

India's Perspective on the Geostrategic Implications of the Maritime Power Balance in the Indo-Pacific: 2005-2017

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

HARI OM NARAYAN



Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies

School of International Studies

Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi 110067

2018



CENTRE FOR INDO-PACIFIC STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110 067

Date: 23/07/2018

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "India's Perspective on the Geostrategic Implications of the Maritime Power Balance in the Indo-Pacific, 2005-2017" submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university.


HARI OM NARAYAN

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that the dissertation to be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


(Signature)

PROF. SHANKARI SUNDARARAMAN
Chairperson, CIPS


Chairperson
Centre for Indo Pacific Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067



(Signature)

DR. SHUBHAMITRA DAS
Supervisor


Centre for Indo Pacific Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067



Dedicated

to

My Struggle for an Education.....!!!

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to express to my cordial gratitude to my supervisor Dr Shubhamitra Das. As my guide for the dissertation she has been involved with the study from its inception through the choice of the topic, material collection and her insight, and everlasting support has led to a successful completion. She always had time to clear my never-ending queries and doubts and also for her way as she guided, supported and encouraged. I would like to thank Prof G V S Naidu and Prof Shankari Sundararaman for sharing their precious knowledge and for the way they taught me. I would like to thank the staff of the JNU Central Library and PLOS for their kind support at the last movement. I would like to thank my friends Priyanka for her academic contribution and perturb amenable demeanour, Himanshu for this caring attitude, Assima for shared fear and getting confident, Sushma for her sympathy, Anuj and Depak for their accommodation in the crucial time, seniors Triloki and Surya for their suggestions and finally Antima for her immense cooperation and motivation without which this task could not be possible.

I shall never be able to thank my father and mother enough, for their unconditional support in my hardships of my life. I will be failing in my duties if I do not mention my family for their consent support, guidance and their encouragement.

I alone owe the responsibility of any shortcomings or mistakes solely lie with me.

Date: 23/07/2018

HARI OM NARAYAN

Place: New Delhi

Table of Contents

List of Figure.....	(iii)
Abbreviations.....	(iv)
Chapter-I Introduction	1
1.1 Indo-Pacific as a Concept.....	3
1.2 Geo-Strategy	5
1.3 Balance of Power	6
1.4 Review of Literature.....	7
1.4.1 Geostrategic Shift to the Indo-Pacific	7
1.4.2 Maritime Strategy of Major Players Towards Indo-Pacific and Challenges for India.....	9
1.4.3 India and Bilateral & Multilateral Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region	10
1.5 Relevance and Scope of the Study	13
1.6 Research Objectives.....	14
1.7 Research Methodology	14
1.8 Research Questions.....	15
1.9 Research Hypothesis.....	15
1.10 Chapter Scheme.....	15
Chapter-II India’s Strategic Concerns in the Indo-Pacific Region and Its Maritime Strategy.....	16
2.1 Background.....	16
2.2 India’s Strategic Concerns	16
2.2.1 Historic Perspective	16
2.2.2 Economic Concerns	18
2.2.3 Environmental Concerns.....	22
2.2.4 Security Concerns.....	24
2.3 India’s Ambition of Power Projection and Naval Interests.....	29
2.4 India’s Maritime Strategy	31
2.4.1 Strategic Cooperation.....	32
2.4.2 Multilateral Engagement.....	35
2.4.3 Strengthening Naval Capabilities and Engagement	36
Chapter-III Maritime Power Balance in the Indo-Pacific.....	38
3.1 Background.....	38
3.2 US-China Conflict for Supremacy in the Waters of the Indo-Pacific	39
3.2.1 Tension over Freedom of Navigation in South China Sea and Militarisation of Western Pacific	40
3.2.2 China’s Geopolitical and Geo-economic Expansion in the Indo-Pacific and the U.S.	41
3.3 India-China Competition in the Indian Ocean	44
3.4 China, ASEAN and Extra-regional Players in South China Sea.....	49

3.5 Competition Among Regional and Extra-regional Players in South-West Pacific.....	54
3.5.1 Small States' Dilemma to Balance between U.S and China.....	56
3.6 US-China-India Triangular Balance in the Indo-Pacific.....	57
3.6.1 Extra Regional Players in the Indo-Pacific- Russia, Japan, France and UK.....	58
Chapter-IV India's Role in Maritime Power Balance and Multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific	63
4.2 Examining the Options for the Leadership of multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific Region.....	64
4.2.1 USA	64
4.2.2 China.....	65
4.2.3 Why India should lead the Multilateralism initiative	66
4.3 India's Cooperation with Extra-regional Players.....	68
4.4 India's Cooperation with Middle Powers and their role in the Indo-Pacific Region...	69
4.5 India's Engagement with Small Stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific Region-Indian Ocean Island Countries (IOCs) and Pacific Island Countries (PICs).....	72
4.6 India and the Multilateral Framework in the Indo-Pacific.....	74
4.6.1 India Led Major Initiative of Multilateralism in the Indian Ocean Region	75
4.6.2 Quadrilateral Dialogue and Free and Open Indo-Pacific.....	78
Chapter-V Conclusion	80
References.....	87

LIST OF FIGURES

Sr. No.	Descriptions	Page No.
1.1	The Indo-Pacific Region	04
2.1	Indian Ocean: Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs)	19
2.2	Oil Transportation through Major Choke points in the IOR	20
2.3	Biodiversity hotspots in the Indo-Pacific Region	23
2.4	Major & Intermediate ports of India	25
2.5	Entry/Exit Choke Points and ISLs of the IOR	26
2.6	Incident of Piracy and armed robbery against ships in 2017	27
3.1	China's Belt and Road Initiative or One Belt One Road	42
3.2	China and India's Maritime Footprint in the IOR	46
3.3	Territorial Claims in South China Sea	50
3.4	Occupation status of Spratly Islands in South China Sea	52
3.5	Southwest Pacific Region	54
3.6	Power Balance in the Indian Ocean	58
4.1	Military Strength of Major Stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific	65
4.2	Malabar Exercise 2017	77
4.3	Free and Open Indo-Pacific	78

Abbreviations

AAGC	:	Asia-Africa Growth Corridor
A&N	:	Andaman and Nicobar
ADMM	:	ASEAN's Defence Ministerial Meeting
ADMM+	:	ASEAN's Defence Ministerial Meeting Plus
APEC	:	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	:	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	:	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BIMSTEC	:	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BRI	:	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	:	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa group
CSCAP	:	Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific
EAS	:	East Asia summit
EEZ	:	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	:	Energy Information Administration
FIPIC	:	Forum of India and Pacific Island Countries
FON	:	Freedom of Navigation
INDC	:	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
INS	:	Indian Naval Ship
IOCs	:	Indian Ocean Island Countries
IOR	:	Indian Ocean Region

IONS	:	Indian Ocean Naval Symposium
IORA	:	Indian Ocean Rim Association
IPR	:	Indo-Pacific Region
LEMOA	:	Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement
mtoe	:	million tonne oil equivalent
MSP	:	Malacca Strait Patrol
OBOR	:	One Belt One Road
ONGC	:	Oil and Natural Gas Cooperation
PACOM	:	Pacific Command
PCA	:	Permanent Court of Arbitration
PICs	:	Pacific Island Countries
PLA	:	The Peoples Liberation Army
PLAN	:	Peoples Liberation Army Navy
Quad	:	Quadrilateral Dialogue
SLOCs	:	Sea Lines of Communications
SOMS	:	Straits of Malacca and Singapore
UN	:	United Nations
UNCLOS	:	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
US/USA	:	United States of America
WP	:	Western Pacific

Chapter-I

Introduction

The contemporary rule based international system is passing through structural and operational changes, to which China and US have reacted very distinctly. The rapid change in international system will have significant implication on regional and global order. The power play between China and US can lead to repercussions not only for India but for all the littoral states of the Indo-Pacific region. On this perspective, this study will investigate the formation and structure of strategic approaches of major powers including India towards Indo-Pacific after 2005 to 2017.

The axis of global geo-economic and geostrategic gravity is moving towards East from the West and towards Indian and the Pacific Oceans from the Atlantic Ocean. Indo-Pacific region is an emerging “Asian strategic space” that covers both the Pacific and Indian Ocean, defined in portion by the tropical waters of Indian Ocean and western and central Pacific Ocean. Australia’s “Defence White Paper” (May 2013), defines the Indo-Pacific as “the strategic arc... connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans through Southeast Asia”. It is the region of expanding geopolitical and geostrategic interests of China & India and continued strategic leadership of the United States. It is the other way around due to increased trade interdependence security strategy got enhanced state’s “economic wellbeing and prosperity increasingly depend on free and open trade.” As the rising powers are looking to advance their own interest, “they will cooperate in some areas, but compete in other.” For instance, China’s initiative to link Europe via West Asia by Maritime Silk-Route (MSR, which is a part of famously known IBR) and strategic developments of ports in Indian Ocean which is called ‘String of Pearls’ by U.S. Department of Defence, escalate economic and strategic security threats to India. India’s aspiration to rejuvenate ancient ‘Spice Route’ and launching of project ‘Sagarmala’ to develop and modernization of ports can be seen as a counter measure. Recently, India refused to join the highest summit on OBOR so far, held in Beijing between May 14 to 15, on the basis of issue related to sovereignty and territorial integrity. India’s decision to not join the summit disappointed China which is aiming

to become world's biggest power by 2049, the centenary of communist rule.¹ Some European countries are also suspicious over this as China is presenting it as 'Project of the Century'. The Belt and Road Initiative has China centric and top-down approach; therefore, it may escalate the race for geopolitical influence in the Indian Ocean on high level. Though China claims this initiative as purely economic and regional integration activity through establishing commercial relationship with Indian Ocean littoral countries, but there is growing concern about Chinese movement that China wants to establish its military presence with commercial relations, especially in the Indian Ocean. After the opening of its first overseas military base in Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa in first August of this year on the occasion of PLA's 90th Foundation Day, suspicion about China's intention have increased. Strain in the South China Sea (SCS) already prevailing, and in many cases, is turning to more accurate. In this perspective, question lies on the role of India to balance maritime powers, especially China's ambitions in IPR.

The emerging India-US strategic ties in the IPR can be seen from a different angle due to the changing power relations in the region. The US is now "looking upon India and its growing influence as an alternative" to counter China's dominance in the region. Although, many of the states namely, Japan, Philippines, Singapore, Australia and the small Southwest Pacific states are still strategically relevant to US's Indo-Pacific-Asia strategy. But, probably India's nuclear capacity, increasing economic and military strength and political stability makes it most compatible ally for US's regional designs. The geopolitics in the IPR is complicating day by day due to continuing shift in security environment. The evolving geopolitics in the IPR may lead to interconnected consequences- threat perception, tension, arm race and conflict. In such case, there may be potential military conflict. In this situation, the middle powers of the IPR have vital role in designing the regional security structure. Though, most of the initiatives put forth by either China or the US, have viewed with suspicion "challenging the potential collaborations in the region." Yet, engagement amongst nations like Japan, India, Australia and Indonesia, both bilaterally and multilaterally will demonstrate a coalition

¹ Philps, Alan (2017), "Destination 2049: the Chinese century will be a projection of money, politics and technology", URL: <https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/destination-2049-the-chinese-century-will-be-a-projection-of-money-politics-and-technology-1.670361> (Accessed October 30, 2017).

of network committed toward keeping the region free of conflict. But this grouping is not limited, it can expand and include other countries of the region, especially Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand to name just a few.

The geographical location of India, on the apex of 'triangular' Indian Ocean, gives it geostrategic advantage in the region. Indian Ocean extended in north from Arabian Sea in the west to the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea near Indonesia in the east. It provides critical sea trade routes that connect the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia with the broader Asian continent to the east and Europe to the west. "Indian Ocean is now the world's busiest trade corridor, carrying two third of world's oil shipments and a third of its bulk cargo; by volume of oil transit, the Strait of Hormuz, leading out of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Malacca (linking the Indian and Pacific Oceans) are the world's most important strategic chokepoints." Andaman & Nicobar Islands located in the north-east of Indian Ocean from where Great Channel and Straits of Malacca pass. Recognizing India's emergence as economic and strategic strength, the countries which have concerns over the region, are now realizing the necessity of India's cooperation and participation. As an emerging democratic superpower of Asia, India incorporated Quadrilateral Security Dialogue in 2007. India also got central role in USA's plan of rebalancing towards Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, "India has its own strategic imperatives in its growing engagement with the Indo-Pacific region." Therefore, the study will try to find out India's role and position in the maritime power balance in Indo-Pacific region and aims to explore the opportunity for India. The study will also examine the required capability of India to counterbalance maritime powers in IPR.

1.1 Indo-Pacific as a Concept

The term "Indo-Pacific" combines the Indian Ocean and the West Pacific (WP), including the adjoining seas of East Asia and Southeast Asia, in a unique regional construction. There are some variations based on country specific preferences. For example, the US has been preferring to use the term "Indo-Asia-Pacific" over "Asia-Pacific", to cover the entire Indian and Pacific Oceans, which allows the US to retain its relevance as resident power in this strategic region. India has its own version the "Indian-Pacific" while Indonesia, the "Indo-Pasifik".² However, the fundamental idea

² Medcalf, Rory (2013).

of "Indo-Pacific" is almost universally accepted. It can be argued that there are “fundamental and distinct differences” between the IOR and the WP in terms of geopolitics, including the geo-economics that shapes geopolitics, and even the security environment. Yes, did the concept of 'Indo-Pacific' take root? Is it an 'aberration' conceptual?³ What was the underlying reason behind the use of the term? This essay seeks to examine these pertinent issues. In addition, based on current trends, the analysis presents a forecast on the future relevance of the 'Indo-Pacific' concept.



Fig. 1.1: The Indo-Pacific Region

Source: Google Map

The Indo-Pacific has emerged as the most recent conceptualization of the space in Asia. In academics, ‘Indo-Pacific’ term first used by Cdr. Gurpreet S. Khurana of Indian Navy in his paper “Security of Sea Lines: Prospects for India-Japan Cooperation”, published in 2007.⁴ Most of the governments of Asian States have been using the term “Asia-Pacific” for three decades to describe the regional links linking East Asia governments with partners in the Pacific Edge. However, since 2010, four of the main powers in the region- US, Australia, Japan and India have formally adopted the term “Indo-Pacific” in their foreign policy and defence strategies understood as super region connecting the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in his

³ Khurana, Gurpreet Singh (2017), “The ‘Indo-Pacific’ Concept: Retrospect and Prospect”, *CIMSEC*, URL: <http://cimsec.org/indo-pacific-concept-retrospect-prospect/34710> (Accessed May 18, 2018).

⁴ Bhatia and Sakhuja, 2014

speech “Confluence of the Two Seas”, delivered in 2007 to the Indian parliament, underscored the importance of Indian and Pacific Ocean “dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and of prosperity” in a “broader Asia”.⁵ Later, then US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton used term in 2010 during her speech in Honolulu saying, “We understand how important the Indo-Pacific basin is to global trade and commerce”.⁶ After three years, Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India, told to East Asian Nation heads that India seeks “a stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region” with them.⁷ Australian government’s defence white paper of 2013 first officially articulating the term wrote, “A new Indo-Pacific strategic arc is beginning to emerge, connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans through Southeast Asia.”⁸ The main theoretical reason for a shift from “Asia-pacific” to “Indo-Pacific” is that now it is illogical to consider South Asia and East Asia separately. The “Asia-Pacific” focuses on East Asia and China while the “Indo-Pacific” emphasis on the IOR and India and eliminate the division between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Though, the term “Indo” refers Indian Ocean, not India, but use of the “Indo-Pacific” recognizes emergence of India as a global power where in the “Asia-Pacific”, China was the main actor. US’s new National Security Strategy (NSS), released in December 2017 frequently used the term Indo-Pacific, instead earlier Asia-Pacific, making drastic shift its approach toward India and Indian Ocean. The Indo-Pacific concept emerged thanks to the recognition of many interactions and the interdependencies in Asia now link or include through these two previously separate regions. The geostrategic importance of this change from Asia-Pacific to The Indo-Pacific is that for the first time, the countries of Indian Ocean Rim are now considered part of the Asian strategic system.

1.2 Geo-Strategy

The term ‘Geostrategic’ is first coined by Frederick Schuman in 1942 in his book ‘Let Us Learn Our Geopolitics’.⁹ State’s foreign policy is based on the geographic directions of the state and it does effort for making its strength with military and diplomatic powers, on this basis. Geographical location describes the state’s territorial limitations

⁵Ministry of foreign Affairs of Japan, URL: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0708/speech-2.html> (Accessed on January 10, 2018).

⁶ Sonnad, 2017.

⁷ Medcalf, Rory (2013).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Dodds, Klaus-John (1993), “Critical geopolitics and the writing of foreign policy”, URL: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/33133737.pdf> (Accessed May 20, 2018)

and jurisdictions of the state, for that 'geostrategic' helps to make strategic efforts on the basis of their geographical locations. Basically, states have limited resources for their development and every state does depend on the other state. That is why states always focus on their geographical locations and made their policies to improve and implement the economic, military and strategic powers. Geostrategy is integrated between the space and time, in which state is related with land & sea where the others time is related with demography and resources. Natural resources are important for the countries for their survival and business with the others. That is why they do made policies for preserving the natural resources through their strategies. Many states also want to conquer the rich areas of natural resources, such as the South China Sea, where China is claiming that area from a historical context. The major initiative of geostrategy is the China's BRI initiative to make greater of their strength.

Many geopolitical thinkers have talked about geostrategy to control the world power, such as- Halford J. Mackinder, Nicholas J. Spykman, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Alexander P. Seversky and many others who have talked about to increase the strength of a state to control over the land, water and air bodies. Former Chief of the Indian Navy Admiral Suresh Mehta rightly points out that "the geostrategic imperative of the region as the global strategic growth and expansion of aspiring powers can be contained and regulated through the control of the movements of goods and key choke points in the region" (Mehta 2014). "Rising China is clearly a key factor in the Indo-Pacific, as well as in the US rebalancing strategy, which both volumes have highlighted to a great extent; It has been pointed out that China's rise is swiftly altering the geostrategic equations in the region; Its assertive foreign policy, backed by growing economic and military power, has also changed the geo-economics and geopolitics of the region" (Leaf 2014).

1.3 Balance of Power

The concept of the Balance of power first reflected in the International relations theory with the work of Kenneth Waltz in 'Theory of International Relation' in 1979, while this term, first coined by the thinker Mortan Kaplan in international relations theory of world politics. "Realists argued over whether balancing strategies actually predominate in world politics instead; states prove more likely to bandwagon—to side with the strong against the weak—than balance of power theory predicts" (Schweller, 1994). In

balance of power theory many International relations theorists have worked, especially where John J. Mearsheimer have talked about the ‘defensive realism’, in which states contains security and military equipment to secure their territory from the war or their own security but sometimes it also takes into ‘Offensive Realism’ where a state is maximizing their military power then the other state would feel insecure and on that ground the insecure state would try to maximize their military power in comparison to others. In the term, balance of power, uncertainty would always be there in the minds of the man. “The proliferation of violent non-state actors and networks at sea, especially in conjunction with an unstable balance of power, present the region with the risk of “violent peace”; This again will require India, Indonesia, Japan, Australia and other regional powers to raise their investments in securing the maritime space” (Pai 2017).

We also differentiate the difference between balance of power theory and power balancing, “Both suggest that systemic balances of power should obtain only under restricted conditions; First, differences in relative growth rates might create a rough equilibrium between major powers; Second, major shifts in administrative, military, social, or economic technologies might shift relative capabilities and thereby create a systemic balance of power; Third, dissatisfaction with the current orders allocation of status, material benefits, or other goods might lead states to enhance their capabilities to challenge a predominate power while accelerating processes of hegemonic overextension” (Gilpin 1981).

1.4 Review of Literature

This section of the research synopsis covers the existing literature on the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific with the power projection by the countries, their maritime strategy, security concerns and their response to threats, bilateral and multilateral engagement into the maritime region.

1.4.1 Geostrategic Shift to the Indo-Pacific

The shift in the global power centre from the West to East due to the emergence of Indo-Pacific region as a vibrant economic region have been witnessed for last two decades which has evolved the geostrategic imperatives of Indo-Pacific. As V. R. Peshwae (2016) pointed out increasing geostrategic integration of Indian and Western Pacific Ocean and respective littoral states viz. a viz. the ‘Indo-Pacific’ as a region. He traces the reason behind this strategic integration the end of the Cold War and led

globalization with the emergence of China & India as a dominant economic & military power. Increasing economic and military strength of China seems as a major factor of balance of power shift towards Indo-Pacific region. The region holds substantial part of global crude oil and natural gas reserves, minerals, especially strategically important such as nickel, cobalt, platinum & manganese and more than 50% of precious gold & diamond and 95% of the platinum in addition. The writer explores the economic and strategic importance of the region. He also tries to identify India's economic, political and energy interest. By recognizing India's geostrategic location, he calls for India to play dominant role in the Indo-Pacific, though it will bring the challenges for India with this advantage. "At a time when 'strategic unease' has become a demarking feature of the region and 'security alignments and strategic hedging' a prevalent diplomatic tendency", Antara Ghosal Singh (2016) examines in her paper the "evolving geopolitical developments in the Indo-Pacific region through the perspective of an India-US-China trilateral cooperative framework". This paper captures an emerging pattern of convergence in the strategic foresight of the three key Indo-Pacific players—India, China and the US, and rising bilateral strategic/defence cooperation between them. As it is known, the Indo-Pacific is a highly diversified and expansive geopolitical entity, with several regional and extra regional powers operating out of this geographic space, the scope of this paper is limited to the tripolar framework – comprising of China, India and the US, and tracks the ongoing dynamics of strategic interaction between the three. Though she accepts the multipolar dynamics of the region her focus maintained on the growing centrality of the Sino-India-U.S.A. in the Indo-Pacific discourse. Saroj Bishoyi (2016) see the increasing geostrategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region as a place of great powers' competition and rivalry. This article identifies the reason behind the emergence of the Indo-Pacific the changing security environment into the region and US's concerns to protect and promote its interests which reflects in the Rebalancing Strategy. Article identifies three reasons behind the Rebalancing Strategy which are: (i) the rise of China and challenges to US's interests in the region by the assertive foreign policy, (ii) US's shift from the exploited economic resources of West Asia to economically the fastest growing Indo-Pacific region to support its weakening economy and (iii) an attempt to balance its power projection in the world. His concern was that "the Indian Ocean Region could witness a major military surge by China, turning it into an arena of great power competition in Asia" because China has rapidly developed its relationship with Indian Ocean rim countries, which is perceived as a

‘String of Pearls’ strategy, to contain emerging India. Further, in response to the Chinese strategy, India has sought to improve its naval and security cooperation with the Southeast and East Asian countries. Notwithstanding, the writers bring the vivid reasons and wide view on the emergence of the Indo-Pacific and power shift, there is a need to go deep investigation about this phenomenon and provide an accumulative research.

1.4.2 Maritime Strategy of Major Players Towards Indo-Pacific and Challenges for India

India relies heavily on the ocean for its energy and trade as more than 95% of India’s trade happen through the oceans. Consequently, in the contemporary world of evolving geostrategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region would not come without challenge for India. Admiral Arun Prakash (2016) questioned India’s over 70 years long silence on defence strategy document. Amid the new defence/military strategic documents issued by China, Australia, Britain & US in 2005. It seems irrational attitude by India in temporary security scenario. He also pointed at Indian parliament for not having any concern about Indian defence forces and their budget. He applauds and support India to become ‘net security provider’ but also pointed out the challenges Indian navy is facing. He exposes the shortage of operational ships, aircrafts and equipment and personnel which Indian navy facing and criticizes the bureaucratic attitude and lack of political will-power for looking towards security challenges. In his speech (2013) on the India’s maritime security challenge in the future he indicates biggest challenge of Indian Navy the timely replacement of the old and inefficient platforms and obsolescent equipment and the “failure to acquire a reasonable level of self-reliance in major weapon systems” in past seven decades which has made India the world’s biggest arm importer. R. S. Yadav (2017) has also pointed out these security challenge for India. Recognizing the increasing geopolitical importance of Indo-Pacific region and its offered opportunity for India to play a greater role, he concerns that this opportunity will have severe difficulties for Indian policy makers. He sees Indo-Pacific emergence as a post-Cold War scenario and therefore, in the globalized world, Indian interest are unavoidable in the region. Yadav says that India has been playing important role in Asia pacific due to ‘emergence of Indo-us cooperation’ in this region but it has several concerns for India’s interests. He identifies two challenges for India in the Indo-Pacific. First is post-Cold War shift in political economic and strategic clout from this region

and, second competition witnessed as rising power in India. India is in favour of multipolar regional and world order but contrary of this China and US want to be dominant in their domain respectively in Asia and in the world. He calls for India to make efforts towards creating balance among the stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific. While Satish Kumar and Pradeep Tandon (2017) in their study analyses the world politics in the perspective of Indian foreign policy actions and its impact especially on China. Writers duo see India's outreach into the Indo-Pacific region as India's 'ring fence' policy to counter Chinese hegemony in South China Sea (SCS). In their article they briefly discussed about India's 'Look East Policy', India-S. Korea military and strategic relation (though bilateral relations are yet to be extended to this level), Indo-U.S. joint venture in SCS and India's blue water aspiration. Article focuses on India-Vietnam relations as a significant factor to counter Chinese assertion in SCS which enthusiast by Vietnamese' sentiments against China. Article tries to show Indo-Vietnam collision greater than Sino-Vietnam providing trade data only of India-Vietnam and also failed to compare Chinese relationship with South Korea, Japan, U.S.A. correctly. Therefore, there are unavoidable concerns for India's economic & political interest which need to address properly through the more reasonable debates in the academic discourse to secure, protect and preserve India's geostrategic interests in the region.

1.4.3 India and Bilateral & Multilateral Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region

The maximum study on the Indo-Pacific region have been done on the bilateral or multilateral level but the problem with these studies is that this it tries to see this cooperation either to counter or against another country, especially China, and therefore tries to see the shaping of the world politics on this perspective. Stephen Blank (2007) in his article 'The Geostrategic Implications of the Indo-American Strategic Partnership', analyses the India's gaining geostrategic significance in the Indo-Pacific region as US recognized India as a nuclear power in 2005 and reconfirmed it in March 2006 during the President Bush's visit. This was not only because of the India's nuclear capability and potential market for USA's civil nuclear products but more importantly acceptance of 'India's rising capabilities, ambition to be a great power in Asia and the consequences thereof'. India's strength to perform strategic autonomy in the international relations makes her a most desirable strategic partner for every key international player. India's this strength lure great and middle powers to ally with

India. Therefore, for the USA, India become an unavoidable partner. After the opening of the new Indo-US strategic relations, concerns in the Russia can be seen. After the Russia's blatant support, India become the member (in 2017) of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) despite the strong Chinese objections. There is also an undergoing talk for India's entry into the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) where China is not a member. Therefore, USA and Russia both accept the importance and requirement of India as a strategic partner. The longstanding and stable democracy in India since its Independence makes her more reliable ally not only for the great powers but any middle and regional power. But these are not the only reason.

As many scholar underscore China as a significant factor, it is strongest opponent of India in the region. The other major powers are getting challenged while middle and regional states are mostly threatened. Therefore, in the wake of these circumstances, India's approach become significant. In this sequence, David Scott (2012) examines Indo-US relations in the wake of evolving concept of Indo-Pacific and its geostrategic importance to build regional maritime framework. Both, the US and India leadership have forwarded cooperation in the whole maritime environment of the Indo-Pacific. The US and Indian leaders in Joint Statement in 2010 referred to how India and the US had a "shared vision for peace, stability, and prosperity in Asia, the Indian Ocean region, and the Pacific region". Both countries are engaging with China and trying to convince each other that their own cooperative convergence are not targeted to anyone. There is a general perception about India's participation in Indo-Pacific as against of China. Though, the concerns have been raised in several platforms India and the US against the China's claims in the South China Sea and its growing deployment of warships and assertiveness as a threat to freedom of navigation, trade and deployment. In the contrast of Indo-US relations and their view on China, the study done by Vinay Kaura (2016) about India-Japan relations tries to see this bilateral engagement again against China. His article 'India Japan Relations and Asia's Emerging Geopolitics' focuses on regional security, maritime issues and energy security apart from the economic cooperation. He sees the new strategic relationship between India and Japan to balance China's emerging dominance in the region. He shows the similarities and challenges faced by both India and Japan in countering China. Therefore, he urges that only India can be the reliable ally of Japan against the structural challenges posed by China. His geometric argument that India-Japan ties would be always greater than

China (he assumed three countries as each side of a triangle with China as a largest side), cannot apply in international relations, though it may be hypothetically true. There is surge in bilateral relationship between India and Japan and multilateralism also 'emerged as a cornerstone of contemporary foreign policy of both India and Japan' but his argument of 'hedging' by India and Japan against China at bilateral and multilateral levels, seems problematic. As per elaboration of "India-China Maritime Dialogue" mechanism 2012, "hedging consists mutual engagement in strategic and policy terms." The dialogue mechanism involves strategic issues in the Indian Ocean and SCS. Though Japan have supported India's engagement in every multilateral platform of Southeast Asian region like EAS, ARF but both are seeking the permanent membership in the UNSC. Therefore India-Japan cooperation should not see as only against of China. Therefore, the study will focus on economic strength, military capacity and political hegemony of these competing countries to understand the reality of the situation. Melissa H. Conley Tyler and Aakriti Bhutoria (2015) shows divergence of interests between India and Australia towards the Indo-Pacific region as well as among each other's need from the region. Australia was aware about the importance of Indo-Pacific since the end of the Cold War and even the term 'Indo-Pacific' was in speculation among Australian academician since 2005. Since, Defence White Paper released in 2013 the evolving "Indo-Pacific" was officially listed as an area of supreme importance among the "four strategic interests of Australian defence policy". Therefore, Australia has vital interests in the maritime region of the Indo-Pacific. Australia's interests can be secure only by "preventing the Indian Ocean Region from becoming an arena of great power rivalry, including between India and China". This strategy leads to build a close strategic partnership with India. But unlike the Indo-US or Indo-Japan relationship as scholars claimed, the basic difference between Australian and Indian perception of Indo-Pacific is that Australia prefers an inclusive framework without openly containing China which is contrary to India's view of China's rise.

Although, the scholars brought out diverse perspectives in their study and analyses of the issues related to Indo-Pacific region, they highlighted the competition and struggle among the countries but lacked in building on the specific cooperative frameworks that is slowly emerging, and the geopolitical term Indo-Pacific is evolving into a form of a cluster, which will be the area of focus in this study. There is a lacuna of specific study on Maritime power balance but including all stakeholders at once. Hence this study will

confine with the maritime arena and will present the state of the present power struggle in the Indo-Pacific region. Therefore, there is need to do specific study on the maritime ambit of the Indo-Pacific which seeks either readiness for a wider engagement among major global and the regional stakeholders to undertake effective and expeditious measures.

1.5 Relevance and Scope of the Study

China, India and ASEAN, 'The Trio', in form of world's fastest growing large economies; largest market, having broadest consumer base in form of middle class income group; giant military powers (China & India) and emerging market of arms (ASEAN) has shifted the power centre of the world from the Trans-Atlantic to Indo-Pacific. This complex matrix has made this region most significant strategically. The weakening economies of USA & Europe on the one hand and the exhausted USA & Russia from their endeavours in West Asia in other hand, have made the region economically and strategically dynamic. While enthusiastic Chinese expansion towards the world, has brought in many interested players in the region.

China has taken steps to establish its credibility at the world level from 'One Belt One Route' (OBOR, famously known as Silk Route in ancient times) to its 'Blank Cheque Book Policy' (providing unconditional financial assistance to countries) to make its economic and strategic presence in the global power politics. China's "Strategic Denial" policy of establishing sovereignty over the SCS and Chinese activities in IOR is posing a question on established global norms and threat to the stability of global order. The United States has been quite ardent in preventing any country to gain power in Asia and China is equally trying to keep the potential adversaries far from its shores. China and USA are contending on almost every issue related to Asia-Pacific; for example, South China Sea disputes, Taiwan and 'One China Policy', Korean Peninsula crisis to Island's dispute etc. However, India has its own commercial and strategic interests in the Indian Ocean and ambitions to become major player in the world. India has geo-strategic advantage in Indian Ocean due to its geographical location. Therefore, this study will light on the current geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific from the global perspective. The study will also focus on the consequent regional engagements that are taking form both at bilateral and multilateral basis on economic and strategic aspects.

1.6 Research Objectives

- To investigate the significant changes in maritime strategic policy of major powers including India towards Indo-Pacific after 2005 to 2017.
- To understand naval capability of India to counterbalance maritime powers in Indo-Pacific region.
- To provide an overview of maritime power balance in the Indo-Pacific region.
- To find out India's role and position in maintaining maritime balance in Indo-Pacific region.

1.7 Research Methodology

To conduct this inter-disciplinary research, the study will be using mainly qualitative methods. The study on the power balance and power struggle between the major players in the Indo-Pacific would follow the method of content analysis, as it deals with news on naval exercises, military actions, official statements, joint declarations, primary official documents of the respective governments which will employ studying magazines, journals, periodicals, case studies and articles. Qualitative method will be used to seek primary and secondary data for like the comparative study of major powers on the basis of economic and military strength such as bilateral trade data, trade of military equipment, deployed and reserved numbers of aircrafts carrier, naval warships, submarine and nuclear submarines etc. Moreover, secondary data congregated from various scholarly articles published in journals as well as online and published news sources would be referred. Therefore, the study strives to be systematic, analytical and descriptive.

1.8 Research Questions

1. What are the concerns for India due to the maritime power manoeuvring in the Indo-Pacific?
2. Is India effectively matching the political and strategic goals with maritime resources like acquisition and development of ships and naval aircrafts and also infrastructural development to explore the blue economy?
3. How will India's aspiration to play a dominant role in the Indian Ocean be hampered with US-China rivalry in the region?

4. What are the stakes for U.S. & China, Japan & Australia, India, Indonesia, SEA and the Middle East in the region?
5. How India's interests are getting affected due to Chinese initiatives like Maritime Silk Route, 'String of Pearls' in the Indo-Pacific maritime arena?

1.9 Research Hypothesis

- The rise of China and major power rivalry in the region impacts the maritime power balance in the Indo-Pacific.
- India's proactive role in enhancing bilateral and multilateral ties with the stakeholders is an option for a secure, peaceful and stable region.

1.10 Chapter Scheme

All the chapters are examining the title of the research with relevant examples and experiences. The introductory chapter has provided the brief background about Indo-Pacific region and its emergence as a significant geopolitical and geostrategic region after the end of the Cold War, especially, in the last decades. It will rationally try to answer that why and how maritime region has become the most relevant space of power struggle the world and regional powers. Second chapter has analysed the alteration and try to find out how much this resistance have changed and what are the reason? It will investigate the concerns and ingrained interests of India and its maritime strategy towards this region. Third chapter has analysed the power competition in the Indian and Pacific Ocean among the major players in the Indo-Pacific. It will investigate the effecting interests of the stakeholders of the region and the factors. It will be the core of the study which provides an overview of the contemporary status of the Power Balance in this region. Fourth chapter will seek the prospect for bilateral and multilateral cooperation and will explore India's leadership capability to engage the stakeholders and to initiate regionalism into the region. The last concluding chapter provides the key themes of research and the findings or summing up of the study; there would be essence of the study with finding from the whole study.

Chapter-II

India's Strategic Concerns in the Indo-Pacific Region and Its Maritime Strategy

2.1 Background

The Indo-Pacific region is currently the primary locus of the world's growth and opportunity, but its security and stability are increasingly under constraint. The rising of China as a superpower in its neighbourhood worried India as its potential threat to play power politics in India's courtyards vis-a-vis in Indian Ocean. In this backdrop, the great power rivalry is expected to increase in the coming years. Therefore, safeguarding sea routes is India's imperative. Further, since India is on the path of integrating its economy globally, it faces an onerous task to protect its long coastline of 7,500 kilometres from the potential threat of non-state actors. The 2008 Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008 that emanated from across the maritime border are evident. Therefore, it is essential for India to safeguard not only its littorals for security reasons but also the vast maritime region for geopolitical reasons. Since realizing these imperatives, India has undertaken several measures to augment the security of its coastal and gradually devolved maritime strategy to protect its offshore geo-economic and geostrategic interests. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to find out what are India's maritime apprehensions regarding its wider national interests. It will reveal the priority India has assigned to its maritime security and types of strategies that India has pursued in response to the maritime security threats. Further, the chapter will analyse its maritime strategy how it addresses the external threats and emerging new challenges to safeguarding its national interests.

2.2 India's Strategic Concerns

2.2.1 Historic Perspective

India has enjoyed its geographical positioning over hundreds of years and was accepted as hegemonic power in the ancient times. Though the ocean was of great importance for the human kind forever, but land was the preferable place in the strategic terms because wars were fought on the land and land was preferred for regime expansion. As time passed, the importance or significance of water territories increased gradually, and

oceans became significant in the 18th Century when the sea routes were used for exploration of the new colonies. The Sea routes through the Indian Ocean were being used for the trade purpose freely from ancient to medieval period but rivalry in the backdrop of the colonialism resulted in the blockade of sea routes. Historically, despite its strategic location, and benefiting from the sea trade, India had ignored the security importance of the Indian Ocean, through which British came into “Golden Land” that resulted into the colonization of India. The European control over the Southeast Asia was possible only through the water ways. Aftermath, the British and the French rivalry was the evident in the in the 19th Century when The British Royal Navy emerged the strongest and established Britain as the Great Power. As India was colonized by the Britain and The Royal Navy was unchallenged, the waters of the Indian Ocean were tranquil, and this tranquillity of the Indian Ocean remained for long. In the post Second World War period, Britain abandoned its presence East of Suez after 1967, when Aden was evacuated which resulted in retreat of the British Navy from the IOR and the lease of Diego Garcia island to the US for its military base, the importance of the Indian Ocean increased. After the building of several bases by many countries in the islands of the Indian Ocean, the tranquil water turned turmoil, which was almost unaffected even during the most turbulent period- during the Second World War.

After independence, India's Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru's priority was to uplift its people from poverty and underdevelopment which required a vast economic and industrial expansion. Therefore, India's focus was economic development and it opted non-aligned policy during the Cold War era to oppose the superpower rivalry in the Indian Ocean. That was grounded in its perception and belief that the geopolitical contest between the two superpowers in the Indian Ocean constituted a potential threat to the freedom, sovereignty, economic independence and political stability of the littoral states of the IOR. But, given its burgeoning economy and its role as an emerging global power, India is faced with multiple challenges in the Indian Ocean in the twenty-first century. India's dependency in the seas for its trade and oil makes its economy vulnerable.

The global powers rivalry in the wake of China's rise and Russia's resurgence have brought lots of concerns too many countries mostly to the US at the global level, India and Japan at the regional level. Since China is the world's largest economy and is the largest trade partner of almost every large economy, its's rise has been “beneficial to international prosperity, but it has occurred in a manner that continues to generate

mistrust and anxiety across the region – and the concerns are only growing” (Alyssa and others, 2018). After the end of the Cold War, when the new centres of powers sought to flex their maritime muscles in the Indian Ocean, it was indispensable for India to give attention. For instance, China has been feverishly engaged in modernizing its navy and expanding its naval arm in the Indian Ocean to assert its influence over the IOR states, which is frequently antithetical to the geopolitical and geostrategic interests of economic concerns of India. Insofar as India is concerned, as an emerging economy, “resurgent maritime nation” and rising global power, it has various interests in the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR), ranging from energy security, economic growth, safety of trade routes and the sea lanes of communications, to its geopolitical ambition to play a leading role in shaping the security architecture in the IOR.

2.2.2 Economic Concerns

The rising geopolitics over the marine resources and economic benefits in the Indo-Pacific region brings many apprehensions to India. India, as the second largest populated country and suppose to become first by 2024¹, is the youngest country among the large economies with the average age of 27 years of its population against the 29.7 year of world average. The average age of population of the larger economies in the Indo-Pacific is too high- Indonesia- 29.2, China- 36.7, US-37.6, Australia- 38.3, South Korea- 40.8, and Japan- 46.1 years, the oldest in the region². With this, according to United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) State of the World's Population report (2014), India has the world's largest youth population (between 10-24 years) which is 356 million.³ Therefore, India has the challenge to provide employment to its younger population to harvest its demographic dividend and need to develop appropriate strategy to harness the opportunities provided by the seas, specially by the Indian Ocean. There are several areas in the maritime arena of the Indo-Pacific which are of immense economic importance for India and bring lots of concern at the same time to address them.

First, the marine resource, floating in the surface and spread in the floor of offshore, constraints in the continental selves and laid down in the sea beds. With the decreasing

¹ UNSESA (2017), UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, “The World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision”, New York, URL: https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/Files/WPP2017_KeyFindings.pdf

²Oliver Smith (2017), Mapped: The world's most elderly (and youngest) countries, *The Telegraph*, 08 July 2017, [Online: web] Accessed 24 April 2018, URL: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/maps-and-graphics/oldest-and-youngest-countries-populations/>

³India has world's largest youth population: UN report, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 18 Nov 2014.

inland mineral deposits and increasing industrial demands, much attention is being focused on mineral exploration and mining of the seabed. The Oceans are believed to be the “last destiny of human kind” because of their resources. Marine resources are necessary for India’s inclusive growth and sustainable economic development. Indian Ocean, which produce nearly 40 per cent of the world’s offshore petroleum, its coastal beach sands and offshore waters host heavy mineral deposits such as granules of sulphur, phosphate, nitrate, and thorium. This is also important for marine agriculture, especially for fisheries which are increasingly important for both exports and domestic consumption. India has vast EEZ of 2.4 million square km and therefore, India holds huge stake of its blue economy in the Indian Ocean.⁴

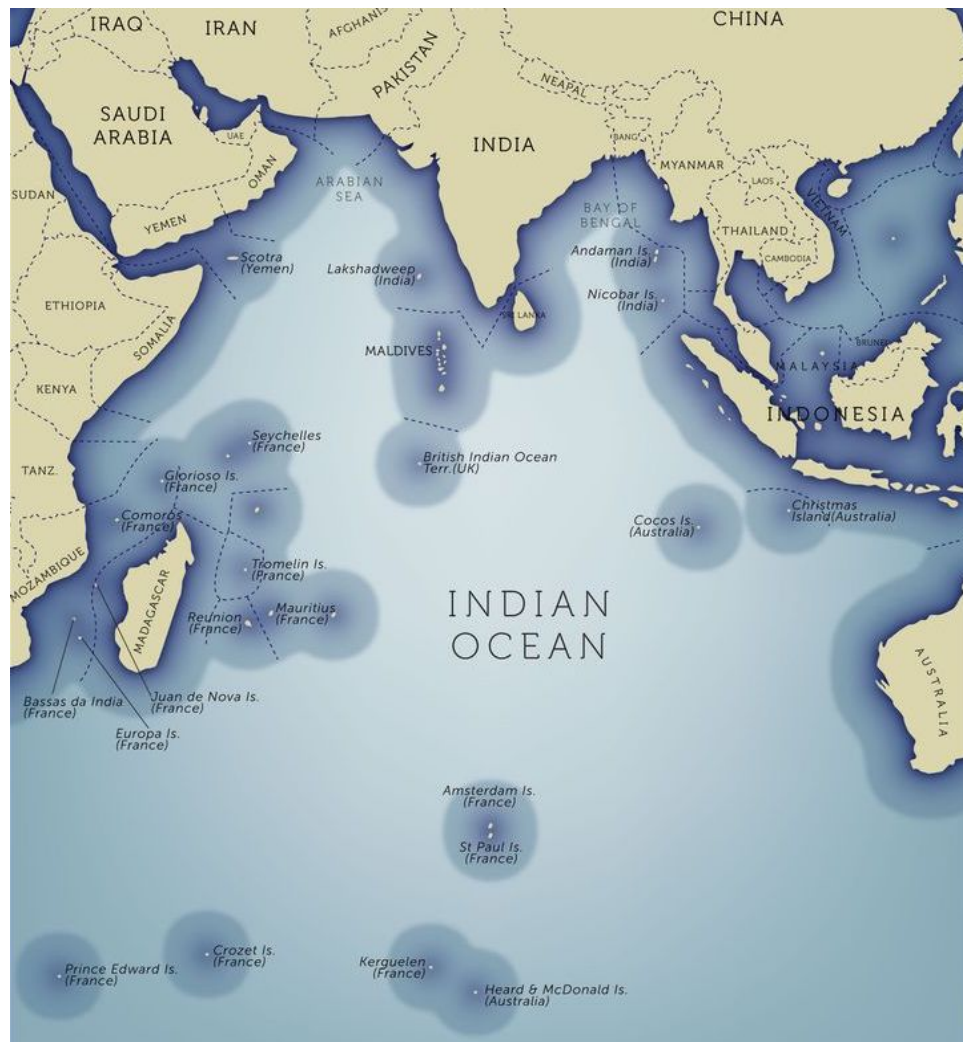


Fig. 2.1: Indian Ocean: Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs)

Sources: <https://ericolason.myportfolio.com/Indian-ocean-exclusive-economic-zones>

⁴ Indian Navy, (2015), “Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy”, New Delhi, Naval Strategic Publication.

Second, in the contemporary globalised and interconnect world markets, international trade is an important tool for the growth and development of any economy. For India, which is the world's third largest economy, international trade is indispensable. In this situation, India's vested interests lies on the sea routes from where almost 95 per cent of India's trade by volume and 72 per cent by value⁵, which account almost 30 per cent of India's GDP, transit through the sea. The IOR is also home to 30% of global trade. Given this, India has share of 1.7 per cent in global trade and has targeted to increase up to 5 per cent in coming years.⁶ Therefore, for India, to grab reasonable share in the world trade, sea routes are actually the spinal column of the Indian economy.

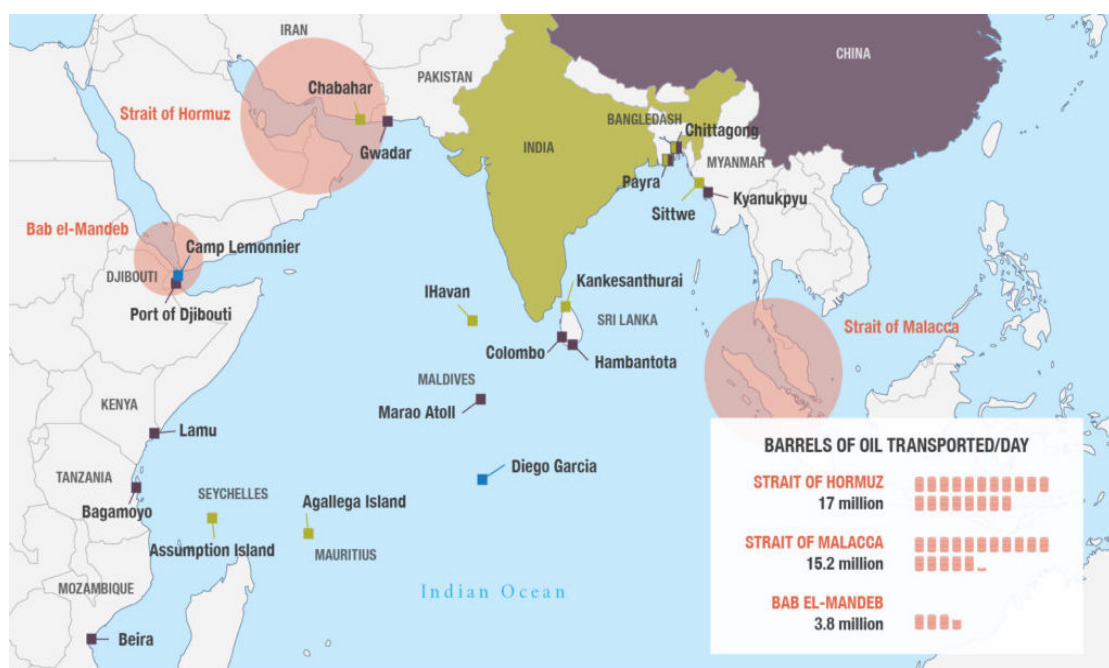


Fig. 2.2: Oil Transportation through Major Choke points in the IOR

Source: Council on Foreign Relations

Third is Energy security. India is looking for its energy needs to fuel its emerging economy. India is today world's third largest energy consumer with consumption of 884mtoe per day. According to BP Energy outlook report, India's energy consumption has increased by 4.2 per cent in 2016 which is the highest among G-20 countries and account a quarter of the global rise in the 2016. The report estimates "India's demand growth of 165 per cent, nearly three times the overall non-Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) growth of 61 per cent, also outpaces each of the BRIC countries: China (+ 41 per cent), Brazil (+ 60 per cent), and Russia (+6 per

⁵ Planning Commission (2014), Government of India, "India Transport Report: Moving India to 2032" Routledge, New Delhi.

⁶ PIB (2016), Press Information Bureau, "India's Share in Global Trade", 28 November, URL: <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=154454>

cent)' .⁷ Moreover, India rely more than 80 per cent on imports to meet its oil needs. India is again world's third largest importer of crude oil which import for the 2016-17 was 214 million tonne (MT) and raised to 219.15 MT in 2017-18.⁸ The Indian Ocean connects the Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Malacca – two key naval choke points through which 32.2 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum are transported every day, which is more than 50 percent of the world's maritime oil trade.⁹ Therefore, the Indian Ocean Region is as much important for India as crude oil are believe to be blood for economy.

Fourth is remittance. India has the highest Diaspora in the world who contributes significantly in Indian economy through remittances. India has been highest recipient of the remittance for many years. According to the World Bank, India received USD 69 billion in 2017 with rise of 9.9 per cent from USD 62.7 billion of last year, while it had revived highest ever in 2014 amounting USD 70.4 billion.¹⁰ These remittances contribute almost 2 per cent to India's GDP, but more significantly for state such Kerala remittances accounts 37 per cent of State GDP. Significantly, the major source region of the remittance is the Indian Ocean Region, specifically the Gulf Countries. Given this, is important for India to ensure safety and security of Non-residential Indians (NRIs) and People of Indian Origin (PIOs). To address the problem they face there, apart from the friendly relation, deep economic ties with respective county, active diplomacy and the power projection is required.

Finally, tourism and related marine activities (including cruise tourism), is a growing industry that represent an important contributor to the economy and employment generation. The tourism sector alone contributes to almost 10 per cent of India's GDP. According to a report of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) 2017, India's travel and tourism sector is the fastest growing amongst the G20 countries and ranks

⁷ Abdi, Bilal (2018), "India will overtake China as largest market for energy by late 2020s: BP Energy Outlook", URL: <https://energy.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/india-will-overtake-china-as-largest-market-for-energy-by-late-2020s-bp-energy-outlook/63024657> (Accessed May 12, 2018).

⁸ India's oil import bill to jump by 25% in FY18, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 26 March 2018, URL: <https://economicstimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/indias-oil-import-bill-to-jump-by-25-in-fy18/articleshow/63464408.cms>

⁹ Albert, Eleanor (2016), *Competition in the Indian Ocean*, Council on Foreign Relations, [Online: web] Accessed January 20, 2018, URL: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/competition-indian-ocean>

¹⁰ India highest recipient of remittances at \$69 billion, says World Bank, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, April 23, 2018.

7th in the world in terms of its total contribution to the country's GDP.¹¹ India's coastal regions have attractive and slow beaches, many islands and marine biodiversity and several favourable places which provide opportunity of Endeavour and explorative activities such as scuba diving. Therefore, India has a huge potential to increase its international visitors and, in doing so, it can create more jobs and drive economic growth.

Therefore, marine arena is of such an importance that every country is trying to grab the opportunity and explore. More challenges are coming from the external powers in the Indian Ocean such as China, Japan and the US. China, Japan, South Korea and Southeast Asian nations fight over aspects of island and reefs in the East and South China Sea mainly because of undersea resources. Islands in the Indian Ocean are emerging as a new focus of struggle between China and India. Thus, marine resources, mainly the fossil fuel, minerals and fishing; sea routes facilitating its trade; crude oil import for its energy security; remittances coming from the gulf countries, are of immense importance for India's economy. In the backdrop, India needs to engage in the blue economy in the Indian Ocean and strengthen its economic ties with the countries in the IPR.

2.2.3 Environmental Concerns

There are many environmental concerns in the Indo-Pacific region ranging from risk of biodiversity loss to the adversity by global warming led sea level rise and many diverse effects of climate change. The Indo-Pacific region is full of flora and fauna which makes it one the world's biggest biodiversity region. Actually, the term "Indo-Pacific" have been used by the environmentalists to determine transitional geographical region of Indian and the Pacific Ocean, which has very rich biodiversity. Biodiversity is a measure of ecological health. A biodiversity hotspot is the richness and variety of species in a region. The biodiversity importance of hotspots is due to the high vulnerability of habitats and high irreplaceability of species found within large geographic regions. This means that these areas and the species present within them are both under high levels of threat and of significant global value based on their uniqueness. There are 14 biodiversity hotspots identified by Conservation International

¹¹India's is the world's 7th largest tourism economy in terms of GDP, says WTTC, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, April 04 2017. URL:<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/travel/indias-is-the-worlds-7th-largest-tourism-economy-in-terms-of-gdp-says-wttc/articleshow/58011112.cms>

in the Indo-Pacific including Western Ghats and Andaman & Nicobar Islands of India with many other in the Indian Ocean alone.

Marine biodiversity is being destroyed because of increasing sea traffic, oil spills, industrialization of coastal region, increasing human activities in the coasts including tourism. These activities are threatening to the lives of marine ecosystem directly by destroying habitat, and indirectly by creating severe pollution. The pollution also has reverse adverse effect on human as marine food are used by them which accumulate and magnificat these pollutant into food chain. Every species of flora and fauna serves a purpose in the ecosystem. Without them, new challenges have to be faced by the environment. If a species becomes extinct, it can create an overpopulation of the prey of the animal. Also, if a species once preyed on an extinct species, it will become endangered without having a source of food. The climate change does domino effect to the ecosystem and puts other species at risk.



Fig. 2.3: Biodiversity hotspots in the Indo-Pacific Region

Source: <https://www.pmfias.com/biodiversity-hot-spots-india-world/>

The other major environmental challenges which the region is facing are Global warming and Climate Change, of which India would be one of the most affected nations. The rise in the sea level of the Indian Ocean due to temperature increase and the melting ice of the Antarctic will have severe consequences- economic, political and security. The rise in temperature and sea level will affect marine economic activity such as fishing, coastal economic activities. A study conducted by the Indo-German Centre for Sustainability at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras has projected that Tamil Nadu alone could face financial losses amounting to around ₹6 lakh crores – or half the

size of its economy in 2016, if global warming causes sea levels to rise one metre by 2050.¹² In 2013, the UN-IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) predicted that global sea levels could rise anywhere between 0.3 metres and 0.6 metres by 2100. Therefore, any rise in sea levels could impact drastically, leading to social and economic devastation of coastal communities and spark inland migration. Notably, nearly 35% of the India's population is settled within 100 km of the shore. India has already started seeing effects of sea level rise in places such as Sundarbans and Majuli, the largest riverine islands in the world.

According to a UN environment report, The Global Environmental Outlook (GEO-6): Regional Assessments, published in 2016, almost 40 million Indians will be affected due to rise in sea levels by 2050, with people in Mumbai and Kolkata having the maximum exposure to coastal flooding in future due to rapid urbanization and economic growth.¹³ The report projected worst impacts of climate change to occur in the Pacific and South and Southeast Asia. The countries in the Indian Ocean adjacent to India like Bangladesh and island nations such as Sri Lanka, Maldives will also have adverse effect and rise in sea level may also lead to migration toward India. This environmental refugee's crisis would lead to the serious security threat to India and may result to insecurity and instability in the region. In such juncture, the small island countries may seek India's help for rehabilitation in India. It will not be limited to the bilaterally, and international politics would involve on this. Therefore, India has to deal with the issue of global warming internationally with its full capacity and experience of leadership in the field of environment to safeguard its national interest and peace and stability in the region.

2.2.4 Security Concerns

India has 7516 km long coast line with its almost 1200 island territories expanding from the Arabian Sea in the west to Bay of Bengal in the east. India's major industries and economic activities are concentrated within the 200 km from the coast line. It has 13 major and over 200 medium and minor ports, substantial numbers of operational and many under construction nuclear power reactors in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu,

¹²Govindarajan, Vinita (2018), If sea levels rise by 1 metre, Tamil Nadu losses could be worth half its current economy, says study, URL: <https://scroll.in/article/866394/in-tamil-nadu-loss-from-rising-sea-levels-could-be-worth-half-its-economy-warns-new-climate-study>

¹³40 million Indians at risk from rising sea levels: UN report, Times Of India, New Delhi, May 20, 2016, URL: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/global-warming/40-million-Indians-at-risk-from-rising-sea-levels-UN-report/articleshow/52358198.cms>

Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat. On the trade side, group of four coastal states vis-a-vis Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu account whopping 64 per cent of India's total export.¹⁴ The maintaining safety, security and stability at sea, particularly in the IOR are imperatives for India to enable use of the seas to advance economic growth & development and provide suitable maritime environment for unfettered pursuit of national interests in the backdrop of the growing significance of seas and dynamics of the maritime environment. The inadequacy of substantial level of safety and security to deal with the challenges in the Indian Ocean such as seaborne



Fig. 2.4: Major & Intermediate ports of India

Source: Maps of India

¹⁴ Government of India (2018), *Economic Survey, 2017-18*, Ministry of Finance, New Delhi.

terrorism, piracy, arm robbery, drug smuggling, human and wildlife trafficking etc. adversely affects the security and all activities therein, including sea trade, shipping, fishing, exploitation of energy and minerals from sea beds, security of marine assets etc. A brief account on few important points of security is following-

2.2.4.1 The Security of Sea Lane of Communications (SLOCs) in the IOR are vital as most significant international sea lanes are passing through the Indian Ocean, connecting Europe, Africa and West Asia to the Southeast Asia, East Asia and South-West Pacific. India in the South Asia is thereby located at the middle of these referred regions, attaining advancement to keep eyes on the activities in the Indian Ocean region and the surveillance of the SLOCs. The most important strategic choke points are located in this region. According to UNCTAD's Review of maritime Transport report 2017, nearly 120000 ships transit every year through the region carrying 66 per cent of world oil, 50 per cent of world container traffic and 33 per cent of world cargo traffic. Nearly 1bn oil transits from Indian Ocean every year.¹⁵

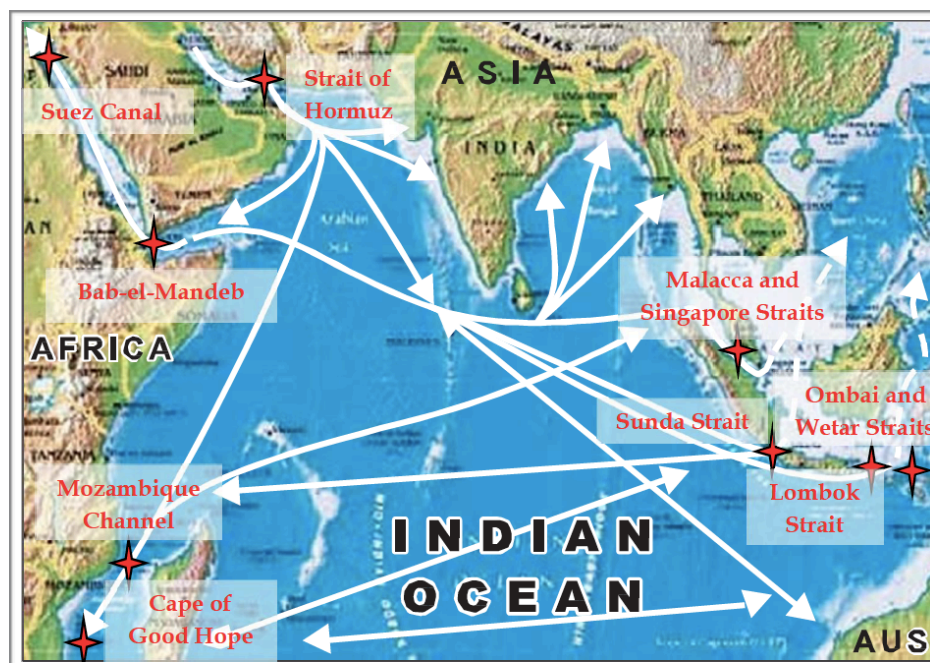


Fig. 2.5: Entry/Exit Choke Points and ISLs of the IOR

Source: Indian Maritime Doctrine, 2009

2.2.4.2 The Seaborne Terrorism is the biggest non-traditional security threat for India. Most of the significant major cities of India are located in the coastal region which is vulnerable to the terrorist attacks. India's neighbourhood is the source of the most of terror activities in the world and this region is one of world's most terror affected region.

¹⁵ UNCTAD (2017), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Review of Maritime Transport 2017", United Nations Publication, Geneva.

In the wake of Mumbai terror attacks in 2008, state sponsored terrorism is now more challenging. The Mumbai attacks have highlighted the essentiality of intense surveillance and response to miscellaneous threats from the sea.

2.2.4.3 The Arms and Ammunition Trafficking is another manifestation of security challenge which has seen a marked increase in the IOR and supports to maritime terrorism. Mumbai serial blasts of 1993 are evident which inducted by sea using seven tons of RDX and small arms landed on the West coast of India. In 2015, a Pakistani fishing boat suspected of carrying explosives blown up in the Arabian Sea near the Indo-Pak maritime boundary, approximately 365 km south-west of Porbandar.¹⁶ The recent history of maritime terrorist attacks is ample testimony to the heightened threat in the IOR. *Piracy and armed robbery* is another international crime which mostly the Indian Ocean Region is facing. Piracy is the biggest scourge of modern day shipping, which exploits the convergence of merchant traffic at choke points. The International Maritime Bureau data reveals that the Indo-Pacific region is most affected of these incidents, which are prevalent in South-East Asia and around the Gulf of Aden and Coasts of Somalia.



Fig. 2.6: Incident of Piracy and armed robbery against ships in 2017

Source: ICC International Maritime Bureau

¹⁶Pakistani fishing boat laden with explosives blows up off Indian coast near Porbandar, The Indian Express, New Delhi, Accessed May 08, 2018 URL: <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/suspected-pakistani-vessel-blows-itself-up-after-being-chased-by-indian-coast-guard/>

2.2.4.4 Drugs Smuggling linked with narco terrorism is another India's security concern. Most of the poppy cultivation in the region takes place in the areas that encircle the Indian Ocean. The "Golden Triangle", and "Golden Crescent", the notorious opium producing region are located respectively in the east and the west of India. Terrorist groups operate with transnational criminal organisations, drug smugglers and mafias. Therefore, India becomes transit region for them. Terrorists use money earned by drugs to procure weapons, arms and ammunition and to support terrorist activities and insurgencies. The transshipment of these tools of terror, which are used to support terrorist activities and insurgencies, often takes place in the waters of the Indian Ocean. Therefore, these all security threats emphasized the vulnerability of India's internal security and need to upgrade coastal and maritime security. The attempts by various terrorist and other groups to use the blue waters around India for vicious purposes have been increased. Therefore, since India shares vast maritime borders, the security of its territories from the terrorism is need of hours.

2.2.4.5 The Security of Fishermen, which has various domestic and external impacts as it is associated with the livelihood of the families of fishermen and congenial relationship with its neighbouring countries. They are vulnerable to various sections from robbers to patrolling navies in the marine water. The custody of the fishermen who crossed the Indian water territory or interred in the neighbouring countries and vice-versa, is very often. These incidents are potential enough to escalate the tension between the nations, though mostly occurred with Pakistan¹⁷ and Sri Lanka¹⁸. But there are several cases where these incidents involved extra regional nations. The relationship between India and Italy stained when two Italian navy personnel shot dead two Indian fishermen off the Kerala coast in 2012.¹⁹ Furthermore, 23 fishermen from Kerala and Tamil Nadu were taken on the custody by the British Navy after they strayed into the British Indian Ocean Territory of Diego Garcia in October 2015.²⁰

2.2.4.6 The Protection of the Indian Residing Abroad has become one of the major concerns in the wake of the escalated terror activities in the west Asia and the increasing

¹⁷ 47 Indian fishermen arrested in Pakistan, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, February 05, 2018.

¹⁸ 50 Indian fishermen arrested by Sri Lankan Navy, *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, August 09, 2017.

¹⁹ Indian fishermen killed: Two Italian marines sent to police custody amid huge protests, *NDTV*, New Delhi, 20 Feb 2012, Accessed May 08, 2018 URL: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/indian-fishermen-killed-two-italian-marines-sent-to-police-custody-amid-huge-protests-571620>

²⁰ Troubled waters, *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, Accessed on May 08, 2018, URL: <http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/troubled-waters-8/>

instability in the west of the IOR. India had to run rescue operation such as 'Operation Rahat' to evacuate the Indian residents caught in the conflict in Yemen. Notably, almost 70 lacs Indians residing in the Middle East and its surrounding West Asian region alone.²¹

2.3 India's Ambition of Power Projection and Naval Interests

One of the widely accepted India's concerns is China's expansion and the assertiveness in the region especially in the IOR. Chinese activities economic, political, and cultural, as often called by China, or military activities made New Delhi worry. China is mapping out map of influence and increasing its presence in the Indian Ocean with the help of economic and commercial initiatives. Beijing is spreading its tentacles in India's immediate neighbourhood using its diplomatic and military routes. The China is trying to use its influence in Myanmar and Pakistan to get footholds in the Indian Ocean region. Defence Ministry in its Annual Security Analysis report, released in March 2015, has made several alarming observations about China's dominance in the IOR. According to this report, "China is extending its lines of access towards the Indian Ocean through Myanmar and Pakistan. Its footprint in India's immediate neighbourhood has been increasing as a result of its proactive diplomacy".²² China is developing network of port projects in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Kenya, Sudan and Pakistan, many of these are supposed to be military facilities, contrary from China's claim of pure commercial facilities. What the strategists call this encirclement of India by China through these facilities along with the coastal states of IOR, is the "string of pearls".

China has been forging special relations with island nations on India's periphery including Sri Lanka, Seychelles and Mauritius. China's attempt to gain foothold in the Indian Ocean came in to view in 2012 when reports flouted of an offer from Seychelles to China for a base to provide relief and resupply facility for Chinese navy.²³ Notwithstanding, China promptly denied the news, the offer underscores the changing balance of power in the IOR. Nevertheless, it was huge setback for India who had traditionally been the main defence provider for Seychelles, providing armaments and

²¹ Why Operation Rahat Is A Major Achievement for India, *Huffpost*, July 15, 2016, URL: https://www.huffingtonpost.in/kabir-taneja/why-operation-rahat-is-a-_b_7023266.html

²² Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Annual Report 2015-16

²³ Chinese plans in Seychelles revive Indian fears of encirclement, *The Guardian*, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/22/china-seychelles-indian-fears-encirclement>

training to its forces. The Indian Navy has also been making regular forage to surrounding waters. In recent years, Chinese military activities have been highly concerned particularly to India. In 2014, when two Chinese submarines visit Colombo port, in distance of just 200 miles from India, India lodged a diplomatic protest with Sri Lanka. In August 2017, China opened its first overseas military base in Djibouti on the western edge of the Indian Ocean which shows indicate China's plan to militaries the IPR, causing direct threat to the India's security and interests. China's this approach further underscored through recent acknowledgment by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) that it is "planning to explore the possibility of more foreign military outposts in Africa, West Asia and other areas."²⁴ The biggest cause of concern for India is that if China extends its activities at the level where Chinese nuclear submarine begins to appear in Indian Ocean and starts anchoring ports and islands in India's neighbourhood. China's growing maritime assets in the region had caused great concern to the Indian Navy. 'It is very obvious for India to try and enhance its presence and surveillance capabilities. In times of peace this is the best way. This is conventional deterrence.'²⁵

Presence of extra regional powers is increasing in the Indo-Pacific region aiming to safeguard their strategic interests in the wake of increasing non-traditional security threats and militarization of the CSC and Indian Ocean region. "There is high instability in the region, with increased incidence of crime, maritime terrorism, proliferation of missiles and WMDs, spread of religious fundamentalism, etc."²⁶ The US had maintained its substantial presence in the region to preserve its vital interests aware of regions strategic importance since 1970s. The USA has been the most visible and potent extra-regional power in the extensive Indo-Pacific region, with its military base in the Diego Garcia and having bilateral strategic partners in the Gulf and the Southeast Asia, Asia-Pacific to Japan. France, and Australia also have several island territories in the IOR, whereupon both the are considered as an Indian Ocean powers with a significant naval presence in the IOR. Japan, and Russia have all shown increased presence in these waters, in recent years, either independently or through politico-security arrangements.²⁷ In the above given scenario, India will have to engage proactively in

²⁴ China's Strategy in Djibouti: Mixing Commercial and Military Interests, URL: <https://www.cfr.org/blog/chinas-strategy-djibouti-mixing-commercial-and-military-interests>

²⁵Ghosh, P. K., Defense Analyst (2017), URL: <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/india-increases-its-presence-in-indian-ocean-with-an-eye-on-china>

²⁶ Indian Maritime Doctrine (2009), Integrated Headquarters Ministry of Defense (Navy) 2015, updated (online version) 2015, URL: <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/sites/default/files/Indian-Maritime-Doctrine-2009-Updated-12Feb16.pdf>

²⁷Ibid.

the IOR for preservation of its influence in the maritime neighbourhood. Moreover, the extensive outreach to the South Pacific countries is required to acquire a major role in the maritime domain. Only after this, India would be able to full fill its aspiration to become a global maritime power and “net security provider” in the IPR.

2.4 India's Maritime Strategy

India's maritime Strategy is evolving gradually since its independence. Earlier, under the British dominant in the Indian Ocean its focus was on the capability enhancement than the strategic vision, as Indian Navy released its First Plan Paper in 1948 and perspective plan in every few years. After the British removal from the Suez Canal, there was a power vacuum in the Indian Ocean for many years. Estimating the geostrategic importance of the Indian Ocean, USA established its first base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean in the 1970s. In the backdrop, India realized the security implications but still could not come out with any strategic vision document until 1998 when ‘Maritime Military Strategy for India 1989–2014’ was released. After this, India has released many documents highlighting its maritime doctrine and strategies. At present, India has three main maritime doctrines, namely, Indian *Maritime Doctrine* (2004), *Indian Maritime Doctrine 2009*, updated in 2015 and Nonalignment 2.0 (2012) and first ever maritime strategy, *FREEDOM TO USE THE Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy* in 2007 before the Indian Navy came with a more comprehensive maritime security strategy in October 2015- ‘*Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy*’. In the perspective of the new emerging global politics, releasing the need for a national security strategy and defence management the Defence Ministry has formed the Defence Planning Committee (DPC) in the chairmanship of National Security Adviser, including three service chiefs as members, which will draft national security strategy and work on international defence engagement strategy and priority capability development plans.²⁸

Intertwined with its vast national interests and ambition to become a global power, Indian maritime strategy is designed to respond to a range of external threats and safeguard India's economic, political and security interests in the maritime domain, with a purposefully-designed set of maritime capabilities. The present circumstances which India is facing are different from those it has faced in the past, but the historical evolution of that maritime strategy is important, because it reveals the various

²⁸NSA-headed committee for higher defense management, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, 19 April 2018

approaches to maritime strategy that India has adopted over the course of its history. Aftermath of the China's expanding naval and strategic activities in the Indian Ocean and neighbours in Indian Ocean such as the Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Sri Lanka, imperative of its maritime strategy is to provide security and political stability in the IOR.

2.4.1 Strategic Cooperation

To deal with seaborne terrorism, In the wake of 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai, the Navy has taken several measures to enhance coastal security, including a plan for greater maritime domain awareness through static and dynamic surveillance, and the setting up of position reporting systems, vessel management schemes and port management systems. The Navy has also been pursuing an “information networking and management project”, which involves greater coastal community participation.²⁹ Whereas the initiative of security of SLOCs in the region took place led by the USA after the September 2001 attack, mainly the security of the straits of Malacca. India is acting on both fronts -domestically enhancing and increasing the naval capability and presence into the Andaman Sea; and internationally extending multilateral cooperation and engagement in the Malacca Straits. On security front, India has tightened its surveillance of the area and also qualitatively griped up its military presence by setting up its first tri- service military command in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to ensure a faster and sharper response to any attempt aims disruption in the region following the 9/11 event. At present, Indian Navy uses its fleet of reconnaissance planes over the Malacca and has its warships patrolling the SLOC west of Malacca. India is also on the final stage to become part of Malacca Strait Patrol (MSP) mechanism.³⁰ India has strategically convinced the Southeast Asian States as Indian Navy's ability to play a non-threatening security enhancing role. Now, Indonesia and Singapore see the Indian Navy as a reliable and non-controversial ally in ensuring that piracy does not escalate into terrorism and cause disruption in the Malacca Straits. Several bilateral and multilateral naval exercises also have been conducted in the Straits of Malacca and the Andaman Sea by India and MSP countries³¹. Navies of India and The Indonesia have

²⁹ Singh, Abhijit (2015), *India's New Maritime Security Strategy: 'Brand-building' in an Era of 'Geopolitical Discord'*, URL: https://idsa.in/idsacomments/indias-new-maritime-security-strategy_asingh_211215

³⁰ India Set to Join Malacca Patrol Group, The Tribune, April 10, 2017, URL: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/india-set-to-join-malacca-patrol-group/389602.html>

³¹Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP) countries are: Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia who launched 'Malacca Straits Sea Patrol' in 2004 which is a trilateral mechanism to enhance security in the SOMS, as well as to bolster existing bilateral arrangements. Thailand had become fourth member, joined in 2009.

conducted coordinated patrols in the Six Degrees Channel, one of the three routes through this area for east-west trade. Both countries have been engaging bilaterally in India-Indonesia CORPAT³² since 2004. All four MSP countries also participate in India-led multilateral naval exercises such as the MILAN exercise and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).

Indo-Pacific Region is significant for each of the rim counters in the region, besides the major powers. India is engaging with these states either bilaterally or multilaterally. US, Japan, China, and Australia are the major powers in the region. In the groups, ASEAN is probably the biggest stakeholder in the region. External powers such as Russia, France and UK are also trying to get into Maritime affairs of the Indo-Pacific. In the backdrop, the U.S.-India relations are remarkable in the IPR where security interests of world's largest two democracies meet. The US and India are natural partners on a range of political, economic, and security issues. India has been considered the "biggest strategic opportunity for the US"³³ as both countries share democratic values, the same concerns; both operate more frequently in the Indo-Pacific region together. India and US have a shared interest in ensuring a stable security order in the IPR. This shared interest has propelled India-US security ties dramatically forward over the past decade. Both countries provide greater opportunities for each other. Over the past year, three foundational agreements were finalized between India and the USA under the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)— Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA) which are referred as the foundational agreements which the U.S. signs with countries with which it has close military ties. Further, the National Security Strategy of Trump administration is in same progressive direction which provides a vision for greater Indo-U.S. engagement in the IPR. Still, the US seeks an enduring, regular, routine and institutionalized strategic partnership with India and the Pacific Command identifies a security relationship with India as a major command line-of-effort.³⁴

32 India -Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) involves The Indonesian Navy and the Indian Navy twice a year since 2002 to keep this vital part of the Indian Ocean Region safe and secure for commercial shipping and international trade.

33Admiral Harry Harris, Commander of the US Pacific Command (2018), URL: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-biggest-strategic-opportunity-for-us-pentagon/articleshow/63331174.cms>

³⁴ Ibid.

To curtail Chinese expansions and minimize any direct negative impact on India's trade, energy and security interest by the Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean Region, India has begun to engage on security issue with major stakeholders of the region and carried them to strategic level in last one decade. Identifying the common security threat amid the growing Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea, India-Japan ties are converging into 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership'. This is evident with the fact that in the last four years, Prime Ministers of two countries have met ten times and it was the fourth annual summits between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, when he visited India in September 2017. Meanwhile, Australia realize that its interests would be secure in a more rules-based global order, which it cannot achieve its defence objectives alone. Therefore, Australia recognises India as a defence partner to achieve its objective to play a more active role in supporting regional security. In the words of Prime Minister Abbott, "This is the time to turn the warm friendship between Australia and India, the long history that Australia and India have together, into something that will be meaningful, more meaningful for us and significant for the wider world." India and Australia relationship is also committed to enhance maritime cooperation in the IPR as both underlined the importance of freedom of navigation (FON) and over flight, unimpeded lawful commerce, as well as solving maritime disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS. Therefore, keeping in the mind IPR as an area strategic to global trade and energy and that houses major sea lines of communication (SLOCs), Indo-Australia cooperation in this region would be crucial for maintaining security in the region. France and the UK, both of the European powers, who have substantial presence in the Indian and Pacific Ocean, through their island territories and military bases, are also concerned of any hegemony in the IPR, therefore willing to have strategic partnership with India in the region. This was underlined during the latest visit of the French President Emmanuel Macron who said, "The Pacific and the Indian Oceans cannot become zones for hegemonic power and we are, therefore, building a strategic partnership"³⁵. The joint statement release during the visit extends to the range of cooperation from "countering maritime terrorism and piracy" to "building maritime domain awareness".

³⁵India, France join hands for Indian Ocean security, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, 11 March 2018.

2.4.2 Multilateral Engagement

On the multilateral aspect, India is already part of several forums of Southeast Asia and Asia Pacific region made on regional security and cooperation outlook. India is member state of multilateral security related forum in the Asia Pacific that is ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), formed in 1994, aftermath of the end of the Cambodian Crisis and the Cold War and rise of China's economic and military strength. India has joined Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) as an associate member in December 1994 and became full member in March 2000 (Devare, 2006). CSCAP has several acting groups on many issues like transnational crimes, maritime cooperation, regional peace and stability, human trafficking, international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and India is actively participating in to them. India is also part of another multilateral dialogue on the issue of security and peace in the Asia-Pacific region that is Shangri-La Dialogue. ASEAN and India share common interests of security and the peace in the region. Recently, in January 2018, New Delhi held the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit to mark 25 years of relationship, where maritime security issues were a key theme. This summit marks the arrival of India as a major force broader in to pacific theatre. On the occasion, Delhi Declaration was signed by all ten-member states of the ASEAN and India, articulated urgent concerns of all of them and reaffirms the importance of maintaining maritime safety, freedom of navigation and over flight in the region and other lawful use of the seas in accordance with international law. It also sought full and effective implementation of the declaration on the conduct of the parties and early conclusion of the code of conduct in the South China Sea.³⁶

India is enhancing its relationship in the field of blue economy not only with the island states in the Indian Ocean but also with the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) to harness the marine resources of the Indo-Pacific. After realizing the necessity to keep pace with China into the Pacific region, such as it is trying in the Africa and Middle Asia, India take off effort for greater cooperation with the Pacific Island countries (PICs) in recent years. A major development was marked in November 2014 when India's Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi in Fiji, launched the 'Forum for India-Pacific Islands

³⁶ASEAN (2018), Association of Southeast Asian Nations, "Delhi Declaration of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit to Mark The 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations", May, 10 URL: http://asean.org/storage/2018/01/Delhi-Declaration_Adopted-25-Jan-2018.pdf

Cooperation (FIPIC), comprising India and 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs).³⁷ Therefore, India's outreach into the Pacific will be critical in sustaining and maximizing its strategic interests in the Indian Ocean. India's aspiration for strong presence and playing important role in security arena into the Pacific region could fulfil only if avocation by Pacific countries, which have been seen enthusiastic and willing to make strong relations with India.

2.4.3 Strengthening Naval Capabilities and Engagement

The naval power is not just about fighting wars. At present, it has an integral role to play in international diplomacy, commerce, energy supplies, exploitation of sea resources and ensuring order at sea. Indian Navy's Maritime Capability Perspective Plan, 2005-06 looked at the aspects of having a plan which is capability based and mission dominated. Highlighting the importance of the greater role of the navy, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in 2009 said, 'the Indian Navy must have a much greater role in safeguarding the Nation's vital security interests'.³⁸ Therefore, the enhancing capability and capacity of the Indian Navy became necessity to deal with the miscellaneous challenges coming from the sea. In such a scenario naval interaction have an important role to play. In the expanding challenges of security and national interests to the maritime arena, the naval services become more important. India has showed its interests in the naval exercise, both the bilateral and multilateral, as a strategy to engage, cooperate and coordinate with the major naval powers across the Indo-Pacific region in the quest of demonstration of its power and preparedness for any unexpected challenge as well. In this way, India had joined many exercises invited by the nations in the IPR and also hosted several naval exercises in the Arabian Sea or in the Bay of Bengal in the IOR.

The trilateral 'Malabar' naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal, consisting navies of India, Japan and United States has full-fledged commitment to address common maritime challenges across the spectrum of operations and boosted maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region for the benefit of the global maritime community. The naval exercise assumes significance as it is being held at a time when China has become more assertive and increasing attempts by their submarines to venture into the Indian Ocean region.

³⁷(FIPIC), Forum for India - Pacific Island Cooperation. *About FIPIC*. 2016. <http://www.ficci-fipic.in/about.html> (accessed NOVEMBER 06, 2016).

³⁸Manmohan Singh, 'PM Inaugurates Naval Academy at Ezhimala', 8 Jan. 2009, Accessed April 28 2018, URL: <http://archivepmo.nic.in/drmanmohansingh/speech-details.php?nodeid=751>

Another one important exercise is MILAN, which was held first in 1995. It is a congregation of littoral navies conducted biennially by the Indian Navy at the Andaman and Nicobar Command in Port Blair. Besides fostering co-operation through naval exercises and professional interactions, MILAN provides an excellent opportunity for participating navies to come together in a spirit of collaboration and to enhance mutual understanding. 35 members grouping of navies of littoral countries of Indian Ocean from Southeast Asia, South Asia, West Asia, East Africa and Australia, the 'Indian Ocean Naval Symposium' (IONS) is a voluntary initiative in the IPR that seeks to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states, by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues. In the process, it endeavours to generate a flow of information between naval professionals that would lead to common understanding and possibly cooperative solutions on the way ahead. These all exercises have enhanced the ability of the Indian Navy to operate with other navies to respond to common security threats.

Chapter-III

Maritime Power Balance in the Indo-Pacific

“In this kind of world, states can survive only by a constant devotion to power politics.”

-Nicholas John Spykman, “America’s Strategy in World Politics” (1942), 18.

3.1 Background

Peace and security still depend on a balance of power. The stability serves the interests of all, whether a big player or small stakeholders, in any region. Alfred Mahan in 1890 introspected “the role of sea power in the emergence and growth of the British Empire” in his book “*The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*”, and portrayed sea as a “great highway” and “wide common” with “well-worn trade routes” over which human sails to every directions.¹ At present, the maritime arena has become the most relevant space for power struggle among the world powers. The Atlantic Ocean was the centre of power politics in the 20th century. But now, as the gravity of power politics is shifting from East to West, the maritime power is shifting towards Indian Ocean from the Atlantic. If the 21st century will be Asia’s Century, as scholars envisaged, the 21st century also would be of Indian Ocean’s, instead of Atlantic Ocean. The circumstances leading to emergence of IPR as a “centre of gravity” of power politics mandates a balance of power in the region. The above perspective requires a comprehensive study on the status of the power balance in the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR). Therefore, this study is an effort to fulfil this requirement.

This chapter of the study explains the maritime power struggle in the Indo-Pacific. It analyses the competition among countries, identifying the major power players, mediators and small stake holders in the maritime arena of the Indo-Pacific. Chapter is divided in region wise main headings vis.-a-vis. Indian Ocean Region, South China Sea and South-West Pacific comprising struggling major stakeholders adjacent to these

¹ Sempa, Francis P. (2014), “The Geopolitical Vision of Alfred Thayer Mahan”, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 20 May 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2014/12/the-geopolitical-vision-of-alfred-thayer-mahan/>

regions. The first and the last major headings covers the whole maritime IPR to present overall scenario of balance of power between US-China and among US-China-India respectively. Further, it provides a vital realistic view of power balance in these regions. The study explores where the other Medium and Small stake holders stand? Are there interests are secure or getting affected by this completion, with or without their any participation? Therefore, this chapter will be core of the study which will provide an overview of the contemporary status of the maritime balance of power in the IPR.

3.2 US-China Conflict for Supremacy in the Waters of the Indo-Pacific

After decades long silent resurgence through the process of economic development and political consolidation, Chinese resurgence is now sound, visible and well known. China is converting its economic achievements into military strengthening while domestic political consolidation is expanding territorial consolidation. Chinese assertiveness is evident not only in the territorial claims over disputed island in South China Sea but also in its military thrust into the waters of Indian Ocean and Western Pacific Oceans. China is expanding its territorial integration from Taiwan to Hong Kong. Unwilling of giving full democracy to these autonomous island territories, contrary, China is increasing its control and limiting status of their autonomy. China is militarising South China Sea in a scale and speed that raised threat to East Asian and ASEAN states and vital concern to regional players. United States was the facilitator of the security to smaller states in the region after the Second World War and the dominant power after the end of the Cold War. U.S. sees China's actions as a challenge to its hegemony.

Admiral Robert Willard, US PACOM's commander, informed to a committee of US Congress, that "China's rapid and comprehensive transformation of its armed forces holds implications beyond the Asia-Pacific region" which will "challenge our freedom of action in the region." According to him, "The PLA Navy has increased its patrols throughout the region and has shown an increased willingness to confront regional nations on the high seas and within the contested island chains". Amitav Acharya do not see the US-China struggle as a narrative of that "US is declining while China is rising". Rather he says "America is not declining but others, especially China, are rising. Growing competition between the US and China is likely, setting the stage for

an intensified arms race, but it is unlikely to push the two countries to a game of brinkmanship or all-out zero-sum rivalry reminiscent of the US-Soviet Cold War.”²

3.2.1 Tension over Freedom of Navigation in South China Sea and Militarisation of Western Pacific

China claims 85 percent of the SCS and has already constructed artificial islands in South China Sea. Installation of military facilities on them seems not related merely to China’s security aspect. China has created seven artificial islands containing troops, radar and missile stations along with several long runways.³ U.S. sees this as a gesture of challenge to its leadership and China’s effort to erode its long presence in the Western Pacific (WP). Former U.S. President Barack Obama was an open critic of China’s increasing assertiveness challenged the U.S. naval supremacy in the waters of WP. While China explains the military infrastructure such as long-range radars & censor facilities, run away, hardened aircraft hangers etc. in Spratly Islands as “necessary defence facilities”. Though, assuring U.S. on the concerns over base construction in Spratly Islands Chinese President Xi Jinping stated in the White House in 2015 that China did not “intend to pursue militarisation” (Stashwik, 2018). Actually, China has constructed infrastructure completely over 70 acres Spratly and Paracel Islands in 2017, even it has “yet to deploy actual force projection system” there.⁴

China’s has challenged the U.S. military presence in the Western Pacific. U.S. and China both are demonstrating their naval power in the Western Pacific. Chinese vessels, warships and aircrafts visits became more frequent in recent years. In retaliation U.S. has also sent its warships to sail through the South China Sea owing international laws. On the matter of surveillance of Chinese ships by U.S. aircrafts and ships near the Chinese water territories have a long-standing contestation. According to media reports, U.S. Navy’ ships “Victorious” and “Impeccable” were harassed by Chinese ships in 2009 during such surveillance. In November 2013, U.S. Navy cruiser *Cowpens* was observing China’s Liaoning aircraft despite in international water.⁵ But now, China has

² Acharya, Amitav (2010), “The United States in Asia-Pacific: The Changing Balance of Power”, *Asia Pacific foundation of Canada*, April 29.

³ AP, (2018), “US Navy in South China Sea: ‘We’re Here’ No Matter China’s Military Buildup”, *voanews*, February 17.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Roy, Denny (2014), “U.S.-China Relations and the Western Pacific”, *The Diplomat*, January 16.

indicated to accept U.S.'s view of tolerance of "surveillance as a normal part of greater power relation" as both sides are involved in surveillance of each other's ships.⁶ In March 2017, Chinese survey ships spotted conducting operation entering strategic water bodies in east of Philippines, a U.S.'s strategic ally in the Western Pacific.⁷ These water bodies are recognised by the United Nations as Philippines territory. After it, a special build vessel for PLAN surfaced. Later, U.S. aircraft observed Chinese survey vessels operating near the Carolin Islands in August 2017, reportedly as a Chinese effort to breach the Second Island Chain. Further, Chinese scientists operated deep sea acoustic research in Mariana Trench in the end of the 2017 that may have "significant application for detecting submarines". In response, U.S. Navy and Marine Corps came with the concept of 'Littoral Operation in Contested Environment' which enables "Marine to help the Navy achieve and maintain sea control using weapon deployed on amphibious ships and footholds they established on land to project force back toward the sea".⁸

3.2.2 China's Geopolitical and Geo-economic Expansion in the Indo-Pacific and the U.S.

China is challenging U.S. everywhere in every aspect by investment, strategic involvement and military exposures. China is expanding its political influence globally after its phenomenal economic growth at the time when U.S. is trying to resuscitate its ailing economy. The biggest evidence in this regard is the "Belt and Road Initiative" of the China. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Previously, OBOR- One Belt and One Road) is an ambitious development strategy proposed by the Chinese government aiming connectivity and cooperation between Asia and Europe led by China. BRI consists two routes, first, the Silk Road Economic Belt, passing through land connecting Beijing in the east of Asia to Moscow, Rotterdam and Venice in the west Europe via Central and West Asia, and second, the "21st-century Maritime Silk Road", passing through the Indian Ocean. Maritime route connects Zhanjiang, in South China Sea to Venice in Adriatic Sea via water bodies like Bay of Bengal, Nairobi in Western

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ APF (2017), "Chinese survey ships entering Philippine territory: Manila", *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, 09 March 2017.

⁸ Stashwik, Steven (2018), "4 Sino-US Trends to Watch in the Western Pacific in 2018", *The Diplomat*, January 12.

Indian Ocean, Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea. This maritime route passes through the strategic chokepoints such as Straits of Malacca, Bab al Mandab and Suez Canal (see map). The project, spanning more than 60 countries of Asia, Africa and Europe and over \$1 trillion investment plan in infrastructure,⁹ is likely the largest construction programme of the world. It is 10 times high of money (adjusted for US dollar in 2018) which US put in under the Marshall Plan.¹⁰ The initiative is touted as Chinese President Xi Jinping's ambitious project to present China's global influence. U.S. sees the BRI as China's effort to "marginalise the US influence in the Indo-Pacific". The BRI, Xi Jinping's ambitious infrastructure project U.S. consider it strategically than simple development, "play out in OBOR, which is not only about development, as much as it is about malign influence throughout the region making China the security partner of choice and pushing the United States and our friends, allies, and partners out of the region."¹¹



Fig. 3.1: China's Belt and Road Initiative or One Belt One Road

Source: *The Economist*

On the economic side, China has made huge investments and issued loans over USD 86 billion between 2000 and 2014 to finance over 3,000 infrastructure projects and

⁹ "Behind China's \$1 Trillion Plan to Shake up the Economic Order", *The New York Times*, May 13, 2017.

¹⁰ "OBOR partially aims to marginalise US influence in Pacific: Admiral Harry Harris", *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 17 March 2018.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

developing more than 20 ports in Africa.¹² Further, it has provided US \$200 billion. loans in Africa, Asia, Europe and Pacific and assured future loans over US \$1.2 trillion.¹³ The U.S. senator David Perdue concerned over the Chinese intention comparing Chinese project to ‘Marshall Plan’¹⁴ that was the one-tenth of this Chinese investment. He said, “The Marshall Plan was not loans, primarily. It was philanthropy. This investment, the USD 1.2 trillion that is coming, is mostly in the form of loans, and in Africa, as an example, they’re loaning money into these ports and the ports’ development. In Sri Lanka we already have an example where several loans have turned unpaid and Sri Lanka is getting into debt-trap. China foreclosed loans and in lieu China has a port in Sri Lanka for 99 years”.¹⁵

US strategy is to continue to pursue programme of its military upgradation to counter China’s long-term strategy of continuing military modernisation and power assertion seeks “Indo-Pacific regional hegemony in the near-term and displacement of the United States to achieve global pre-eminence in the future”.¹⁶ As a result, USA’s 2018-National Defence Strategy seeks to “maintain a balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region” and prepares US for a power game with “revisionist” China and “resurgent” Russia. Expressing concern over the increasing competition in the Indo-Pacific region, US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis said, “We will continue to prosecute the campaign against terrorists, but great power competition—not terrorism—is now the primary focus of US national security,”¹⁷ National Bureau of Asian Research’s Senior Vice President Roy D Kamphausen, said about that the BRI is an “instrument to consolidate China’s position at the heart of Eurasia, in a space where US’ influence is rather limited;

¹² Independent, URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/china-africa-investment-dependent-economies-chinese-belt-road-a8352531.html> (Accessed on July 10, 2018).

¹³ “OBOR Partially aims to marginalise US influence in Pacific: Admiral Harry Harris”, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 17 March 2018.

¹⁴ Marshall Plan was the U.S. initiative to rebuilt West Europe after the destruction caused by Second World War. The plan came in June 1948 under which United States gave over \$13 billion economic assistance to Western European economies.

¹⁵ “OBOR Partially aims to marginalise US influence in Pacific: Admiral Harry Harris”, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 17 March 2018.

¹⁶ Jim Mattis (2018), “In nod to India, US military renames US Pacific Command as Indo-Pacific Command”, *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, June 01, 2018.

¹⁷ PTI (2018), “Jim Mattis seeks to maintain balance of power in Indo-Pacific”, *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, January 21, 2018.

BRI is a continuation of a favourite Chinese strategic gambit that to win without war, one must weaken the adversary's resistance by all means available; In the case of BRI, opposition is weakened through large-scale investment (often without contingencies) and extensive informational, even propaganda, campaigns."¹⁸

China conceives United States' military appearance in the Indo-Pacific as it projected to rein China's rise. Although, the possibility of military conflict between China and US is minimum. Chinese leadership is aware about the overwhelming U.S. military supremacy, which is supposed to be remain at least for the next 15-20 years. China is modernising its military to deliver a strong message to the United States. "The Chinese are confident that in 30 years their military will essentially match in sophistication the U.S. military. In the long term, they do not see themselves as disadvantaged in this fight."¹⁹ Therefore, Chinese actions are intentionally and surprisingly typical behaviour of great powers. While U.S. is seeming decline of its long age domination in the region, China is increasing its power day by day in the world.

But no doubt, there are some continued substantial transformations which are shaping the US's security role in the region. One of the prospect consequences is "the end of the US hedging strategy," which means US will not seek to check China, signalling greater geopolitical assertiveness by China. Another consequence could be elimination of prevailing idea that the US and China can share the security space of Asia, with the US dominating the maritime sphere with China doing likewise in the Asian heartland. China is increasingly a major naval player. The US will remain the number one maritime power, but its relative dominance will not be the same. We may thus be entering an era of diffuse bipolarity.²⁰

3.3 India-China Competition in the Indian Ocean

China has almost attained favourable status-quo in the west of Pacific and now griping to the small island states of the Indian Ocean by huge "investments and commercial initiatives". China's objective is to project itself as a "resident power" in the Indian Ocean region through its economic and strategical with these states, leading to a larger intrusion in the IPR. However, unlike the Western Pacific, the Indian Ocean is already

¹⁸ PTI, (2018), "India should become a central component of Asia-Pacific strategy", *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, July 13, 2018.

¹⁹ Lee Kuan Yew, former Prime Minister, Singapore (2013), in an interview to *The Atlantic*, March 5.

²⁰ Acharya, Amitav, 2010.

playground of India, the largest naval power in the Indian Ocean. Worried of China's unilateral and hostile maritime policies, India has vowed to maintain security and stability and trying to enhance its influence in the region that it has long dominated. As a result, the possibility of increased Chinese presence in the IOR is leading to the competition for geostrategic space between India and China. "China's presence has subsumed a direct threat on India's security and national interests and undermines its role as a 'preeminent power' in the Indian Ocean region."²¹ Therefore, amid Chinese increasing naval activities, Indian Navy is trying to increase its outreach in the blue waters of the Indian Ocean with everlasting deployment of over a dozen ships, including on the mouth of the straits of Malacca. Indian Naval Ships are also being deployed surrounding of Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles.

China is well aware about India's potential and military strength. Although, India may be far behind in potential to defeat Chinese challenge in case of face to face military conflict but, India, not only in China's neighbour but also in Asia, is the biggest challenge for China's political ambitions in the IOR. The geographical proximity with the Indian Ocean makes India advance against China. India is in the position to surveillance the ships passing through the strategic chokepoints and backyard water of the Indian Ocean. The Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Islands provide India legitimate access to patrol in west of Straits of Malacca, the vein of the East and Southeast Asian Economies, including China. Most of the oil and gas requirement of China, Japan, and South Korea fulfil by oil import from the Gulf which passes through the Strait of Hormuz, Bag al Mandab, and Straits of Malacca. On security front India has tightened its surveillance of the area and also qualitatively griped up its military presence by setting up its first tri-service military command in the A&N Islands to ensure a faster and sharper response to any attempt aims disruption in the region. "China has employed a combination of hard military tactics political patronage, and an ever-widening list of economic development to gain foothold in South Asia, progressing relatively unchecked in this quest" (Mujherjee 2018). The competition between India and China Ocean. Kyaukpyu Port in Myanmar, Chittagong Port in Bangladesh, Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, Mombasa Port in Kenya and Gwadar Port in Pakistan. These ports are

²¹ David Scott (2008), "Sino-Indian Security Predicaments for the Twenty-First Century", *Asian Security*, 4(3): 244-270.

strategic part of Chinese military requirements in the future.²² Concerned with India on Chinese presence, Sri Lanka has offered India to develop Trincomalee Port in April in the Indian Ocean has prevailed their engagement in the port development acquisition,













	Chinese offshore naval bases and maritime development projects (L to R): Djibouti; Gwadar, Pakistan; Ihavandhippolhu Atoll, Maldives; Hambantota, Sri Lanka; Chittagong, Bangladesh; Kyaukpyu, Myanmar; Kra Isthmus, Thailand.
	Indian naval bases and maritime operations (L to R, counter clockwise): Western Naval Command, Mumbai; Forward Operating Base, Lakshadweep; Southern Naval Command, Kochi; Tri-services Command, Andaman & Nicobar Islands; Eastern Naval Command, Vishakhapatnam.
	Indian berthing rights in Maputo, Mozambique
	Indian access to French naval bases in Indian Ocean under Logistics Agreement with France: Mayotte Island and La Réunion
	India planning to develop military base in Assumption, Seychelles
	Indian Navy offshore listening post in Northern Madagascar
	Indian development of dual-use logistics facilities in Agalega, Mauritius ongoing
	Indian access to port of Duqm in Oman for military use and logistical support
	Indian access to United States naval base in Diego Garcia under LEMOA
	Australian naval base in Cocos Island

Fig. 3.2: China and India’s Maritime Footprint in the IOR

Source: *The Diplomat*

²² Ibid.

and operation in the countries of IOR. It is perceived that Chinese intention is to ring-fence India in its backyard through the “string of pearls”, a Chinese strategy to contain India through the port developments and naval assets in the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.²³ Similarly, India has developed Sittwe port of Myanmar and keen to grab Payra port of Bangladesh. Further, India is developing Chabahar port in Iran to balance Chinese involvement in the development of Gwadar port of Pakistan in the Arabian Sea. Chabahar port is just 72 Km west of Gwadar and the second largest port of Iran after Bandar Abbas. Moreover, Sri Lanka is realising the Chinese threat of gripping it through naval presence and now seeking India and Japan’s assistance to come out from China’s debt-trap.²⁴ In this regard, India has given over \$45 million to Sri Lanka for the development of Kankesanthurai Harbour (KKS harbour).²⁵ Further, in February 2018, India got access to strategic Oman port Duqm for military use, as a part of its maritime strategy to counter Chinese military base in Djibouti. India has extended its military cooperation across the spectrum to counter China’s expansionist military activities, as demonstrated in Fig. 3.2.

China’s has further possessed its weight in the Indian Ocean Region through the BRI, where China has made significant influence in the littoral countries of the Indian Ocean through its maritime road initiative. The political influence of China under the BRI can be seen in India’s neighbourhood as India is the only South-Asian country which has not joined the OBOR. In the response of 21st Century’s Maritime Silk Route of China India has taken many steps. India plans to develop Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) with Japan. The declaration about the AAGC was issued in November 2016 by Indian PM Narendra Modi and Japan’s Premier Shinzo Abe.²⁶ It is based on four pillars- “Development and Cooperation Projects, Quality Infrastructure and Institutional Connectivity, Enhancing Capacities and Skills and People-to-People partnership”.²⁷ AAGC different from the China’s BRI as it gives importance to

²³ “Sri Lanka to offer India Port Developments to Balance Out China”, *Times of India*, New Delhi, April 19, 2017.

²⁴ “Sri Lanka Seeks India and Japan Cash to Balance China”, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, March 28, 2018.

²⁵ “India gives \$45.27 million aid to develop KKS harbour in Sri Lanka”, *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, January 1, 2018.

²⁶ “Asia Africa Growth Corridor Vision Document May 2017”, URL: <http://www.africa-platform.org/resources/asia-africa-growth-corridor-vision-document-may-2017> (Accessed May 30, 2018).

²⁷ RIS, “Asia Africa Growth Corridor”, URL: <http://www.ris.org.in/aagc/> (Accessed July 10, 2018).

countries' development requirement while BRI is China centric and unidirectional. Therefore, bottom-up approach of AAGC is inclusive and uphold states' sovereignty while BRI is assertive in nature and threatens sovereignty. India is reviving ancient Spice Route and New Silk Road (Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State first mentioned in July 2011 during her speech in Chennai) to enhance "economic and cultural relations" with states in the IOR. The US has revitalised two significant development projects—"New Silk Road initiative" and "Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor" in South and SE Asia. The projects could be seen hypothetically as possible move to disadvantage China's ambitious Belt and Road initiative.²⁸ India would have a significant role in both projects as India is the connecting country between the South Asia and Southeast Asia. India's initiatives such as Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) and BIMSTAEC are playing vital role in interlinking to countries located in both sub-regions. Therefore, India is projecting itself as a key player in the IOR through strategy of collective measures to consolidate its predominance and to counter balance China's extensive expansionist strategy in the region.

China has been manoeuvring for the influence in the countries south of India in the Indian Ocean. For a while China is preparing for the ground in the Maldives to achieve its objectives. According to David Brewster, "The jostling for influence in those countries between China and India is already highly reminiscent of US–Soviet competition for influence during the Cold War and will likely grow in the future." The current political turmoil in the Maldives raises concerns in India. India was concerned about China's prospective naval base on the Gan island in the southern end of the archipelago, proximate to the US base on Diego Garcia, well located to supervision the middle Indian Ocean. Notably, Indian Navy had maintained a little presence at Gan for decades on Maldives Government's authorization. Since pro-China President Abdulla Yameen "ordered the withdrawal of an Indian naval helicopter from Gan" in April 2018, Indian military presence there became pennyworth. It was suspected strongly that China's hands are behind the move to make way for China. Therefore, there is now a clearer scenario that China is almost wiping out to the India in IOR (Brewster 2018).

²⁸ Ganguli, Sreemati, (2017), "India's Strategic connect with World", URL: https://idsa.in/idsacomments/india-strategic-connect-with-the-world_sganguli_231017 (Accessed May 31, 2018).

3.4 China, ASEAN and Extra-regional Players in South China Sea

The South China Sea (SCS) has rich fishing shores, oil and gas deposits. It has estimated reserves of “130 billion barrels of oil and 900 trillion cubic feet of gas” (Hang 2013). It is one of the busiest global waterways, being one of the main arteries of the world economy and trade through which more than \$5 trillion of world trade ships pass every year.²⁹ Realising the significance of the SCS, China claims for almost all its territorial water and repossessed almost all disputed islands located there. The position, China attained after decadal economic growth; and military strength for last two decades has raise strategic worry primarily to Southeast Asian states. After the end of the Cold War, the Southeast Asian states have faced the situation of “twin uncertainties of American military withdrawal, and Chinese strategic intentions along with its increasing material capabilities.” China has the territorial disputes over islands with four countries- Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei, out of ten ASEAN members and water dispute adding Indonesia in the SCS. Since the emergence of this complicated situation, “the Southeast Asian states have been at the forefront of planning for and putting into action strategies to cope with the rise of China, developing a mix of enmeshment and balancing approaches specific to the region but with potentially wider applicability” (Goh, 2007).

Chinese assertive actions in the SCS have aggravated apprehensions about its potentially aggressive supremacy. As a result, the ASEAN states which have territorial disputes with China in the SCS, specially Vietnam, Philippines and Indonesia, are seeking active strategic role of the external powers. Philippines and Singapore have traditional military relations with US while Vietnam and Indonesia are energising security relations with it. They are inviting India and Japan for strategic engagement and seeking security ties to rein China’s rising power and assertion in the SCS. Apparently, China is against of the intervention of any external player and warned for the consequences. Therefore, the situation has become more complex as bilateral disputes between China and any one of the SCS states have turned tripartite struggle with engagement of any one of external powers. For example, bilateral dispute between China and Vietnam oilfields became tripartite due to India’s involvement in the oil exploration. Further, Philippines and China’s dispute is now becoming trilateral

²⁹ “China waits to hear why Japanese warship going to South China Sea”, *Reuters*, March 14, 2017.

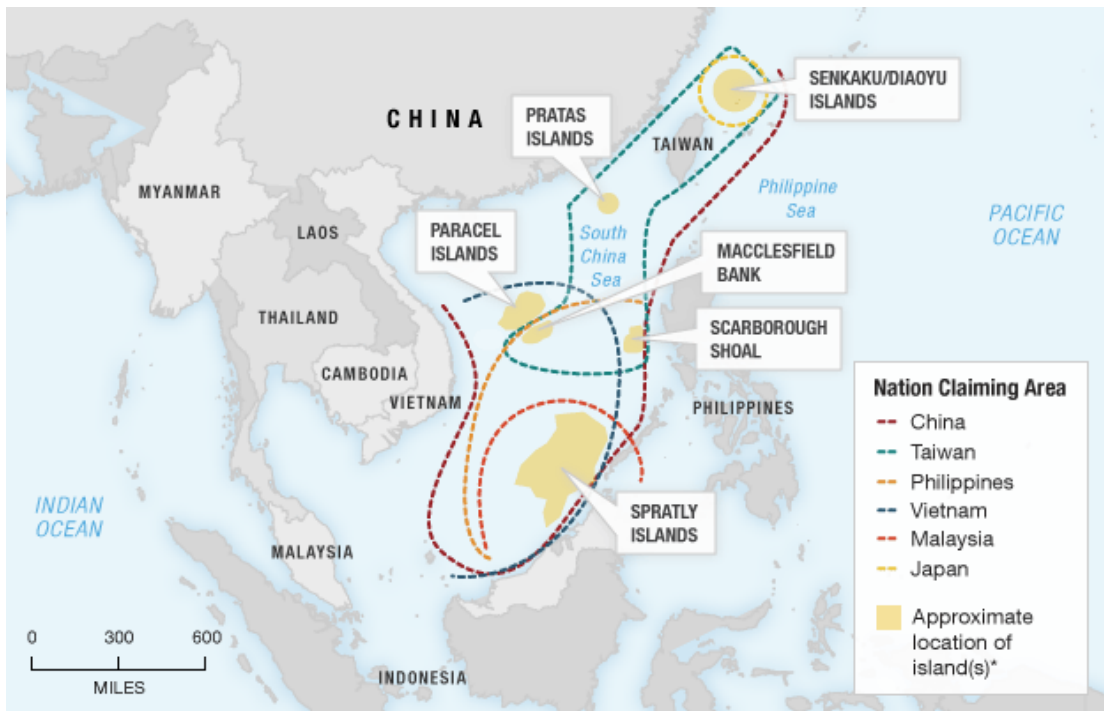


Fig. 3.3: Territorial Claims in South China Sea

Source: URL: <http://bhartiadministrativeservices.com/south-china-sea-dispute/>

because of the Japan's increasing interest in the South China Sea by linking it with the East China Sea. This geometry has increased the probability of speculation and complicated any predictability of the states' action. Vietnam considers China as a security threat because of the escalation of territorial disputes in the South China Sea by China and its geographic proximity, In the backdrop, "Vietnam has pursued an assertive soft-balancing strategy"³⁰, incorporated by informal military relations with the US and defence cooperation with India and Japan. Vietnam is the largest oil producer in South China Sea and it wants to increase its production and security of these oil fields. Therefore, Vietnam wants India's strategic engagement to check Chinese intervention in the SCS. Indian Public sector oil firm ONGC Videsh Ltd. is involved in drilling in the oil fields block 128, a part of 'Nine Dash line' which have granted two-year extension in July 2017 by Vietnam despite the Chinese objection.³¹

Philippines is another most vocal ASEAN nation against Chinese assertiveness. Scarborough Shoal (China called it Huangyan Island) is the disputed island in SCS which are claiming both as their sovereign right. Tension was escalated in April 2012,

³⁰ Chen and Yang (2013).

³¹ Nguyen, Mai et. All (2017), "Vietnam renews India oil deal in tense South China Sea", *Reuters*, July 06, 2017.

when a Chinese Naval vessel stopped a Philippine vessel from arresting Chinese fishermen in the disputed waters. China used the incident to normalise its claims of sovereignty over the South China Sea area, while Manila tried to internationalise the matter and draw the USA, Japan and ASEAN into the dispute to counter China's growing strength. In 2013, Philippines appealed in Permanent Court of Arbitration against China under the 1982 UNCLOS³², saying China's claims violated its sovereignty on the disputed island. In July 2016, the PCA delivered verdict in the favour of Philippines, ruling, China's claims of historical rights over SCS has no legal basis.³³ China rejected the ruling saying it is not bound to abide by the verdict. Despite the rejection of the international court's decision by China, the gesture of Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte was dramatically changed towards China. Therefore, the question is what strategy Philippines will adopt to balance relationship between the U.S and China. Ironically, Philippines is now cow-towing before China while the judgment was a victory of its position over the South China Sea. Duterte is trying to revive its Philippines economy and eyeing on multibillion-dollar investments for its infrastructure development from China. Therefore, despite Chinese denial of settlement, Philippines wants an adroit bargaining with China on the South China Sea dispute maintaining its sovereignty. Duterte's remark, "I am not a fan of the Americans... in our relations to the world, the Philippines will pursue an independent foreign policy,"³⁴ is important regarding warm indication towards China as it came after the PCA's verdict in September 2016. Philippines has been the traditional security ally of U.S. in the Western Pacific. Though, U.S. will remain a strategic Ally as its military forces still have access to Philippine bases for ten year by "Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement" signed in 2014.³⁵

PCA's decision on SCS dispute was consequential to affirm "rule-based maritime order" under the UNCLOS. China sees this as an issue related to its sovereignty. The

³² "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea", 1982, also called the "Law of the Sea Convention", which "defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resource".

³³ AFP (2016), "Tribunal rejects Beijing's claims on South China sea", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, July 13, 2016.

³⁴ South China Morning Post (2016), "Philippines Duterte Says he's not a 'fan of US' and vows to Plot own Course", South China Morning Post, September 10, 2016.

³⁵ Singh, Daljit (2016), "Duterte and US-China Balance of Power in South East Asia", *The Strait Times*, 15 Sep. 2016.

latest White Paper, China is strongly asserting its claims on the South China Sea, claimed “maritime rights and interest”, and warned all to not “internationalise and judicialize” the issue. China has muted all the countries except Vietnam, in South China Sea by economic and military power. It has brought a paradigm shift in the geopolitical and maritime sphere in the SCS. Southeast Asian Countries are in such immense pressure that even they do not mention PCA’s judgment either in the deliberations and statements of ASEAN or in their negotiation with China.³⁶ China’s acquisition of Mischief Reef and other reefs perceived by Philippines as a threat to its national security rely on the US military. Therefore, Duterte’s predecessor President Aquino III’s priority was the Philippines-US relationship to check China's actions in SCS, relying on US military for its security.³⁷

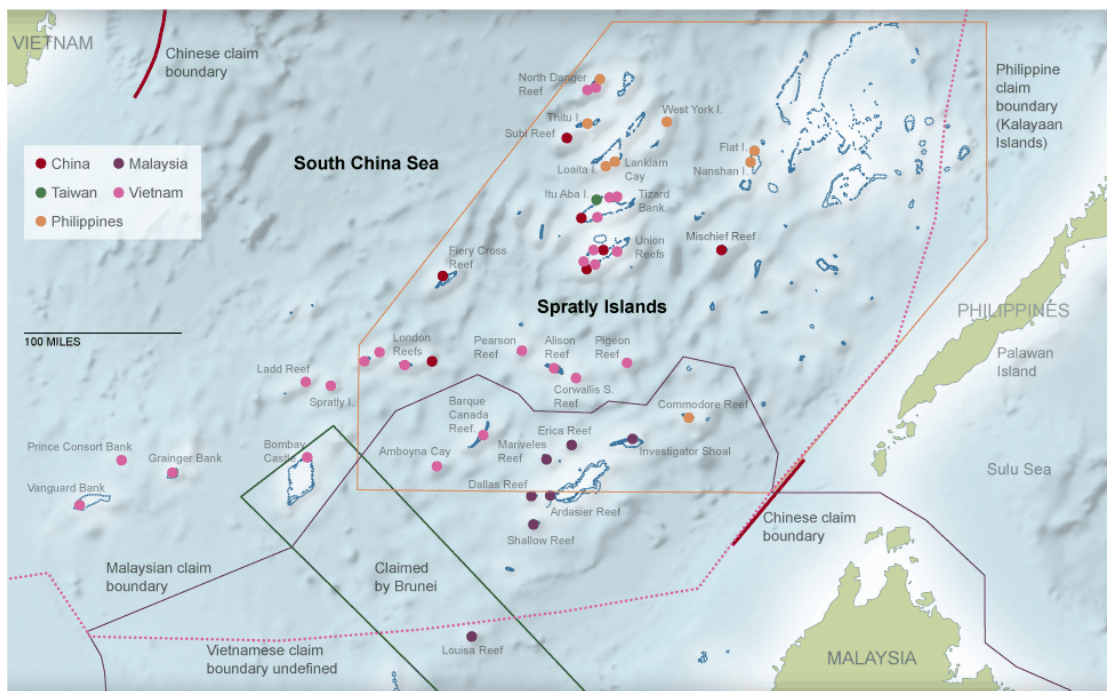


Fig. 3.4: Occupation status of Spratly Islands in South China Sea Sources: *The New York Times*

As a result of apprehensiveness over China's regional role and aggressive policies in Southeast Asia, Indonesia has also moved to fortify military ties with the USA. Though, it has dispute with China only over a small EEZ in South China Sea, unlike others, it is also a worry of China's claims “there might infringe upon Indonesia’s

³⁶ Ghoshal, Baladas (2017), “One Year after the PCA Tribunal Judgment on the South China Sea”, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, July 18, 2017.

³⁷ Hong, 2013.

sovereignty over Natuna Island.”³⁸ Indonesia has been against the entry of any external powers in the maritime security matters. It is increasing defence relation with the U.S. Earlier, when Admiral Fargo initially talked about Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMIS) in his address to the US Congress on March 31, 2004, both, Indonesia and Malaysia strongly opposed any patrols by foreign powers in the Strait of Malacca. “The governments of these two nations also raised the concern that a US naval presence in the strait would actually attract terrorist attacks and bolster the appeal of extremists. However, Singapore, which economy mainly depends on global commercial traffic through the strait, sees piracy, armed robbery and maritime terrorism as major security threats, and therefore supported the RMSI.” Singapore’s argument was that it is an intensive and complex task to safeguard the waterways against maritime terrorism and that no single State has the resources to deal effectively with the maritime security threat in the Strait of Malacca.

Japan, a non-claimant state in the South China Sea, is now getting involved in the South China Sea issue over its anxiousness about China’s “expansionist” approach. Japan’s perception is that “there is a linkage between the South China Sea and East China Sea dispute and that Beijing’s strategy and actions towards the claimant states in the South China Sea may have implications for the East China Sea and the Diaoyu (Senkaku) dispute”. Therefore, Japan is looking for a more active political role in the South China Sea dispute. In the backdrop of intensifying South China Sea dispute in 2012, Japan “decided to vitalise its military relations with the Philippines and planned to provide the Japan Coast Guard’s oldest 1000 tons patrol vessels to the Philippines.”³⁹ As a front line against the Chinese “first island chain of defence” stretching in an arc from the South China Seas to Russia’s Kurils, Japan bolster military base on island idyll. For Japan, the most vulnerable point is the Senkaku, to which China is claiming with surrounding isles.⁴⁰ Further, The Japan is finishing the installation of radars, anti-aircraft and anti-ship, and around 600 troops in the Ishigak island. Politically, Japan is energising its diplomatic and defence relations with Philippines and Vietnam through the multilateral institutions such as APEC, ARF and EAS. Various experts of International relation on Southeast Asia have the view that “the region has adopted a

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Sengupta, Kim (2018), “China Sea Crisis: Japan to bolster military base on island idyll that could become front line in event of war”, *The Independent*, 13 February 2018.

twin ‘hedging’ strategy of deep engagement on the one side and, on the other side, ‘soft balancing’ against potential Chinese aggression or disruption of the status quo; The strategy of soft balancing consists military acquisitions and modernisation with attempts to keep the US involved in the region as a counterweight to Chinese power.”⁴¹ The founding former prime minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, made similar statement in an interview in 2013 about the balance of power in the region. According to Lee, “Competition between the United States and China is inevitable, but conflict is not...Prudence dictates that there should be a balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region. This is reflected in a widely held consensus that the U.S. presence in the region should be sustained...Peace and security both in Europe and in the Pacific still depend on a balance of power. A U.S. military presence in both regions is very necessary.”⁴²

3.5 Competition Among Regional and Extra-regional Players in South-West Pacific

The Pacific Islands have been basking in to the limelight despite of very small in land area and least developed. These island countries are very rich in natural resources



Fig. 3.5: Southwest Pacific Region

Source: Asia Times

⁴¹ Goh, 2007

⁴² Yew, Lee Kuan, former Prime Minister, Singapore (2013), in an Interview to *The Atlantic*, March 05.

including minerals, flora and fauna. Above all the strategic location of these state make them relevant in power struggle and trade affairs. This region is more relevant strategically because of its geostrategic location into the Pacific Ocean. It has traditional Asian-American trade route and key sea lines of communications (SLOCs). Southwest Pacific region has become crucial geostrategic space of power projection for major Pacific Rim countries.

Geopolitically, PICs hold a crucial 12 votes⁴³ in United Nations which are important to India as it is seeking UN Security Council's permanent membership. PICs are now emerging as a region of enormous potential due to their steady and bold exit from era of ANZUS⁴⁴ influence. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Australia in 2014 signified India's "strategic pivot to the Indo-Pacific" stand arguing that a pivot to Asia also should be pivot to Pacific.⁴⁵ Australia has its dominance in South Pacific and France has colonial residuum in as New Caledonia and French Polynesia, USA has strong military presence through projecting its forward defence policy, China has also succeeded in making strong foothold. Japan and Russia are also not far behind. ASEAN leaders such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Philippines are also emphasising their presence in to the region. Therefore, it becomes unavoidable for India to keep itself away from the region. China has made strong presence by offering huge money to Pacific Islands. A report by the Lowy Institute of International Policy stated that "China is now the largest bilateral donor in Fiji and the second largest into the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga." Further it says that China has provided \$333 million bilateral aid to Fiji between 2006 and 2013, "even more than Australia (\$252 million) and almost thrice that of Japan (\$117 million), while in Samoa and Tonga the sum of Chinese aid is second only after Australia."⁴⁶ Cumulatively, "China has committed more than USD 1.7 billion in aid to eight countries in the region."⁴⁷

Although, China has its strong foothold into the Pacific region, especially in Fiji and expanding significantly from increasing trade & investment to setting up diplomatic

⁴³ Cook Island and Niue are not member of United Nations among 14 Pacific Island countries.

Nations, United. *Member States*. 2016. <http://www.un.org/en/member-states/> (accessed July 06, 2018).

⁴⁴ A trilateral security treaty of Australia, US and New Zealand, signed in September 1951.

⁴⁵ Kapila, Dr Subhash (2016), "India's Strategic Pivot to the Indo Pacific", November 27. <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1665> (accessed November 02, 2016).

⁴⁶ "The geopolitics of Chinese aid: mapping Beijing's funding in the Pacific", Lowy Institute of International Policy, 2014.

⁴⁷ Lintner, Berthel (2018), "China advances, West frets in South Pacific", *Asia Times*, April 25.

missions in each of these countries, India's beginning for regional ties has significant potentials. Fiji has been reluctant to Australia and New Zealand's influence in PICs. Fiji also waked to the issue of regionalism and had made efforts to regionalisation of Pacific identity. Other side, Kiribati has raised blatantly the issue of climate change and its life-threatening impact in to the PICs. India came out positively in support to mitigate the impact of climate change and technological help in adopting clean energy, as PICs has a huge potential of renewable energy sources such as tidal energy, solar energy and wind energy. India also signalled its seriousness to combat global warming and climate change in its ambitious INDC targets under Paris Agreement on Climate Change.⁴⁸

Therefore, very big power is making efforts to strong presence. US and France already have significant military presence in many countries and their island territories located there. Australian media reported in April 2018 that China aimed to establish a permanent naval base on the Pacific island republic of Vanuatu. Though, both Vanuatu and Chinese governments denied any such plan, but such a kind of any Chinese move would have serious impact on the region's security dynamics. Indeed, "China has already constructed a too large wharf on the Vanuatu's island of Espiritu Santo which is suspicious to fulfil mere commercial purposes of its 40,000 inhabitants and irregular tourists; Though, there is no evidence that China seeks to expand its influence through military might, it is inevitable that its expanding Pacific interests will eventually clash with those of the US and other European powers."⁴⁹

3.5.1 Small States' Dilemma to Balance between U.S and China

The geopolitical competition between the US and China has implications across the spectrum and small states of the South-West Pacific are not exception. "The dilemma works, at least, as a background condition for their independent foreign policy; Small states of south-west Pacific are confronted by a growing dilemma over how to balance their steady increasing trade with China and traditional security relations with the US." Replacing U.S., China is now the largest trade partner and investor in almost all island states though most of them have maintained close security relation with the US. This

⁴⁸Mishara, Sylvia. *India's Groing Influence and Ambition*. February 10, 2016. <http://www.policyforum.net/indias-growing-influence-ambition/> (accessed November 06, 2016).

⁴⁹Lintner, Berlitl (2018), "China advances, West frets in South Pacific", Asia Times, April 05.

situation has prevailed policy dilemma to states of assorting their economic and security relationships. New Zealand had maintained its independent foreign policy while PICs appears comparatively vulnerable. New Zealand had matched its trade and security interests through maintaining robust relationships with its traditional partners -UK, US and Australia. But New Zealand's this symmetry has collapsed in the wake of prominent trade relation with China in recent decades while critical security ties are still focused on its traditional partners. To handle this strategic dilemma, "New Zealand has adopted a mixed set of strategies to manage its position between the US and China." (Stef and Dodd-Parr, 2018).

3.6 US-China-India Triangular Balance in the Indo-Pacific

Competition among the US, China and India in the Indian Ocean can be seen which may provoke conflict over power balance in the IPR, though; these countries have disparate strategic goals. US wants to maintain its presence in the Indian Ocean but US led dominance in the IPR is quite questionable since he wants to consolidate its economy and reducing its defence expenditure over the region. US has reduced its military presence from countries, the closest allies in the IPR, Japan, Vietnam, Philippines, Singapore and wanted them to stand their selves to own defence. In case of the South China Seas, higher U.S. nor India have claimed in the disputed SCS but both have declared that their views for peaceful resolution and the maintenance of freedom of navigation for their national interest.

With the growing trade with the African countries and the huge investment in the Africa continent as well as PICs in the south-west Pacific has vast implication for Chinese SLOCs in the Indian and the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, China is apparently dominating in the South China Sea and trying to expand it up to the South-West Pacific and the Indian Ocean in its own way. But China's affliction in maintaining a continuing presence in the Indian Ocean is the larger distance which is unfeasible for its logistic support. At the same time, China is developing blue-water navy to meet its interests which will extend its reach in nearby Indian Ocean that would be inevitably increase security threat in the Indo-Pacific. It is also increasing naval presence in the nearby Pacific. For the naval base, perhaps Vanuatu is in its radar. "If the new port facility in Vanuatu is developed or used as a naval base, it would be China's second such overseas naval facility after at Obock in Djibouti opened in August 2017 on the Horn of Africa."

Therefore, China is using potential to become a superpower, whereas India's ambition is to be greatest player in the IOR, while, America's interest is to maintain the status quo, where it is the only superpower.



Fig. 3.6: Power Balance in the Indian Ocean

Source: Geopolitical Intelligence Service

3.6.1 Extra Regional Players in the Indo-Pacific- Russia, Japan, France and UK

Russia is increasing its interests in the Indo-Pacific. It has sought great-power status in the region where it seeks to participate in geostrategic landscape. “Russia seeks to restore its great power status and establish spheres of influence near its borders ... The combination of Russian ambition and growing military capabilities creates an unstable frontier in Eurasia, where the risk of conflict due to Russian miscalculation is growing.” Russia has drastically increased its defence cooperation throughout Asia and the Indo-Pacific over the last decade.⁵⁰

As a result of the increasing Russia's activism, US is trying to knock into any kind of Russia-China collision in the Indo-Pacific affairs. Trump administration's new defence strategy clearly mentions Russia as emerging threats to international security along with China. U.S. Defence secretary Jim Mattis accused China of using “predatory economics” to intimidate its neighbours and Moscow of “violating the borders of its

⁵⁰ Muraviev Alexey, (2018), “Russian Military Power in the Indo-Asia-Pacific”, Real Clear World, URL: https://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2018/02/15/russian_military_power_in_the_indo-asiapacific_112711.html (Accessed July 10, 2018).

neighbours”. Mattis said, “it is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model — gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic and security decisions”.⁵¹

France is also concerned about the security of the Indian Ocean and freedom of navigation in the region. France has its naval bases in Mayotte and Reunion islands in the Indian Ocean. Therefore, France is seeking maritime and military cooperation with India. During his India visit in March 2018, French President Emmanuel Macron said, “The Pacific and the Indian Oceans cannot become zones for hegemonic power and we are, therefore, building a strategic partnership. The same is true for our defence cooperation signed a while ago.”⁵² UK has expounded its “concern over China’s ambitious transnational Belt and Road Initiative, infrastructure-linked project; UK has raised doubts about China’s short and long-term political aims through the BRI.” As the Guardian, stated, “Prime Minister Theresa May has not given her formal endorsement to the USD 900 billion New Silk Road being promoted aggressively by Beijing since 2013.”⁵³ Australia also shared US’s concern about the changing global order, but it not perceive China’s rises as a threat. In a clear attempt to distance Australia from the ‘Mattis doctrine’ which described Russia and China as emerging threat to global order, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said in responding US’s new defence strategy, “We have a different perspective on Russia and China clearly — we do not see Russia or China posing a military threat to Australia.”⁵⁴

Mahan identified “six fundamental elements of sea power: geographical position, physical conformation, extent of territory, size of population, character of the people, and character of government.”⁵⁵ Based on largely those factors, Mahan envisioned the United States as the geopolitical successor to the British Empire. He proved to be right

⁵¹ *The Australian*, URL: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/new-defence-strategy-a-change-of-trumps-tune-says-beazley/news-story/1101ec6d3912bcd1107cf58524d14cdf> (Accessed July 10, 2018).

⁵² *The Hindu*, New Delhi, March 11, 2018.

⁵³ UK flags concern, doubts over OBOR project, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, Feb. 03, 2018.

⁵⁴ *The Australian*, URL: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/new-defence-strategy-a-change-of-trumps-tune-says-beazley/news-story/1101ec6d3912bcd1107cf58524d14cdf> (Accessed July 10, 2018).

⁵⁵ Sempa, Francis P. (2014), *The Geopolitical Vision of Alfred Thayer Mahan*, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 20 May 2014, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2014/12/the-geopolitical-vision-of-alfred-thayer-mahan/>

after years. In the contemporary world politics these factors are posing China and India as potential global powers. “Mahan also recognized the power potential of China and foresaw a time when the United States would need to be concerned with China’s rise; In 1893, He wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Times* in which he recommended annexation of Hawaii as a necessary first step to exercise control of the North Pacific; If the United States failed to act, Mahan warned, ‘The vast mass of China...may yield to one of those impulses which have in past ages buried civilization under a wave of barbaric invasion; Should China ‘burst her barriers eastward,’ he wrote, ‘it would be impossible to exaggerate the momentous issues dependent upon a firm hold of the [Hawaiian] Islands by a great civilized maritime power.’”⁵⁶

In this regard, Naval War College professors Toshi Yoshihara and James Holmes concludes after examining the writings of contemporary Chinese military thinkers and strategists, “China is situated in the heart of east-central Asia and has a lengthy sea-coast, a huge population, a growing economy, growing military and naval power, and, at least for now, a stable government. China’s political and military leaders have not hidden their desire to supplant the United States as the predominant power in the Asia-Pacific region.”⁵⁷ The Economist writes about China’s rise, “China wants—and deserves—a greater role in East Asia and in the global order. America has to make room for it.”⁵⁸

Definitely, China is so giant in term of economy and military power that it seems impossible for the rest of Asia, including Japan and India, to match it in weight and capacity over the next two-three decades. Therefore, America will have to strike a balance. United States nevertheless will not be willing and cannot afford to bear the whole cost of the global security burden. As the new regime in the US is adopting the protectionist approach towards its economy and the President Donald Trump has made statements several times that the US cannot waste lots of dollars in the security of the other states. He has made a point of telling US allies that they must do more for their own defence.⁵⁹ Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s effort for constitutional amendment is evident which aims to revise Japan’s post-war pacifist Constitution.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ The Economist (2017), “America and China’s strategic relationship”, April 22.

⁵⁹The New York Times (2016), “Transcript: Donald Trump’s Foreign Policy Speech”, April 27.

Earlier, U.S. had made pressure on Japan to revise its security doctrine and bilateral security guidelines announced during Mr. Abe's visit to the U.S. in April 2015, urged Tokyo to take "more responsibility" in their bilateral security arrangement.⁶⁰

In this backdrop, in 2007 Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe initiated a security dialogue, supported by "Asian Arc of Democracy" to formulate "Quad". Though it could not sustain after its first meeting as Australia pulled back itself, largely due to fears about China perceiving the grouping as containment. Though, the joint military exercise- 'Malabar', between Japan, India and US continued from 2007 onward. The recent revival of Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between US, India, Japan and Australia made possible immense security gain to the member states though has provoked China as its potential to turn into a formal military alliance in form of "Quad", which China see as an effort to non-aligned China in the region to containment it's rise. Chinese government responded by issuing formal diplomatic protests to its members after the meeting of four states in the side-lines of the East Asia Summit in Manila, November 2017. Former US President Obama had called, through his 'Pivot to Asia' policy for a new "worldwide concert of democracies to counter the influence of Russia and China not only in the regional politics but also in the international forums, especially in the United Nations Security Council." In an attempt to marginalise China, US and Japan and now India and Australia, call Asia and the Pacific as the new Indo-Pacific region. Definitely, for the US, India has to play a central role in the "Asian geopolitics in general and in the maritime geo-strategy in particular". Chinese aggressive strategy in form of BRI, propelled the quad. In this context, "India needs to have an alliance based on an axis of economic or strategic cooperation." The quad appears to be feasible enough to India as it has given importance to Indian Ocean and Western Pacific as well. India's announcement of its new Maritime policy 'Ensuring Secure Seas' in 2015 seems to prioritise security against maritime security challenges.

Finally, comprehensive analysis of the study reflects that the U.S. presence in the region should be sustained. Presence of the United States makes a difference, which is required for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. It will have to engage India, Japan and Australia to contain China in the Indo-Pacific region. Therefore, the US will be able to maintain itself as a world power but not as the super power. Moreover,

⁶⁰The Hindu (2015), "Japan's Security Dilemma", July 21.

definitely, US will have to share its predominant position with China because it cannot stop China's rise, as the Lee Kuan Yew said, "the size of China's displacement of the world balance is such that the world must find a new balance. It is not possible to pretend that this is just another big player. This is the biggest player in the history of the world."⁶¹ Definitely, "China is leveraging military modernisation, influence operations, and predatory economics to coerce neighbouring countries to reorder the Indo-Pacific region to its advantage."

⁶¹ Yew, Lee Kuan,(2013), "Interview: Lee Kuan Yew on the Future of U.S.- China Relations", *The Atlantic*, [Online: web] Accessed on 20 June, 2018, URL: <https://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/03/interview-lee-kuan-yew-on-the-future-of-us-china-relations/273657/>

Chapter-IV

India's Role in Maritime Power Balance and Multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific

“Geography is the most fundamental factor in the foreign policy of states because it is the most permanent...”

-Nicholas J. Spykman, *America's Strategy in World Politics* (1942)

4.1 Background

Multilateralism is the intergovernmental practice of participation by three or more states on the issues of international politics such as trade, security, climate change etc. This multilateral participation requires broader consensus on such issues for the greater cooperation. Multilateralism may result into formation of a formal multilateral framework as mechanism to address regional or global issues appropriately which is capable to take necessary actions to safeguard common interests. The main problem of this kind of multilateral framework is the initiation of multilateralism, since the hegemon state doesn't want to share power and small states are reluctant. Therefore, the responsibility of such an initiative come to the middle powers because their interests are most affected. Indo-Pacific Region (IPR) may be new as a concept, but issues related to the geopolitics are neither new nor limited to the contemporary geopolitics. IPR consists majorly, Southeast Asia and South China Sea (SCS), Southwest Pacific and Indian Ocean Region (IOR); and these regions have specific regional aspects of the geopolitics. Southeast Asia and SCS is a region where major players have shared concerns over the Chinese hegemony. Chinese supremacy has been boosted by the significant U.S. military revulsion. As a result, Japan has been pitching for a multilateral cooperation in the region for a long period. In last one decade, the growing encompasses of Chinese ascendancy in the maritime arena have made multilateral cooperation indispensable. Though, India had stayed away itself for long from the geopolitics of Asia-Pacific and has been limited to the neighbourhood in the Indian Ocean. Similarly, Australia has been playing in the Southwest Pacific. The increasing fear of Chinese hegemony has accentuated both India and Australia to not limit their regional dominance. In the given background, this chapter explores the options for a multilateral cooperation and examines the capabilities of regional players to lead multilateralism in IPR.

The chapter compares potential regional players of their strength in the various indicators and lights on the India's capability and implications to play crucial role for the multilateralism in the IPR. Further, chapter discuss the existing multilateral platform and India's presence and its role there. Further, Chapter describes India's major multilateral initiatives in the maritime domain of the IPR and their importance.

4.2 Examining the Options for the Leadership of multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific Region

4.2.1 USA

US is predominant world power which remained unchallenged for last two decades after the end of the Cold War, led by collapse of the USSR. China has grown up rapidly in a peaceful environment, especially in the power vacuum created particularly by US's withdrawal from the East Asia. US's realisation of the emergence of China as a challenge witnessed in 2011 when former President Barak Obama pitches to rebalance Asia in his address to Australian Parliament. Prior to this, then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in her speech in India laid out his Asia rebalance plan saying, "we encourage India not just to look east, but to engage East and act East as well" (Kugelman 2018). US's approach to forward India to play a balancing role in the Indo-Pacific can be seen as US's incapability to carry burden of the regional and global security. Despite the world's largest economy, largest military strength, oldest and second largest democracy, long history of backing and supporting democratic political system across the world, US is now widely accepted as a declining super power. US supremacy is now challenged by the emerging power China, India, Russia and multilateral grouping specially by BRICS at the global and regional level. After the election of the Donald Trump as the US President, the notion about the American leadership have weakened. Trumps decision to pullback US from the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), Paris Agreement on Climate Change, UNESCO and insisting trade war and anti-globalization have proved the decline in US's global approach. This is perceived by the countries, even strategic partners of the US in the Indo-Pacific Region. US's security allies are now changing their approach about the partnership and the shared strategy. Talking about the US's leadership, the Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull stated that, "U.S.-anchored rules-based order" can no longer be "taken for granted." Turnbull said foreign policy should be determined by Australia's interests "alone," and he declared that

the U.S. alliance isn't "a straitjacket."¹ German Chancellor Angela Merkel in reaction to Trump said that Europe must "take our fate into our own hands." Chrystia Freeland, Foreign Minister of Canada said that America's questioning of "the very worth of its mantle of global leadership puts in sharper focus the need for the rest of us to set our own clear and sovereign course." Dana Milbank writes "this became more clear after last week's Group of 20 meeting, where Trump was the sole dissenter on the Paris accord and his protectionist talk set off fears that a trade war was forming."²



Fig. 4.1: Military Strength of Major Stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific

Source: *The Economist*

4.2.2 China:

China is rising in the world political map very significantly being world's largest populated country, second largest economy, largest military personnel and so on. Having second largest defence budget (\$177 billion) and consistently increasing allocation shows Chinese pretension as well as its readiness for her role of wider security and stability provider. In last 15 years "China has built corvettes, destroyers, frigates and submarines more than Japan, India and South Korea combined."³ According to the Military Balance report 2018,

¹Milbank, Dana (2017), "Watching America lose its moral authority in real time" *The Washington Post*, July 14.

²Ibid.

³Sengupta, Kim (2018), "China and Russia are catching up with military power of US and West, say leading defence experts", *The Independent*, February 14.

“the total tonnage of China’s new warships and auxiliaries launched in the last four years alone was greater than that of the whole French navy.” But mere development of military equipments and ‘leap-ahead’ technologies to augment in comparison to the US and Europe is not necessarily guarantee of success, even delivering military power. The IISS’s director general Dr John Chipman pointed out that, “China’s emerging weapons developments and broader defence-technological progress further its transition from ‘catching up’ with the West to becoming a global defence innovator; The West no longer has a monopoly on world-leading defence innovation and production, or the funds to enable these; Indeed, China might be the one to leap ahead; But to use its capabilities to best effect, China will need to make similar improvements in training, doctrine and tactics.”

The most prominent doubt over Chinese ascendancy, despite having for better strength is the very problematic feature of China’s non-democratic political system. The political system of China and its institutional mechanism, including the selection process of successor make it opaque and unpredictable. Therefore, it raises doubts over China’s intention and most of the states are reluctant to accept Chinese leadership, even in the regional level. At the global level, large democracies such as US, India, France, UK and Australia have always been batting for democratic value system. Recently, in an unprecedented move, China made an amendment in its constitution which removed the maximum of two terms of presidentship paving the way for lifetime leadership for President Xi Jinping.

As Yida Zhai, a Shanghai Professor showed concerns about substantial space between the objective apprehensions of China’s strength by its neighbours. Zhai observed that “Power cannot make China a great state” (Lampton 2016). Concerning with Chinese expansions and its approach towards international norms it is very unpredictable about the kind of country that China will be in coming years. In the words of the Admiral Harry Harris, the Chief US PACOM, “In longer-term perspective, regarding to what we see evidence of right now in terms of the China strategy with the BRI and also with President Xi Jinping's change to a lifetime leader.”

4.2.3 Why India should lead the Multilateralism initiative

Geography is the most important factor in the strategic practices as Spykman pointed out in his book *America's Strategy in World Politics* (1942). India’s geographical location at the apex of the Indian ocean provides it the most geostrategic advancement. India’s islands

territories' location on the blue waters of the Indian Ocean makes India's outreach beyond the SLOCs and legitimizes India's surveillance of the strategic chokepoints of the region. Apart from the geography, in the economic side, India is the world's third largest economy after China and US in the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) and poised to become fifth largest economy in the nominal values in 2018 after the US, China, Japan and Germany.⁴ In the term of military capabilities, India is the world's fourth military power and the largest naval power in the Indian Ocean. Politically, the most important thing in the value based international system, India is the world's largest democracy. Further, India has the important legacy of the Non-aligned Movement which helped India in remaining away from military alliance politics. India has been a reliable partner for regional countries as it is non-expansionist and non-colonial power. India's peaceful approach in the bilateral relations, respect to the international rules and regulations is now attracting larger powers to engage with India for a secure, peaceful, stable regional and global order.

The US has been pitching for greater Indo-US cooperation in the strategically key Indo-Pacific region where China has been ramping up its military presence. Definitely, US wants India to be in a leading role for the security and stability in the Indo-Pacific Region. US is pushing India to become "net security provider" in the IOR. US President Barack Obama during his visit on Republic Day in 2015 urged India to play a greater role in the IOR. US might have earned strategic and political gains in the past few years. But the concerns are expressed over possible break-up of the US-Japan alliance. The role of US allies specially, Philippines, including their domestic developments that affect their relationship with the US also matters. The dramatic reversal of pro-Americanism in the region since the election of Donald Trump, strategic partnership with India became inordinate requirement. In the backdrop, the US designated India a "major defence partner" in 2016 with the objective of strengthening military cooperation and both countries signed a Logistics Exchange Agreement (LEMOA) that bolstered their bilateral security relations. It enables two countries to use each other's military bases and to conduct joint military operations in IPR.

China's assertiveness and arbitrariness must be checked timely that is indispensable for value-based world order and the security of the region. The United States cannot afford security of the Indo-Pacific region alone. US's traditional allies are now distancing

⁴ "India Is Poised To Become The World's Fifth Largest Economy, But It Can't Stop There", *Forbes*, 17 December 2017.

themselves from the US in pursuance of free and independent foreign policy. Australia's geographical distance and now changing approach to US's partnership in guiding its foreign policy have minimized the US-Australian alliance. Japan and Philippines have been most important strategic partner of the US in the Asia Pacific region. After the diminishing its economy, and growing defence budget abroad, US is pulling itself back from its role of umbrella security provider at its own cost. US is urging all its traditional security partner to become self-dependent to tackle security threat. The significant example is Japan. US is losing its influence in the Philippines. China's potential weight, which far exceeds that of the US and Japan combined, India's strategic partnership is indispensable. In this regard commissioner of US-China Economic and Security Review Commission Jonathan N Stivers told a Congressional committee during a hearing on China's BRI strategy that "India should become a central component of the Asia-Pacific strategy"⁵. These aforementioned points show that India has a greater possibility of leading a successful multilateral forum in IPR.

4.3 India's Cooperation with Extra-regional Players

The major extra-regional player can be identified as Russia, Japan, France, and U.K. though, Russia and Japan do not have their territory in the Indo-Pacific despite their geographical proximity, but the France and UK have substantial island territories as a remanence of their colonial history. The French territories are Reunion Island in the Western Indian Ocean and French Polynesia & New Caledonia in the Southwest Pacific. UK has Chagos Archipelago where US's Diego Garcia military base is located. All extra-regional players have their shared concern of freedom of navigation and security of SLOCs as substantial share of their seaborne trade passes. Their common interests are related to the environment, maritime security and marine resources. In a new emerging paradigm of the global order, extra-regional players are also aggravating their role. As, this is not feasible and even possible for them to have direct presence in the IPR, therefore they are exploring and energising their strategic relations with India, a reliable and emerging global power which has vast maritime domain in the IOR. The strategic cooperation has increased in the past few years. India and France strengthening their cooperation in the field of "logistical support on reciprocal access to respective facilities for India and French armed forces."⁶

⁵PTI, (2018), "India should become a central component of Asia-Pacific strategy", *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, July 13, 2018.

⁶"India, France join hands for Indian Ocean security", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, March 11, 2018.

The India-France Joint Strategic Vision released during the French President Emmanuel Macron's India visit in March 2018, stated mutual support for "greater coordination in regional/international fora in the region."⁷ During 9th India-Japan Strategic dialogue in Tokyo in the end of March 2018, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono described India as Japan's "most important" partner in its "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," and both countries agreed to step up cooperation in their "Special Strategic and Global Partnership". Concerned of China's actions in the South China Sea Japan wants its "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" to be merged with India's Act East Policy. Therefore, "growing convergence on economic and strategic issues is important for peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region."⁸ India has now begun explicit mentions of SCS in its joint declarations in line with proactive Act East Policy and to maintain a deliberate ambiguity in its position in SCS disputes. After the first mentioning of SCS with the US in 2014, reference of the SCS placed in the joint statement of India-Japan Summit in 2015 and 2016.⁹

4.4 India's Cooperation with Middle Powers and their role in the Indo-Pacific Region

Australia and Indonesia are the main median players in the Indo-Pacific region in the term of geographical size, population, economy, military strength and political influence. Bangladesh, Vietnam, Malaysia, New Zealand, Thailand and Myanmar are emerging middle power which have enhanced in the vibrating concept of Indo-Pacific by their strategic geographical setting. Indian orientation in the region has been mainly, development of bilateral relations and trade under its 'Look East Policy'. After, growing concern over Chinese outreach in the region and realising the geostrategic imperatives itself, India is proactively engaging with the middle powers of the IPR. Australia and New Zealand have also voiced their concerns over Chinese threat and wishes India to play greater role in the region. In this order, in September 2004, after getting convinced of the Indian Navy's ability to play a non-threatening security enhancing role, Malaysia has overcome its earlier reluctance to involve the Indian Navy in a sea lanes' sanitising role. While, Indonesia and Singapore see the Indian Navy as a reliable and non-controversial ally in ensuring that piracy does not escalate into terrorism and cause disruption in the

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "India and Japan commit to Indo-Pacific strategy", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, March 30, 2018.

⁹ Parashar, Sachin, (2017), "As US dithers, India-Japan reviewing South China Sea position?", *Times of India*, New Delhi, Sep. 17, 2018.

Malacca Straits. Indonesian gesture has seen in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, when it highly appreciated the Indian Navy's Operation 'Gambhir' for humanitarian assistance in January 2005. Several bilateral and multilateral naval exercises also have been conducted in the Straits of Malacca and the Andaman Sea by India and MSP countries¹⁰. Navies of India and Indonesia have conducted coordinated patrols in the Six Degrees Channel, one of the three routes through this area for east-west trade. Both countries have been engaging in coordinated patrols since 2002, which called the India-Indonesia CORPAT. All four MSP countries also participate in India-led multilateral naval exercises such as the MILAN exercise and the IONS. At present, Indian Navy uses its fleet of reconnaissance planes over the Malacca and has its warships patrolling the SLOC west of Malacca.¹¹ Indian Navy's Boeing P-8 maritime surveillance and strike aircraft have been deployed in the A&N Islands near the Malacca Straits. Singapore is also a strategic Partner of India in the Southeast Asia.¹² Recently, it has offered India its logistic base for security of Straits of Malacca and Andaman Sea and Indian Navy to visit Changi naval base more frequently. India and Singapore have bilateral naval cooperation agreement which covers maritime security, joint exercises, and short-term of the naval facilities from each other.¹³

India has become more vocal to play leading role in the Indian Ocean while, earlier Indian political leadership has hesitated to accept the leadership in this context. This can be traced in several statements of the top political leadership of India. In 2009, the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has insisted that "there can thus be no doubt that the Indian Navy must be the most important maritime power in this region". In 2012, the Defence Minister A.K. Antony said in the Naval Chiefs Conference that "India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean and the professional capability of our Navy bestows upon us a natural ability to play a leading role in ensuring peace and stability in the Indian Ocean Region". Moreover, India delivered a substantial message about its commitment in the Indo-Pacific through the presence of the all heads of ASEAN states at celebration of 2018's Republic Day. Simultaneously organised the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in New Delhi marks

¹⁰ The MSP (Malacca Straits Patrol) countries are Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. "MSP is a set of cooperative measures comprising the Malacca Straits Sea Patrol, the 'Eyes-in-the-Sky' Combined Maritime Air Patrols as well as the Intelligence Exchange Group, that are undertaken by the littoral states to ensure the security of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS)."

¹¹ *Sputnik International*, "India Set to Patrol Malacca Straits That Lead to South China Sea", URL: <https://sputniknews.com/asia/201704111052519338-south-china-sea-india/> (accessed July 11, 2018).

¹²"Singapore a strategic Partner: PM", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, June 02, 2018.

¹³"Singapore offers India logistical base", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, December 1, 2017.

the arrival of India as a major force in to the Pacific theatre. On the occasion, Delhi Declaration, signed by all ten-member states of the ASEAN and India, articulated urgent concerns of all of them and reaffirms the importance of maintaining maritime safety, freedom of navigation and overflight in the region and other lawful use of the seas in accordance with international laws. It also sought “full and effective implementation of the declaration on the conduct of the parties and early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.”¹⁴ The most importantly, ASEAN nations appealed India to play proactive role in the maritime fulcrum of the Indo-Pacific.¹⁵

Understanding the importance of countries seeking their role and asserting their views more soundly in the shores of the South China Sea, India have intensified strategic relationship with them. Vietnam’s strategy to avoid any formal military alliances in the region and it is seeking many partnerships with big powers. Vietnam’s increasing “defence and commercial ties with India are part of Vietnam’s SCS strategy; India is providing naval patrol boats, satellite cover to monitor Vietnam’s SCS waters and training for its submarines and fighter pilots - more military support than it is giving to any other Southeast Asian country.” India has provided \$500 million defence credit to Vietnam as transfers of naval vessels and missiles. Therefore, the relationship between India and Vietnam are in new height, as underscored by Vietnam’s Deputy Prime Minister Pham Binh Minh who welcomed India to play a bigger role in Southeast Asia - and specifically the SCS.¹⁶

Indonesia is the world’s largest archipelagic State “with a coastline of 108,000 km which is key to connects the Indian and Pacific oceans.” Therefore, Indonesia is seeking to raise the Southeast Asian states as a “fulcrum” of Indo-Pacific maritime activity under President Widodo’s Global Maritime Fulcrum through Indonesia’s geographic position. Connecting with the Indonesia’s view, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his first visit in May 2018 said “Under India’s Act East policy, we have SAGAR- Security and Growth for All in the Region- which matches with President Widodo’s Global Maritime Fulcrum”.¹⁷ India and Indonesia have signed agreement to enhanced defence cooperation and released shared

¹⁴“India Should be Proactive: ASEAN”, The Hindu, New Delhi, January 27, 2018.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶Reuters, “Vietnam renews India oil deal in tense South China Sea”, URL: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-vietnam/vietnam-renews-india-oil-deal-in-tense-south-china-sea-idUSKBN19R25P> (Accessed July 08, 2018).

¹⁷ Jacob, Jaynath, (2018), “India, Indonesia agree to step up defence and maritime cooperation during Modi visit”, *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, May 31, 2018.

Vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and agreed tightened defence and maritime cooperation in May 2018.

4.5 India's Engagement with Small Stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific Region-Indian Ocean Island Countries (IOCs) and Pacific Island Countries (PICs)

India, as it is emerging economically, seeking its place in global sphere and important strategic role in world politics. Pacific Island countries are becoming crucial centre of manoeuvring with the growing Chinese influence into the Indo-Pacific region. India has increased patrols in the Indian Ocean, financial and equipment assistance and capacity building of IOR island countries such as Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives and Pacific Island Countries and humanitarian assistance activities in the Indo-Pacific Region. This is very evident that India has the potential and has shown its intention to take the regional security responsibilities. India has provided patrol ships-Topaz, Constant and Hermes and two Dornier maritime patrol aircraft equipped with 360-degree surveillance radar to Seychelles, first in January 2013, to enhance its multi-dimensional maritime monitoring capacity. In June 2018, India has announced a \$100 million line of credit to purchase military hardware from India.¹⁸ Prior to this, in early 2018, India signed an agreement with Seychelles to take Assumption Island on lease for the development, management, operation and maintenance; and for the operation of a naval base and air strip by the Indian navy.¹⁹ Though the agreement would be required the parliament's nod of the archipelago state which may find difficulty with increasing Chinese Intervention. India has also delivered 11 fast interceptor vessels to Mauritius on contractual basis.²⁰ Further, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) is an area in which India has proven remarkably adept in recent years. India can lead initiative for coordination among countries for HADR operations in the Indo-Pacific Region, including planning and training. A joint Indo-Pacific HADR cell can be established for accomplishing this objective.

India is expanding its geopolitical circle to South-West Pacific. It has made substantial effort for greater cooperation with the Pacific Island countries (PICs) in recent years. In the way to make its footholds in the South-West Pacific India founded 'Forum for India-Pacific

¹⁸“After aid for defence buys, India gifts plane to Seychelles”, The Hindu, New Delhi, June 27, 2018.

¹⁹“Strategic deal: Seychelles allows India to build military infra on island”, Business Standard, New Delhi, January 29, 2018.

²⁰Mauritius inducts GSL-build vessels, Times of India, URL: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/Mauritius-inducts-GSL-built-vessels/articleshow/51567272.cms> (Accessed July 12, 2018).

Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)', which includes all fourteen Pacific Islands countries (PICs)- Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. These countries have a regional cooperation platform called 'Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)', where all fourteen countries are members. Therefore, India is not engaging with PICs only through the FIPIC, but it got opportunity to interact with all the members of PIF. PICs have been victim of tug of war and abhorrent policies of USA and Australia. PICs have been exploited and ruined since colonial era and now are facing serious development challenges, threats from global warming and experiencing of natural hazards like volcanic eruption, tsunamis and severe tropical cyclones. Living condition is also vulnerable due to extreme climatic condition.

India has been always vocal of Self-determination and equal rights in international forum. Fiji, because of its emphasis on Pacific identity always treated as 'black sheep' in regional forums, especially in US, Australia and New Zealand dominated groups. In the year of 2009, it was the highest level when Fiji was thrown out from Pacific Island Forum by joint efforts of Australia and New Zealand. In the case of FIPIC, it was launched in Fiji and got opportunity to host its first summit. India also deepens its ties with Papua New Guinea when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited this country with Fiji. Now India wants to expand its ties and partnership with other Pacific countries helping them in capacity building, creating human capital and helping in combating with climate change. It is in India's long term commercial and strategic interest to make significant efforts to ensure its strong presence in to the Pacific region.

During the launch of FIPIC, India had offered some major assistance projects which includes "setting up of a special \$1 million fund for adopting to climate change and clean energy, establishing a trade office in India, Pan-Pacific Islands e-network to improve digital connectivity, extending visa on arrival to all 14 countries, cooperation in space technology application for improving quality of life of Islands, and training to diplomats from Pacific Island countries." In addition, India has increased the annual 'Grant in Aid' from \$125,000 to \$200,000 to each of the Pacific countries for community project (training and capacity building) of their choice. In May 2017, India hosted the 'India-Pacific Islands

Sustainable Development Conference' in Suva, Fiji under the FIPIC.²¹ Though, these are non-strategic cooperative measures but importance of this early or premature relationship is the prospect for the deeper engagement in coming year which would pave the way for strategic cooperation. In August 2015, second summit of the FIPIC held in Jaipur where, out of ten members states' or government head were present. It was significant as global issues important to members such as climate change and reform of United Nations have discussed. Their gratitude sent a strong message as they came out openly regarding bilateral relations which have been wooed by big powers such as US, China, and Russia, and middle powers like Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Indonesia for their strategic and trade interests.

4.6 India and the Multilateral Framework in the Indo-Pacific

The stability of systematic order requires cooperation from among nations in one hand and healthy competition in the other. The multilateral mechanism can and should serve value base international system that can work as a tool to fulfil common interests in long term. According to Stephen Burgess, “the constructivist perspective, stressing self-conceptualization of Chinese strategic culture, supports Chinese confidence that patience will eventually bring dominance. The most promising alternative is multilateral diplomacy through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Regional Forum, a vehicle for negotiating a Code of Conduct and implementation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.”²² If China's expansionist approach is aspired mainly by defence of realist interests. US's soft its partners have a chance of working multilaterally (Burgess, 2016). On the backdrop, the US National Security Strategy (NSS) came in due course which states, “A free and open Indo-Pacific region provides prosperity and security for all. We will strengthen our alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific to a networked security architecture capable of deterring aggression, maintaining stability, and ensuring free access to common domains”. The NSS prevails the multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific region though it not specifically mentioned India and Japan. The NSS “the US will bring together bilateral and multilateral security relationships to preserve the free and open international system with key countries in the region.”

²¹ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, URL: http://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/28460/IndiaPacific_Islands_Sustainable_Development_Conference_to_enhance_cooperati_on_between_India_and_Pacific_Island_Countries (Accessed July, 18, 2018).

²²Burgess, Stephen F. (2016).

India is already part of so many forums of Southeast Asia and Asia Pacific region made on regional security and cooperation outlook. India is member state of multilateral security related forum in the Asia Pacific that is ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), formed in 1994, aftermath of the end of the Cambodian Crisis and the Cold War and rise of China's economic and military strength. India has joined Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) as an associate member in December 1994 and became full member in March 2000.²³ CSCAP has several acting groups on many issues like transnational crimes, maritime cooperation, regional peace and stability, human trafficking, international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and India is actively participating in to them. India is also part of another multilateral dialogue on the issue of security and peace in the Asia-Pacific region that is Shangri-La Dialogue.

4.6.1 India Led Major Initiative of Multilateralism in the Indian Ocean Region

4.6.1.1 Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

IORA is an inter-governmental organisation which was established on 7 March 1997. The vision for IORA founded by South African President Nelson during his India visit in 1995. The sentiment and rationale underpinned the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative in March 1995, and the creation of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (then known as the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation) two years later, in March 1997. Objective of the organisation it to "build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation through a consensus based, evolutionary and non-intrusive approach". As of "non-intrusive approach" it has no "binding contracts or ridged instrumental structures". Therefore, it has been insignificant in the securing and shaping of the interests of the member states. Following the changing maritime security environment amid the china's challenge in IOR, India has come in active mode. The prospective China-US competition may vanish the interests of the littoral states of the region. Aftermath of the emerging new paradigm in the maritime region, the forum members have realised the importance to activate multilateral framework and therefore, the member states are trying to revitalise it so that they can be able to collectively vanquish any prospective challenge. Therefore, the leaders of 21 members of the IORA met first time in Jakarta, Indonesia in its first summit organised in

²³Devare, (2006).

March 2017 after completion of 20 years under the theme “Strengthening Maritime Cooperation for a Peaceful, Stable and prosperous Indian Ocean.”²⁴

4.6.1.2 Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

The IONS was conceived by the Indian Navy in 2008 to enhance maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral states of the IOR by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion on regionally relevant maritime issues. It is critical to building an effective maritime architecture in the IOR. It has grown significantly in a decade and now has 23 member states from the littorals of South Asia, West Asia, East Africa, Southeast Asia and Australia, and 9 observers including China, Russia, Japan, Germany and Italy. Notably, UK and France are members as their island territories are located in in the Indian Ocean.²⁵The IONS Charter of Business was agreed upon by the ‘Conclave of Chiefs’, at the biennial commencement IONS chairmanship. 2018’s ‘Conclave of Chiefs’ held in Iran in April and France will host in 2020. As the founder nation, India will also be conducting commemorative activities in November 2018 at Kochi, for celebrating its 10th Anniversary this year.²⁶

4.6.1.3 India Led Multilateral Naval Exercises

Indian Navy has been carrying out extensive naval exercises with many regional and extra regional navies for last two decades at the India Ocean. These naval exercises have resulted in greater exposure of the Indian Naval power. The Malabar and MILAN naval exercises have become platform for the demonstration of naval power across the Indo-Pacific region. Although these exercises are targeted for “the benefit of the global maritime community” through the commitment “to address common maritime challenges across the spectrum of operations” and boosted maritime security. The Malabar trilateral exercise, consisting navies of India, Japan and United States is carried out at Bay of Bengal. In the recent years, realising its increasing symbolism in the power projection, Australia has also showed the interest to participate in the exercise, while India has declined its request. In 2007, Australia stayed away from participation in exercise when India invited it to join, Australia was not

²⁴Panda, Ankit, (20170), “Indian Ocean Rim Association Concludes First-Ever Leaders' Summit”, The Diplomat, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2017/03/indian-ocean-rim-association-concludes-first-ever-leaders-summit/> (Accessed July 15, 2018).

²⁵Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, URL: <http://www.navy.gov.au/ions>(Accessed July 15, 2018).

²⁶Indian Navy, “Press Release”, URL: <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/admiral-sunil-lanba-chief-naval-staff-visits-tehran-iran-indian-ocean-naval-symposium---2018> (Accessed July 15, 2018).

in the position to anger China. Therefore, Australia's wish to join Malabar exercise has important indication of its strategic engagement in the IOR with India.

The 2017 edition of the Malabar exercise was most significant as it saw the participation of US's *Nimitz*, the world's largest aircraft carrier. Moreover, many guided missile cruiser, guided missile destroyers, fast-attack American submarine participated in the naval drills. "Japan's Maritime Self Defence Force ships along with INS *Jalashwa* and INS *Vikramaditya* also participated in the exercise; In addition, it included technical exchanges on carrier strike group operations, maritime patrol and reconnaissance operations, surface and anti-submarine warfare." Another India led naval exercise is MILAN, which was held first in 1995, congregates littoral navies conducted each two years by the Indian Navy in the Andaman Sea. "MILAN provides an excellent opportunity for participating navies to come together in a spirit of collaboration and to enhance mutual understanding".²⁷ MILAN-2018 was significant as Maldives declined to participate citing domestic political emergency, but it was perceived India's losing influence in the island country. Though, this edition was the biggest as navies of 16 countries participated including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Australia, Italy, Thailand and Singapore, held at Port Blair from 11 March to 13 March.²⁸



Fig. 4.2: Ships from the Indian navy, Japan Maritime Self-Défense Force (JMSDF) and the U.S. Navy sail in formation in the Bay of Bengal during exercise Malabar 2017 Source: US Navy photo

²⁷ Indian Navy, (2014), Government of India URL: <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/naval-event-milan-2014-scheduled-port-blair> (Accessed May 28, 2018).

²⁸ "Milan 2018: Multilateral Naval Exercise begins in Andaman", *The Times of India*, New Delhi, March 06, 2018.

4.6.2 Quadrilateral Dialogue and Free and Open Indo-Pacific

India has urged for the 'Security And Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR) in the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's maritime vision for security and cooperation on seas.²⁹ Japan's Premier Shinzo Abe played the most crucial role in shaping this axis and the quadrilateral was supposed to establish "Asian Arc of Democracy", which envisioned to consist countries in Central Asia, Mongolia, the Korean peninsula, and other countries in Southeast Asia. It was broadly perceived as an act to challenge the Chinese influence in a democratic way. However, this challenge could not be sustained without US's cooperation, because of the Chinese giant power. Precisely, India is at the central stage for the US in the "Asian geopolitics in general and in the maritime geostrategy in particular". Significantly, Japan, Australia, India and US has been calling Asia and the Pacific as the Indo-Pacific region which is now accepted by most of the countries in and outside of the region. At the recently held meeting at Manila, the quadrilateral dialogue between India, Japan and Australia, called for a "free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region". Quad is "evolving towards a more comprehensive partnership less explicitly focused on defence issues.



Fig. 4.3: Free and Open Indo-Pacific

Source: Lowy Institute

The latest idea, the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), involves providing the region with alternatives to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)" (Brewster, 2018). The Indo-Pacific region is increasingly inter-connected, therefore, convergence of interests of these nations

²⁹Padmaja, 2015.

is essential to make peaceful, prosperous and inclusive. They are striving to make the rules-based region “to ensure freedom of navigation and overflight, increase connectivity, countering terrorism and uphold maritime security.”³⁰ India has issued joint statements with the US and Japan in this regard. Quad is likely to fulfil India's interest in countering China's BRI and its foothold into the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific. Apparently, it prioritises security against uncertain challenges over other traditional threats and gives the opportunity for greater coordination between different maritime powers.

India considers its “sphere of influence” extended from the Bab al Mandab in the west to the Strait of Malacca in the east of the Indian Ocean. India has its tri-service command in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, at entry point of the west of Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

The biggest challenge for India is to sustain a balance between all major powers as it is considered a mediator state between the two rival axes or alliances. India is part of the “Strategic Triangle” perceived by the then Russian Foreign Minister Primakov in 1998, including China which was developed mainly to counter- balance the unipolarity of the US. Just after a month of the Quad talk, India hosted 15th Russia-India-China trilateral meeting where both China and Russia presented similar view about the possible security block formation through the quad. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said a sustainable security architecture cannot be achieved in Asia-Pacific region with “closed bloc arrangements”. Wang Yi, the Chinese foreign minister cautioned against “sphere of influence” “cliques”.³¹ Therefore, India will have to slush the growing tensions in the trilateral framework as well balance between the Quad, in the changing global political environment as it is the only common member of two differently motivated platforms. As Gopalashwami pointed out, “An important consideration must be the implications for India's perceived legitimacy as the regional security provider if it does not act in accordance with its principles by resisting bellicose incursions in its neighbour be they direct or indirect.”³²

³⁰Brewster, David (2018), “A free and Open Indo-Pacific” and what it means for Australia”

³¹Pant, Harsh V. (2017), “Looking for Balance in Power”, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, December 16, 2017.

³²Gopalswami, Bharat (2018), “India's Role and China's Roads in the Indo-Pacific”, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed July 11, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/02/indias-role-and-chinas-roads-in-the-indo-pacific/>

Chapter-V

Conclusion

The Indo Pacific Region is the canvas of global power shift. While the US seeks to maintain a status quo in the world order and international system, China, on the other hand, asserts for recognition as a major power and strives to carve out its own sphere of influence. Russia, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and the ASEAN countries are exploring for their role in the balance of power in the waters of Indo Pacific. Every stakeholder is pursuing its core objectives through dynamic balancing of interests. The importance of the South China Sea increased since it contains wealth as well as strategic advantage. Control of the margin sea will allow China to project its sea power further in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean region. Chinese actions are detrimental to global security, peace and stability. In such a situation, which study has revealed in the entire Indo-Pacific region, it may be argued that in the 21st Century peace can only be guaranteed when maritime powers agree to form some kind of pivot relations beyond the geographical borders and considering the relationship on the multilateral strategic platform. SCS' peripheral countries' national security and regional stability is mainly dependent on the peaceful resolution of SCS dispute. This is relevant for India too and India is in a position to cooperate and constructively contribute towards this objective. US has also offered to mediate in this regard. The rising tensions in East China seas make it more operative for these regional powers.

The study has found that at the one side, Chinese assertiveness has drastically increased in last two decades. China's ambition is to be superpower of the world in the 21st century and it wants to achieve it before the year 2049. The BRI or OBOR is the evident example. While in other side, US is losing its potential weight and feels exhausted after having maintained global order for more than two decades since 1990s onwards. Weakening

economy and so the political will is making US inward looking. US is pulling back itself from the global leadership specially after the Donald Trump came into the power. India's situation is between these two conditions. India's interests are getting immense challenge from the China's side which is ready to fill power vacuum being created by the US. India is aspiring itself to be only power in IOR and to play a critical role in the Indo-Pacific and global politics as well. US has put its potential weigh in favour of India as it is seeking new strategic and reliable partner in the Indo-Pacific and designated it as a rising global power. Japan, an old defence partner of US, is also enhancing its military cooperation with India. Many other regional powers such as ASEAN and Australia have also called India for a greater role. France and UK have come forward for the maritime security cooperation with India in the Indo-Pacific. France has prepared bilateral strategic partnership with India, declining participation in the Quad- leading to Quad Plus. This preference brought out significance of India and confidence over it. As a result, India is at the centre stage in the power balancing game. Definitely, India is getting its ambitious place in the power politics in the Indo-Pacific. Therefore, guiding collectively by the desire for global role, regional stability and backing for the rules-based world order, India is increasing bilateral strategic cooperation and multilateral engagement in the IPR. India has strengthened security ties with US, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia and Australia bilaterally, and deepening cooperation with ASEAN, IORA and PICs. India's announcement of its new Maritime policy further gives indication of its special focus on the maritime security and rising concerns in the Indian Ocean Region.

In line with India's constructive contribution of capacity building in IPR countries to counter China's "String of Pearls" and to increase its influence, India can expand Sagarmala project in IPR countries especially to Myanmar and Bangladesh in east, Sri Lanka, Maldives in south, and to Iran and Oman in the west. Expansion of the Sagarmala project is not tough task. India will have to convince smaller countries in a diplomatic way that this is not for the hegemonizing itself, but in the interest of them. Engrossing and

significant as well, thing in this regard is that Sri Lanka has shown its interest first from itself. The significant statement was made by the Chief of the Defence Staff of Sri Lanka during the fourth Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue in New Delhi, when he applauded India's infrastructure project Sagarmala and said that two northern ports, namely Triconmalee port and Kankesanthurai Harbour (KKS Harbour) will be developed and used by India. India is already engaged in Seychelles and Mauritius in its south west in the surveillance and patrolling to secure sea routes.

India's focus has largely been on the Indian Ocean where it has sought to play a major role and protect its strategic and commercial interests. After realising the necessity to keep pace with China into the Pacific region, such as it is trying in the Africa and Middle Asia, India started greater cooperation with the Pacific Island countries (PICs) in recent years. After rupture for many decades, relations with Fiji have improved in last few decades. Asia's big two India and China are competing to secure their loyalties. Just after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Fiji and foundation of FIPIC, Chinese president Xi Jinping landed in Suva and organised similar event. This race for expanded sphere of influence, need not be a zero-sum game. There are many limitations for India in the Southwest Pacific. India's link with Pacific Island Nations, separated from India by 4000 miles which takes 18 hours air travel, have been limited compare to all others expanding presence in Islands. Diplomatically, India has only two consulates in Fiji and Papua New Guinea and covering PICs from New Zealand, Japan and Philippines with these two, while China has seven diplomatic missions. FIPIC focuses on economic cooperation and there is lack of vision on strategic cooperation. Moreover, despite the enthusiastic beginning, the FIFIC summits have not been organized for last two years which were supposed to take place annually. If Australia's and USA's "dollar diplomacy" in the Pacific Island region is now hearing ringing bell of Chinese "cheque book policy", then what about India? Precisely, India's efforts are too inefficient against the US's military presence, Australia's geographic proximity and predominance, and Chinese strong outreach.

China's foray into the South Pacific, which began as a move to offset Taiwan's interests in the region, is becoming a case of concern for India. These concerns pose certain limitations over India's steady ambitious outreach into the Pacific region. These countries are needy and depended on foreign aid, so India cannot wish for quid pro quo. India would have to carry on unilateral finance and assistance just following "Gujral Doctrine" which was proposed for neighbouring countries.

Still there is prospect for India in the South-West Pacific because PICs have experienced colonial era of exploitation, war fair of American policies and large-scale environmental degradation due to mineral excavation. India was not engaged earlier, this deterioration in fact facilitates its entrance. To the Pacific Island countries India-Pacific cooperation is a fresh opportunity to be pursued and can be utilised as a shield against manoeuvring of bad players. To the medium and small countries and stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific region, India represents an emerging global power that is not associated with colonial oppression (as France), opaque and worrisome investment (as China), nor bad blood in forum politics (as Australia and New Zealand). And to India, the Pacific is the next frontier in fulfilment of its Act East policy, a firm step cast from Southeast Asia and on the newest contest for paramountcy.

China's growing hegemony has led the impression in India as threat to its national security and strategic interests in the region. Further, Chinese leadership will obviously minimise the scope for India's any political role at the regional and global level. The circumspection mandates India to intensify its defence and security cooperation with the similarly concerned countries of the region. The non-alignment of China is clearly not the solution. India and China both shares many multilateral fora with regional powers and extra regional powers such as ASEAN ARF, EAS, ADMM etc. These platforms can be used for the discussion and the confidence building. As US see the China's rise as Challenge for its predominance and wish to rebalance Asia, while China is trying to build a strong bond with resurgent Russia to counter US. This is leading China-US rivalry which will be

disastrous for the regional security. The regional insecurity will further lead to the instability of the region and disruption in the peaceful order. China has alleged US to having Cold War mentality on the revival of the Quad and threatened for the consequences of any security alliance in the region without the participation of the all regional powers. Russia have also supported China's view. In this situation India's role become critical. India is the part of two different platforms- Russia-India-China triangle and Japan-India-US-Australia – the Quad. India will have to justify its participation in the both fora of counter objectives. Chinese leadership have anticipated for India-China cooperation to keep US away from the region, while India's view was always to be a single power in its backyards. Although, India have ruled out Quad as against of China and Indian Prime Minister's statement, "by no means do we consider it against any country", might have brought some relief to China. Still, India has to perform as a bridge for the confidence building against the rising fear of the military alliance.

Further, US is to continues its contribution to the stability of Indo-Pacific Region and revitalising the 'free and open rules-based international order'. No doubt, the 2016 LEMOA agreement between India and USA and USA's designation to India as a 'major defence partner' was aimed at countering the maritime assertiveness escalated by China in the region. The 2017 was significant as it was evident for the Chinese efforts to decimate US's military advantage in the western Pacific and US's retaliation of abrupt Chinese adjure for military dominance in the IPR. Interestingly, the first half of the 2018 witnessed the series of unpredictable events, which were founded in the second half of 2017. Major unexpected Change was the revulsion of Trump's view about the Indo-Pacific. During the electoral process he blatantly opposed the US's Asia-Pacific involvement and criticised his predecessor's rebalancing policy of 'Pivot to Asia'. Also, there were speculations among the international experts about his visit to Southeast Asia and his participation in the East Asia Summit. Surprisingly, Trump not only participated in the EAS but also revived the Quadrilateral Dialogue with India, Australia and Japan in the side-line of the summit in Manila,

Philippines in November 2017. In December, Trump administration announced the new National Security Strategy which emphasises on the term “Indo-Pacific” and call for the security cooperation with the new strategic partners. Moreover, in a drastic shift, US renamed the US Pacific Command as the US Indo-Pacific Command just before the 2018 Shangri La Dialogue began, projecting a new set of national interests. Notwithstanding, India’s response to the political turmoil in Maldives is important to understand as to “what India’s role in the Indo-Pacific will look like in the 21st century”. India will have to maintain and steadily increase its space which it is getting for a strategic partnership and leadership role in the IPR. Further, India must consider Australia’s bid to participate in Malabar naval exercise. If India aspires to become leader in the political affairs in the Indo-Pacific region, it should not fear China’s agitation in engaging strategically with interested countries. Australia is a major stockholder and an important player in the region. Hence, the Australian participation would be required for any security grouping. After Australia’s inclusion in the Malabar exercise, it can transform in a formal naval security forum in specific circumstance of jeopardising the regional security. Notably, Malabar exercise is being considered as a formal military alliance of the Quad. India’s outreach into the Pacific will be critical in sustaining and maximising its strategic interests in the Indian Ocean.

India’s aspiration for strong presence and playing important role in security arena into the Pacific region may fulfil through the inclusion by Pacific countries. In this context, FIPIC brought together to India and 14 Pacific Island Nations. Pacific Islands are enthusiastic and willing to make strong relations with India. The Pacific Nations, which have come out from “American Lake” of post war period, are now responding to a changing world order by opening dialogue with non-traditional partners. Tough, India is yet to consolidate its strength in the larger Indo-Pacific, thereby getting out of the box of being a regional power. India’s success in engaging countries such as Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia and Vietnam in recent years is testament to the increasing demand in the region for a greater

Indian role and presence. Quad is centred on democracy, rule of law, and a mutual commitment to security the stability of common maritime interests in the Indo-Pacific. Therefore, India is capable, and it has to play critical role for a maritime balance of power in contemporary international order. Definitely, India has the potential to occupy a significant place in a new regional architecture, free for the reconfiguring of a rules-based regional security architecture that will go a long way toward building peace, prosperity, and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

References

(* Indicates Primary Sources)

(FIPIC), Forum for India - Pacific Island Cooperation. *About FIPIC*. 2016. <http://www.ficci-fipic.in/about.html> (accessed NOVEMBER 06, 2016).

Abdi, Bilal (2018), “India will overtake China as largest market for energy by late 2020s: BP Energy Outlook”, [Online: web] Accessed on May 20, 2018, URL: <https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/india-will-overtake-china-as-largest-market-for-energy-by-late-2020s-bp-energy-outlook/63024657>

Acharya, Amitav (2010), “The United States in Asia-Pacific: The Changing Balance of Power”, [Online: web] Accessed on 20 June 2018, URL: <https://www.asiapacific.ca/op-eds/united-states-asia-pacific-changing-balance-power>

AFP (2016), “Tribunal rejects Beijing's claims on South China sea”, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, July 13, 2016.

Albert, Eleanor (2016), *Competition in the Indian Ocean*, Council on Foreign Relations, [Online: web] Accessed January 20, 2018, URL: <https://www.cfr.org/background/competition-indian-ocean>

Andrews, Kevin (2016), “India is a key partner in Indo-Pacific region”, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, March 28, 2016. <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/india-is-a-key-partner-in-indopacific-region/article7600487.ece> (accessed May 18, 2017).

ANZUS Treaty – Full Text. 1951. <http://australianpolitics.com/1951/09/01/anzus-treaty-text.html> (accessed November 02, 2016).

APF (2017), “Chinese survey ships entering Philippine territory: Manila”, *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, 09 March 2017.

ASEAN (2018), Association of Southeast Asian Nations, “Delhi Declaration of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit to Mark The 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations”, May, 10 URL: http://asean.org/storage/2018/01/Delhi-Declaration_Adopted-25-Jan-2018.pdf

Asia Africa Growth Corridor Vision Document May 2017, URL: <http://www.africa-platform.org/resources/asia-africa-growth-corridor-vision-document-may-2017> (Accessed May 30, 2018).

Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. ‘India and the Emerging Geopolitics of the Indian Ocean Region’. Aug 17-19, 2003. http://apcss.org/core/Conference/CR_ES/030819-21ES.html (accessed Sep 12, 2017).

Australian Politics.Com (1951), "ANZUS Treaty – Full Text", [Online: web] Accessed on June 29, 2018, URL: <http://australianpolitics.com/1951/09/01/anzus-treaty-text.html>

Ayres, Alyssa and etc. all. (2018), "Creating an India-US advantage in the Indo-Pacific: Four steps that would boost security cooperation and regional stability", *Times of India*, New Delhi, 01 March 2018

Balakrishnan, Bhaskar. *IDS COMMENT Forum for India Pacific Islands Cooperation moves ahead*. August 25, 2016. 1. http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/ForumforIndiaPacificIslandsCooperationmovesah ead_bbalakrishnan_250815 (accessed November 02, 2016).

Balakrishnan, Bhaskar (2016), "Forum for India Pacific Islands Cooperation moves ahead", [Online: web] Accessed on 28 June, 2018, URL: http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/ForumforIndiaPacificIslandsCooperationmovesah ead_bbalakrishnan_250815

Banerjee, Ajay (2017), "India set to join Malacca patrol group" *The Tribune*. April 10, 2017. <http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/india-set-to-join-malacca-patrol-group/389602.html> (accessed April 10, 2017).

Barua, M. Darshana (2016), "India's Evolving Maritime Strategy", *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed February 26, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2015/12/indias-evolving-maritime-strategy/>

Bhattacharjee, Kallol, (2017), "Shinzo Abe Promises Peace in Indo-Pacific region", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, 14 September 2017.

Bishoyi, Saroj (2016), "Geostrategic Imperative of the Indo-Pacific Region: Emerging Trends and Regional Responses", *Journal of Defence Studies*, 10(1): 89–102.

Blank, Stephen (2007), "The Geostrategic Implications of the Indo-American Strategic Partnership", *India Review*, 6(1): 1-24.

Brewster, David (2018), "A free and Open Indo-Pacific" and what it means for Australia", *Lowy Institute*, [Online: web] Accessed July 11, 2018, URL: <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/free-and-open-indo-pacific-and-what-it-means-australia>

Burgess, Stephen F. (2016), "Rising bipolarity in the South China Sea: the American rebalance to Asia and China's expansion", *Contemporary Security Policy*, 37 (1): 111-143.

Chaudhari, Ruby. 'China and the Geopolitics of the Indian Ocean'. July 26, 2015. <http://www.thethumbprintmag.com/china-and-the-geopolitics-of-indian-ocean/> (accessed Sep 10, 2017).

Collin, Koh Swee Lean. "The Malacca Strait Patrols: Finding Common Ground." *RSIS COMMENTARY*. April 20, 2016. <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/CO16091.pdf> (accessed March 30, 2017).

David Scott (2008), "Sino-Indian Security Predicaments for the Twenty-First Century", *Asian Security*, 4(3): 244-270.

DESA (2017), UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "The World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision (2017)", URL: https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/Files/WPP2017_KeyFindings.pdf

Devare, Sudhir (2006), *India and Southeast Asia: Towards Security Convergence*. New Delhi: Capital Publishing Company.

Devare, Sudhir (2006), *India and Southeast Asia: Towards Security Convergence*, New Delhi, Capital Publishing Company.

Dikshit, Sandeep. *THE HINDU*. September 08, 2004. <http://www.thehindu.com/2004/09/08/stories/2004090806701200.htm> (accessed April 12, 2017).

Dodds, Klaus-John (1993), "Critical geopolitics and the writing of foreign policy", URL: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/33133737.pdf> (Accessed May 20, 2018).

EARS (2016), East Asia Research Programme, "Security Challenges and Strategic Partnerships in Indo-Pacific Region", Aug 19, 2016, URL: <http://earp.in/en/security-challenges-and-strategic-partnerships-in-indo-pacific-region/>

Elizabeth, C. (2018), "China's Strategy in Djibouti: Mixing Commercial and Military Interests", URL: <https://www.cfr.org/blog/chinas-strategy-djibouti-mixing-commercial-and-military-interests>

ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA. March 12, 2014. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Strait-of-Malacca> (accessed April 12, 2017).

EU (2017), European Parliament, "India and challenges ahead in the Indo-Pacific Region Opportunities for cooperation with the EU", May 17, URL: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603956/EPRS_BRI\(2017\)603956_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603956/EPRS_BRI(2017)603956_EN.pdf)

FIPIC (2016), Forum for India-Pacific Island Cooperation, "About FIPIC", [Online: web] Accessed on June 20, 2018, URL: <http://www.ficci-fipic.in/about.html>

FIPIC, (2014), Forum for India - Pacific Island Cooperation, "About FIPIC" <http://www.ficci-fipic.in/about.html> (accessed NOVEMBER 02, 2017).

Ganapathy, Nirmala (2017), "India Increased its Presence in the Indian Ocean, with an eye on China", URL: <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/india-increases-its-presence-in-indian-ocean-with-an-eye-on-china>

Ganapathy, Nirmala (2017), India increases its presence in Indian Ocean, with an eye on China, The Straits Times, [Online: web], Accessed March 19, 2018, URL: <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/south-asia/india-increases-its-presence-in-indian-ocean-with-an-eye-on-china>

Ganguli, Sreemati, (2017), "India's Strategic connect with World", URL: https://idsa.in/idsacomments/india-strategic-connect-with-the-world_sganguli_231017 (Accessed May 31, 2018).

Goh, Evelyn (2007), "Southeast Asian perspectives on the China challenge", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 30 (4-5), 809-832.

Gopaldaswami, Bharat (2018), "India's Role and China's Roads in the Indo-Pacific", *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed July 11, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/02/indias-role-and-chinas-roads-in-the-indo-pacific/>

Goud, R. Sidda and Mookherjee, Manisha, Eds.(2016), *Sino-Indian Relations: Contemporary Perspective*, New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 2016: 82-87.

Govindarajan, Vinita (2018), If sea levels rise by 1metre, Tamil Nadu losses could be worth half its current economy, says study, [Online: web] Accessed May 06 2018, URL: <https://scroll.in/article/866394/in-tamil-nadu-loss-from-rising-sea-levels-could-be-worth-half-its-economy-warns-new-climate-study>

Hong, Zhao (2013), "THE SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE AND CHINA-ASEAN RELATIONS", *Asian Affairs*, 44 (1): 27-43.

IANs, (2016), 'India-Pacific Island nations summit in Jaipur on Aug 21', [Online: web] Accessed on May 20, 2018, URL: http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-pacific-island-nations-summit-in-jaipur-on-aug-21-115081101259_1.html

IANs. *India-Pacific Island nations summit in Jaipur on Aug 21*. August 11, 2015. http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-pacific-island-nations-summit-in-jaipur-on-aug-21-115081101259_1.html (accessed November 02, 2016).

IDSA (2012), Institute of Defence and Strategic Analysis, "India and US Rebalancing Strategy for Asia-Pacific", July 09, URL: http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/IndiaandUSRebalancingStrategyforAsiaPacific_sahgal_090712

IDSA (2013), Institute of Defence and Strategic Analysis, "Maritime Security of India: Future Challenges", Nov 26, URL: <http://www.idsa.in/key speeches/MaritimeSecurityOfIndiaFutureChallenges>

Independent (2018), "Chinese investment in Africa could create national economies 'entirely dependent on China', say experts", [Online: web] Accessed on 20 May, 2018, URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/china-africa-investment-dependent-economies-chinese-belt-road-a8352531.html>

India and Japan commit to Indo-Pacific strategy, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, March 30, 2018.

India has world's largest youth population: UN report, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 18 Nov 2014, URL: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-has-worlds-largest-youth-population-un-report/articleshow/45190294.cms>

India highest recipient of remittances at \$69 billion, says World Bank, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, April 23, 2018.

India, France join hands for Indian Ocean security, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, March 11, 2018.

India's is the world's 7th largest tourism economy in terms of GDP, says WTTC, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, April 04 2017, URL:<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/travel/indias-is-the-worlds-7th-largest-tourism-economy-in-terms-of-gdp-says-wttc/articleshow/58011112.cms>

Indian fishermen killed: Two Italian marines sent to police custody amid huge protests, *NDTV*, New Delhi, 20 Feb 2012, Accessed May 08, 2018 URL: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/indian-fishermen-killed-two-italian-marines-sent-to-police-custody-amid-huge-protests-571620>

Indian Maritime Doctrine (2009), Integrated Headquarters Ministry of Defence (Navy) 2015, updated (online version) 2015, URL: <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/sites/default/files/Indian-Maritime-Doctrine-2009-Updated-12Feb16.pdf>

Indian Navy, (2015), "Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy", New Delhi, Naval Strategic Publication.

INDIAN NAVY. 2014. <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/naval-event-milan-2014-scheduled-port-blair> (accessed April 12, 2017).

INDIAN OCEAN NAVAL SYMPOSIUM (IONS). 2012. http://ions.gov.in/about_ions (accessed April 12, 2017).

IORA (2018), Indian Ocean Rim Association, "Blue Economy", [Online: web] Accessed May 08, 2018, URL: <http://www.iora.net/en/priorities-focus-areas/blue-economy>

Jain, B. M. (2017), *India's Security Concerns in the Indian Ocean Region: A Critical Analysis*, Future Directions International, [Online: web] Accessed 5 March 2018, URL: <http://www.futuredirections.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/India's-Security-Concerns-in-the-Indian-Ocean-A-Critical-Analysis.pdf>

Jennings, Ralph (2017), "Japan Is Becoming Player in South China Sea Sovereignty Dispute", [Online: web] Accessed on June 10, 2018, URL: <https://www.voanews.com/a/japan-player-south-china-sea-sovereignty-dispute/3773376.html>

KAK RAMCHANDRAN, SMRITI (2015), "India to host meeting of 14 Pacific island nations", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, August 03, 2015.

Kapila, Dr. Subhash (2014), "India's Strategic Pivot to the Indo Pacific", [Online: web] Accessed on June 28, 2018, URL: <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1665>

- Kapila, Dr. Subhash. *India's Strategic Pivot to the Indo Pacific*. November 27, 2014. <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1665> (accessed November 02, 2016).
- Kapila, Dr. Subhash. *India's Strategic Pivot to the Indo Pacific*. November 27, 2014. <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1665> (accessed November 02, 2016).
- Kaur, Sumeet (2017), *The Indian Ocean Region is Key to U.S.-India Relations*, American Security Project, [Online: web] Accessed 4 March 2018, URL: <https://www.americansecurityproject.org/the-indian-ocean-region-is-key-to-u-s-india-relations/>
- Kaura, Vinay (2016), "India-Japan Relations and Asia's Emerging Geopolitics", *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs*, 29 (1/2): 17-38.
- Khalid, Nazery. *The Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*. June 1, 2006. <http://apjif.org/-Nazery-Khalid/2042/article.html> (accessed April 10, 2017).
- Khera, Pawan. Did Obama's India Visit Revive the 'Asian Arc of Democracy' Strategy Against China? 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/pawan-khera/obama-india-quadrilateral-security-dialogue_b_6564544.html
- Khurana, Gurpreet Singh, "The 'Indo-Pacific' Concept: Retrospect and Prospect", *CIMSEC*, [Online: web] Accessed May 18, 2017 URL: <http://cimsec.org/indo-pacific-concept-retrospect-prospect/34710>
- Kugelman, Machael (2016), "India Act East", *The Foreign Policy*, [Online: web] Accessed July 06, 2018, URL: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/05/17/india-acts-east/>
- Kumar, Satish & Tandon Pradeep (2017), "India's Outreach in Pacific Ocean and Shaping the World Politics", *World Focus*, 38(3):33-37.
- Lampton, David, M., (2016), "China: Challenger or Challenged?", *The Washington Quarterly*, 39(3): 107-119.
- Lintner, Berltil (2018), "China advances, West frets in South Pacific", *Asia Times*, [Online: web] Accessed on July 10, 2018, URL: <http://www.atimes.com/article/china-advances-west-frets-in-south-pacific/>
- Manmohan Singh, 'PM Inaugurates Naval Academy at Ezhimala', 8 Jan. 2009, Accessed April 28 2018, URL: <http://archivepmo.nic.in/drmanmohansingh/speech-details.php?nodeid=751>
- Marlow, Iain and Ondaatjie, Anusha (2018), "Sri Lanka Seeks India and Japan Cash to Balance China", *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, March 28, 2018.
- Maseeh, Rahman (2012), "Chinese plans in Seychelles revive Indian fears of encirclement", *The Guardian*, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/22/china-seychelles-indian-fears-encirclement>
- McGahan, Terrence Lee and Kevin. *piracy-studies.org: the research portal for maritime security*. May 19, 2015. <http://piracy-studies.org/norm-subsidiarity-in->

maritime-security-why-east-asian-states-corporate-in-counter-piracy/ (accessed April 10, 2017).

Medcalf, Rory (2013), “The Indo-Pacific: What’s in a Name?”, *The American Interests*, 9 (2), October 10, 2013.

Medcalf, Rory (2017), “A Term Whose Time Has Come: The Indo-Pacific”, *The Diplomat*, Dec. 04, 2012, [Online: web] Accessed May 27, 2017, URL: <http://thediplomat.com/2012/12/a-term-whose-time-has-come-the-indo-pacific>

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, URL: http://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/28460/IndiaPacific_Islands_Sustainable_Development_Conference_to_enhance_cooperation_between_India_and_Pacific_Island_Countries (Accessed July, 18, 2018).

Ministry of foreign Affairs of Japan, URL: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0708/speech-2.html> (Accessed on January 10, 2018).

Mishara, Sylvia. *India's Groing Influence and Ambition*. February 10, 2016. <http://www.policyforum.net/indias-growing-influence-ambition/> (accessed November 06, 2016).

Mishra, Sylvia, (2016), “India’s Growing Influence And Ambition”, [Online: web] Accessed on 30 June, 2018, <http://www.policyforum.net/indias-growing-influence-ambition/>

Mukherjee Tuneer, (2018), “China’s Maritime Quest in the Indian Ocean: New Delhi’s Options”, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on July 10, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/04/chinas-maritime-quest-in-the-indian-ocean-new-delhis-options/>

Muraviev Alexey, (2018), “Russian Military Power in the Indo-Asia–Pacific”, *Real Clear World*, [Online: web] Accessed on July 10, 2018, URL: https://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2018/02/15/russian_military_power_in_the_indo-asiapacific_112711.html

Nations, United (2016) “Member States”, [Online: web] Accessed on 30 May 2018, URL: <http://www.un.org/en/member-states/>

Nations, United. *Member States*. 2016. <http://www.un.org/en/member-states/> (accessed November 06, 2019).

Naval Today (2017), “Thailand hosts first ever ASEAN multilateral naval exercise AMNEX 2017”, [Online: web] Accessed January 8, 2018, URL: <https://navaltoday.com/2017/11/08/thailand-hosts-first-ever-asean-multilateral-naval-exercise-amnex-2017/>

NSA-headed committee for higher defence management, *The Hindu*, New Delhi, 19 April 2018.

Oliver Smith (2017), Mapped: The world's most elderly (and youngest) countries, *The Telegraph*, 08 July 2017, [Online: web] Accessed 24 April 2018, URL:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/maps-and-graphics/oldest-and-youngest-countries-populations/>

ORF (2017), Observers Research Foundation, “How India and the US can lead in the Indo-Pacific”, Aug 18, URL: <http://www.orfonline.org/research/how-india-us-can-lead-indo-pacific/>

Padmaja, G (2015), “Modi's Maritime Diplomacy: A Strategic Opportunity”, *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India*, 11(2): 25-42.

Panda, Ankit (2018), *India Gains Access to Oman's Duqm Port, Putting the Indian Ocean Geopolitical Contest in the Spotlight*, The Diplomat, [Online: web] Accessed February 16, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/02/india-gains-access-to-omans-duqm-port-putting-the-indian-ocean-geopolitical-contest-in-the-spotlight/>

Panda, Ankit, (2017), “India's 2017 Joint Armed Forces Doctrine: First Takeaways”. April 28, 2017. <http://thediplomat.com/2017/04/indias-2017-joint-armed-forces-doctrine-first-takeaways/> (accessed Aug 25, 2017).

Panda, Prof. Snehalata (2013), “Rebalancing Asian Strategy: Challenges for India”, *World Focus*, 34(12): 31-39.

Parashar, Sachin, “Sri Lanka to offer India Port Developments to Balance Out China”, *Times of India*, New Delhi, April 19, 2017.

Patnaik, Sanghamitra (2017), “Indo-Pacific Dynamics in Indo-U.S. Relations”, *World Focus*, 38(3): 66-74.

Peri, Dinakar. ‘Decoding the Joint Indian Armed Forces Doctrine’. May 08, 2017. <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/decoding-the-doctrine/article18404994.ece> (accessed on Aug 28, 2017).

Peshwae, V.R. (2016), “The Increasing Geo-Political Importance of The Indo-Pacific Region: Strategic Implications for India”, *National War College Journal*, 28: 47-59.

Philps, Alan (2017), “Destination 2049: the Chinese century will be a projection of money, politics and technology’, [Online: web] Accessed October 30, 2017, URL: <https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/destination-2049-the-chinese-century-will-be-a-projection-of-money-politics-and-technology-1.670361>

PIB (2016), Press Information Bureau, “India’s Share in Global Trade”, 28 November, URL: <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=154454>

PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY. London: ICC INTERNATIONAL MARITIME BUREAU, July 2016.

Planning Commission (2014), Government of India, “*India Transport Report: Moving India to 2032*” Routledge, New Delhi.

Prakash, Arun (2016), “India’s New Maritime Strategy: Is Everyone on Same Page?”, *National War College Journal*, 28: 09-17.

PTI (2018a), “India biggest strategic opportunity for US: Pentagon”, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 16 March 2018, at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-biggest-strategic-opportunity-for-us-pentagon/articleshow/63331174.cms>

PTI (2018b), “OBOR partially aims to marginalise US influence in Pacific: Admiral Harry Harris”, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, 16 March 2018, at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/obor-partially-aims-to-marginalise-us-influence-in-pacific-top-us-admiral/articleshow/63330657.cms>

PTI, (2016), “40 million Indians at risk from rising sea levels: UN report”, *Times Of India*, New Delhi, May 20, 2016.

PTI, (2018), “India gives \$45.27 million aid to develop KKS harbour in Sri Lanka”, *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, January 1, 2018.

PTI, (2018), “India should become a central component of Asia-Pacific strategy”, *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, July 13, 2018

PTI, (2018), “OBOR partially aims to marginalise US influence in Pacific: Admiral Harry Harris”, *Business Standard*, New Delhi, 17 March 2018.

Rahn, Daniel (2006), “Unlocking Indian Maritime Strategy”, [Online: web] Accessed March 27, 2018, URL: <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a462727.pdf>

Ramchandran, Smriti Kak (2015), "India to host meeting of 14 Pacific island nations", *The Hindu*, New Delhi, August 03, 2015.

Reuters, “Vietnam renews India oil deal in tense South China Sea”, [Online :web] Accessed July, 06, 2018, URL: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-vietnam/vietnam-renews-india-oil-deal-in-tense-south-china-sea-idUSKBN19R25P>

Roy, Denny (2014), “U.S.-China Relations and the Western Pacific”, *The Diplomat*, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2014/01/us-china-relations-and-the-western-pacific/> [Online: web] Accessed on June 30, 2018.

Rumley, Dennis & Chaturvedi, Sanjay. (2015), *Geopolitical Orientations, Regionalism and Security in the Indian Ocean*, New Delhi: South Asian Publishers pvt. Ltd.

Saji, Abraham (2016), “*China's Role in the Indian Ocean: Its Implications on India's National Security*”, New Delhi, Vij Books India Pvt Ltd.

Sakhuja Dr. Vijay and Narula, Dr Kapil (2016), “*Maritime Dynamics in the Indo-Pacific*”, New Delhi, Vij Books India Pvt Ltd.

Scott, David (2012), “The “Indo-Pacific”—New Regional Formulations and New Maritime Frameworks for US-India”, *Asia-Pacific Review*, 19(2): 85-109.

Sempa, Francis P. (2014), “The Geopolitical Vision of Alfred Thayer Mahan”, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 20 May, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2014/12/the-geopolitical-vision-of-alfred-thayer-mahan/>

Sempa, Francis P. (2015), Nicholas Spykman and the Struggle for the Asiatic Mediterranean, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 20 May, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2015/01/nicholas-spykman-and-the-struggle-for-the-asiatic-mediterranean/>

Sengupta, Kim (2018), “China and Russia are catching up with military power of US and West, say leading defence experts”, *The Independent*, URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/china-russia-us-military-challenge-western-allies-nato-strategy-war-military-balance-a8209771.html>

Sengupta, Kim (2018), “Japan to bolster military base on island idyll that could become front line in event of war”, *The Independent*, URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-military-aggression-island-missiles-troops-south-china-sea-ishigaki-japan-winter-olympics-a8208586.html>

Sharma, Ritu (2017), “India boycotts One Belt One Road Summit in China”, May 13, 2017. <http://www.newindianexpress.com/world/2017/may/13/india-boycotts-one-belt-one-road-summit-in-china-1604412--1.html> (accessed Sep 21, 2017).

Sheat, Fact. *MINDEF Singapore*. April 21, 2016. https://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/press_room/official_releases/nr/2016/apr/21apr16_nr/21apr15_fs.html (accessed March 30, 2017).

Singh, Abhijit (2015), *India’s New Maritime Security Strategy: ‘Brand-building’ in an Era of ‘Geopolitical Discord’* Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, [Online: web] Accessed February 08, 2018, URL: https://idsa.in/idsacomments/indias-new-maritime-security-strategy_asingh_211215

Singh, Dalijit (2016), “Duterte and the US-China balance of power in South-east Asia”, *The Straits Times*, [Online: web] Accessed on 30 June 2018, URL: <https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/duterte-and-the-us-china-balance-of-power-in-s-e-asia>

Singh, Ghosal Antara (2016), “India, China and the US: strategic convergence in the Indo-Pacific”, *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 12(2): 161-176

Song, Yann-huei (2005), “Security in the Strait of Malacca and the Regional Maritime Security Initiative: Responses to the US Proposal”, In *Global Legal Challenges: Command of the Commons, Strategic Communications, and Natural Disasters*, Editor Michael D. Carsten. International Law Studies, 2005.

South China Morning Post (2016), “Philippines Duterte Says he’s not a ‘fan of US’ and vows to Plot own Course”, URL: <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/2018261/philippines-duterte-says-hes-not-fan-us-and-vows-plot-own> (Accessed June 10, 2018).

Sputnik International, “India Set to Patrol Malacca Straits That Lead to South China Sea”, URL: <https://sputniknews.com/asia/201704111052519338-south-china-sea-india/> (accessed April 11, 2017).

Stashwick, Steven (2018), “4 Sino-US Trends to Watch in the Western Pacific in 2018” *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 30 June 2018, URL:

<https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/4-sino-us-trends-to-watch-in-the-western-pacific-in-2018/>

Steff, Reuben and Dodd-Parr, Francesca (2018), “Examining the immanent dilemma of small states in the Asia-Pacific: the strategic triangle between New Zealand, the US and China”, *The Pacific Review*, DOI: 10.1080/09512748.2017.1417324

Tatsumi, Yuki, (2015a), “Abe's Visit Takes Japan-India Security Relations to the Next Level”, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 28 May, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2015/12/abes-visit-takes-japan-india-security-relations-to-the-next-level/>

Tatsumi, Yuki, (2015b), “Japan-Australia Relations: Beyond the ‘2+2’”, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 20 May, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2013/12/china-responds-to-japans-defense-package/>

Tewari, Sharad & Khanijo, Roshan (2016), “*The Indo Pacific Region: Security Dynamics and Challenges*”, New Delhi, Vij Books India Pvt Ltd.

The Australian (2018), “New defence strategy a change of Trump’s tune, says Beazley”, [Online: web] Accessed on July 10, 2018, URL: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/new-defence-strategy-a-change-of-trumps-tune-says-beazley/news-story/1101ec6d3912bcd1107cf58524d14cdf>

Tiezzi, Shannon (2013), “China Responds to Japan’s Defense Package”, *The Diplomat*, [Online: web] Accessed on 28 May, 2018, URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2013/12/china-responds-to-japans-defense-package/>

Troubled waters, *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, URL:<http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/troubled-waters-8/> Accessed on May 08, 2018.

Walsh, Patrick (2016), “India’s Pivot to Oceania: Modi and the Pacific Island Nations”, [Online: web] Accessed on 29 June, 2018, URL: <http://thediplomat.com/2016/09/indias-pivot-to-oceania-modi-and-the-pacific-island-nations/>

Warr, Carl Grundy-Warr etc. all (1994), “Maritime Briefing: In Act of Piracy in the Malacca and Singapore Straits’, 37.

Yadav, R. S. (2017), “Politics of Indo-Pacific Region and India’s Foreign Policy”, *World Focus*, 38(3): 05-09.

Yew, Lee Kuan,(2013), “Interview: Lee Kuan Yew on the Future of U.S.- China Relations”, *The Atlantic*, [Online: web] Accessed on June 20, 2018, URL: <https://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/03/interview-lee-kuan-yew-on-the-future-of-us-china-relations/273657/>

The End