "Malacca Dilemma," April 24, 2008)

and naval capabilities, bases and resources. Most important in military capability, despite her space and electronic warfare capacity, has been the US naval carrier force, which provides her mobility and poise to reach areas of interest in the shortest possible time. Moreover, she has experience using naval ships for the launch of aircraft (earliest carrier) for more than 100 years, giving the US Navy an exclusive edge in naval warfare. Similarly, she also has an edge in number, size, quality and potency in nuclear submarine armada.

On the other hand, the reality for China is that it is a factory area for the US economy, whereas the USA acts as a market. China is also an energy-hungry country compared to the USA and is dependent on imported energy to run its economy. China also has class differences in development in her Eastern and Western regions. Its western region is still far behind in development and, hence, needs a lot of funds to bring herself to par with the rest of China. This factor pulls down her development factor and may continue for at least the next 10 years. However, China has invested heavily in the higher education sector and developing its universities to act as a center for the knowledge economy. Chinese technology, although it has come a long way, still lags behind US technology. On the Military front, Chinese Military Forces are far inferior and lack international exposure. Its experience of operating Carriers is inadequate. Similarly, the number and quality of its military machines, including submarines, are still not at par with the US. China's strategic leadership experience is also not adequate, as China still has not been able to influence its thoughts at the global level. Chinese borders are not peaceful as her relations with India, Taiwan, and countries bordering the South China Sea are tense and probably unresolvable in the near future. One of the major hurdles for

the Chinese to lead the globe as a strategic leader is the acceptance of the Chinese language. China needs to develop the capacity of the English language to dominate the world canvas. China is also facing a stiff challenge from Far Eastern Countries in Economy. China is also handicapped because of the large & quality of population and the negative impact of the single-child policy. The impression has been created that Pakistan has helped China to address its Malacca Dilemma. This is not true, as the Chinese Eastern Region will continue to depend on Eastern ports for imports/ exports. It is not possible for China to depend solely on the Pakistani port of Gwadar for its imports/ exports. Moreover, great powers cannot be cornered and put to the test at a massive scale without the possibility of consequences. China is a formidable great power because of its economic clout and continuously building and modernizing of its military muscles. Therefore, it will be a strategic miscalculation to assume that China can be bullied now to the extent of creating the Malacca dilemma in 2020.

Perception has been built for India as a counterweight to China. She claims to be the biggest democracy, despite the rise of Hindu ideology in recent times. Her recent moves against the Indian-occupied Kashmiri population and segregation of the Muslim population of over 200 million from Indian nationality have dented its global image as a secular and democratic country. Although India is one of the largest commercial markets more than half of the population probably cannot afford the modern luxury of life and lives only to make ends meet. However, India is a natural leader in the Indian Ocean due to her physical size and economic and military strength. In this regard, India also uses reference to history for her claim to be a regional leader. She wants to act as a Policeman

in the Indian Ocean under US arrangements. She is also a claimant to get a seat at the UNSC despite repeated disregard of UN resolutions on Indian Occupied Kashmir since 1948 and the treatment of its minorities. She is also a proponent of being a responsible nuclear state in the region, although India was the first country in the region to bring in nuclear technology for weapon use, violating the peaceful use of technology transfer. She exploded her first nuclear test in 1974<sup>248</sup>.

The reality for India is that she is building naval bases and listening stations away from home ports. In addition, she is heavily investing in modernizing the armed forces. At present, she is 5<sup>th</sup> largest military power at the global level. She also has a formidable naval force in the Indian Ocean, whose strength is even more than the combined strength of most of the Indian Ocean Rim countries. Similarly, she has also stepped into space technology, and her cyber and computer technology are quite advanced, but still far behind both the USA and China. On the social front, she has a large population below the poverty line without even basic facilities like toilets. She is also experiencing insurgency in many areas <sup>249</sup> including Kashmir, which is under curfew since 5 August 2019. Her dealing with minorities, especially Muslims, is questionable. Despite all these flaws and weaknesses, She is managing her international relations quite well and to her advantage. She has balanced relations with Russia, the USA, the EU, the ME and the Far East. Her clout in US political circles is impressive because of the well-established

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<sup>248</sup> The test used plutonium produced in the Canadian-supplied CIRUS reactor. This was the violation of transfer of nuclear technology supplied for peaceful purposes and diverted to produce nuclear weapons.

<sup>249</sup> Dravida Nadu, Insurgency in Northeast India, Assam separatist movements, Insurgencies in Meghalaya, Manipur, Ethnic conflict in Nagaland, Kashmir conflict, Khalistan movement and Naxalite–Maoist insurgency

Indian diaspora in US Government circles. Similarly, her relations with African countries since Ghandi's time are friendly and further developing fast.

In Western circles, perception has been built for Pakistan as an economically challenged country, where, Civil-Military relations are also under stress. Another problem is the non-performing maritime sector. Its leadership is virtually blind towards its maritime potential, which can boost its economy to the desired level and resolve most of its economic problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Pakistan has been blamed as an irresponsible nuclear state because of Dr. Khan's network in the past. However, Pakistan has proved otherwise for the last 20 years, and her nuclear program is safe and as per international standards protocols. Pakistan has been the victim of the negative effects of wars in the neighbourhood, i.e. Afghanistan, since 1979. Pakistan has sacrificed more than 75000 lives in the war against terrorism and suffered an economic loss to the tune of more than US\$ 188 billion in the last 40 years<sup>250</sup>. Despite all this, Pakistan is blamed as a country sponsoring terrorism. On the social front, Pakistan has experienced poor run of disruptive democracy time and again. However, the last two political governments have completed their respective 5 years tenures without any hiccups, and the third Government has been in place through elections for the last year and a half. It appears that democracy in Pakistan is progressing

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<sup>250</sup> "Pakistan Has Lost at Least US\$118 Billion during the Ongoing War on Terror.," June 4, 2016)<https://www.dawn.com/news/1262750>, accessed on 17 Dec 2018

satisfactorily. Corruption is another issue facing Pakistan which is being addressed through the implementation of the law under the watchful eye of the judiciary.

Perceptions have also been built over the years that Pakistan has problems with all its neighbours. Unfortunately, problems with her eastern neighbour India is because of the unfinished agenda of partition over Kashmir since 1947. Relations with Afghanistan also have a historical linkage to the pre-partition era and Pakistan's inherited British- – Afghanistan problems. That is why, Afghanistan was the only country from the whole of the world that opposed Pakistan membership to UN in 1947<sup>251</sup>. Pakistan has ideal relations with its northern neighbour China and friendly relations with Iran. Relations with Iran can be explained that Pakistan Embassy in Washington has been facilitating Iran in representing and safeguarding her interest in United States since 1989 till to date.

Other blame on Pakistan is too much spending on her defence forces. This is also not a true fact as Pakistan's defence budget is capped for past many years to around 3-4% of GDP (US\$ 11 Billion was allocated in Annual national budget of 2019-20<sup>252</sup>), compared to Indian Defence Budget<sup>253</sup>. However, Pakistan is surrounded by two-front

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<sup>251</sup> Afghanistan did not accept the creation of Pakistan and legitimate state after the partition of British India in 1947, [www.understandingwar.org/pakistan-and-afghanistan](http://www.understandingwar.org/pakistan-and-afghanistan), accessed on 20 Dec 18..

<sup>252</sup> Pakistan - Defense Spending, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/pakistan/budget.htm>, accessed on 17 Oct 2019.

<sup>253</sup> According to Laxman Kumar Behera, Research Fellow at Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDS), India's Defence Budget 2019-20 is estimated to be US\$ 61.96 billion (2.3 % of GDP), July 08, 2019, <https://idsa.in/issuebrief/indias-defence-budget-2019-20-lkbehera-080719>, accessed on 17 Oct 2019.



threats and cannot ignore its rightful requirements of defence. Pakistan also feels that accumulation of latest and modern weaponry by India is only Pakistan specific, as Indian military powerhouse cannot use their arsenal against China by physically crossing Himalayas. Similarly, Indian inventory is unsuitable even in War against Bangladesh riverine battle fronts. So, Pakistan lives in existential threat from both India and Afghanistan. Pakistan is also facing social issues like an uneducated population, with 60% below the age of 25 years. Similarly, Pakistan is believed to be a religious extremist society with social taboos against women. This is also not very true, as the population of Pakistan has never opted for religious parties in elections. Pakistan has an open-minded population that follows the basic principles of Islam. Women in Pakistan have voting rights since 1947, and the people of Pakistan have selected Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto as the first female Muslim prime minister in 1988.

Pakistan has been a target of world politics and a playground for the great games being played in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is primarily because of its strategic location, which connects East with West and provides Central Asian Republics, Russia, and China access to the warm waters of the Arabian Sea. Because of the international political agenda and power rivalry, Pakistan has suffered the most and could not progress to the desired level.

The combination of economic growth and slowdown, military expansion, increasing demand for natural resources, demographics combined with the geopolitical

situation, the increased presence of nuclear-capable actors and variances in regional structures of governance highlights the geo-political significance of the Indian Ocean. It has also been assessed that the varying system of governance in the area determines the outline of the regional security architecture. Thus, the relations between nations, both intra and extra-regional, help in shaping the complex matrix that ultimately defines the overall architecture. However, it is also a fact that change in political thought processes may result in alteration in relations which could impact and alter the security scenario of the region.

## **6. Conclusions**

The Indian Ocean has gained prominence in the international geopolitical discourse in the century dubbed as the 'Asian Century'. The strategic significance of the region is prodigious on the global chessboard, and it is becoming an arena for major competition between the Asian great powers. The interests of regional and extra-regional actors converge on the sea. Therefore, sea lines of communications will play a crucial role in regional energy exports and world economic security because any problem in Indian Ocean SLOCs will have consequences at the global level. Unfortunately, the region remains poorly prepared to respond to environmental security threats. This region is also forecasted to be more likely to be exposed to great human and ecological tragedies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It may be because of the changing weather patterns and rising sea temperatures beside pollution at sea. Most of the Indian Ocean Rim countries depend on the Indian Ocean trade winds, which bring monsoons to the Indian peninsula. Similarly, rising temperatures at sea are harmful to most of the fauna and flora. The rise of sea levels because of rising temperatures in polar regions and melting glaciers will have a

direct negative effect on coastal regions. Even some of the Indian Ocean Island Nations are threatened to be wiped out from the face of the earth because of rising seas. These threats are common to all states and need common solutions. No individual country can have possible remedies to these mega problems of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

On the strategic front, we know that all countries of the region are compelled to support and join the US or Chinese camps. It is very difficult for states to follow non-aligned policies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Likewise, Gulf countries will continue to support and assist the USA at the global level. Similar is the case with NATO, Britain and the EU, who are major cornerstones of US strategic power. Pakistan and China have enjoyed mutual trust and friendship over the years. Hence, this partnership is likely to continue and grow to strategic-level cooperation. Similarly, China, India and Pakistan are likely to resolve their difference to a level where trade and commerce will flourish. This is the only solution to economic challenges being faced by the rival powers and guarantees the development of the region. As far as US and China relations are concerned, they will continue to have simmering relations but will work closely in Indian Ocean to safeguard their interests.

Specifically speaking about China entails that Chinese dependence on the Indian Ocean is likely to grow further in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thus, China will avoid direct confrontation with USA and India in the Indian Ocean. China is also likely to make a maritime bridge between Djibouti and Gwadar Port by employing multiple shipping. This will facilitate China in collecting raw materials from all over Africa and exporting them

through the Djibouti Port Complex to Gwadar. However, this is likely to materialise when Chinese Western provinces are ready for import/ exports, most likely in by year 2030 and beyond. China will need another 10-15 years to bring all parts of the country to an equal level of development. Similarly, the Chinese Navy needs additional resources and operational capacity buildup before challenging US naval dominance. On the economic front, although the Chinese economy has superseded the US economy, it depends on US markets. But the size of the US economy is still larger than the Chinese overall economy. On the knowledge front, Chinese universities are behind their counterparts in the USA and they are yet to make an impact in the development & innovation of new technology at the global level. China needs to address its language barrier, which is one of the major hurdles to accepting China as a global leader. China needs peaceful neighborhood to rise economically. Unfortunately, China has lost its considerable influence on the Far Eastern Region to the USA because of her stance over the South China Sea. It is also unlikely that China will challenge India in the Indian Ocean. China will endeavour to maintain trouble-free relations with India and will avoid direct confrontation to ensure the peaceful flow of her energy passing through the Indian Ocean.

The USA will likely continue dominating world affairs purely because of its economic, strategic and military clout over world affairs. However, as a status co-power, the USA would like to share and shed some of its responsibilities to regional powers. India, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Australia are a few of the regional powers that can fill in the vacuum created by the USA. Indian Ocean will see an increase in Indian dominance under the patronage of the USA. On the other hand, the USA is not likely to

exit the Indian Ocean but will continue to acquire more bases in the Indian Ocean for permanent setups. The US will only see the challenges in the 21st century from within, maybe because of President Trump's policy of "USA First" and the white supremacy wave. These two issues are likely to hurt US interests globally than anything else. US dominance over global issues is primarily because US Universities continue to churn out quality output, thus keeping their dominance over technology. On the military muscles, the US military, along with like-minded countries, is a formidable challenge for China. Similarly, the US will continue to lure India by offering her incentives to prepare her as a challenger to Chinese ingress in the Indian Ocean. US interest in Duqm Port is set to increase with further deteriorating relations with Iran. The USA is trying to address challenges posed by Iran in the Gulf by developing the operational capacity of Duqm Port. Duqm Port is designed to handle US Aircraft Carrier and can also be docked in case of repairs. Moreover, the US Naval presence in Duqm Port will help her keep track of Gwadar Port and maritime traffic between Djibouti and Gwadar. Regarding the encirclement of China, Pakistan is not likely to support the US cause against China.

Compared to the other big three, Pakistan is a small country with limited resources and is still economically unstable. This economic vulnerability will dictate Pakistan's foreign policy options. Military capability alone will not solve its security challenges; there must be a collective and coordinated effort across multiple sectors. Therefore, regional cooperation and capacity building will likely provide the most effective basis for long-term, sustainable solutions. It is also essential for Pakistan to continue to be part of an international organisation, bloc or setup for safeguarding her maritime interests.

Moreover, Pakistan should avoid US-China rivalry in the Indian Ocean as much as possible. At the same time, Pakistan needs to build its maritime sector to address its economic woes and maritime vulnerability. On the strategic front, Pakistan must ensure that Gwadar Port is not politicised at the global level, and it should remain an economic hub where all investors from all nations can come and earn their livelihoods.

Cooperation and collaboration amongst IOR states and other stakeholders is the key to deriving benefits from the Indian Ocean. Critical vulnerabilities and geo-pol-economic compulsion will force all stakeholders of the Indian Ocean to exercise interdependent and cooperative diplomacy, turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace into a reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will also help in clearing prevailing perceptions of rivalry and conflicts in the Indian Ocean. The peaceful Indian Ocean will directly affect Pakistan's maritime interests in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean in general.

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