

GEOPOLITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

KEDISE PUCHO

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
ORGANISATION AND DISARMAMENT
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110067
INDIA 1993



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वावद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110067

Political Geography Division,
Centre for International Political
Organisation and Disarmament.

CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled
"GEOPOLITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS"
submitted by Mr.Kedise Pucho in fulfillment for
the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
(M.Phil) of this University, is his original work
and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.
This dissertation has not been submitted for the
award of any other degree of this University or
of any other University to the best of our knowledge.

(Prof. M.L.Sondhi)

Chairperson

(Prof.R.C.Sharma)

Supervisor 20.5.1993

**DEDICATED
TO
DEAR PARENTS**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am highly grateful to my supervisor Prof. R.C. Sharma for his patience and valuable guidance in preparing this dissertation. I owe my sincere gratitude to him for showing keen interests in the work and without whose support this dissertation could not have been possible to be completed.

My heartfelt thanks to Ms. Supriya (Supu) and Mr. S. Srinivasa Rao for helping me in dissertation process. Their sincerity shall be remembered always.

I owe a lot to my class-mates and friends in the campus for their assistance and suggestions and showing concern towards my dissertation.

I shall be failing in my duties if I do not place my parents fore of this task. It is their consistent and ceaseless prayers support that saw me successfully through my efforts. My brother and sisters, Kesovil, Madji, Ale, Kole, Anodi and Akochu have always been a source of encouragement and inspiration all through my studies outside the 'sweet home'.

Above all, my thanks are due to Almighty God for His grace and blessings which showers upon me endeavour.

New Delhi

1993


KEDISE PUCHO

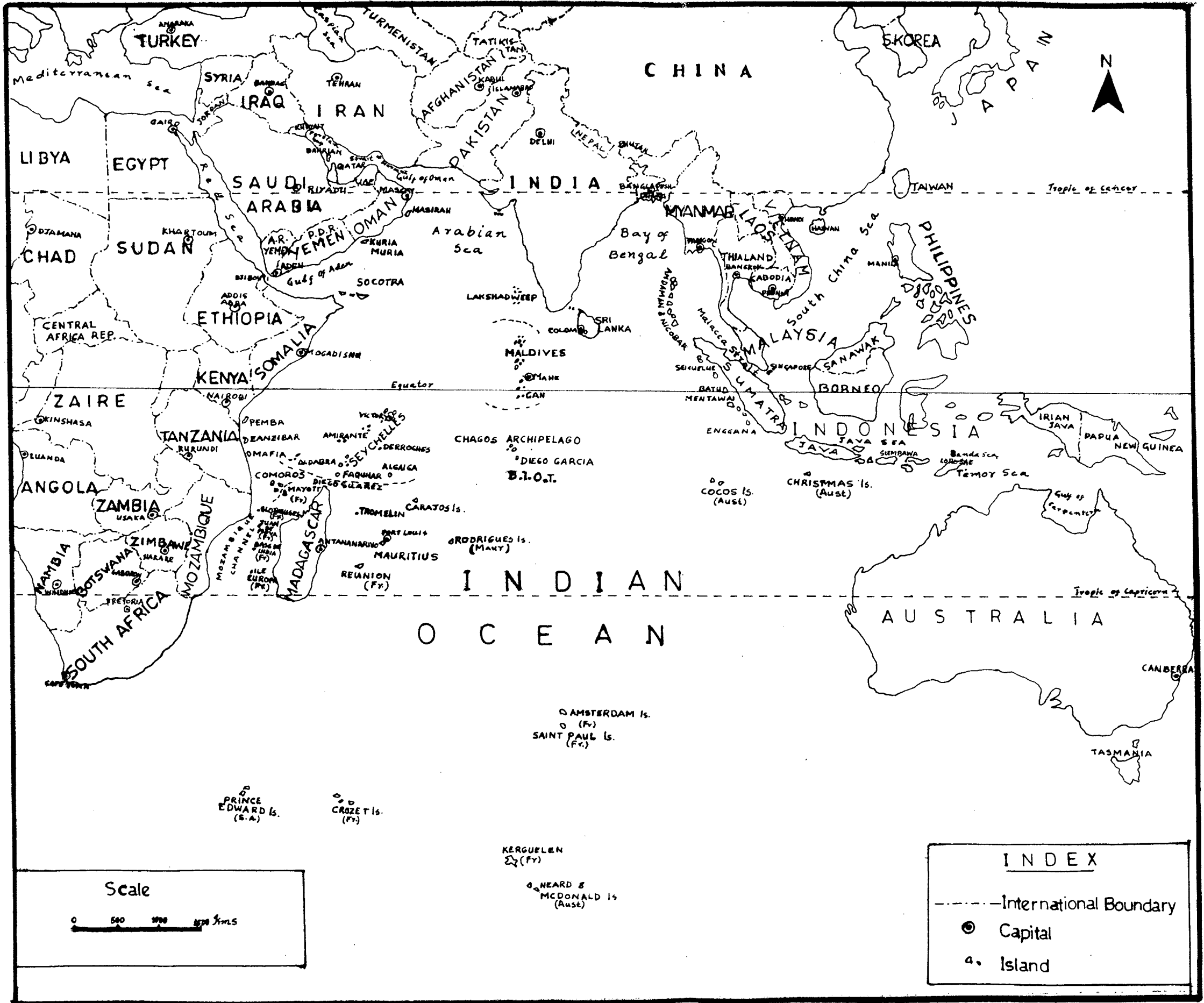
C O N T E N T S

	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION	1-10
CHAPTER II: GEOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK ON ISLANDS OF INDIAN OCEAN	11-50
CHAPTER III: ISLANDS IN RETROSPECT AND QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY	51-89
CHAPTER IV : STRATEGIC ROLE OF INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS.	90-126
CHAPTER V : GLOBAL AND REGION OF POWER EQUATIONS INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS	127-175
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION, FUTURE PERSPECTIVES	176-188

LIST OF MAPS:

	Page
1. Indian Ocean Islands	
2. Indian ocean islands climate	15
3. Western Indian Ocean Islands	23
4. Central Indian Ocean Islands	35
5. Eastern Indian Ocean Islands	40
6. Southern Indian Ocean Islands	46
7. Persian Gulf	129
8. South Asia	136
9. Rival Naval and Air Facilities-1975	143

INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS



CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

The Indian Ocean island states have gradually emerged as a pivotal region in the economic and geopolitical configuration of the superpowers. The geostrategic significance of the region and its increasing relevance to the competitive globalism of the superpowers are primarily the result of the central dynamics of contemporary power politics, which in a bipolar context have introduced a complex pattern of conflict and competition in economic, political and strategic fields.¹ It is not only the modern military technology that has transformed the world into a single strategic theatre, or has integrated all the important areas of the world into the central defense planning of the superpowers, but also the regional geopolitical characteristic balance of power arrangement and perceptions of vital interests have largely determined the nature of extra-regional participation in this strategic subsystem of the world.

The Ocean islands have played major roles in developing the history of their regions. Both the Atlantic and the Pacific islands have seen events which

1. For a geopolitical view of competitive globalism between the superpowers. "Heartland, Rimlands and the Technological Revolution." (New York: Crane, Russak and Company, 1977)

have changed the destinies of countries that border them. In social context, the status quo of areas bordering the Atlantic and the Pacific islands is now established with little scope for change. This is not so with the Indian Ocean islands. The historical phase of the Indian Ocean Islands today is between the disruption of one status quo and the beginning of another, but there is possibly of the variant of the hegemonic type, that different than what was in existence earlier. This, in fact, is the most decisive stage after the early nineteenth century open the British paramountcy had begun to take definite shape. By the middle of the century, the British were supreme in the region and the Indian Ocean was lake within the Empire and was truly a British Lake.

During the First World War, the Indian Ocean and islands did not become important target of war operations. The conflict in this remained localised in the Middle East and East African and the German submarines so active in European waters did not extend their operation to the Indian Ocean. But after the Post-World War I many significant changes in the Indian Ocean and Islands. In the Second World War the Indian Ocean was the sense of greater naval activity than

during the First World War. There is no doubt that the British maintained their supremacy in the Indian Ocean till the second half of the twentieth century. With the independence of India in 1947, British interest in the Indian Ocean could not remain active till the second half of the twentieth century. The British withdrawal has however been gradual spread over twenty years from 1947 to 1967. The Soviet Union have already intend to emergence of the her naval power in the Indian Ocean because Moscow, it was alleged, was eager to fill the "power vacuum" likely to be created by Britain departure. But before the British withdrawn from Indian Ocean the United States was already active in the Indian Ocean in 1963, where USA sent its Seventh Fleet operating in the Pacific to the Indian, also in March 1964 US task force move into these waters to confront China so it is only from the sixties and seventies that the scramble for the Indian Ocean as well as islands can truly be said to have begun.

Before announcing their decision in 1966 to withdraw their military forces from the land mass east of the Suez by 1971 end the British had planned together with the United States a new strategy for the Indian Ocean which relied in the virtually uninhabited islands

serving as staging post and fuelling and communication points. As early as 1964 an Anglo-American team made a joint survey of the Indian Ocean to select islands for military base. Under an agreement signed in 1965 with the Maldives which became operative in 1966 Britain secured "virtually sovereign use" of the Gan island a World War II British base till December 1986. The military facilities available on the Gan island included an airfield with advanced navigational aid which provided a much needed staying staging post between Europe and Australia. The British Government had decided to set up a new colony known as the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) this consisted of the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar and Desroches from the Seychelles group of islands, which a British colony acquired from Napoleon in 1810, and the Chagos Archipelago, a dependency of Mauritius. Latter BIOT Diego Garcia has granted to the US for naval facilities by the British with an agreement of 50 years. By another agreement in 1967 with Britain the United States obtained the right to use the island of Mahe in the Seychelles group for satellite tracking and telemetry facilities.

The British objective of dominating the Indian Ocean remained unchanged despite the fact that the

countries bordering it were no longer under their rule. Only the strategy was altered on account of the changed correlation of forces and Britain no longer aimed at domination of the region single-handed. She was to try to achieve it in cooperation with the United States, Australia and even the racist South Africa.

The Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean is explained in the context of the cumulative result of the growing super power interests in Third World, and the evolution of the cold war strategy, in the light of the newly emerging weapon system. After 1960 the Soviet naval power began to develop in Indian Ocean and succeeded in making its political presence felt in almost all the Indian Ocean states. The urgency was felt by the Soviet Union to enhance its naval capabilities, not only to maintain a balance between the three wings of its armed forces, but also to counter the accelerated naval programme launched by the U.S.A.

The presence of the super powers in the Indian Ocean islands has generally been explained by reference to their diplomatic and military rivalries in the gray areas of the Third World. This is owing to the "power vacuum" and "reciprocal isolation" have largely

influenced the traditional conceptualization of super powers policies in the Indian Ocean region². Although all elements of competitive globalism has played a part in the strategy thinking of the superpowers, their respective policies, including naval deployment, have been largely response to a greater mix primary of national interests. The United States and the Soviet Union have utilized the Indian Ocean region, for the Soviet it is the priority on the land projected to the adjoining ocean, the American seek to balance with sea power and the land forces of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean region. The use of mechanized warfare, particular modern missile, intercontinental range, integrates upper Asia and the Indian Ocean in a dangerously compact manner.

There are two major developments which make the Indian Ocean islands particularly important at this juncture. The first is the interest of the United States and the Soviet Union (Russia) in the region, one of the very few to have been outside their prying eyes. Both have their own political and security priorities and

2. V.K.Bhasin, Super Power Rivalry in the Indian Ocean, (New Delhi, S.Chand and company, 1981); S.N.Kohli, Sea Power and the Indian Ocean (New Delhi, Tata Mc Graw-Hill, 1978)

there is a certain bid for power in an area where either is established in the way they are in the Atlantic and Pacific regions for the Americans. This new interest is symbolic by the island base at Diego Garcia which is in the center of the Indian Ocean with major littoral bases and numerous mid-ocean anchorages and mooring buoys for their warships. Both nations also have ties with one or other of the littoral states, thereby, relying on both land and the ocean islands states to maintain security priorities.

Secondly, the development is not of a military character as are the Americans and Soviet interests. It is political and is not directly concerned with either of the two superpowers but influenced by them. This is the emergence of new states, with evolving nationalisms and with great geopolitical potential. These countries range from smaller ones like, Mauritius and the Seychelles, to larger ones, like Australia some, like the Seychellas have recently gained independent while others, like Australia, are for the first time discovering a new destiny and a nationalism based on realization that they are part of a world which far removed from the source of their culture and ethnic roots. Still others, like Sri Lanka , are for the first time looking to the oceans of a new awareness about

their place in Asian and world affairs sustaining foreign policy aspiration by their position in the Indian Ocean islands. It is not the size or the economic development of the nations that matter but that they are directly influenced by events in the Indian Ocean.

Beside the USA, Britain and USSR, there are three other big powers which are showing a growing interest in the politics of the Indian Ocean islands. They are France, China and Japan. They are as yet not strong enough to play an independent super power role, but their growing presence would influence the politics of the area in the coming years.

The new geopolitical importance of the Indian Ocean is reflected in two major areas of the ocean, the central which includes the island republic of the Maldives and the western comprising Mauritius, the Madagascar Republic, Seychelles, Comoros and French Reunion. Though both areas have their own regional politics, there is likely to be greater contact if not interaction in the future. This is likely on a bilateral basis between the island republics themselves, given the greater awareness of their surroundings as a result of the strategic importance of the area. In fact, it is quite possible that the interests of the major powers in

the Indian Ocean may lead to the island states taking more interest in each other.

In both the Central and the Western Indian Ocean there is an intricate pattern of domestic and regional politics and the island states in the two regions are looked at separately. Common to both groups is the need to relate to the major powers with interests in the Indian Ocean and to the question of the zone of France advocated by the larger littoral countries. These diverse pulls have imposed some strain on the foreign policy machinery of the island states. It has led the island government to ask them do they react to the new frontier character of the Indian ocean or does it mean becoming national prisoners of another more powerful country. In a geopolitical perspective this countries to be the most important question for the island states.

The Indian Ocean islands are of immense, though complicated geopolitical importance both from the point of view of the global powers and the littoral states who realizing the new strategic importance of the region and threats of their security are engaged in building up their own military strength. This makes the region particularly prone to conflict. The sudden inflow of immense oil revenue into Iran and the Persian Gulf

states the extensive development of nuclear power in India, the economic potential of Australia, the acquisition of sophisticated weapons by China, the growth of the Soviet navy and the use of modern military technology in the Indian Ocean islands by the United States, are just some of the reasons which make the Indian Ocean region vitally important to international security. But its immediate importance continues to be in the contact of the vast land mass of Asia, which overlooks the ocean islands and, as it were, dominates the hearts of it, with Africa and Australia flanking its sides. Three continents together engulf the ocean making it a compact stretch of water, one with geographic contiguity but also strategic vulnerability.

CHAPTER - II

**GEOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK
ON
ISLANDS
OF INDIAN OCEAN**

Indian Ocean, the world's third largest ocean lies South of Asia, North of Australia, and between the continents of Africa and Australia. In area, it covers one-fifth of the continent of Asia, including its western and Soviet-Asian parts. Along with the long coastline of East Africa, the entire reaches of the vast Indian Ocean and the lands boarding this ocean is the region of great political and strategical significance. It lies between two political worlds on the one hand is the U.S.S.R. and the People's Republic of China and on the other hand is the United States of America and British interests. It contains one-third of the world's population. The geographic definition of the Indian Ocean as has been accepted by the United Nations on 1st July 1974 is as follows.¹

1. The dividing line between the Atlantic and Indian Ocean is the meridian of Cape Aguthas ($20^{\circ}0'E$)
2. The dividing line between the Pacific and Indian Ocean is the meridian of the South-East capes of Tasmania ($147^{\circ}0'E$), the Western exit of the Bass

1. "Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of Peace. Report of the U.N. Secretary General", Strategic Digest, Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi, Vol.IV, No.6, June 1974, p.24.

Strait and the median line between the north-west of Australia and the Malay Peninsula (Cape Talbot through Timor, Sumba, Flores and the Sunda Islands up to Sumatra).

3. The dividing line between the Antarctic Ocean and the Indian Ocean is the 60°0'S.
4. The northern limits of the Indian Ocean are clearly defined by the continent of Asia.

The principal bodies of water along the margins of the Indian Ocean are the Red Sea , Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, Andaman Sea, Strait of Malacca, Timor Sea and the Great Australian Bight. The ocean including marginal seas cover on area of 28,920,000 square miles (74,902,800 square kilometers). The maximum length of Indian Ocean is over 10,460 kms (North and South) and its maximum breadth is nearly 9,655 Kms (east and west). It covers nearly 20.6% of the total oceanic area of the world. The average depth of the Indian Ocean is about 13,080 feets (3,987 meters) and the deepest known points is in Java Trench, which descends to 24,390 feets (7,434 meters) just south of Java.

According to the geologists the Indian Ocean

basin was formed in the paleozoic age as a result of the splitting of the Gondwana landmass into the present-day South America, Africa and Australia. The Gondwana landmass is believed to have earlier separated from the landmass in the Northern Hemisphere. The Indian sub-continent is said to have come into existence as a broken off part of Africa which while drifting northward collided with the Eurasian landmass giving rise to the Himalayas.³ This geological unity has imparted a certain symmetry of physical form to the Indian Ocean area which stands out in marked contrast with the shapeless wastness and corridor-like form of the Atlantic.⁴

The dominant structural feature of the region is of course, the formidable mountain barrier, the Himalayas. These, mountains demarcate the northern limit of the region. The tertiary orogenesis which formed the Pyreness Alpine and Himalaya ranges was the most violent and widespread in Asia, north of the present Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. As an evidence of this we have the present day wilderness of deep tertiary folds on a

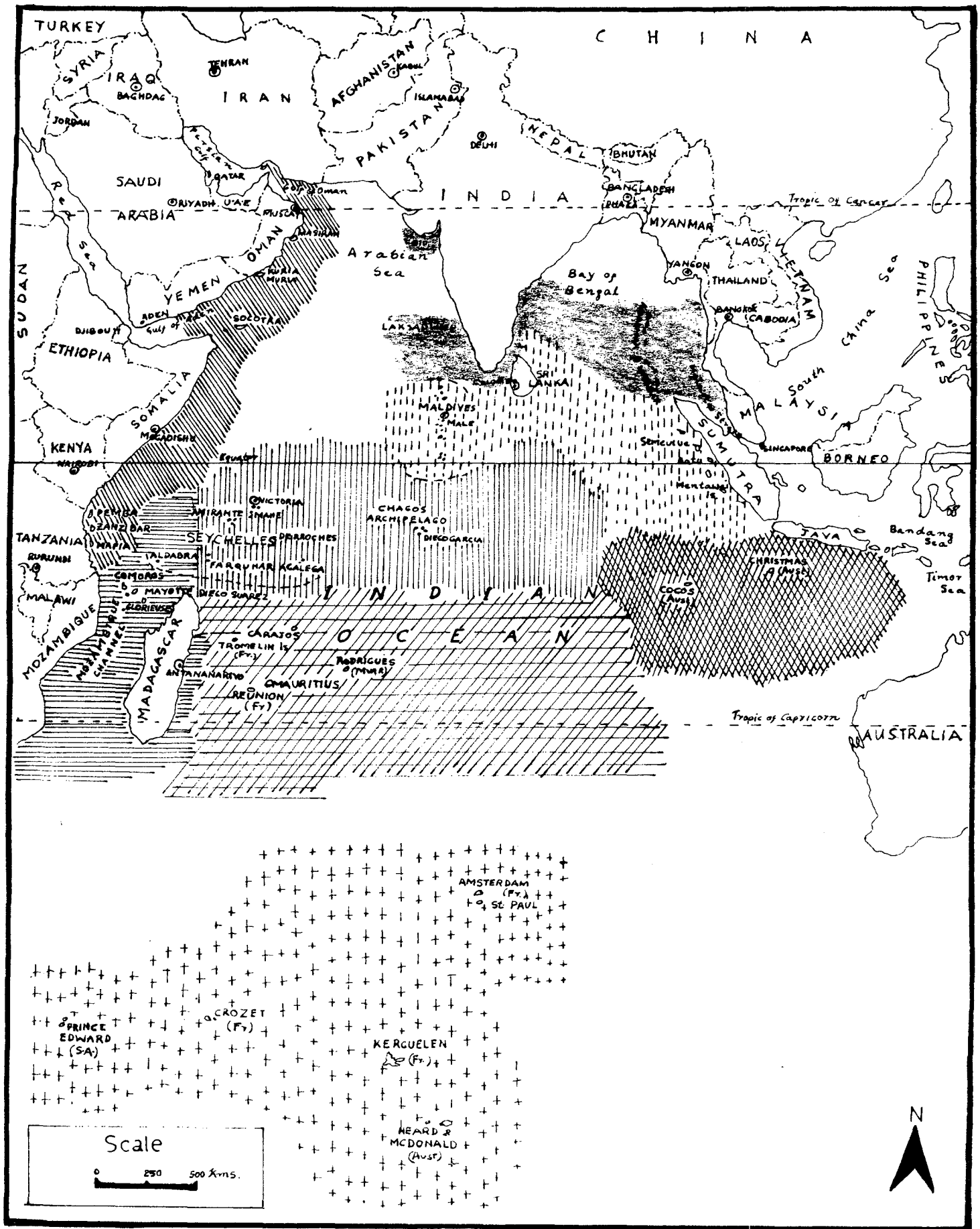
-
3. Alfred Wegener, The Origin of Continent and Ocean, New York, 1966. pp.62 -64.
 4. Jacques Amber, "Historic del'ocean Indian, Tananarive," 1955, pp.2-4, cited in Ferene A.Vali, Politics of the Indian ocean Region, New Delhi,1976, p.33.









west-to-east axis and the elevated, denuded plateau of Tibet. As if to fulfill completely its roles of isolation, the tertiary folds bend south wards at the northwest limits of the region, through Afghanistan and Iran to terminate at Oman, while to the east of Bangladesh they take on a north-to-south direction through Burma and Malaya, resuming their characteristic west-to-east trend in the mountainous islands of Indonesia from different causes but with the same effect, the east coast of Africa is isolated from its interior by a broken chain of faults, tectonic troughs and escarpments throughout its length of over 4500 miles commencing from Cape Guardafnic (Somaliland) to the Cape of Good Hope. The Red Sea fills a gigantic fault which separates Asia from Africa, except for the narrow neck of land through which the Suez Canal has been cut.

CLIMATE

Most of the Indian Ocean islands lies in between tropic of cancer and Tropic of Capricorn. In the northern position climates are dominated by monsoon winds that blow toward Asia in summer and out from the continent in winter. During the summer the onshores monsoon produces frequent rains as it approaches the zone of inter tropical convergence lying over south India. In winter the tropical convergence shifts to an

INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS CLIMATE



- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
|  Hot Climate |  Tropical Climate |  Tropical Ocean |  Monsoon Climate |
|  Equatorial Climate |  Maritime Sub-Tropical |  Tropical Rainy |  Cold Climate |

average position slightly south of the equator and dry northeast monsoon blows from Asia. The Southeast trade winds prevail over much of the Southern Hemisphere tropics, bringing rain to windward slopes of the few scattered islands. The westerlies dominate the southern reaches of the ocean where frontal storms are common

The Indian Ocean Islands climate is divided into eight categories. They are : 1) Hot climate 2) Tropical climate 3) Tropical Oceanic climate, 4) Monsoon climate, 5) Equatorial climate, 6) Maritime subtropical climate, 7) Tropical rainy climate and 8) cold climate.

1. Hot Climate:- The shoreline of islands is deeply indented so that no part of it is far from the sea and this serves to temper the very hot climate with continual breezes. The annual rainfall is of 60 to 80 inches (1500 to 2000 mm). Rainfall is reliable and well distributed in comparison to the other islands. The long rain occurs between March and May and the short rain between October and December. This hot climate comprises of islands like Pemba, Zanzibar, Mafia, Kuria, Muria and Masirah.

2. Tropical Climate: The tropical climate covers the island of Comoros, Madagascar and Aldabra, has two

clearly marked seasons, a fresh , dry period between May and October and a hot, humid season between November and April. In November the monsoon brings the highest temperature to about 85°F (28°C). The highest rainfall occurs in January (11-15 inches [275 - 375 mm]) and the summer brings cyclones, waterspouts and tidal waves. Winter temperature fall to their minimum of 68°F (20 °C) in July. The annual rainfall varies between 43 and 114 inches,

3. Tropical Oceanic Climate: Seychelles, Agalego, Providence Cocos and Chogas Archipalego are the islands have tropical oceanic climate, the average annual temperature varying from 70° F (21°C) to some 93°F (32°C) at sea level. Rainfall ranges from 90 inches (2,300m) at sea level to 140 inches on the mountain slopes.

4. Monsoon Climate : The rainy season from May to August is brought by the South-West monsoon from December to March, the North-West Monsoon brings dry and mild winds. The average annual temperature varies from 92°F (33°C) to 79°F (26°C). Rainfall averages about 84 inches (2,150 mm) a year. Maldives, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar are the islands which come under monsoon climate.

5. Equatorial Climate: Sri Lanka, Simenlue, Batu and Mentawai are the islands which have equatorial climate with an average annual temperature of 80° to 83°F (27° to 28°C) and a high relative humidity in most places. Being near to the Indian and South East subcontinental has resulted in modification of the equatorial climate by the seasonal occurrence of monsoon, whose rainfall is not uniform.

6. Maritime Subtropical Climate: Mauritius , Reunion and Cargadas Chrajos shoals, which is shaped like an oyster, is volcanic and coral reef origin. The climate is maritime subtropical with fairly uniform temperature varying from 74°F (25°C) at sea level to 67°F (19°C) in the plateau. Two seasons are recognized hot (Dec.to April) and cold (June to September). Annual rainfall varies from 35 inches (900 mm) in the west coast to 60 inches in the south east coast and about 200 inches in the central part.

7. Tropical Rainy Climate: The tropical rainfall climate are found Christmas and Cocos of Keeling which is situated south of the island of Java and northwest of Australia. The tropical rainy season between November and April and little variation in

average temperature 64° to 86°F (18° to 30°C).
Average annual rainfall is 113 inches (2,678 mm.)

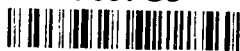
8. Cold Climate: This climate comprises of islands like Amsterdam, Kerguelen, Heard and Crozet and Princes Edward, lies to the south of Indian Ocean and north of Antarctica. Extremely cold winters are the principal characteristic of this type of climate. The ground is covered with snow and ice for about 6 to 8 months. The summer and winter temperatures are 10° and below 0°C respectively. The total annual precipitation is about 30 cm.

I-Origin of Islands II-Name of Island III country

Atoll	Bahrain	Independent States
Atoll	Kuria Muria	Oman
Coral	Ile Europ	France
Coral	Lakshadweep	India
Coral	Madagascar	Democratic Republic of Mad.
Coral	Seychelles	Independent State
Coral atoll	Chagos Archipelago	UK (BIOT)
Coral atoll	Cocos or Keeling	Australia
Coral atoll	Maldives	Republic of Maldives
Coral atoll	Sri Lanka	Republic of Sri Lanka
Coral atoll	Tormelin	France
Coral atoll	Prince Edward	South Africa
Coral bank	Socrota	South Yemen
Oval atoll	Agaley Island	Mauritius
Oval atoll	Aldabra	U.K.
Granite & Coral	Comoros	Federal Islamic Republic
Extinct Volcano	Amsterdam	France
Volcanic	Cargados Carajos	Mauritius

	shoals	
Volcanic	Crozet	France
Volcanic	Heard & MacDonald	Australia
Volcanic	Kerguelen	France
Volcanic	Mauritius	Independent State
Volcanic	Rodrigues	Independent State
Volcanic action	Mayotte	France
Volcano Crater	Saint Paul	France
Oceanic Mountain	Andaman & Nicobar	India
Oceanic mountain	Christmas	Australia
Rocky and Coral Reefs	Mentawia	Indonesia
Rocky and Coral Reefs	Pemba	Independent State
Rocky-reef	Simeulue	Indonesia
Rocky-reef	Sumbawa	Indonesia
Rock Island	Mafia	Tanzania
Rocky reefs	Masirah	Oman
Rocky-reef	Diu	India
Rocky-reef	Zanzibar	Tanzania
Rock-reef	Sumatra	Indonesia

DISS
327.091824
P961 Ge



TH4466

TH- 4466



ISLANDS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

The Indian Ocean abounds in both large islands and coral atolls. Some of those islands like Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Mauritius, the Maldives, the Seychelles and the Comoros are sovereign independent states with membership of the United Nations. The islands of Socotra near the Bab-el-Mandeb entrances of the Red Sea and that of Masirah off the coast of Oman near the Hormuz Straits providing access to the Persian Gulf of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman respectively.

The submarine ridges form a large number of islands in the ocean. There are four main chains of islands along the longitudinal (North-South) direction. They are the Western, Central, Eastern and Southern groups of islands.

THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS:

The first chain forms a 700 mile circle from Diego Suarez at the northern end of Madagascar which includes the Amirante and Seychelles group, Cargados Carajos group and Mauritius and Reunion island with Rodrigues another 200 miles beyond. Inside this ring 250 miles

WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS



from Diego Suarez are assumption island. Aldabra, Farquhar, Comoros, Pumba, Zanzibar, Mafia commanding the northern entrance of Mozambique. In the north Western group islands are Masirh, Socotra and Kuria Muria. In South Western group fall (west-coast) Prince Edward, Crozet and Karguelen island.

Aldabra Island:- Aldabra Island in the Indian Ocean, of part of the British colony of Seychelles, located $9^{\circ} 30's$, $46^{\circ}E$, 26.3 mile N.W, of the northern point of Madagascar, 630 mile south west of Mahe and 70 miles west of the Cosmoledo group. The island which is constitutes of an oval atoll about 1 1/2 mile broad, encloses a large but shallow lagoon. The total land area is about 60 Sq. mile.

Aldabra was visited by the Portuguese in 1511 but was already known to the Arabs who gave the name. In the 18th century the islets became dependencies of the French establishment at Bourbon Reunion. In 1810 with Mauritius, Bourdon (for a time) the Seychelles and other islands, Aldabra became British islands.

Agalega Islands:- Agalega Islands had two island dependencies (north Island and south Island) of Mauritius, in the Western Indian Ocean. They lie about

600 mile (1,000 km.) north of Mauritius and have a total land area of 27 sq.mile (70 Sq.Km.) The main village Sainte Rita is in the South Island. The Island is situated between latitude 10 24'5 and longitude 56' 37'E. The latest census of the total population is about 437.

Comoros Island:- The Comoros island lies in the full Islamic Republic of the Comoros, Arabic Jumhuiryat Al-Qumur Al-Illihadiyah. Al-Islamiyah, French Republic Federal Islamique Des Comos, independent state comprises numerous coral and granite and islets, scattered on the northern approaches to the Mozambique Channel between the east African coast and northern Madagascar and clustered into four major island groups. They are, Grand Comoro, Anjouan, Moheli and Mayotte. Moroni is the capital, situated in the Grand Comoros. The group has a land area of 719sq. mile (1862 sq. km.) Most of the Islands are from the African mainland.

In 1527 Portuguese Cartographer Diego Roberos landed this island but the first European to visit them was the Englishman James Lancaster in 1591. The dominant of the islands was then and for long afterwards, Arab. In 1843 the French officially took possession of Mayotte and in 1886 placed the other three islands under

protection. In 1974 majorities on three of the islands voted for independence but most of the inhabitants of Mayotte favored continuation of French rule. On July 6th. 1975, French government recognised the sovereignty of the Comoros islands.

Kuria Muria:- Kuria Muria also known as Khuriya Mariya island group of Oman, consists of five islands lying in the Arabian Sea off the southern coast of Oman about midway between the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. The total is an area of 28 sq mile (75 sq km). The largest, Hallamia is 8 miles (12 km) land with an area of 22 sq miles (57 sq km).

About 80 A.D. a Greek sailing called Insula Zenobu the first recorded a found in the " Periplus of the Erythrean Sea". In 16th century the Portuguese rediscovered than the islands were the huant of Arab freebooters. In 1835 the islands were charted by the British Amiratly. Later, Sultan of Musket and Oman owned this island and declined to sell the island, but 1854 ceded them as a gift to Britain.

Mafia Island:-The Mafia Island is in the Indian Ocean of the Eastern Coast of Tanzania, East Africa, 80 miles (130 km) southeast of Dar es - Salaam and opposite the

mouth of the Rufiji River. It is 170 sq mile (440 sq km) in area and is separated from the mainland by a channel 10 miles wide and 30 miles long. The island became part of (German) East of Africa in 1890, Zanzibar in 1916 and Tanzanyika in 1922. It is now administered as part of Pwani region, Tanzania.

Mauritius Island:- This is an island country, the central independent island state of the Mascarene group, lying about 50 miles (800 km) East of Madagascar in the South-Western Indian Ocean - 500 miles East of Madagascar, 110 miles South-East of Mombasa and 2400 miles South-West of India, covering an area of 788 sq miles (2040 sq km) it is situated at a latitude $20^{\circ}18^{\circ}s$ and longitude $57^{\circ}36'E$, the capital in Port Louis. Mauritius which is shaped like an oyster is volcanic in origin and almost surrounded by coral reef.

Mauritius was probably known to Arab seafarers since the 10th century or earlier. The Portuguese visited in the 16th century however, they couldn't settle in the island. The Dutch who took possession between 1598 to 1710 called it Mauritius. French possessed this island between 1721 - 1810. In 1810 the British captured the island from the French till 1968.

Malagasy/Madagascar Island:- The Malagasy is officially a Democratic Republic of Madagascar Malagasy Madagasikara or Repolika Demokratika Malagasy, French Madagascar, or Republique Democratique De Magasascar, is the fourth largest island in the world situated off the south east coast of Africa in the South Western Indian Ocean, covering an area of 226,558 Sq. miles (587,041 Sq.Km). The capital is Antomanivo. Madagascar occupying the islands of the same name and minor adjacent islands, lie between latitudes 12° and 26° south and between longitude 45° and 51° E and is thus almost entirely within the tropic. It is separated from the African coast by the 500 miles in length wide Mozambique Channel. The coastline of the island is 2,480 miles in length.

Most of the inhabitants are Malagasy, a culturally homogeneous people found through the fusion of Arab, Indonesia and African migrants to to Madagascar. Besides the Malagasy, there are some small but important groups of second type of immigrants origin including Comorians, French, Indian and Chinese. On June you 26th 1960, Madagascar got independence from French Government.

Mayotte Island:- Mayotte Island is situated northwest of Madagascar. It is the Easternmost of the Comoro Islands in the Indian Ocean. It covers 144 sq.miles (574 Kg.). The capital is Dzaoudzi. Mayotte is also called Mahore rises 2,165 feet (660 meters) within a shattered lagoon formed by a coral reef.

The Mahorians are Malagasy stock, whereas most Comorians are muslims. The Mahorians are mainly Roman Catholics governed by France since 1843. Mayotte had refused to join the comoros republic which was created in 1975. France is administering Mayotte as a special entity until the people choose between their independence and a status as a French overseas department. According to the population census was about 47, 246 in 1978.

Reunion Island:- The Mascarene island and a French overseas department in the Western Indian Ocean. It is located about 450 miles (720 km) East of Madagascar and 110 miles South West of Mauritius. Reunion is almost elliptical in shape , about 40 miles long and 30 miles wide and has an area of 970 sq.miles (2,512 sq.km.). The capital is Sainte Denis on the northern coast. Reunion population was 551,000 in 1984.

The Reunion is volcanic in origin, volcanoes having developed along a northwest-southwest fault. Reunion was first settled in the 17th century by colonists from France. Slaves and laborers were brought in from East Africa to work in plantations and later Malays, Annamites, Chinese and Malabar Indians were imported as indentured laborers. The population is a mixed descent.

Pemba Island:- Arabic Jagirat Al-Khudrah, island in the Indian Ocean 55 miles (56 Km) off the coast of East Africa, opposite the port of Tanga, Tanzania. The island embraces 380 sq. mile (984 sq.km.) being 42 miles (47 Km) long and 14 miles wide. As the Arabic name means, it is also known as the green Island. Pemba is the world's leading producer of cloves.

The island is governed by Zanzibar with which it has radio communication and a steamer service. Chakechake is the principal seaport and town island on an islet on the west coast. Pemba was transferred to the British East Africa Company in 1891 by the Sultan of Zanzibar. The capital is Wete on the West Coast situated in this islet-fringed bay, Wete has a population of 125,000.

Rodrigues Island:-This island dependency of the Western Indian Ocean state of Mauritius is of volcanic origin. It has an area of 70 Sq. mile (104 m). The island was apparently uninhabited when it was sighted by the Portuguese in 1507. It was first successfully colonized by the French who used slaves to cultivate sugar plantation. The British received the island from the war (180-1815) and the French settlers were evacuated leaving their slaves behind. Most of the Rodrigues are descended from those slaves. There are also a few Chinese and Indo-Mauritius immigrants.

Seychelles Island:- The Republic of Seychelles, is an island republic in the Western Indian Ocean, comprising 92 granite and coral islands and islets widely scattered in the mid-western region of the Indian Ocean. The islands cover an area of 171 sq.mile (444 sq. km). The capital is Nitoria, situated between latitudes 4° and 11° south and longitude 46° and 56° east Seychelles is located about 1000 miles (1,600 km.,) east of Kenya. The population in 1984 was estimated at 66,700.

Seychelles is composed of two main island groups, the Mahe group of 40 Central, mountains granite islands and a second group of 52 outer, flat, corolline islands.

uninhabited islands and their black slaves were joined in the 19th century by deportees from France and by a few Britishers. Asians from China, India and Malaya arrived later in smaller numbers. The majority of the population is Roman Catholic and French the official language.

Socotra Island:- The island of Socotra, a part of the Democratic Republic of Yemen is situated in the north-west of Indian Ocean and South east of Yemen (Aden) The largest island an archipelago, it measuses 1,400 sq.mile. (3,600 sq. km.) in area. The Jabal Hajhir (Haggier Mountain) occupy the interior with norrows coastal plan. In the north and west are smaller islands of Samhah and Darzah al-khwan (called the brothers) and Abol-al-Kuri all of which also belong to Yemen (Aden) The islands stand an coral banks and many of them, once have been connected with the African and Arabian mainlands. Socotra's flora includes several famous species like myrrh, frankincense and the dragons blood tree.

The inhabitants were Christians but religion disappeared in the 17th century. Socotra was interrupted by Portuguese occupation between 1507-1511.

In 1834 British obtained this island from Portuguese. Later the Sultanate ruled the island until in 1967 and Socrotra got independence. The capital and largest town Hadiboh (Tamrida) lies on the northern coast. The latest population estimated was about 8000.

Zanzibar Island:- The island in the Western Indian Ocean is 22 miles (35 Km) off the coast of East Africa. In 1964 Zanzibar together with Pemba and some other smaller islands joined with Tanganyika on the mainland to form the United Republic of Tanzania. Zanzibar island covers 637 Sq.miles (1,651 sq.km.)

The southern and eastern portions of Zanzibar islands have been mainly populated by a Bantu speaking people known as the Hadimu. The northern portion of Zanzibar island and the adjacent Tumbates island have been occupied by another Bantu-speaking people known as the Tumbatu. These two group represent the earliest arrival in Zanzibar. The language mostly widely spoken is a highly Arabicized form of Swahili.

Bahrain Group:-The Bahrain lie in the central-western region of the Persian Gulf between the Qatar Peninsula and the Saudi Arabian mainland. Bahrain, the largest island, is 30 miles long and upto 10 miles wide,

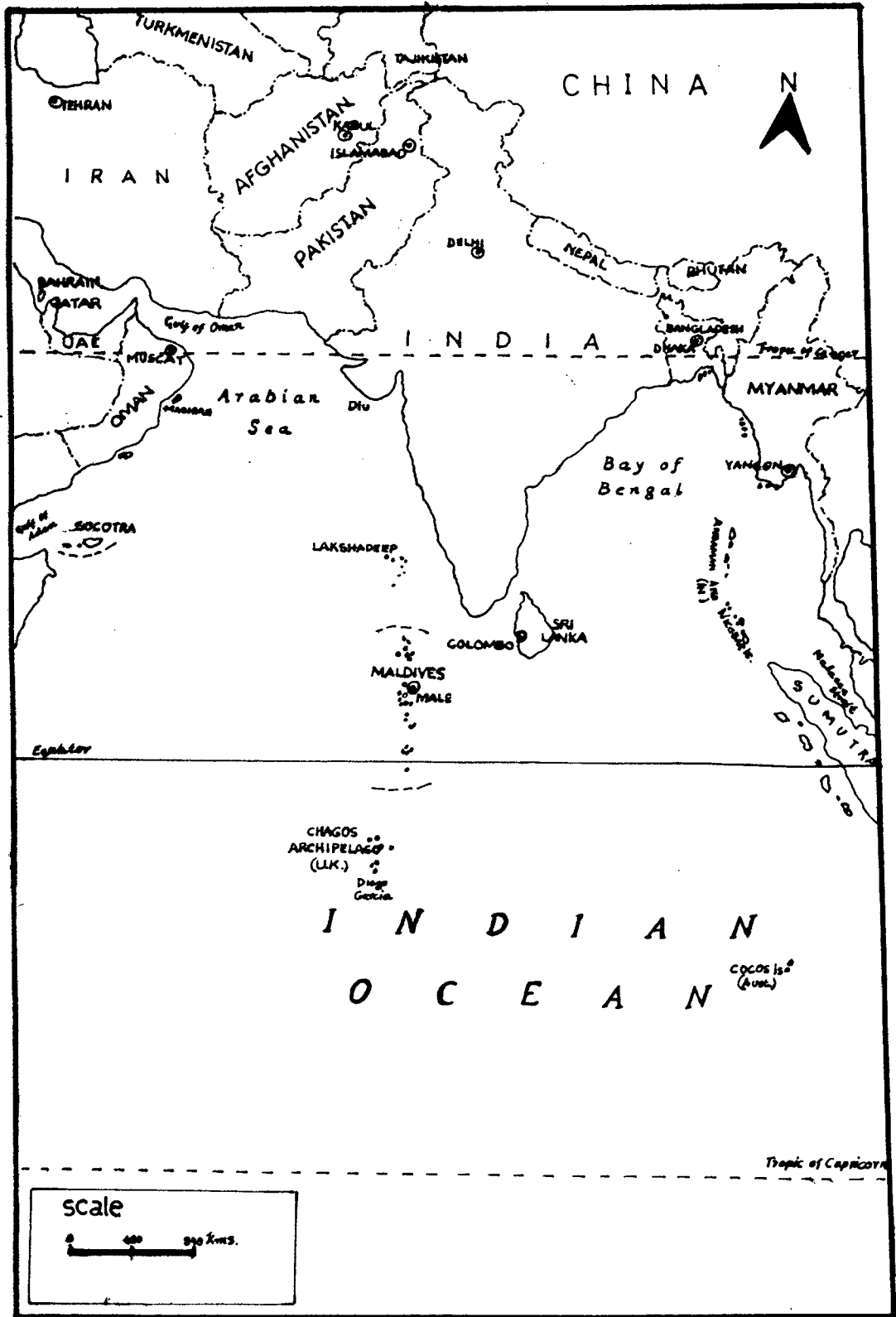
Muharrraq island in the north-east, which is 4 miles long and one mile wide, is connected with Bahrain by a causeway nearly 1.5 miles long, carrying a motor road. Other small islands are Sitra, Umm Annassan, Jiddah, the Harwar group and several islets some of which is uninhabited. Total land area is about 255 sq.miles. The population estimate for 1978 was 275,549. Over 70 per cent of the people are Muslim Arabs Manama is the capital.

Masirah Island:- The island of Masirah, about 40 miles long and 10 miles wide, is in the territory of Oman. The strategically situated island lies 15 miles off the southern coast of Oman and about 450 miles south-west of the Straits of Hormuz and commands western approaches to the Gulf.

THE CENTRAL INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS:

Among the Central group of islands, towards the north lies the Lakshadweep island, Diu, Maldives and Sri Lanka. In the center are Chagos Archepalega in which the much publicised Diego Garcia islands is situated. It is now a well known US-UK naval and air base. To the south of this chain lie St.Paul, Amsterdam islands.

CENTRAL INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS



Diu Island:- Formerly Dio, it was the town administrative headquarters of Diu district, Goa, Daman and Diu union territory. It is situated on an island in the Gulf of Cambay of the Arabian Sea, off the Saurashtra coast of Gujarat State of Western India. Diu district has an area of 15sq. mile (40 sq. km.)

Diu fell to the Portuguese in 1,534 and remained a Portuguese colony until 1961. After India achieved its independence in 1947, the islands Portuguese possession in the island subcontinent was a source of friction. In 1961 India seized Dui, joining it with Goa and Daman in a single Union territory.

Lakshadweep:- Formerly Laccadive, Minicoy and Amidivi Island, Union territory of India, Lakshadweep comprises a group of island in the Arabian Sea about 200 miles (320 kms) of south western Indian coast. Lakshadweep lies scattered in the Arabian Sea between 8° and $12^{\circ} 30^{\circ}$ north latitude and 74° east longitude. They lie in north East and south west direction from the Kerala Coast. These coral islands with an area of only 12 Sq.mile (32 km) form the smallest union territory of India. The Lakshadweep archipelago consists of 12 atolls, three reefs, five submerged bank and islands. There are 36

islands out of which 10 are inhabited. The people are Moplah (of mixed Indian and Arab descent) and Muslims.

The Portuguese discovered the islands in May 1498. In 1973 the union territory was renamed Lakshadweep. Kavarthi was the Laccadive group is the territorial capital. The population is about 40,249 in the 1981 census.

Maldives:- The Maldives also known as the Maldives Island formerly Republic of Maldives, Divehi Jumhuriya, is a chain of nearly 1800 small coral islands and sanbanks (about 220 of which are inhabited) grouped in clusters or atolls in the Indian Ocean. The islands extend over 475 miles (764 km) from north to the south and 80 miles from east to west. The northern most atoll is about 370 miles south-southwest of the Indian mainland and the central area including the capital at Mahe is 416 mile west of Sri Lanka. The population in 1984 was estimated at 207,800. The total land area of 115 sq. miles (298 sq.km) is built of coral on the crowns of an ancient, submerged volcanic mountain range.

The Maldives are a mixed people, speaking Indo-European language called Divehi, Arabic, Hindi and English are also spoken. In 1965 Maldives became a

sovereign state from the British Crown.

Sri Lanka:-Formerly known as Ceylon, is an island country lying in the Indian Ocean on the southern strip of the Indian subcontinent. It is separated from it by the shallow waters of the Palk Strait and Gulf of Manner. A string of small islands known as Adam's bridge, stretch between India and Sri Lanka and separate the Strait and the Gulf. Sri Lanka reaches from 5° 55' to 9° 50' north latitude and from 79° 40' to 81 '55 east longitude. The island covers an area of 25,332 sq. mile (65,610 sq.km) and is roughly pear-shaped. It has been called "India Teardrop". It extends about 270 miles (430 km) from north to south at its greatest length and about 140 mile (223 km) from east to west at its greatest width. Sri Lanka is a small country, but it has great internal variety.

The island's first human settlers probably include immigrants aborigines of Southern Asia, peoples of the Proto-Australoid ethnic group. In 1503 a Portuguese fleet landed on Ceylon. In 1796 Dutch ousted the Portuguese and eventually some under the control of the Dutch East India company. In 1919 the Ceylon national congress united Sinhalese and Tamil group for their freedom from British colony and got independence in 1947.

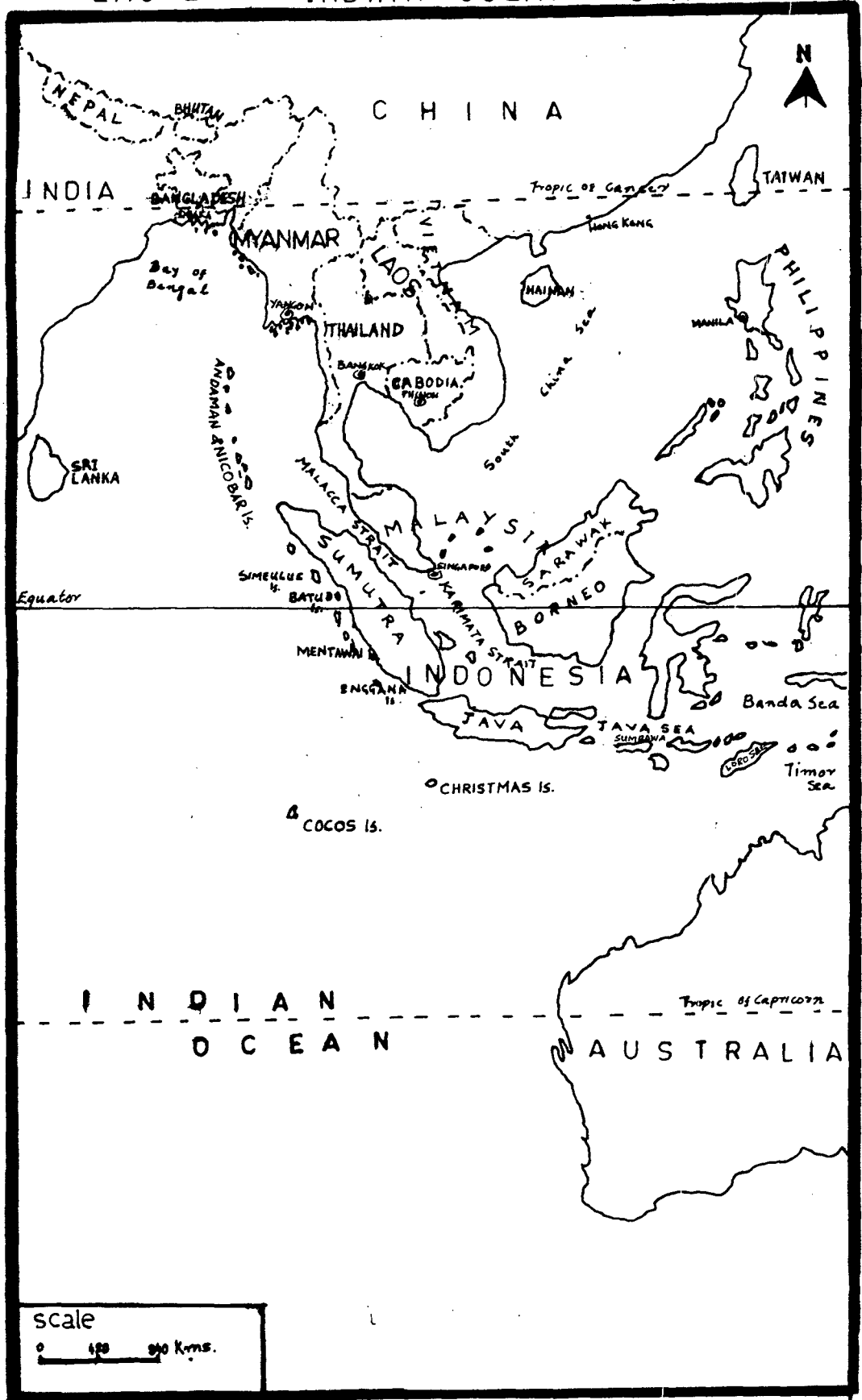
Chagos Archipelago Inland:- Chagos are a group of British-owned islands in the Central Indian Ocean, about 250 miles (400 km) South of the Maldives Islands. Formerly a dependency of Mauritius, the islands were transferred in 1965 to a newly created colony called the British Indian Ocean Territories (BIOT).

The five main coral atoll are Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos, Salomon, three brothers and six islands. The last two are uninhabitant. Diego Garcia, which is about 100 mile (160 km) to the south east of the group is the largest and its crescent shape encloses a lagoon that forms a harbour. The island was British air base during World War II and in 1965 became a British-American defence facility.

THE EASTERN INDIAN ISLANDS:

The third chain of islands is made of a garland of islands between Burma and Sumatra, starting with the Burmese Preparis and Coco islands, followed by the 219 Indian Andaman and Nicobar islands with, among others, the fine natural harbors at Port Blair and Nancowry. Then there is the series of Indonesian islands. Some of them, like Sumatra and Java are enormously big. In the west of Indonesia islands lies Coco and Christmas islands of Australia.

EASTERN INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS



Andaman & Nicobar Island:-The Andaman and Nicobar are a group of picturesque islands, big and small inhabited and uninhabited, lying in the South Eastern part of the Bay of Bengal. The Andamans are separated from the Nicobar to the South by the Ten Degree Channel, which is 90 miles (145 km) wide. The Union Territory of the Andaman and Nicobar islands consist of about 321 islands (of which only 38 are inhabited) with an area of 8295 sq. mile. The islands are situated between 6° and 14° north latitude and 92° and 94° east longitude in the Bay of Bengal with the ten degree channel separating the Andaman group of islands. The land area of the Andaman group of islands is 6,340 Sq.Km. and that of Nicobar group of islands is 1953 Sq.Km.

Andamanese are the aboriginal inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal . They belong to Negrits stocks, which is represented also by the semang of Malaysia and the Pygmies of the Phillipines. Most have been detribalized and absorbed into modern Indian life especially in the three chief islands - Great Andaman, Rutland island and little Andaman.

Sumbawa Island:- The island is also known as Soembawa, One of the Nusa Tenggara (lesser Sunda) islands east of Java in the Republic of Indonesia at 8° 30' south latitude and 118° east longitude. Lying between Lombok and flores islands, it has an area of 5,965 sq. mile (15, 449 sq km). This island is about 175 mile (285 kms.) long and 55 miles (90 Kms.) at its widest point. It has an irregular coastlines and one of the best harbors in the republic, at Bima Bay on the northern side. The mountain was about 1,300 feet (400 m) high until a volcanic eruption in 1815 reduced the peak. The population was 7,66,961 in 1981.

Mentawai Islands:-Mentawai island is a group of about 70 islands, Sumatara Barat Propinsi (west Sumatra province) Indonesia off the western coast of Sumatra in the eastern Indian Ocean. The major islands are Siberut, Sipura, Pagai utara (north pagai) and pagai relation (South Pagai), the last two also known as the Nassan Islands. The principal towns is the Muarasiberut, in south-eastern Siberut. The western coast is steep and rocky and coral reefs and heavy surf make the approach dangerous. Elevation is below 1500 feet (450 m) and earthquake are frequent. Most of the Islands are covered with forest. Population was 14,732 in 1971 censuses.

Simeulue Island:- Indonesia Pulau Simeulue, Simeulue also spelled as Simeuloe, is an island in the eastern Indian Ocean, Aceh daerah istimewa is a special district of Indonesia. Simeulue lies off the north-western coast of Sumatra about 170 mile (274 km) south west of Medan city. The island is 65 miles long and 20 miles wide. It covers an area of 712 sq.mile (1849 sq. km). Its hills rise to about 1,860 feet (567 m). The chief town and port is Sinabang, located in the south eastern coast and linked by road to Sebigo in the north eastern tip of the island. Communication with the mainland is mainly through Meulaboh, a port on the north western coast of Sumatra.

Sumatra Island:- Bahaba Indonesia, is one of the Greater Sunda Island and the second largest island for 1,100 miles (1770 km) from northwest to southeast across the equator between latitude 6° north and 6° south. For the greater part its length has an average width of more than 200 miles (320 kms). With its administratively associated islands it has an area of 2,08,953 sq. mile (541, 174 sq.km.) and is the world's sixth largest, island. In the North East Sumatra is separated from the Malay Peninsula by the Strait of Malacca (relate Melaka) and in the south east, is separated from Java by the Sunda Strait. The south-western coast faces the Indian Ocean.

Cocos or Keeling Island:- A group of small low-lying coral islands situated in the Indian Ocean, south of Sumatra, and Indonesia and in the external territories of Australia in the Eastern Indian Ocean. They are about 2,290 miles (5,685 km) west of Darwin, Australian west and South West of Singapore. They lie at the 12° 4' south latitude and 96° 50' east longitude. The isolated territory with a total area of 5.5 sq. mile (14 sq.km.) consists of two corals atolls of which the southern part has 26 islets and the northern part has the only North Keeling island.

The island was discovered by William Keeling (a mariner of the English East India Company) in 1609 and was first settled (1826) by an English adventurer named Alexander Hare, who brought his Malay harem and slaves. In 1857 the British declared the possession of the Islands and placed there under the governance of Ceylon. In 1955 these islands were passed from British Singapore to Australia.

Christmas Island:- The island in the Indian Ocean, 224 mile (360 km.) South of the island of Java and 870 miles north west of Australia. It is administered as an external territory of Australia. It has an area of 52 sq. mile (135 sq. km) and comprises of the summit of an oceanic mountain. The main settlement and chief port is at flying fish cove on the northeastern part of the

island. The inhabitants of this island are from Malaysia, Singapore who had come as labourers. The population was estimated 3,000 in 1984.

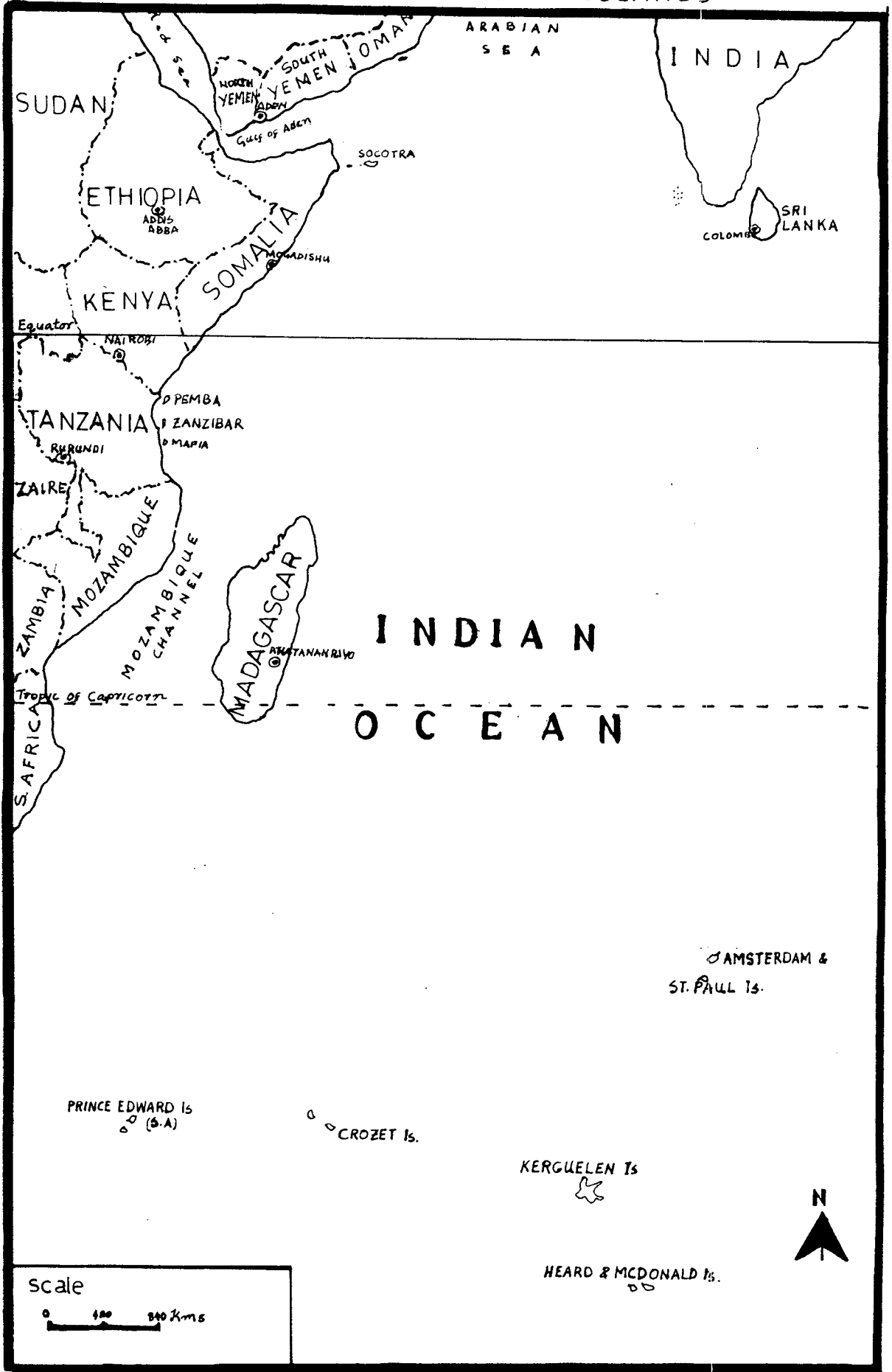
It was first sighted in 1615 by Richard Rowe, master of the 'Thomas' the island was named on the Christmas day in 1645 by Capt. William Mynors of the British East India company. In 1888 the island was annexed by great Britain and the first settlement was established at flying fish cove by George Clunies - Ross of Cocos (Keeling) . In 1948 the government of New Zealand and Australia acquired the island and later in 1958 the island became a part of the Australian territory.

THE SOUTHERN INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS:

The four chain of volcanic origin of islands, lie in the Southern Indian Ocean and north of Antartica. They are small islands very close to lands masses, There are some scattered islands 3,000 miles to the south of Sri Lanka. They are Amsterdam and St.Paul and further south, at about the limit of the ice zone, are the Marion and Prince Edward islands, Crozet islands, McDonald and Heard Islands and Kergueleen islands.

Amsterdam Island: The Amsterdam Island is situated near the middle of the Southern Indian Ocean, about 2,800

SOUTHERN INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS



mile from the south eastern of Africa and 200 miles north of Antarctica. Except for St. Paul Island 60 miles to the south, the nearest island is 900 miles away. Amsterdam and St. Paul have been part of the Southern French and Antarctic territories since they were formed in 1955. Amsterdam Island also called Nouvelle Amsterdam was formed by an extinct volcano that raised 2760 feet from the sea. The Island is about 6 miles, long 4 miles wide, with an area of 16 sq. mile.

The island was discovered in 1522 by Magellan's crew and was named in 1653 by the Dutch explorer Anton Van Diemen. The French claimed it in 1845 but failed to colonize it. In 1950 the French built a weather station on the island. There is no permanent population.

Heard and Mac Donald Island:- It is a sub-Antarctic group forming an external territory of Australia in the Southern Indian Ocean, 500 mill (4,000 km.) south west of Perth. Volcanic in origin, the Heard Island is 227 miles long and 13 miles wide and rises to 9,005 feet (2,745 m) at Mt. Mawson on Big Ben mountain. Much of its surface is covered with snow and ice. It was discovered in (1833) by a British sailing vessel and named after a U.S. mariner, Capt. John J. Heard (1853). Annexed to Australia in 1947 it is inhabited intermittently by

scientific research parties. The Mac Donald are a group of uninhabited rocky islets 25 mile west of Heard Island. It lies $53^{\circ} 06'$ south latitude and $73^{\circ} 30'$ east longitude.

Crozet Island: The Crozet archipelago is situated in the Southern Ocean, 1500 miles (2,400 km). off the coast of Antarctica, Administratively it is a part of Terres Australia Antarctiques Francaise. It consists of several small uninhabitant islands of volcanic origin. Discovered by Captain Nicolos Thomas Marion Dufresne in 1772, the islands cover an area of 195 sq.miles (505 sq km.) Rising to 6,560 feet (2000m) on the ice de la are rugged with steep cliffs. They have been designated a natural conservation area.

Kerguelen Island:- The Kerguelen island is situated in the southern Indian Ocean. Administratively a part of Terres Australs at Antarctiques francaises, it consists of the island of Kurguelen (also known as desolation Island) and nearly 300 islets, which together cover about 2,400 sq.miles (6,200 sq. km.). It has active glacier and peaks upto 6.445 feet (1965m) above sea level.

It was discovered in 1772 by the French navigator Yves - Joshep de Kurguelen - Tremarec and later explored

by the British circum-navigated captain James Cook. The archipelago was often frequented by whalers and seal hunters. In 1950 a permanent base and scientific centre, Portauk-Francais was established on the main island.

Saint Paul Island:- Saint Paul island is situated near the middle of the southern Indian Ocean, about 2,800 miles (4,500 km.) east of the South Africa and 2,000 mile (3,200 km.) north of Antarctica. Except for Amsterdam Island, 60 mile(97 km) to the north, the nearest island is 400 miles (1450 km) away. St. Paul is a volcanic crater about 3 sq.miles. (8 km) in area. It was discovered by Portuguese sailors in the 16th century and was briefly settled in the 18th century by fisherman from Reunion. It has been a part of the French Southern and Antartica territories since they were formed in 1855.

The Indian Ocean is dotted with strategically placed islands, some form the territories of countries, and other are sovereign states. Of late, all went in for republican forms of government on achieving independence during the last decade. The assumption of nationhood by those countries coincided with the new strategic importance of the Indian Ocean though it was not

necessarily related to it yet, in the last few years the island republics have not been able to keep too far away from the politics-strategic games being enacted on their doorsteps and a system of interaction between internal politics of the island republic and a new strategic character of the Indian Ocean has taken root. This system of interaction, both elaborate and complex, likely to grow on the Indian Ocean acquires greater strategic sensitivity.

CHAPTER - III

**ISLANDS IN RETROSPECT
AND QUESTION
OF
SOVERIEGNTY**

Historically the Indian Ocean has always been in prominence, whereas the Atlantic shot into limelight only in late 18th century that is with the emergence of the United States of America. Events like the expedition of Vasco da Gama around the Cape of Good Hope into the Indian Ocean at the close of the 15th century and the opening of Seuz Canal in the latter half of 19th century are generally associated with the beginning of modern and contemporary history. In fact, the history of navigation in the Indian Ocean goes back to 2,300 B.C. to the times of the Pharaohs. Egyptian sailors sailed to the legendary country of Punt which has been identified as either Mozambique or the Somalian coast in search of gold and incense and later linked Red Sea to the Mediterranean in 1490-1475 B.C.

The Arabs played an important role in navigation in the Indian Ocean in 2,000 B.C. The Persians and the Greeks seem to have gained their knowledge of navigation through the Arabs. Both of them did not undertake long-distance voyage until the 5th century B.C. In the beginning of the first century A.D. a Greek sailor living in Egypt, found the Indian Malabar and Coromandel coast and sailed to Persia, Arabia, Africa and Red Sea ports with their merchandise of pearls, precious stones etc. and re-export of China silk, all of which were in

great demand.¹ As the navigation became prominent in the 7th century it sailed beyond India to Indonesia and to China.

A little later the Portuguese appeared in the Indian ocean. Within 15 years of the rounding of the Cape they were in control of all the key points in the Indian Ocean overcoming the strong joint resistance by the Arabs and the Indians. In 1509 Egyptians defeated the Portuguese and conquered Goa and captured the island of Socotra. When the Portuguese supremacy came to an end in the 15th century, with the Seizure of Malacca by the Dutch in 1641, three European powers, Dutch, the French and the English were contending for the control of the Indian Ocean. By 1815, both the Dutch and the French had lost their main possession to the British in the Indian Ocean. The British also seized the greater part of the region-India, Ceylon, Cape of good Hope, Malaya, Mauritius and Australia. In 1869 was the most important event in the history of the Indian Ocean with the opening of the Suez Canal.

-
1. D.G. Keswain, "Indian Cultural and Commercial Influence in the Indian Ocean from Africa and Madagascar to South-East Africa", in Historical relations Across the Indian Ocean, p.35.

After the Second World War the Indian Ocean declined all naval activities due to the fall of France to Nazi Germany. The colonial powers of Europe had to withdraw from India , Ceylon, Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka, South East and East Africa and grant them independence. At the same time, some of the Indian Ocean islands were also granted independence. For eg. Mauritius (1969), Maldives (1968), Comoros (1975), Malagasy (1960), SriLanka (1947), Socotra (1967) etc. But on the other hand, some of them were stil under the administration of the British and the French, eg. Deigo Garcia of Chagos Archipaleya was under the British administration and the French still controlled the Reunion, Mayotte and Crozet.

MAURITIUS: Mauritius was formally cided to Great Britain by France under the Treaty of Paris, 1814. Mauritius had no indigenous inhabitants. Immigrants came mainly from East Africa and India permanent settlement started in 1721. The population were brought by the French from East Africa and India for cultivation of sugar and spices and coffee². About two-third of the population is Indian descent of whom three-fourth are Hindus and one-forth Muslims.

2. The Europa-year Book 1977: A World Survey, Vol.II (I) (London 1977) pp.1077-8; (ii) 1980, pp.917-18.

Home rule was granted in 1947 was granted Rule and self-government in 1961. It became an independent state and a member of the British Commonwealth on 12th March 1968. In 1947 under the Home Rule the first election was held and Dr. Ramgoolam's labour Party won the poll. In the August 1967 elections, was held again and the three parties -the Labour Party, Independence Forward Bloc and Musulman action Committee (CAM) formed a common front for independence called the Independence Party. The independence coalition won the majority and formed the government under the leadership of Dr. Ramgoolam.

In 1980 the Mauritius government reaffirmed that Diego Garcia is a part of the territory and demanded from the British to return to the Mauritius. Diego Garcia which was leased by British to the United States for a period for a period of 50 years for defence facilities. Dr. Ramgoolam took up the matter with the British. The Mauritius demand rested on the ground that the island was kept back by Britain in 1967 for communications with Australia and the Far East and that Mauritius had retained civic rights over Deigo Garcia. Mrs. Thatcher's government, stated that the islands would be returned to Mauritius if it was not required by the US or UK after the expiry of the present 50 years lease.

On 9 October 1980 Dr. Ramgoolam while addressing the UN Assembly had reaffirmed their claim to Diego Garcia and called for the return of the territory to Mauritius. Both India and Indo-Soviet joint declaration issued on 11 December 1980 supporting the demand of Mauritius for the return of the Diego Garcia.

On July 7, 1982, the new Mauritius Legislative Assembly unanimously approved of a bill saying that Diego Garcia is apart of the counrty³. The Prime Minister Aneerood Jugnath in his address to the UN General Assembly in October 15, 1982 sought for UN assistance to retain the Diego Garcia. Addressing the Non-Alligned Nations Summit on March 8, 1985, the Prime Minister demanded that the island of Diego Garcia should immediately be returned to Mauritius. The summit in its Declaration expressed full support for Mauritius demand. The Prime Minister also sought US help in restoring Diego Garcia, currently under British possession, to this country. He met the US President, George Bush and said he had no objection to the US using Diego Garcia for defence purposes as long as it is integrated

3. Keesings Contemporary Archies, Oct.15, 1982, p.3170.

with its parent country.⁴

SECURITY FORCES: Mauritius had no defence forces. The British garrison left in June 1960 after 150 years of services in the island. It was replaced for the purposes of internal security by the special mobile force with an authorised establishment of 8 officers and 355 other ranks. The Mauritius naval volunteer force, which had III personal, was disbanded in June 1968.

Mauritius signed a mutual defence pact with the United Kingdom when it became independent in March 1968. This allowed joint consultation on external threats to either country and also British help to meet any internal security threat to the island. It further provided for British assistance in training and equipping the Mauritius Police and other security forces. The pact expired in March 1976.⁵

Mauritius concern for its security was heightened after the June 1977 coup in the neighboring Seychelles group. The weekly Mauritius Times warned in an

4. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, July, 1991.

5. IDSA India in World Strategic Environment, Vol.II, 1970-71 (West Asia and Indian Ocean, pp:669-70).

editorial in July 1977, "The Seychelles coup has taught us a grim lesson. Our security could not be jeopardized. The Prime Minister has an uphill task to discourage those who were probably planning to seize power through undemocratic actions".

FOREIGN RELATIONS: Mauritius is a member of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) and the French speaking community known as the Organisation Commune Africa, Malagasy and Mauritius (OCAMM).

The Indo-Mauritian relation started after the independence in 1968. Mauritius is linked with India through its ties of blood and culture. Three-fourth of the population is of Indian origin-60 per cent of Mauritians being Hindus. Mauritius looks towards India as a mother country that provides emotional aspiration for various kinds of assistance in economic development, internal security, external threats and the counter subversion by external agencies and without groups. Indian warships paid goodwill visits to Port Louis. In April 1974 India presented a gift of patrol boat renamed AMAR.⁶

6. J.P. Anand "Indo-Mauritius Relations", IDSA, Strategic Analyses December, 1977.

Mauritius also maintained good relation with South Africa. In 1975 imports from South Africa amounted to Rs.193 million and exports to Rs.23.7 million. South Africa Airways aircraft regularly fly to and from the island. China was one of the first countries to recognize the new nation and Mauritius when it gained independence. China offered economic cooperation to Mauritius and China agreed to the construction of an international airport at Plains des Roches in the northern part of the island. In, January 12, 1984 Abdool K.A. Bhagat , Minister of trade and transport had talks in Peking and the outcome was to bring more effective development of bilateral trades between the two countries.⁷

THE SEYCHELLES GROUP:

These islands were uninhabited until they were colonised by France in the middle of the eighteenth country. The Mahe group was annexed by the British in 1794 and incorporated as a dependency of Mauritius in 1817. It continued to be administered as a dependency of Mauritius until 1903 when, alongwith the Corraline

7. The Indian Ocean newsletter, La lettre De L'Oaon Indien ,' June 15th 1984, n.126, p.8.

groups, it became a separate British crown colony known as Seychelles.

In 1960's several political parties were formed and out of all the parties the most important was the Seychelles Democratic Party (SDP) led by James Mancham. Later in 1970 general elections was held and the Seychelles Democratic Party got majority of seats Mr. James Mancham was appointed as the Chief Minister.⁸ The radical Seychelles People's Unity Party (SPUP) opposition supported by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) demanded immediate independence for the Seychelles.

In 1975 a constitutional conference was held in London and it was agreed that Seychelles should have internal self government. The two parties formed a coalition government on 1st June 1975 under James Mancham as Prime Minister. In 1976 under the coalition government, with James Mancham as President and opposition leader Albert Rene as the Prime Minister. In June 1977, the hardcore of the SPUP, led by radical and militant elements from the Africa maintained staged an armed coup while James Mancham was away in London for

8. John M. Ostheimer, "The Politics of the Western Indian Ocean Islands," (New York 1973) p.169.

the Commonwealth Conference. Mancham were deposed and Albert Rene was sworn in as President of the republic. The republican constitution which came into force in June 1976 was suspended after coup d'etat but was again reintroduced in July 1977 with certain modifications.

SECURITY FORCE: The island had no standing army. James Mancham had said on June 1976 that his country did not intend to raise defence forces. To defend the population would be "a useless proposition when we have to deal with the super powers who were making their presence felt in the Indian Ocean". In November 1979, President Albert Rene said that his government had uncovered a foreign-backed plot to overthrow his Socialist government. After attained the independence the Seychelles several attempts had been made by radical militants to destabilize the islands. Following this event in November 1973, the island has started receiving arms from the Soviet Union and other sources. Members of the 300 strong army have been sent for training in the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and Tanzania and the government is also raising a strong militia, which was formed in 1977 with Tanzanian advisers. A contingent of 140 Tanzanian troops including a 50 member training team was stationed on the islands as late as the mid-1980.⁹

9. The Times of India, 19 November 1979, Rotor report Victoria, (Seychelles) 30 May 1980, The Europa Year Book, 1980, p.1312.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: The mini-republic is a member of the Non-Aligned group, the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The government professes a pragmatic foreign policy maintaining correct relations with all the major maritime powers interacting in the region.

Seychelles has extensive relations with India. The Air India boeing service to Port Louis was extended to Mahe in June 1976. The shipping corporation of India vessels from Bombay to East African ports called Port Victoria. India has also opened a resident mission in Mahe. In 1990 September 1990 India agreed to extend a Rs.2.5 crore government to government credit to Seychelles, assist it in the field of civil aviation and petroleum. Their agreements emerged after the Seychelles President F.A. Rene had met the then Prime Minister Mr. V.P.Singh India also agreed to depute 10 experts to Seychelles and receive 20 trainees from the country under its technical and economic cooperation programme.¹⁰.

The Soviet Union policy began to play from littoral states into the islands states particularly

10. News Review on South Asia/Indian Ocean, IDSA (New Delhi) Vol.23,n.11, November, 1990.

seychelles group for strengthening their military position. On April 27, 1984 an agreement worth \$ 2.5 million was signed between the Soviet Union and Seychelles islands¹¹. Further, on June 26, 1986, both the countries signed a one year fishing agreement. The Seychelles also renewed their fishing agreement with the EEC for three years. On June 21, 1987, the Soviet delivered a rapid patrol boat to the navy , enabling it to strengthen its sea defence and ensure surveillance of its economic exclusive zone¹². The Seychelles did not buy arms and only accepted military supplies in the form of donation. China has also shown its increasing interest in some of the East African littoral and island states. At the invitation of Chinese leaders, President Albert Rene visited Peking in April 1978. His discussion with Chinese leaders was mainly centered on economic matters, and both countries also signed an agreement on economic and technical cooperation.

The Seychelles government and French trawler owners from the port of Loreint are to set up a joint fishing company with two ocean going tuna boats. Each

11. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, La Lettre De L'Ocean Indien (Paris) 16.5.1986 no.285, p.3.

12. The Indian Ocean newsletter, the Lettre De L'Ocean Indien (Paris), No.238, June 28, 1987, p.2

vessel will have 15 crew members of whom about half will be French and will fly the Seychelles flag. French provided aid has been increased markedly in recent years.

The Seychelles leaders have consistently called for the elimination of foreign bases and super power naval presence to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

MALADIVES:

After the Portuguese arrived in 1507, they maintained a garrison intermittently for more than 100 years. In the mid-17th century the Sultan agreed to a protectorate arrangement with the Dutch, who replaced the Portuguese as rulers of Sri Lanka. When the British tookover from the Dutch in Sri Lanka in 1796, they also assumed the responsibilities for the Maldives. British protection was confirmed in 1887 by the Sultan and the governor of Sri Lanka. A new agreement with the British continued the protectorate after 1948, when Sri Lanka became a sovereign state. Maldives achieved complete independence in 1965 and did not join the Commonwealth. In 1948 the Sultanate was replaced by a republic.

In November 1968 a national referendum was held throughout the Maldives to ascertain which form of

government was desired by the Maldivians. Over 80 per cent of those who voted approved a proposal to establish a republic in place of the sultanate. A constitution was introduced in 1954 and amended in June 1964 and July 1967,¹³ The republic of the Maldives was proclaimed on 11 November 1968, Amir Ibrahim Nasir, became the Prime Minister, and later became the first President replacing Sultan Ahmed Farid Didi, and Ahmed Zaki became Prime Minister, In a surprised move in 1975, President Nasir removed the Prime Minister from his office. The President assumed full powers and took over the duties of the Prime Minister. There were reports that Ahmed Zaki had leftist leanings and that external interests were involved in his overthrow. On 28 July 1978, a national referendum was held which elected the new President Manmoon Abdul Gayoom, as the new President. In April 1980, the government uncovered failed a plot against the government and the President which was masterminded by certain opposition politicians in collaboration with a group of European mercenaries led by a British national. The launching pad of their operation was stated to be Colombo. The government maintains an

13. The Ceylon Daily News, 28 February 1975, The Rising Nepal and Mainichi Daily News, 12 March 1975, Daily Mission (Colombo) quoted in the Times of India 1 (March, 1975).

internal security force of 500, called the Maldives Regiment based on Male the capital. Besides, it has a sea patrol solely meant for domestic security. There is in military apparatus intended to meet any external security threats.¹⁴

The republic has received economic and technical aid from Britain. Under the 1965 agreement of independence and subsequent commitments, Britain has given a total of 1.4 million pounds. Others contributors to the development of Maldives include India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Japan, the Soviet Union and France and also Libya and Saudi Arabia.

SECURITY FORCE: Defence thinking in Britain underwent a change when the Labour Government returned to power in March 1974. Following a review of Britain's defence policy, the liquidation of all British forces east of Suez was announced in the Defence White Paper in March 1975, (which the withdrawal of forces from Gan) Britain felt that its forces were greatly over-extended between Europe and the Far East, making forces east of Suez

14. M.Adeny and W.K. Carr, "The Maldivian Republic" John M. Ortheimar in 2 pp. 143-150.

expensive as well as incapable of resolving any serious military crisis. In 1978 Britain finally closed its staging post which for 34 years had remained an operation base during wartime and later as a transit post.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: The Maldives became a member of the United Nation in 1965 soon after its independence. It chose not to become a member of the British Commonwealth. It was admitted as the member of the Non-Aligned Movement in August 1976 in the Fifth Non-Aligned summit held in Colombo. It has diplomatic relations with all the big powers and regional states. Their ambassadors in Colombia are currently accredited to the Maldives. Its relation with some of the Arab countries were very cordial because of its recognition of Israel. Maldives also have friendly ties with India and Sri Lanka. They played a special role in the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka has provided aid and has assistance in the construction of the airstrip at Hulule. Under agreement, India is assisting Maldives in setting up educational institutions and in training personnel. Indian naval ship Godavari and Ganga paid a goodwill visited the Maldives. India was the first to set up a resident mission in Mahe in July 1976 and again in 1980 it upgraded its mission to embassy level.

The Maldives has also maintained its relationship with Pakistan. Pakistan's naval squadron, which includes PNS Babur paid a goodwill visit to the islands in 1970. Soon, more units of the Pakistan Navy visited the republic thereafter. The Maldives has shown interests in Iran. A Squadron of Iranian destroyers made a week long stay off Mahe in the beginning of February 1976. Iran granted a \$ 1 million aid to expand the fishing industry in the Maldives.

ANDAMANS AND NICOBARS:

The territory which began as a Penal settlement in 1858 under a superintendent, became a territory administered by the Chief Commissioners in the year 1872. During Second world war, the islands fell into the hands of the Japanese in March 1942 and remained with them till their re-occupation in October 1945. The Japanese personally surrendered on 9 October 1945, after having been in the islands for 5 years 6 months and 15 days.

With the advent of Independence on 15 August 1947, the islands got their special identity. 37 years of independence has witnessed tremendous activities in the

territory. After the independence of India, these islands were administered by the Indian commissioners. The Chief Commissioner is the head of the Islands Administration and the territory is directly administered by the Ministry of Home Affairs.¹⁵

In fact, there have been no interference from foreign countries on these islands for many years, but recently some changes have come out in the surroundings of the islands. The Myanmar is building a new naval base at Hanggji island at the mouth of the Bassein river. The programme was involves the development of existing naval bases at Akyab, near the Bangladesh border and at Great Coco Island, adjacent to the Andaman Islands. It is believed that China might be providing technical assistance in building the Hanggyi Island facility. With the new development of naval base India was worried that the Chinese link would result in Chinese naval vessels gaining to Burmese ports and beginning to operate regularly in the Andaman sea and Bay of Bengal.

15. "Miniature India Andaman and Nicobar Islands",
Vanathi Book House, Port Blair, 1984.

BAHRAIN GROUP:

The ruling family, the Al Khalifa- an Arab dynasty is in power since 1782. The present Amir Sheikh Isa bin Sulman Al Khalifa succeeded on 2nd November 1961 Bahrain's first Cabinet known as the Council of State was set up in 1970. A national assembly with a proposed five year life met for the first time in 1973 but was dissolved at the end of 1975. The Emir is assisted by a Cabinet headed by a Prime Minister.

The Island's economy is mainly dependent on oil. Operation being conducted by the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO) owned by US interests. There is an important fishing industry and a fairly large farming community. The islands have an international airport at Muharrap and five harbors at Manama and Mina Sulman. In July 1969, Bahrain was linked with earth satellite Intelsat III in stationary orbit of about 22,300 miles above the Indian Ocean. The satellite search station at Ras Al Jorjor is owned and operated by Britain's cable and wireless company.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: Bahrain is a member of the United Nations, the Arab League, the group of Islamic nations and Organisation of the Arab Petroleum Exporting

Countries (OAPEC). The conservative ruling family, being a former British protectorate for a century, follows generally pro-Western policies. The group has inadequate and poorly equipped armed forces incapable of meeting effectively any external challenge. It has been in favour of retaining the British forces as well as the US naval presence in the region. Since independence, Bahrain has developed relations with its Arab neighbors, who have supported the islands' sovereignty in the face of repeated Iranian territorial claims on the islands.

MASIRAH ISLAND:

The Masirah island is situated on the southern coast of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz and commands western approaches to the Gulf.

The island has primarily been used as a staging post by the Royal Air Force (RAF). The airbase had a contingent of 340 RAF personnel in 1976. The airstrip was first used by the RAF when a fuelling station for the London - India route was set up there. During World War II, it was used by the Allied forces for operations in the Gulf and by long range RAF bombers in their operations against the Germans and Japanese surface

raiders in the Arabian sea.¹⁶ Under an agreement signed in 1958, the RAF maintained an airbase in the island leased to Britain in a period of 99 years.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: In 1975 Sultan Qaboos agreed to allow the US to use facilities at the airbase and elsewhere in the Sultanate for the next five years in return for expenditure of \$ 800 million to be spent for improvement of military facilities and strengthening the Omani armed forces.¹⁷ In fact the Sultan, who traditionally relied on Britain for the supply of arms, started looking forward to the United States for his armaments. The airbase is being used by US aircraft for ferrying supplies from Diego Garcia and carrying out surveillance and other missions. During the abortive US airborne adventure in April 1980 to recall American hostage held in Tehran, the C-150 transport planes involved in the rescue operation which flew from a base in Egypt had refuelled at the airbase.¹⁸

16. The Statesman Year Book, 1979-80, p.1102

17. A.P.Report (Kuwait), 9 April 1980: The Hindustan Times, 7 and 10 April 1980,.

18. Vikrant (New Delhi) January 1980, p.58.

MAYOTTE ISLAND:

The crisis leading to the unilateral declaration of independence in the Comoros started with a referendum on 22 December 1974 by the French colonial authorities. Mayotte was the odd-island-out where 64% of the people voted non: This was an outcome of the general feeling of the people that they are both French and Christian whereas the majority of the inhabitants of the other three islands are Muslims and non-French. They fear that their minority position would be threatened. Their apprehensions were confirmed later when Comoros declared an Islamic Federal Republic in October 1978 whereas in Mayotte, wanted it to remain part of France with the status of an overseas department led by Marcel Hungry, the islands deputy in the French National assembly, the party put forward ethnic reasons for staying French. A new referendum held on 8 February 1976 resulted in a 99.4% vote for retaining the islands links with French

Mayotte welcomed for the first time ever a head of government on October 19, 1986. But the P.M. Jacques Chirac did not bring it to the status of a French administrative department, which its representatives had so loudly demanded. However P.M. Jacques Chirac met President Ahmed Abdullah, who perceived that in any

case the island would remain French as long as it wished. Under the "loi-programme" covering France's overseas territories, Mayotte will benefit from substantial aid over the next five years. Included in the budget are 150 million francs for a deep water port, 45 million for air links, 20 million for agricultural development and 54 million in 1985 for housing. Tax relief on investment in overseas territories will also apply to Mayotte.¹⁹

Diplomatic relations with France were resumed in July 1978 and in November the two countries signed agreements on military and economic co-operation, deferring any decision on the position of Mayotte.

The population is engaged almost entirely on primitive agriculture, yet most of the island's food is imported. The basic problems intensifying its backwardness are overpopulation, severe unemployment, poor harvest, landlessness, lack of natural resources and industries and absence of educated class.

AUSTRALIAN ISLAND TERRITORIES:

Most of these island territories lie in the

-
9. The Indian Ocean News letter, La lettre De L'Ocean Indian (Paris) No.253 October 25, 1988, p.5.

eastern region of the Indian Ocean, off the coast of north-west and south-west Australia. Britain had transferred these islands and outposts to Australia in the forties and fifties. The islands which have a bearing on Indian Ocean politics are; Ashmore and Cartier, Heard and Mc Donald, Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) islands. Of these, the Cocos have gained special importance, in view of the build up of the US base on Diego Garcia and the regular deployment of Seventh fleet task forces.

Cocos (Keeling) Islands: Two separate atolls comprising some 27 small coral islands with a total area of 14 square kilometers, which offer an ideal site for a base on a strategic post. It lies south west of Sumatra, west of the Australia mainland and few kilometers away from Colombo. The mainland islands are West Island, Home Island and Direction Island. The three of them are inhabited mostly by Malays and Europeans.

The Cocos island belongs to Australia but the US is using it for its own defence purpose and has made it into another Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean Islands. There is no confusion between the USA and Australia over the islands sovereignty in the future.

SOCOTRA ISLAND: The Socotra island, a part of the Democratic Republic of Yemen is situated to the point of Horn of Africa and South of Arabian Peninsula.

The island was used as a staging post by the RAF during World War-II. There are two unsurfaced airstrips both built by the RAF. One is located near Hodibu, small and bumpy and can take DC-31. The other at Mouri, 8 miles to the west which can take Antonov transport aircraft.

The Soviet landing craft of the Aligator class was sighted in early September 1970 around the islands, reportedly carrying a force of Soviet marines. The Soviet had installed a radio communication station in the island and had also constructed gangs were working there (and ships) using the island as a base.²⁰ These were some of the allegations by the British Press, which were later found to be baseless.

SRI LANKA:

Sri Lanka was the model British crown colony that made the transition from dependence to sovereign states without rancour or violence. Transfer of power was in

20. Arab Report and Record - 1970 , pp.447,449.

stages and the island's political elites were, unlike in the case of other volatile societies in Asia and Africa, voluntarily put through a gradual process of political education and experiences which taught them to exercise power with modernisation and democratic fervour.

By the end of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, many associations and societies had been formed by local men of property and the professional classes for addressing memorials, petitions and prayers to the secretary of state for colonies towards this end. In 1923, the Legislative Council was expanded so as to have a majority of Ceylonese unofficial members with a large election element. But promotion was restrictive, extending only to 4 percent of the island's population. The representation was only open to the two communities i.e. the Sinhales and the Ceylon Tamils and neglected the minor groups namely Indians, (Muslims and Burghers). In 1927 the Ceylonese unofficial majority in the Legislative council gave the power, without responsibility, to the utmost discomfiture of a British-dominated minority executive as well as British officialdom in Ceylon.

In 1937 Maha Sabha (The Great Council of the

Sinhalese) was formed by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and the All Ceylon Tamil Congress in 1944. All Ceylon Moors Association, 1935, Ceylon Indian Congress, 1939, Ceylon Muslim League etc. All the parties had a common platform to struggle for their self government, and the political situation became more serious and ran out of the British hands. In August 1947 the general elections were held under the Soulbury Constitution which gave D.S. Senanayaka's newly formed political grouping, the U.N.P. the largest number of seats. He was appointed Prime Minister by the British Governor, Sir Henry Monck Mason Moore. Later they conducted negotiations with His Majesty's government and in February 1948 the British Parliament opted for the Ceylon Independence.

In 1978 the Executive Presidency was created through amendment of the constitution of 1992 and the entire constitutional system was transformed to suit the President system by the introduction of the constitution of the Second Republic in August 1978. The President's election was held in 1982 in which United National Party (UNP) became majority and Mr. J.K. Jawardene appointed the President.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: Sri Lanka is a member of the United Nations, Commonwealth of Nations, and Non-Aligned

Movement. In 1955 Sri Lanka had diplomatic representations in only nine countries and again in 1958 it expanded diplomatic missions in communist countries like China, USSR, and Yugoslavia with accreditation of representatives in other socialist countries particularly in Eastern Europe, and in 1956 Sri Lanka also established its links with New York.

India and Sri Lanka ever since their independence, stand out as unique example of the manner in which two neighboring states in South Asia have succeeded in rendering disputes and problems, some of which appeared at times to be intractable by resources, political cooperation, discussion, negotiated settlement and continued diplomatic effort. Mrs. Bandaranaike wrote to Mrs. Gandhi in August 1971 seeking for the greater economic cooperation between the two countries. Thereafter both the two countries made contributions in economic situation and upliftment of one another. During the time Prime Ministership of Mrs. Bandaranaike, it was believed that friendship with India and closer identification with the neighboring countries and the South East Asia were better insurances against exposure to war than to have a military alliances with a distant and aligned power. India has been providing aid to Sri Lanka both in

economic and military fields to uplift the external affairs

In the field of economic cooperation Sri Lanka stood to gain from Commonwealth membership, Her relationship in this sphere are particularly strong with Britain, her biggest trading partner are Australia, Newzeland, Canada, India and Pakistan Among Commonwealth countries Britain and Canada are the biggest aid givers to Sri Lanka.

In 1960 relations with China became strained as a result of ill treatment of Muslims in Sinkiang. But in 1970 relations with the 'National Government' had improved and the Chinese were willing to assist in economic and military affairs. In 1991, China supplied sophisticated military equipment to Sri Lanka to fight Tamil rebels in the islands north eastern zone Sri Lanka also acquired A-5 jet from China in early 1991. A top Sri Lankan Air Force team was in China, undergoing expensive training in the operation of the particulars of jets.²¹

The Soviet Union developed relations with Sri-

21. News Review on South Asia/India Ocean IDSA, September 1992, pp.40.

Lanka during 1960, thereafter both the countries had been very understanding in many affairs. The "national government" in 1969 entered an agreement to provide technical assistance to Sri Lanka. At present Sri Lanka is receiving substantial aid from Soviet Union.

MALAGASY (Madagascar):

Malagasy a former French colony, attained full independence in 1960. It lies 235 to 300 miles, off the coast of Mozambique. The French had a naval base at Diego Suarez in the north and airbase at Ivato and the headquarters of the French forces in the capital Tanamarive. Under an agreement in 1960 France had the right to maintain a naval base and other military facilities in Malagasy.²²

Malagasy did not have full independent power of decision when it signed the defence agreement with France in 1960, which affected its sovereignty both at the national and international level . The government headed by General Gabriel Ramatora after coming into power in May 1972 sought basic changes in the Republic's

22. J.P. Anand, French Interest in the Indian Ocean, IDSA New Reviews on South Asia, March 1975, pp. 143-46.

relations with France. Foreign Minister Didier Ratsiraka said on August 26, 1972 that although foreign relations with France were good, pre-independence agreements must be changed and the economy must be taken out of the control of foreigners. The French pointed out that the total and rapid departure of the French forces would create a vacuum in the region while major power maintained their potential there intact soon are eventually, they argued would be prejudiced to the world balance in the region.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: Relations with France have been affected by disputes over compensation for nationalised French assets and the Malagasy claim to the Isle Glorieuses and three other islands off the coast of Mauritius.

The Madagascar is maintaining relationships with the Soviet Union. The Soviet union has just constructed radar equipment in the West coast of Madagascar in the Mozambique Channel. The Soviet ships have actively observed the past work in this port of Tamatave. The first meeting between the Soviet and Madagascar was conducted in January 1984 in Antananarivo, under the foreign affairs. Moscow granted Madagascar a new time of credit amounting to 2.3 billion Malagasy francs

principally to help the country acquire cement²³. The Soviet Union will continue to give support to the Malagasy government in terms of existing projects. This includes mainly training agricultural technicians and construction of 20,000 tone flour mill in Tamatave, road building and also installing of 150 kw broadcasting station.

The Madagasy government declines the France aid because the Soviet Union provides much military aid to the country mainly by selling its tanks and aircraft whereas the Franch Mirage fighter planes are of high rates as compared to the Soviet MIGs

In 1984 the Malagasy government and the American government signed a contract at Alananarivo on credit for 23000 tonnes of rice and 1,300 tonnes of cooking oil with 8 million dollars as a food aid programme to developing countries²⁴.

A new agreement for medical cooperation between Madagascar and China was signed in the beginning of

23. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, La Lettre De L'Ocean Indien, January 7th 1984 - no.113, p.1.

24. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, La lettre /De L'ocean Indien (Paris) March 13, 1984, no.125.

April 1984 under which the fifth Chinese medical mission, a 34 member team will stay on the island for two years for the past ten years to work in hospital in Mahitsy, Vatomandry and in Ambovombe. Madagascar has also been receiving substantial assistances from China.

The relation between Madagascar and France is warming up. In 1987 French warships arrived in the port of Toliary, which brought notably 30 tonnes of rice, part of the 100 tones of food aid promised by Paris. French warships only visited Madagascar for the first time since 1972 in January 1985, when Antananarivo recognised France as an Indian Ocean state and agreed to its joining the Indian Ocean Commission by reason of its possession of Reunion.²⁵

REUNION ISLAND:

Reunion Island is the Mascarene islands and a French overseas department in the Western Indian Ocean. The population is Roman Catholic and some Muslim of Persian origin and Arab descent. Most of its trade is with France . The Reunion receives seizeable economic aid and budgetary support from France. ²⁶

25. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, La, Lettre De L'Ocean Indien, (Paris) No.270, 21-11-1987, p.4.

26. Honkong Standard, 19 June 1975.

The small islands of Juan de Nova, Europe , Bassa da India, Isle Glorieuses and Tremelin, with a combined area of less than 50 sq km. lie adjacent to Maladagasy and all uninhabited, remaining parts of the French Republic after Malagasy's independence in 1960s are adminisitered by the French authorities in the Reunion. Both Mauritius and Malagasy land claim to Tromelim, transfered by the U.K. from the Seychelles to France in 1954.

There is a rising tide of anti-French sentiments in the island. Reunion leaders viewed with displeasure the transfer of French troops from Malagasy to the island after the closure of French bases there. Lefistists parties, following developments in Malagasy, Mauritius the Seychelles and the Comoros are demanding an autonomous status for the colony. France is reluctant to create additional facilities on the island whose political future is uncertain.²⁷

FOREIGN RELATIONS: Since Reunion is under French overseas department therefore, there is not so much foreign relation, all aides being provided by the French government. In 1987, the United States National

27. John M. Ostheimer: The Politis of the Western Indian Ocean Islands (New York 1975), p.133.

Endowment for Democracy organisation had published its programme of aid for Africa has declined to give financial support to the French trade Union, Force Ouvriere for its activities in Reunion. The United State warship, the anti-submarine vessel Quellet, paid a visit to Reunion from June 26 to 30 1987 based at Pearl Harbor.

Recently elected President of the Reunion Island Regional Council Camilk Sudre met French President F.Mitterrand on June 17, 1992. They discussed the stand of the Reunion which is continue to be under the French overseas territories.²⁸

THE COMOROS GROUP:

Formerly attached to Madagascar since 1912, when the three islands of Grand Comoro, Anjuan and Moheli were taken over and grouped with Mayotte, the group became a separate French Overseas Territory in 1947. The islands achieved self government in December 1961 with a chamber of Deputies and a government council to control the local administration. Election held in Decmber 1879

28. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, La Lettre De L'Océan Indian P.12, 1992, June 25, No.160.

gave a majority for the parties which demanded independence and a popular figure, Ahmed Abdullah, become President of the Government Council.

In June 1973, France agreed that the Comoros on 6 July 1975 unilaterally declared independence (UDI) with 33 votes in favour of the move six members from the islands of Mayotte were absent and non voted against. The French government declared a state of Emergency and troops guarded all public buildings, and however, lifted the next day on orders from Paris. ²⁹ Mr. Ahmad Adolla became the Prime Minister of the local administration and had been in the French senate for thirteen years. France acknowledged the Comoran leaders decision to become independence from France and offered to short talks with news authorities. On July 6, 1975 Comoros declared independence, but the island of Mayotte opted to retain the island's links with France.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: On 13 November 1975 the Comoros was admitted to the United Nations. The UN recognised the Comoros as unified state representing all the four islands. It did not receive French support. France continued to administer the breakaway island of Mayotte. The group also is a member of Non-Aligned nations.

29. The Hindustan Times, Indian Express, 7-9 July 1975.

Even though the Mayotte remained under the French rule, France and the Comoros group maintain their relationship. On July 20 1984 France donated FF No.7m to the Comoros to be used to finance six projects, to equip Radios Comoros with Frequency Modulation, equipment for the Civil service, research agronomy and establishment of a medical test laboratory. In 1986, the joint France - Comorian commission which met in Paris on January 21 and 22. The outcome of the meeting was that to bring both country's closer in development and Paris had agreed to help financial assistance to the Moroni also to help the Comoros to finance its debt servicing.³⁰ France supplied 250,000 Francs worth of detection equipment to improve security at Moroni/Hayana airport. A recent meeting between the Comoros minister of the interior, Omar Tamou and the head of the french military mission in Moroni discussed the poor security for the flight between Paris and the Comoros via Jeddah.

Most of the Indian Ocean island states enjoys their independence which is granted by the British Crown and French colonies. But as the matter of fact that the question of their sovereignty is remain uncertain in the near future. One of the main reason is the Western

30. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, La Lettre De l'océan Indien, (Paris) No.216 January 25, 1986, p.6.

dominance and activity evolution of the weapon system. Strategy based, diplomatic moves by the big power to accommodate their weapons in the region and the local response to the power presence.

In 1960 both France and Britain made interim arrangements anticipating their departure. The French concentrated in their remaining possessions in the area, Reunion, Mayotte, Tromelin and Madagascar Channel and the British decided, in the same manner, to consolidate their hold on areas of strategic importance. In the Western Indian Ocean British created the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) which are detached the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius and the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar and Desroches from Seychelles. The British also owned Diego Garcia island which was part of the Chagos Group and latter gave to the United States for naval purposes. Even today, most of the islands raise their voices against the big powers in the region but there is no sign of retreat rather a superpower more keen in the region for their stable position. In 1980, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, stated that the British will acquire the islands (BIOT) as long as British needed for defence purpose. This is how the island states is just a mere of sovereignty states in the hand of superpowers.

The United States and Soviet Union had equal interest in the Indian Ocean, infact both became active in the late 1960s. The United Sttes had already made an agreement with British to use BIOT and Diego Gracia islands. The US has obtained increased access to facilities in the Masirah and Cocos islands. The Soviet also established viable political and economic link with several littoral states, paritcularly Iraq and Somalia. In addition they maintained fleet anchorages in location close to the Chagos Archipelago, and midway between Diego Garcia and the Seychells. The Soviet Union also enjoys a favourable position in Aden and Socotra islands. There is no doubt, that the Untied States and the Soviet Union enter a competition, especially for political objectivs, security and economic interest in the regime. At the same time lack of eonomic and security the island states depend on the superpowers for their survive and defence against possible threats from radical fascist and mercenary well armed groups as many islands had experient in the past. Therefore, depending too much on superpowers the island had lot of disadvantages concerning in their Sovereignty in the future.

CHAPTER - IV

**STRATEGIC ROLE
OF
INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS**

Most of the island republics and territories in the Indian Ocean, which are of some strategic significance, are located in the western region of the ocean. These were mostly British and French colonial territories since the 18th century or even earlier. Most of these emerged as independent nations in the 1960's and 70's and are now members of the Non-Aligned group of nations, which a few island group in the eastern region were transferred to Australia by the British colonial administration in the 1950's. However, the Chagos Archipelago which includes the Diego Garcia atoll, Reunion and a few other islands and islets remain British or French territories. Those continue to be major source of tension and instability in the region.

The islands and foothills provides potential sits for establishing military facilities, communication and weather stations, transit post or bases for logistic support. A number of these islands served as operation bases, refueling station, staging post, stepping-stones during the First and Second World War by the Allies, especially the U.K. even earlier some of these had been used by the British and French colonial powers as their bases of operation since the Napoleonic Wars.¹

1. J.P. Anand, "Indian Ocean Islands", IDSA Journal April - June 1981 pp.585; rab world, March 18, 1982.

Following the World War II Britain's diminishing interests in the region East of Suez and economy in defence expenditure, these posts and other outposts were closed. Bahrain in 1971, Gan and Mauritius in 1976 and Masirah in 1977. The agreement in Simontown naval base with South Africa was terminated Britain ended its nine year Beira Patrol by two Royal Navy frigates on the Mozambique Channel, enforced under a UN resolution against Rhodesia since 1967, after Mozambique became independent. It closed the Headquarters of its Far East command based in Singapore since the early 16th century in October 1971.² Britain realised that its forces were greatly over extended, making the force East of Suez relative expensive and incapable of meeting any serious military crisis. Britain recognised its limitations and launched on a process of closing its bases, staging posts and other outposts which implied abandoning its claims to be a global power. It was no longer in a position to have an interventionist capability and influence events in the region.

However, in 1979 British Government allowed the US further expand facilities on Diego Garcia Britain share

2. J.P. Anand, "Bug Powers and the Indian Ocean", IDSA Journal, April/June 1978 pp.574-6.

facilities at the base. Prime minister Margaret Thatcher was offered to provide British forces to serve in a multinational rapid deployment force for the Gulf sponsored by the US. Britain may be interested in a standing force ground around in American aircraft carrier. In the absence of propositioned supplies and depots for replenishment the operation and effectiveness of the British task force in externally limited. The US has become one of the most sea powerful in the Indian Ocean Islands.

The France is the only power which continues to keep sizeable permanent presence in the area. The maintains of its overseas territories and dependencies which are scattered over a wide area long eastern coast of Africa and South-Western Indian Ocean. Existing France bases and military facilities are mainly out Djibouti, Reunion, Tromelin and Mayotte islands. France also concentrating its attention on a chain of small strategic island Malagasy like Juan Nova, Bassa da Indian, Europa and Glorieuses. These islands straddle the main oil traffic lanes between West Asia and Europe. There are, besides, meteorological station at Isle Amsterdam, Crozet and Kergulen in Far South - West Indian Ocean.³

3. J.P. Anand, "French interest in the Indian Ocean" IDSA Journal, Oct//dec 1979 pp.185-6.

MAURITIUS: After the closure of the Suez Canal in June 1967, the geospstrategic role of Mauritius, lying off the eastern coast of Africa, around the interest of the Mauritius powers the island has become prominent in international commerce because of the intensive use of the cape sea route and the consequent increase in Mauritius activity at Port Louis. Its closeness to the worlds most important oil tanker lanes and the West Asia oilfields has added to its strategic value. The reopening of the Suez Canal in 1975 has not diminished its importance. Port Louis is also a post of call for expenditure to Antartica. The Indian scientists expedition to Antartica in 1981-82 called at the port.⁴

Mauritius, despite its small size and population of about one million, has become a cockpit of big power rivalry because of its strategic location since the 1973 West Asia War. the big powers - the US, France the UK and the USSR, have steeped up their naval deployment in the region. Their task forces or naval units have paid goodwill region of the Indian Ocean. The international airport at Plairance is being increasing used by aircraft of the big powers and several international airlines.

4. J.P. Anand, "Mauritius" IDSA Journal, Oct-Dec 1978, pp.166-72.

The American were granted facilities including a satellite tracking station at Vacoas and landing rights for military aircraft US aircraft from Diego Garcia have been using the airport frequently. The Mauritius have demanded the return of Diego Garcia, amputated to form the BIOT before the island was granted independence in 1968. The new Mauritius Legislative Assembly on July 1982 unanimously approved a Bill formally declaring Diego Garica as a part of the country.⁵ But US military delegation which visited Port Louis reaffirmed that Mauritius would not give support to activities that endangered world peace, moreover, it would not cooperate with forces that had occupied its territories. The New government calls the US military presence a threat to regional peace and security and wants to keep all the big powers out of the Indian Ocean. The government of Mauritius committed to the completed demilitarization of the Indian Ocean. India has reiterated its full support for Mauritius sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago which includes the Diego Garcia atall.

The agreement signed in July 1970, with the Soviet

5. Keesing contemporary Archives. Oct. 15, 1982.
p.3170.

Union for the development of fisheries in Mauritius also provides the Soviets harbour facilities for fishing vessels and landing right at the international airport for Soviet planes carrying crew of Soviet fishing vessels. Though the British presence is gone, but the influence is still there in their elswile Crown colony. France exercise its influence through the French sugar planters elite. The US has established a foothold and consolidated its contacts with the dominant political and economic interest there. The Soviet Union continues to maintain a low profile while making a determined effort to cultivate those who matter in Mauritius. The Chinese too have seen playing for higher stakes with offers of economic assistance. It would be very difficult for such a small developing nation with ever growing demographic pressure to ignore opportunities of sizable foreign aid.

The leader of the ruling party Movement Militant Maurities (MMM) Paul Berenyer stated "in foreign affairs, we will be strictly non-alleged. We won't allow either Soviet or American naval vessels to call here. Our closest contacts will be with France and India. The new government has signified that it seeks to have closer relative with India. Mauritian leaders want India's advice and help on how the island native could

reduce its economic dependence on South Africa. The Government wants to cut its ties with Pretoria, but gradually and smoothly. It is keen to increase its imports from India in place of those from South Africa. Mauritius is gradually moving out of its larger dependence on South Africa as a trading partner.

MALDIVES.

The Maldives gained strategic significance role primary because an RAF staging post was located on the island of Gan, situated in the centre of the Indian Ocean. The island lie close to Mauritius routes from the Red Sea. The Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf and East African ports to Malacca Straits and the Far East. Its closeness to the world's most important oil tanker lanes from the Gulf oilfields has added to its strategic value.

Conscious of its geostrategic importance and the valuerability of its being drawn into the big-power rivalry, the Maldivian leaders feel that the best chance of the infant nation retaining its entity is by steering clear of entanglements with the big powers, which maintaining friendly relations with them. There for instance, in the last quarter of 1980, the government

signed a scientific and cultural agreement with the USSR Chinese Foreign minister Huang Hua's visited in July 1982 led to the signing of a technical cooperation accord Britain has agreed to provide assistance worth \$8.3 million to the mini-republic.

A member of the non-aligned group, the Maldives has consistently supported the move for making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace in the face of considerable pressure from some of the big powers to give them access to the Gan vacated by Britain in 1976. There were some offers including the development of a tourist complex by Western multinationals. A \$ 1 million Soviet annual rent offer to lease the existing facilities on Gan airbase for rent and recreation facilities ostensibly for their Indian Ocean fishing fleet was not accepted on the ground that this would increase tension in the area.

The Maldives desires to see the Indian Ocean declared as a zone of peace was reiterated by foreign minister Fathulla Jameel at the Second UN conference on Disarmament of Jan. 1982. Jameel told the session that his country would like the whole of Asia to become a nuclear weapon free zone, and particularly, the Indian Ocean. The Maldives would not allow nuclear weapons to be stationed or brought in its territory, even on a temporary transit basis, he stated.

The island republics are actually concerned about their worsening security environment. They do not want if they can help it, their security to be underwritten by one or the other major power bloc. They would prefer to be left alone to develop their own self defence. Development of a defence infrastructure, however modest, and some kind of security umbrella in the interim, both involves assistances and cooperation from a competent friendly country whose interests in the island are identical of their own interests and objectives ie, elimination of foreign influence and military presence.⁶ There seems to be a self that India could be such a potential source of assistance. India however appears somewhat shy and reluctant to play their role. However, the possibility of South Block coming to the assistance of its immediate neighbours, like Mauritius and Maldives and even Seychelles, need not be ruled out of a reduced is received in emergency situation, as was the case in Sri Lanka in the April 1971 insurrection.

SRI LANKA

A former British Colony, Sri Lanka was granted dominion status in 1947. It become a sovereign republic

6. P.K.S. Namboodri, "India and the security of Indian Ocean Islands," IDSA strategic Analysis, Sept. 1982, pp.381 - 2.

within the British Commonwealth on May 1972 after breaking its 152 old ties with the British Crown. The Cylone independence act included agreement on defence which provided for assistance for the protection of the island nation with permission for Britain to use military bases by agreement. Two major British bases were the naval base at Trincomales and the RAF airbase at Katunayake, 14 km north of Colombo.

Described as the fulerum of the Indian Ocean Sri Lanka possesses unrivaled geographical and other advantage. Colombo in the focus of transcontinental air service and major shipping lines for the superpowers it makes a very attractive place to leave military facilities.

In the strategic consideration of the Indian Ocean area, two facilities in Sri Lanka deserve special mention. These are the Trincomalee naval base and Trincomalee oil facilities.

TRINCOMALE NAVAL BASE: This is situated along the north-east coast of Sri Lanka Trincolomalee is one of the best from 1875 to 1957 and served as headquarters of the

British Pacific fleet after the capture of Singapore by the Japanese in World War II.⁷

Surveillance aircraft of the United States have been increasingly using the Colombo international aircraft since incursions by the US naval task force again in 1971 in the wake of increased Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean. Colombo is a port of call by navies of all the big powers like UK, US, France, USSR and China and the others. They have also bunkering facilities at Trincomalee. In early 1980, the US was urgently looking for rest and recreation facilities in Sri Lanka, in order to maintain a permanent presence in the Indian Ocean. The US made a tempting offer to Sri Lanka government with promise of \$600 million oil refinery in exchange for access to Trincomalee and the airport near Colombo.⁸ Later the United States realised such facilities are needed for the Diego Garcia based personnel. In September 1981, Sri Lanka officially and formally lifted a nine year ban on foreign warships using Trincomalee. The ban on entry to Trincomalee was

7. Hong Kong standard, March 6, 1982.

8. DK. Subkrahmanyam, "Non Aligenment under stress," IDSA strategic Analysis December 1980; p.391: Bharat Corned, "Big power Rivalry" Hindustan Times 17-11-1980.

imposed in the early 1970's by Mrs. Bandaranaike's government which championed the proposal to turn the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace.

TRINCOMALEE OIL FACILITIES: Sri Lanka's proposal in the fall of 1981 to lease 100 abandoned oil storage tanks at Trincomalee which spread over 270 hectares of land by Britian in World War II and lying idle. The US based multinational coastal corporation to make the site the nuclear of an oil storage terminal in the China Bay complete with refuelling facilities, had sparked peace that Sri Lanka might be drawn into a future superpower confrontation. This company has a supply contract with the US Defence Department. The US paying annual ground rent of \$30,000 a period 25 years. It was contended that mounting economic pressure had left the government with hardly any option but to go ahead with the deal despite the political storm it had stirred and world translate into more foreign exchange, more employment and increased earning for Sri Lanka with the west would inevitable lead to military ties and other inroads, because do not seen as a purely commercial transaction but another step into turning over the strategic port of Trincomalee to the US for use as a naval base. The controversial deal came under adverse criticism at home and abroad jeopardising Sri Lanka's sovereign status as

a non-aligned nation and undermining its stated objectives of making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. The deal fell through after it became known that coastal planned to reserve a few of the oil tanks for use of US naval vessels, to service the Seventh Fleet. Fears were expressed that its times of crisis, the Americans firm could not be prevented from passing on oil to bases like Diego Garcia or US naval vessels.

The present Sri Lanka are aspiring for a Singapore, where Colombo serving as a refuelling and replenishment port for foreign various operating in the Indian Ocean, as well as providing rest and recreation facilities for their crew, apparently motivated by commercial consideration. The President Jayawardene in 1983 told newsmen in New Delhi that his country was against any name being mentioned in the declaration because there were other bases of the superpowers. Both superpowers were a party to the proposed UN conference on the Indian Ocean scheduled to be held in Colombo in 1984. "We want to help the conference" he said Sri Lanka also sought unsuccessfully, membership of ASEAN, which has pronounced pro-Western leanings. The opposition alleges that the US has a secret understanding with the Jayawardene government for the use of the island's ports by it Seventh Fleet as the price of munificence.

SEYCHELLES GROUP: The Seychelles group play a great strategic role in the Indian Ocean, which are scattered in the mid western region of the Indian Ocean. The islands straddles vital international Mauritius routes to and from East Africa and oil tanks lanes from the Gulf oilfields. The capital island of Mahe has an international airport and modern harbour at Victoria. It has been described as a airline staging post Military aircraft and warships of the big powers have increasingly availed of facilities available there. Its strategic location has enhanced its importance in the contact of the big powers rivalry in the Indian Ocean.

In November 1964, Britain granted the independent decided to set up the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) in the western region of the Indian Ocean, which was meant for the construction of defence facilities by the British and the US government and compensation was paid to Mauritius and Scycheelles governments. The new colony comprised the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, Desroches (detached from the Seychelles group) and the Chagos Archipelago. In June 1976 the Seychelles gained independence, even then, both the British and US took very active in the islands. The US in 1981 set up a satellite tracking station, in the main island of Maha

for various space project, meteorological and seismological research. President Albert Rene sees no contradiction in the existence of the station and the demand for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the Indian Ocean. The station is used for peaceful, not military purposes. President Albert Rene expressed gratitude to the government of France and the Soviet Union which, their warships directed to the Seychelles port of Victoria, in Jan 1982. Two French reconnaissance and one transport plans were set the international airport. The exercised French presence seems to be a high of closer military cooperation between the two countries. India has offered to train as many naval cadets as the Seychelles wishes to send. India has also pledged \$25,000 to repair the Mahe airport damaged in the coup attempt.

BAHRAIN GROUP

The Bahrain group are consists of Bahrain, Muhareq, Sitra, Umm Annassan, Jiddah and Harwar group, lie in the central western region of the Persian Gulf between the Qatar peninsula and the Saudi Arabian mainland. The Bahrain islands considered one of the richest countries with the highest per capita income. Treaties with Britain of 1882 and 1892 were replace by a

Treaty of Friendship on 15 August 1971. Under the earlier treaties, Britain had been responsible for Bahrain defence and foreign relations. On the same day Bahrain declared its independence.

After the British forces pulled out on December 1971, the US leased the Bahrain naval base located at the centre of the oil rich region. In 1977 the US closed the naval base due to the wake of pressure from the Arab and other Afro-Asian nations. East Task force stationed there since 1948 "a guest" of the British Navy. Bahrain has inadequate and poorly equipped armed forces incapable of meeting effectively on internal challenge. The Emirate has been in favour of retaining British forces as well as US naval presence in the region although these views are not explicitly put forward out of respect for the general Arab sentiments. Bahrain armed forces were equipped by Britain. It has now started getting aircraft and other weapons from the United States. On April 1982 the pentagon announced plans to supply six F-5 fighters and 60 air-to-air missiles and anti-tank missile worth \$114 million. Ten US officials are seconded to Bahrain besides two producers representatives for period upto two years.⁹

9. Arab World, April 21, 1982.

Bahrain has developed close relations with its neighbours in the Gulf who form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GOC) and who have supported the Emirate's sovereignty in the face of repeated Iranian territorial claims¹⁰. In 1982 meeting held at Manama, the council declared its support in resisting Iran's acts of sabotage in Bahrain by Iranian fundamentalists, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the continuing Iran-Iraq war especially the threat to block the Hormuz strait. The joint defence strategic comprising a joint strait defence umbrella and armament industry in the region was decided upon at the defence Ministers conference held in Riyadh on Oct.1982.

SOCOTRA:

The island of Socotra, a part of the Democratic Republic of Yemen, is situated 18 miles off the point of the Horn of Africa and about 400 miles south of the Arabian Peninsula in the southern approaches to the Gulf of Aden separately populated and the island is an ideal place for developing a multi-purpose logistic base.¹¹

10. BBC summary of world broadcasts (1) SWB/ME/6912/A, 22.12.81 and (ii) SWB/ME/6978/i, 15.3.82, Arab World, January 4, 1982, p.29.

11. J.P. Anand, April-June 1981, op.cit.1, pp.555.

It was used as a staging post by the RAF during World War II. It has airstrips at Hodibu (the capital) and Mouri and no suitable harbour.¹² Reports about the construction of a Soviet base or communication facilities have frequently appeared in the western news media since the early 1970's which has been consistently denied both by the Soviet and Yemeni government. In an interview in March 1982, the President of South Yemen denied the presence of a Soviet military base on the island.

A party of foreign correspondents including the British, French, Chinese and Arabs which visited the island and reportedly did not see any evidence of Soviet activity on the island. However, reports continued to persist in the western press that the Soviet have facilities on the island and Soviet naval ships made port call there.

INDIA'S ISLANDS:

The Indian's islands territories of Lakshadweep Diu and Andaman and Nicobars. These islands give to the

12. J.P. Anand, "Island Group and Base" Big Powers" In the Arab East Today (Ed.) Surendra Shutani (New Delhi 1981), p.58, n.9. pp.75-76.

Indian western and Eastern littorals in depth. There is a plausible argument abroad, that the Indian naval staff chalked out its plans for a significant accretion in the strength of the Western Fleet, on the assessment that such a force was necessary for the defence of Lakshadweep.

In the Bay of Bengal a strong naval presence based on the Andamans may not make sense, because the Andaman Sea washes the shores of Myanmar (Burma) Malaysia and Indonesia and with a little stretch of the imagination Singapore. India's policymakers would not, at this stage of the development of the Indian Navy, wish to alarm that countries which the exception of Myanmar, are part of ASEAN. They would have to be handled with some care and a good deal of circumspection as far as power projection in and around the Strait of Malacca is concerned. The straits are the jugular not only of three countries but also of Japan, which is bound to react adversely to any Indian naval build in the Andamans.¹³

The Nicobar island, a part of the far flung from Madras, the southernmost tip of the island is barely 140

13. Blety, "Islands of the Indian Ocean," 19 August 1989. p.8.

Km from Indonesia and 190 km. from Myanmar. Andamans and Nicobar Islands situated armed 1,500 Km This long string of islands consists of 310 varied shapes and sizes, stands as silent sentinels to the ever increasing sea communication and the shipping routes passing through the area. Strategically, the present a perfect platform for vigil over the country's territorial water against any nefarious activity of smugglers, adventurers and poachers and for safeguarding the countries magnitude resources against illicit exploitation. This is where the India Air force comes in. The Russian made Mi8 helicopters of the 122 helicopters unit posted at the air base here work tirelessly amidst heavy odds. The IAF covers all the islands extending from Diglipur in the North Andaman to Campbell Bay in Great Andamans. In most cases the helicopters have to fly over long treacherous stretches of the sea which makes navigation a nightmare also the pilots have to reckon with inclement weather considering that it rains eight month in a year here. The air base, with a landing strip long enough to take in ever a jumbo jet has come a long way after it was taken over from the air force¹⁴

14. Dinesh Kumar, "IAF the Backbone of Andaman Life Now"
The Times of India, November 10, 1981.

MALAGASY

A former French overseas territory, known as Malagasy, Malagasy attained full independence in 1960, and France continues to be principal trading partner and aid donor. Under the 1960 defence agreement with France, Malagasy received military aid in training and equipment in exchange for the right to maintain a naval base at Diego suarez in the north and an airbase at Ivato near Tananarive, the capital. The headquarters of France's Southern Indian Ocean command were located there. The US space agency -NASA had set up a station 88 Km prove Tananarive. The RAF contingent stationed at the Majunga airbase on the Beira Patrol, keeping surveillance on the oil port of Beira under UN sanctions against Rhodesia in the Mozambique Channel since 1967, was withdrawn by Britain on June 1971.

France closed its airbase at Ivato on September 1, 1973 and shifted its military headquarters of the Southern common to the Reunion Island because Malagasy took over the Deigo Suarez naval base on 1975. The loss of the air and naval base was a major blow to France. Moreover, it came at a time when paris was facing demand for independence in the French territory of Issas and Afars- now the Republic of Djsbouts. The US navy also

lost access to the naval base ¹⁵

In 1975, France sent a squadron of four warships, led by aircraft carrier Clemenceau to Madagascar in the wake of the up-rising and assassination of Col Richard Ratsindrandava, the Republic's military strongman to safeguard French nationals living there. Relations with France have been affected by disputes over compensation for nationalised French assets and the Malagasy claim to the Isle Glorieuses and three other islands off the coast of Mauritius.

Madagascar has periodically laid claim to five islands in its neighbourhood: Juan de Nova (400 miles north), Glorieuses (90 miles, east), Tromelin (400 miles north-east), Europa and Bassa da India (South). These are administered by the prefect of the French Overseas Department in the Reunion Island.

REUNION ISLAND:

The Reunion is a French dependency, where population 48,500 over 90 per cent Roman Catholic and

15. Michel Richardson, "Asian Extends Its military ties," Pacific Defence Reporter, November 1982, pp.58-59.

some Muslims of Arab descent . It is roughly in the centre of the western region in the Indians Ocean.

France has an airfield and radio relay station in the island. After the withdrawal of their forces from Malagasy in September 1973, the French established the headquarter of their armed forces in the Southern Indian Ocean, forces Armees de la Zone l' Ocean Indian (FAZOI), at Saint Denis on the island. Naval facilities were reinforced. The French strength in the Reunion was 3,200 in 1980.¹⁶ France is responsible for the security of the French islands in the region and of the Antarctica Ocean of their territorial waters and airspace. French also owned the small island like Juan de Nova, Bassa da India. Isle Glorieuses and Tromelin which are combined area of less than 50 sq.km. adjacent to Malagasy and all uninhabited.

France is interesting on these strategic islets around Malagasy. considered as stepping stones in its communication network. Weather stations and listening posts were being set up on Bassa da India. Europa, Tromelin and Isle Glorieuses. These outposts will extend Francis supply bases, transit posts and other footholds

16. J.P. Anand, Oct/Dec. 1979, op.cit.3, pp.185-6.

from Djibouti on the Red Sea to Mozambique Channel and the Reunion. The French government ratified a Franco-American agreement on April 1974 to set up and Omega radia navigation aid station on the island by the United States, which is one of the eight very low frequency (VLF) stations established around the world. It was set up in 1974.¹⁷

THE COMOROS GROUP:

The strategic significance role of the Comoros archipelago has been dramatised following evens in the Horn of Africa, Malagasy and Mozambique, in the light of the proximity of the archipelago to the West Asian oilfields and the stepped up naval activity by the big powers close to the region in the north. The islands straddle tanker lanes and international maritime routes through the Mozambique Channel. About 70% of Eurpoe's oil supplies pass through the channel. All the big powers have vital interests in the area with the recall that the area around the Comoros has become a focus of East-West rivalry.

17. John s. Ostheimer, "The Politics of the Western Indians Ocean Islands" (New York) 1973 p.133.

The archipelago with primitive economy is heavily dependent on the French aid which has been used as a political lever when needed. Other powers have also offered economic assistance. Since the Comoros declared independence on July 1975 unilaterally, the islands of Mayotte and Malagasy opted to retain the island's links with France. This was an outcome of the general feelings of the islanders that they are both French and Christian whereas the majority of the other three islands are Muslims and non-French. Their apprehensions increased especially since the three islands (Grand Comors, Anjouen and Moheli) declared themselves an Islamic Federal Republic in Oct.1978.¹⁸

French military interests in the 'break-away' island of Mayotte coincide with sentiments of the islands in wishing to retain their French association or rather, protection. French is keeping Mayotte as a collectivite particuliere. It has stationed 550 troops in Moyotte and units of the French Navy anchor at Dzaoudi in the lagoon of Mayotte. President Ahmed Abdullah of the Comoros had charged that the island could be 'a fall-back base,¹⁹ , but France denied that

18. J.P. Anand, "The Comors French Interest," IDS
Journal, Oct./Dec.1976, pp.186-6.

19. John S. Ostheisner, op.cit.17, p.133.

it was setting up a naval base there. France has been accused favours the island's association with the rest of the archipelago under a federal constitution.

After the lose of Diego Suarez naval base (in Malagasy) of immense strategic important, the Western powers maintain that in the present circumstances the islands in the Mozambique Channel and around Malagasy should continue to remain in French hands especially since coming into power of Marxist-led or radical government in Mozambique, Malagasy and Tanzania as well as Soviet and Chinese "inroads" into the area.

COCOS (KEELING):

The Cocos islands comprising some 27 small coral islands are situated in the Central-Eastern of the Indian Ocean; which offer an ideal site for a base to a staging post. In 1971, the US using the airfield on Cocos island, an Australian Territory, in a big way when construction work began on Diego Garcia. US transport aircraft ferried construction material from Utapao airbase in Thailand. The "Civilian" staging post also being increasingly used by US surveillance aircraft. In 1979, an estimated three dozen American flights, nearly all of these P-3 Orion aircraft, stopped at Cocos.

The Royal Australian Air Force at Darwin on Australia's north coast is being used by P-3 Orion aircraft and B-52 bombers based at Anderson airbase for maritime missions over the Indian Ocean which stay overnight for refuelling and crew rest at Darwin and Cocos. Such mission began to January 1980. Prime Minister Fraser has confirmed that U-52 bombers all are allowed to use Darwin as a staging post.²⁰ The Australia government has consistently tried to sustain American interest in Australia's security environment and to bottom in with US global communication network. The transit post, 1600 km to the west of Australian mainland in the central-eastern region of the Indian Ocean, bestow considerable advantage of range and endurance in the approaches to the Indonesian archipelago and the Bay of Bengal and extends the range of surveillance and other aircraft.

An object believed to be from Soviet spacecraft landed near Cocos in the international waters in the fourth week of May 1982. A Soviet special space support vessel, four other support steps, a tanker and a guided missile Kriwak class class frigate were seen by the

20. Christopher Paine, "The Rapid Deployment Force", MERI Reports (New York) 1983, pp.4-5.

Australian navy which had kept watch on their activities since May 1982. 21

CHRISTMAS ISLANDS:

The islands, an Australian territory and area 133 sq.km. lie South of Java. Recovery of phosphate is the only economic activity. It is a potential site for a transit or staging post. The group is strategically situated with reference to North-West Australia, Java-Sumatra and the Andamans.

MASIRAH:

The Masirah island is an Oman territory, is strategically situated in the Western approaches to the Hormuz Strait, entrance to the Persian Gulf, is close proximity to the Southern flank of the West Asian oil fields. The island commands the waterways which over 1,000 million tonnes of oil move usually.

The Masirah airbase is being increasingly used by the USAF aircraft after the closing of the RAF staging post in 1977. Masirah has a 2,460 meters long and 45

21. IISS, Strategic Survey, 1981-82, p.135, Vikrant, June 1982, p.48.

metres wide runway, fit for C-131, C-141 and P-3 Orion aircraft. American aircraft from Diego Garcia and elsewhere land regularly at the airbase and also refuelling, the planes stop overnight to enable the crew to rest. During US-Iranian confrontation in 1979-80 and the US decision to station Rapid Development Forces (RDF) in the Gulf region, the US obtained increased transit and storage facilities in Masirah as well as on the Omani mainland.²² Sultan Qaboos agreed to allow the US to use facilities at the airbase and elsewhere in the Sultanate for the next five years. The US was to spend \$500 million in 1982 to improve the airfield naval bases in Oman and to be improved facilities like airfields at Sib and Saint-al-Falaj, Muscat Naval Base, Qaboos Harbour, Sabalah Airport and Tanrayt Base. New facilities have been constructed at Juff near Muscat and Al Qasab in the Hormuz Strait.

The Americans have displayed their interests increasingly in the strategic island and the Sultanate of Oman has assumed a major role in their contingent planning in South-West Asia. This paved the way to the stationing of the Gulf quick strike force of the US multi-service Rapid Development Force (RDF). Masirah has

22. Mecheal Gelter, "Rapid Deployment Force", International Herald Tribune, 14.8.80.

become the principal American Bridgehead in the region. It can serve as a jumping off ground for launching commando-style raids and subversive missions against unfriendly or hostile powers and countries in the Gulf region. India's coast is less than 1280 km from Masirah and most of the other US bases in Oman.

CHAGOS ARCHIPILAGO AND DIEGO GARCIA:

The Chagos Archipelago is a group of islands in the centre of the Indian ocean. The largest, and the most important island in the group is Diego Garcia. The other islands of the archipelago include Egmont, Salomon and Peros Banhos. All these islands mainly coral atolls, are small. Despite the smallness of its size Diego Garcia is located in the centre of the Indian Ocean and outside the typhoon belt which affects other islands of the region making it particularly attractive as a naval base.

DIEGO GARCIA: The most important development of the past decade in the Indian Ocean has been the construction of a major base in the heart of the Ocean on Diego Garcia, the southern-most atoll of the Chagos Archipelago in the Indian Ocean (BIOT). The strategic significance of the Diego Garcia, the fact

that it lies at the apex of an isosceles triangle, the base of which extend from Australia to South Africa. Aircraft placed on the island could carry out surveillance over tanker lanes from the Persian Gulf to the Cape of Good Hope and maritime routes between the Malacca Strait and the Arabian and Red Seas, eastern Africa and India. It is situated put in the centre of the Indian Ocean, half way between US communication centres in Australia and the far East and Africa and West Asia.²³

The main intention of US occupying Diego Garcia to fill the geopolitical power vacuum in the region after the exit of traditional colonial power and to counter the growing Soviet influences. Further expansion was launched in 1981 after the overthrow of the Shah of Iran and the Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan. Technically called austere naval communication facility, it is being rapidly developed and upgraded into a permanent multi-purpose logistic base. Among them outstanding features of the base are a highly classified intelligence and communication facility, a 3600 metres long runway capable of taking four-engine freighters, a large natural labour which is

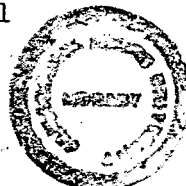
23. The Financial Times, (London), The Times (London), 22 September 1975.

protected on three sides by coral formations, fuel storage capacity of 380,000 barrels of aviation fuel and 320,000 barrels a fuel storage oil for ships. The runway is used by P-3 Orion, SR-71, DC-8, C-141, C-130 aircraft and K-135 tankers. B-52 bombers which carry nuclear warheads use the airfields. The air capability developed around Diego Garcia covers both surface and submerged ships. A satellite tracking station is operative. Electronic communications provide radio relays to surface ships and aircraft operating in all sections of the Indian Ocean. Destroyer tender Dixic was anchored in Diego Garcia in the fall of 1980 to carry out repairs. The base had accommodation for 1,800 persons.²⁴

The current expansion programme provide for the positioning of the US Navy and the quick strike RDF as a part of American comprehensive strategy for the region. The base is being further strengthened. This is well mark a new phase in the role of Diego Garcia due to interest and developed high technology on the Diego Garcia due to the Iranian crisis, developments is the Horn of African and the Arabian Peninsula. Soviet

24. Joel Loras, "Diego Gurcia, Political Clouds over a vital US base", Strategic Review, Winter 1982, No.9, pp.267-310.

TH- 4466



intervention in Afghanistan and the Iran and Iraq war, the US is speeding the enlargement of air, neval storage and worshop facilities on the atoll. Apart from an ultimate sum of \$1 billion to improve facilities on the base, \$700- million to \$1 billion will be allocated to improve other facilities with \$1 billion more to increase war-reverse stockpiles, ammunition and spare parts. Admiral Zumwatt had testified before the US Senate that the facility would enable the US to influence major shifts in the global power balance over the next decade. 25

STRATEGIC ROLE:

The major factors that appear to have dramatised the geostrategic significance role of the island groups especially sixes induction of big power rivalry in the Indian Ocean since the early 1970s are given below.

1. Most of the islands straddle vital maritime routes and oil tanker lanes from the West Asian oilfield. The supply routes are considered the jugular vein of their economics by the major Western powers and

25. Michael Getler, op.cit.,14, 14.8.80.

their allies in the context of the raising volume of overseas trade with Afro-Asian countries, Australia and the Far East India also has a major

2. Another factor is the stepped up deployment of warships of the major navy powers and the superpowers excessive preoccupation the Persian Gulf-Arabian sea region. Some of their task prices were on muscle-flexing demonstration and just exercise to influence events in the region, to assure support to their allies or friends and safeguard their countries interests. Facilities on the islands ease the logistic problems and provide considerable advantage of range and endurance contention the considerable advantage of rangs and endurance extending the range of their surveillance, transport and other airport and Task forces operating at general distances from their homeports.
3. The US accelerated its navel building in the region decided to expand and upgrade its base on Diego Garcia and repositioned a special logistic forces of cargo vessels there and obtained more facilities in other islands as well as on the Indian Ocean. France reinforced its military prescience in Djibouti enclave, Russian island and other outposts.

The Soviets have set up anchorages in international waters in the vicinity of some of the islands. The possibility on the Soviet seeking or developing facilities on the islands of Socotra, Dahlak in Malagasy and elsewhere as a counter move to the US construction activities on Diego Garcia and Masirah cannot be ruled out.

4. In a situation of seaborne foreign intervention, however remote and insignificant these island groups may appear, their weight can add to or diminish substantially from the quantum and nature of power projection from the Oceans waters. Moreover, the island and other footholds can serve a stop covers on take-off fads providing support to their proxies or clients even launching or abetting commands rails or over and convert subversive activities against unfriendly governments in the neighbouring island or littoral states.²⁶

5. In a major escalation of the strategic use of Diego Garcia, the US had decided to store nuclear arms from the islands at a time when the international

26. K.Subrahmanyam, "Sudian Ocean" IDSA Journal, Jan - March '82. pp.340-41.

situation in drifting towards confrontation. The Soviets maintain that Diego Garcia poses a threat including a nuclear threat to the Soviet Union security.²⁷ On March 7, 1985, the seventh non-aligned movement held in New Delhi, Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi stated, that what particularly concerned India was the existences of the US nuclear base on Diego Garcia. She reaffirmed that the non-aligned nations were unanimous in opposing the intensive militarization of the Indian Ocean and the neuclearisation of the Diego Garcia base.

6. The 320 km. EEZS around the island republics are rich in marine resources and mineral wealth. The seabed minerals can be exploited only by the industrial and technologically advanced countries who mostly happen to be the big powers who are jockeying for preferred positions and endeavoring to carve out their spheres of influences in the region.

All the big powers have vital interest in and around the island groups in the Indian Ocean besides the adjoining Afro-Asia mainland and Australia and adjacent waters with the result that the area has become the

27. P.K.S.Namboodiri, op. cit, 6, pp.381-2.

focus of East-West rivalry with consequent danger for strategic stability. As the big power rivalry grows in the region, the geostrategic importance of these island nations, territories and footholds has also increased and they are coming under mounting pressure from external powers which are seeking facilities in the Indian Ocean. It is to be seen how many more Diego Garcia or mini Diego Garcia and Masirah are there in the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean to serve as strategic maritime junctions.

CHAPTER - V

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL POWER EQUATIONS INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS

It is almost prosaic in 1980 to reiterate the importance of the Indian Ocean region. Through out the last decade developments in and around the Indian Ocean and its islands have repeatedly drawn world attention. It is and of crucial importance are the regional developments as compared to the rest of the world.

Oil issues provide the most compelling concern.

The emergence of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the oil embargo of 1973-74, the continuing dependency of the developed world on access to Gulf oil, and the need for assured and steady transport of that oil across the Indian Ocean are variety of challenges confronting these littoral states. The Iranian revolution and its aftermath and the seizure of the great Mosque in Mecca are two recent reminders of the precariousness of oil supply questions. The oil issues are not enough to rival attention on the region but there are other issues like India, Pakistan wars in the recent past. Those remain vast ongoing tension in the subcontinent, now complicated by the reality of nuclear proliferation. Along the Western Indian Ocean, in the Horn. of Africa and in Southern Africa, the forces of nationalism, liberation and racism continue to vice for influences and ascendancy against the background of vast means disparities and the need for

economic development. The recent innovation of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union has again drawn attention to the region and sparked a renewed debate both in the west and elsewhere about Soviet intention and around the Indian Ocean. Postponing to the Soviet invasion the US upgrading its military capabilities in the Indian Ocean raises new question about the overall role of the superpowers in this area. Therefore, its became the difficult inherent in developing arms control and demilitarization proposals for the region. With all this, it is little wonder that the area is often described as an arc of instability.

REGIONAL FORCES:-

PERSIAN GULF: Much of the strategic character of the Indian Ocean region can be attributed directly or indirectly to the fact that nearly three fifths of the world's power (and most easily exploitable) oil reserves tie in and around the Persian Gulf. Added to that the Gulf's proximity to one of the superpowers and the area's prevailing and potentials levels of instability and one has accounted for much of the explanation for the gulfs salience in late twentieth century international politics. The Persian Gulf region consists of countries like Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Omen.

PERSIAN GULF



There are three medium powers of the periphery of the Persian Gulf, Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Among those three Iran is by far the most powerful. The role of Iran's moved beyond the Persian Gulf into the Indian Ocean this is due to the industry has been rapidly growing. The growth rate is one of the highest in the world. As defence budget has risen sharply during the past decade and presently it is more than what India spends on her defence. The weapons which are in the process of acquisition are most sophisticated and include the latest items in the American armoury. After the British withdrawal from the Gulf's in 1970's Iran emerged as the dominant power in the sub-region and demonstrate its role and obtain physical control over the entrance of the Hormuz Strait. Iranian troops also occupied the three strategic islands of Alu Musa, Greater Tumb and Lesser Tumb. Airfield were developed at the port and islands and Kharg and Bushirl and West of the Hormez Strait.

In 1975 she found a place in the Indian Ocean island for her naval in Mauritius and also served aid to this particular island state. This show that not only confine in the Gulf region but extending her power and relation with the island states in the Indian Ocean.

Iraq is rather remote from the main body of the Indian Ocean, and its coastline on the Persian Gulf is only ten miles. Nevertheless, its location at the head of the oil-rich gulf at the confluence of two historic rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates enhances its strategic significance. Iraq is the only country of the Persian Gulf which maintain close ties with the Soviet Union. Iraq's size economic potentials its armed to the teeth, she is therefore, on weight factor in the balance of power in the Gulf region and tangentially, also in that in the Indian Ocean region at large.

In 1975 with the help of the Soviet Union Iraq developed the port of Umm Qasr. This harbour is located at the end of Khor Ad Abdullah. Being isolated from the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean region there is less major role to play by the Iraq in the near future, but she was seriously concerned for the presence deteriorating the region. In 1979 Iraq raised question in the United Nation, that the superpowers presence alarming increase of the military presence of the big powers in the Indian Ocean island states.¹ Iraq expressed their desired that the Indian Ocean region should remains as an area zone of peace, free from foreign influences and intervention,

1. Indian Express, New Delhi, April 10th 1979.

Next to Iran and Iraq, Saudi Arabia is the major in the Persian Gulf region. Saudi Arabia stretches from the gulf to the Red Sea, its coastline extend 296 miles, while its Red Sea is 1020 miles, Saudi Arabia is thus both a Persian Gulf and Red Sea power but there is no major role and objectives of the Indian Ocean island states because of lack diplomatic contacts and no strategic significance in the future. Also unlike Kuwait Saudi Arabia does not maintain any diplomatic ties with any communist country. The state run by government through spiritual leadership role in the Muslim world. Such attitudes limit its maneuverability and the flexibility of it foreign policy. Still Saudi Arabia totally depends on the US and Britain aid. Whereas, Kuwait is the smallest size and population and the third biggest oil producer in the Middle East after Saudi Arabia and Iran. Being small size of population Kuwait is dependent in the goodwills of other countries as far as its security is concerned and also maintain excellent diplomatic relations its neighbour states. In regarding the Indian Ocean, Kuwait far away from its relations to those island states, and there is no keen to interfere their affairs.

Qatar consists of a group of island in the Persian Gulf and the mainland of Saudi Arabia. After British

withdrawal Qatar has entered into any alliance or defence treaty. However joined the Arab League also maintained friendly relations with all the Gulf States. Qatar are dominated by the Iran. The Qatar practice a pro-Western and Pro-Arab oriented Non-Aligned foreign policy and the protection depend on the power in the Gulf area.

In 1970 Oman entered the international community, because a member of United Nation and the Arab league and set up diplomatic relations with many countries. Iran become close contacts and become protective from foreign countries. The alliance between Iran and Oman is momentous, thus Tehran control all vital strait route from Persian Gulf and shores of the Indian Ocean. Special relationship agreement was made between Oman and Iran that two countries have concluded concerning the delimitation of the waters within the Hormuz Strait.

The Red Sea basin is formed by Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti and Ethiopia on the African rim Saudi Arabia, the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) and the people's democratic republic of Yomen (South Yemen) or Aden. The basin funnels through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait into the Arabian Sea to the north, and into the Indian Ocean to the south east. The Horn of Africa made

up of four political entities. Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. Stressing linkage with other parts of the Indian Ocean region. The colonial occupation of the costal plains, France in Djibouti, Italy in Eritrea and southern Somalia and the British in Sudan, Egypt and northern Somalia unusually the colonial powers rarely came into actual conflict with one another in the region during World War II.

In 1970 there was radical even revolutionary, changes that have swept across the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa and still having run their course. In Ethiopia from feudal into the Marxist minded soldiers, they have formed a close alliance with the Soviet bloc and committed themselves to participating in "the national democratic revolution" of the Third World and active cooperation with the international communist movement.² There was a state of affairs bordering on open warfare has grown up between Ethiopia and its eastern neighbour, Somalia, over national rights and border disputes.

The situation in South and North Yemen also been completely changed due to the rise of a Marxist

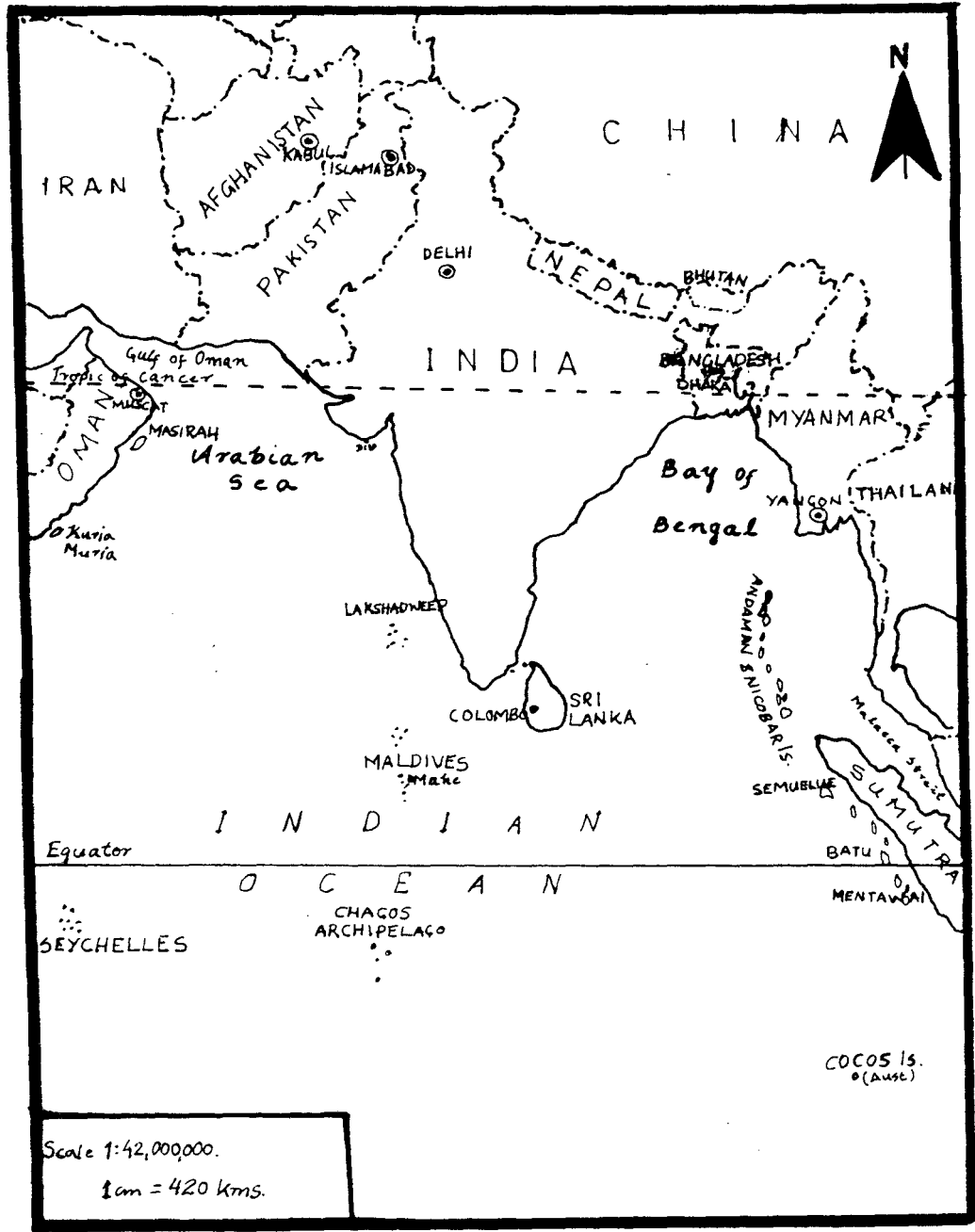
2. Statement made by chairman Mengister Haile Mariam to the Conference organizing the people and workers of Ethopia (COPWE) Addir Ababa, 3Jan. 1983.

leadership within the army Both states had tied by treaties of friendship and cooperation to the Soviet Union.

SOUTH ASIA: Since the British withdrawal from the Indian subcontinent in India-Pakistan rivalry has dominated the security issues of the region. War has broken out between the two states on three occasion over the last thirty seven years but has failed either to resolve the issues that divide them on to enhance their overall sense of security. Following the last of these clashes in 1971 an encounter that led to the dismemberment of Pakistan and the birth of the barely viable state of Bangladesh, there had been evidence on both sides of a desire to improve relations. Unfortunately, December 1979 the Indian Pakistan rivalry has been somewhat overshadowed by the Soviet's advance into Afghanistan. This event had its most immediate impact on South-South West Asia but was created apprehensive among governments throughout the entire Indian Ocean and necessitated a reappraised of all regional strategic linkages.

In 1971 India war with Pakistan and after the creation of Bangladesh that India's strategic perceptions of the Indian Ocean and her future security role in South Asia underwent a radical change. The

SOUTH ASIA



Indians greatly aided by the Soviet, have launched a massive programme of rapid deployment and modernization of their naval fleet. The strengthening of the navy is part of a massive armament programme that is aimed at making India the largest military power in Asia only next to the Soviet Union. This has been motivated by India's aspirations to play a dominant role in the region.

India owned some islands in the Indian Ocean, they are Andaman and Nicobar islands, Diu and Lakshadweep. Andaman and Nicobar islands lies in Bay of Bengal is the possession of the Indian Union. Recently, Car Nicobar islands has set up for naval and air base for the Indian Union. The islands constructed sea communication to detect the shipping route passing through the area. The islands also accommodate the Indian Air Force and the Russian-made MI-5 helicopter and 122 helicopter unit posted there. The Indian Air Force covers all the islands extending from Diglipar in the North Andaman to Campbell Bay in great Nicobars.

Diu is a tiny islet in the Gulf of Cambay near Veraval Port. This islet are not yet developed for the military purposes but used as a tourism purposed. The tiniest Union Territory of India, Lakshadweep lies in

Arabian Sea. Strategically, the islands are not to construct the air base because the islands are small and only helicopter can be accomodate also area are very limited and naval base is difficult to construct due to the so many tiny islands.

India have diplomatic relations with some islands, they are Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives and Sri Lanka.

Pakistan's initial interest in the Indian Ocean was confined to the security of sea lanes between East and West Pakistan. But Pakistan's naval capability has never been able to keep the merchant shipping and naval deployment open between Karachi and Chittogong. The reason, is that building a strong naval force to match the strength of the Indian navy was never within Pakistan's national means, secondly until the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, Pakistani strategist believed that East Pakistan could be defended from West Pakistan, which assumed that Pakistan could capture Indian territories in Punjab and Rajastan which might then be bargained with Indian awareness in East Pakistan. This was a great strategic fallacy, as is evident from India's successful blockades of the Bay of Bengal in 1971 which prevented any resupply to Pakistan's troops.

Since 1971, the Arabian Sea region has become the primary concern of Pakistan's naval operation, because the waterway to Europe and East Africa for their naval forces. To protection of coastal trade with Oman and other states in the Persian Gulf is also the responsibility of the Pakistan navy. But this programme can not carry out owing to the constrains on the Pakistan navy budget and behind India both in quality and quantity of its naval power.

Pakistan attempted many times to change the name of Indian Ocean into "Afro - Asian Ocean" in 1983. Again in 1988 into "Muslim Ocean" further Pakistanis stated that the Ocean should have been renamed "Indo-Pak Ocean" after the independence in 1947. All these proposal could not changed and non islands posses by Pakistan in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan have intensive relation with Sri Lanka, Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius.

Bangladesh is the eastern half of the province of Bengal as it existed under the British administration but in 1971 Bangladesh became independence state.

Strategically, Bangladesh has no major role to play in the Indian Ocean because she owned only one or two

islands in Indian Ocean. Bangladesh have no close ties with other countries due to the poor economic and lack of diplomatic contact. But Bangladesh always expressed solidarity with all the littoral and islands states in support for withdrawal of foreign military bases and stand the Indian Ocean as a peace zone.

Myanmar (Burma) is the borderland between South East Asia and the Indian subcontinent while its long coastlines faces the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea, high mountains divide it from China and India and wild jungles from Thailand. Strategically, Myanmar place in a more importance area in the region because its coastline is about 13,000 miles which is facing to the Indian Ocean. Myanmar consists many islands and some these can serve military purpose, they are, Hanggyi Island, Ramree Island, Bilugyam Island , Moseas Island, Bentinick, clara Island etc. Recently, Myanmar is building a new naval base at Hanggyi island at the mouth of the Bassein river, Bay of Bengal, a part of its programme to upgrade its naval infrastructure. Another programme also under construction for naval bases at Hkyab, near the Bangladesh border at Mergni, near the Thai border and at great Coco island, adjacent to the Andaman Islands. Regarding the Indian Ocean island states Myanmar had no influence and there is no foreign policy in them.

However, Myanmar compelled to accept foreign economic assistance from both communist and non-communist sources. Myanmar display a passive, almost outistic attitude, ignoring alliance or balance-power concepts.

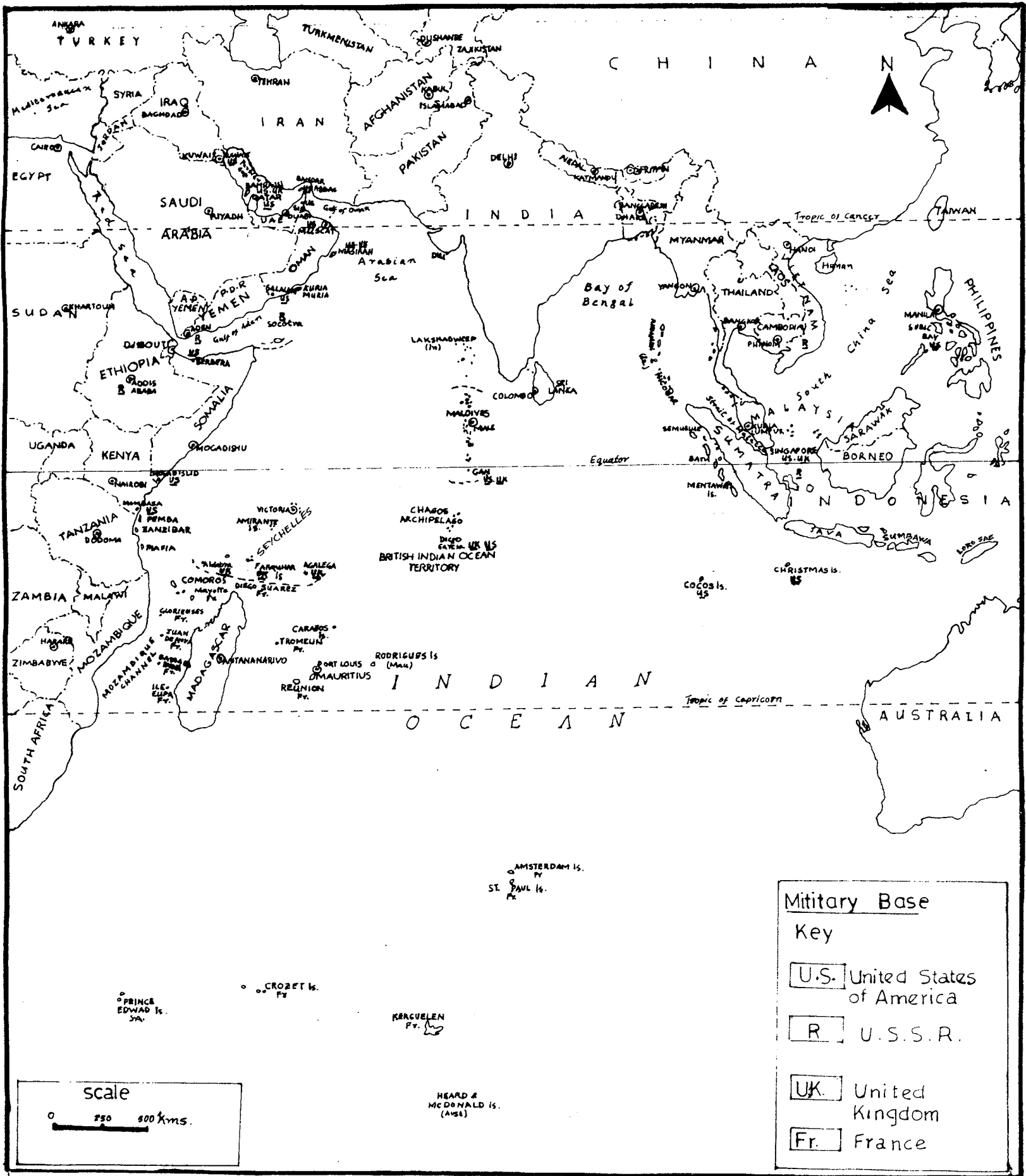
AUSTRALIA: In recent years Australian attitudes toward Indian Ocean have undergone changes. The Liberal-National Country Party government led by Malcolm Fraser came office in December 1975. The new government to promote the greater Australian self-reliances in international politics and the increased involvement in regional affairs, willing to cooperate with the United States on defence matters. But the future of Australian cannot depends on United States in the Indian Ocean because the United States vital security interest and it lead no danger in the Indian Ocean. There is no doubt that the Soviet Union had already deployment its naval and air forces. By seeing the situation the Australia had to acts a modest to both US and USSR in order to maintain balance powers. the Australia's naval and other military installation were mainly in the east. Australia has island possession same islands in the Indian Ocean, the Cocos (Keeling) and Christmas. The lack of a major naval base on the Indian Ocean, the Australia's constructing a Garden Island, Cockburn Sound in Western Australia South of freemantle. The

Australians military powers growth not so much increase because Australia did not face any military threat for the past fifteen years, as result of it services and the acquisition of new equipment slowed down. Australia's maintain a relationship of sincere cordiality with the South East Asia countries like, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, China and Japan. In the Southern Africa, Australia maintain excellent diplomatic relations and continued contribute civil aid to the Rhodesia, Mozambique, Tanzania etc. In the island states Australia's had a little less influence though it is the highest continent in the Indian Ocean, because Australia's thus wishes to play a modest role. The country realised that economic and military resources are limited and in case of around conflagration the country would be unable to secure its trade and indispensable trade routes. The Australia's government support the United General Assembly resolution of 1972 concerning the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. In 1973 Australian again vote for the Zone of Peace resolution and participated actively in the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Committee.

INTERNATIONAL FORCES:

Since the end of the fifteenth century the Indian Ocean has been dominated by Western Europeans. The

RIVAL NAVAL AND AIR FACILITIES - 1975



Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British vying with each other for commercial advantage, these states controlled the ocean and the various narrow sea lanes leading to it. At first, they limited themselves to the occupation of strategically important points and to commercially lucrative trading centres. However, by the end of the eighteenth century, the British had succeeded in restraining their rivals and in establishing a position of predominance in the region. Their dominion extended mainly over the waters of the region but also over much of the adjacent landmass as well as some of the islands. This dominance ended after World War II. Beginning with India, London gradually gave up most of its possessions in the region. Gradually, in the 1960's the United States, Soviet Union, China, Japan, France and other Western European powers began to rise in the Indian Ocean island states.

EUROPEAN STATES: In the relatively short period of time from 1947 to 1971, London gave up most of its Asian and African continental possessions and islands in the Indian Ocean. Today, the only remaining British possessions in the Chagos Archipelago.

The final decision to withdraw from east of Suez was made in 1968 and implemented by 1971,

Eventually this was to entail the abandonment of the Persian Gulf protectorates, departure from Malaysia and the relinquishment of the bases on Masirah Island along the Oman coast and on Gan in the Maldives Archipelago. But before this decision the British adjusted political and administrative boundaries between the offshore islands for which they were responsible. Thus in 1965 the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) was created by detaching the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius and uniting it with the islands Aldabra, Farguhar and Desroches, which were simultaneously separated from the administration of the Seychelles group.³ The BIOT was formed to established defence facilities within this geographically and strategically important area of the Indian Ocean. As is well known, the island of Diego Garcia in the Chagos group now serves as a naval and military base. It has been based to the United States for a period of fifty years, with the British having joint access to the facilities,⁴ the few, allegedly nonpermanent, inhabitants of Diego Garcia mainly fishermen and coconut planters, have been removed and Mauritius. But these arrangement and the payment of

3. These islands were returned to the Seychelles at independence in 1976.

4. For a discussion of the U.S. leace, see Joel Laru's Chaper in this book.

compensation for the removed islanders have not freed London from trouble and responsibilities with regard to the territory.

For Britain the projection of power into any but the most western portion of the Indian Ocean region is fraught with difficulties. Long lines of supply make heavy demands on Britain air and naval logistics capabilities and require ready access to replenishment facilities in foreign countries. Regarding the latter, Britain used to depend upon the extensive naval and air facilities at the Simonstown in South Africa. The Simonstown Agreement , however, was renounced by the British government in 1975 following pressure from Africa and Asian members of the Commonwealth opposed of whole rule in Pretoria. Since then, Britain has had to make alternative arrangements. this included an agreement with the government of Mauritius to use airfields, harbours and a naval communication station on the island, but even that may soon be unavoidable. Under the agreement, Mauritius may revoke Britain's rights of access on a year's notice and it is likely that the new government of Paul Berenger will give that notice.

Britain's trade and navigational interests are still paramount in the Indian Ocean region. At any given

time, about one-fifth of the British merchant fleet is likely to be found in the area. British trade with the countries of the region amount to 22 percent of the United Kingdom's total overseas transactions. About 46 per cent of British overseas investments are based in the area were it not for the development of its own oil fields in the north sea, Britain's trade within the region, especially the countries of the Persian Gulf, would be substantially greater. As it is, Britain continues to purchase a significant amount of petroleum from the Middle East but the level of dependency is down sharply and is noticeably less than several of London's partners in Europe.⁵.

During the eighteenth century, France contended with Britain for supremacy in the Indian Ocean region. At the end of this prolonged struggle, the British had managed to evict the French from their strategic positions in India and during the Napoleonic wars, from Mauritius (called by France, Ile de France) and the Seychelles Islands. But during the second half of the nineteenth century France staged a comeback into the region. Besides the island of Reunion (formerly the Bourbon) returned by Britain in 1818. Paris established

5. Economist, 3 July, 1982.

control over the large island of Madagascar and the Comoros islands and set up a colony in the Gulf of Tadjoura, naming it French Coast of Somalia with its capital Djibouti.

Paris has attempted several places to maintain and political military foothold. For instance, under an agreement with the newly independent Malagasy Republic (now the Democratic Republic of Madagascar) the French were able to maintain an air base and to garrison the strategically important naval base of Diego Suarez. This arrangement continued for over a decade, until 1973, when the French were compelled to withdraw from their facilities following a change of government in Tananario. Elsewhere, France has been more successful in preserving its presence. In the strategically important Republic of Djibouti located at the entrance of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, France has sustained two French infantry regiment and two squadrons of the French air force. The French navy who uses Djibouti's harbour as a naval base.

In the other part of the Indian Ocean region French links are much stronger. The islands of Reunion has been a fresh overseas department since in 1949 and in represented in the French Parliament by three

deputies and two senator. It has an ethnically mixed population of half of million comprising French, Indians, Africans, Indonisia, Malay and Chinese, France's determination to hold on in the Western Indian Ocean in evident it is its continued claim to several small islands. Tromelin island's off the northeast coast of Madagascar and Europa, Juan de Nova and the Glorieuses islands in the Mozambique Channel. In some of these cases, France's claim has been challenged by Madagascar. Besides, there are meteorological station at Isle Amsterdam, Crozet and Kergulen islands in the for South-West Indian Ocean. The Saint Paul island is uninhabited. Isle Amsterdam has a special significance as it lies at the southern-most and of the Central Ridge of the Indian Ocean and mid way between South-West Australia and South Africa, a site for a potential staging or transit post. The isle has an area of 60 square kilometers and the French established a weather research station there in 1950.

French possession in the Western part of this ocean require protection. The possession are located along the sea lanes leading to and from the Suez Canal and along the Cape route down the east coast of the Africa. To protect these sea routes and its sovereign possessions, Paris sees a naval/military establishment

as indispensable. Thus in 1974 following the Arab-Israel war of 1973 and the Arab-Israel war of and the Arab oil embargo, Paris formally set up a new naval command to extend over the entire Indian Ocean and the Cape route leading to it.⁶ The operational headquarters of the commander-in-Chief of this naval command is located in one of the larger ships whose base, when not deployed, is the port of Djibouti.

The presence continued of France's in the Indian Ocean and its policies in Paris perception of its status as a great power and also call "the condominium of the two superpowers". Paris thus finds it quite natural to have a military province in the Indian Ocean region next only to the Soviet Union and United States.

Apart from the Britain and France, there are other European countries also showing their interest in the politics of the Indian Ocean. They are the only European states that have a significant capability of projecting power into the region. The federal republic of Germany, Italy and the other major powers of Western Europe (excluding Spain) also has considerable interests in the

6. Christian Sciences Monitor, 27 February 1974.

Indian Ocean, but less of a will and a capability to exercise influence among the states of the region.

West German interests are essentially economic somewhat less than half of Bonn's oil requirements are next by imports from the Persian Gulf area. Being one of the major industrial countries of the world, West Germany's share in the exchange of goods with the countries of the Indian Ocean is considerable. While exporting industrial and manufactured goods to the region it imports raw materials from states such as India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and South Africa. More for historic than for tangible reasons, West Germany, also maintains an interest in Tanzania, a former colonial possession. Further worth, relations between Bonn and Pretoria are underwritten by the many ethnic Germans living in the Republic of South Africa. To the west is Namibia, a former German colony, a sizeable proportion of its population is also ethnically German. These ties to southern Africa have resulted in Bonn taking an active role in the territory. In 1980 spring and summer Germany sent the warship to the Indian Ocean for Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Diego Garcia island for the political gain.

Regarding the relations with the island republic states, Italy has not yet developed in both economic and politics. Italy only concerns to concentrate on the Persian Gulf and some certain littoral states in Africa.

Among the smaller west European nations, the Netherland has cherished reminiscence of its former colonial possession Indonesia the second largest country of the Indian Ocean region. Although the Indonesia waged a protracted war of liberation against the Dutch, in the last twenty years the Netherland has developed sound economic ties with the country. Equipped with knowledge of local customers and appropriate languages skill, the Dutch are unequally placed among Europeans to be able to strengthen their burgeoning business and industrial relations with Indonesia. One fact of this relationship is the important of the Netherland as a supplier of military equipment. In 1980 for instance, the Dutch supplied Indonesia with three new Fatahillah frigates. It is conceivable that as Djakarta moves to expand its naval capability orders for additional equipment will follow.

Historically, the states of Europe have competed with one another for influence in the Indian Ocean region. More often than not, their interests in the area

were antithetical rather than complementary since the end of World War II this adversarial relationship has been transformed largely as a consequence negotiation to bring aboard a settlement in Namibia West Germany is a member of the Western contest group dealing with the South African government and in acknowledge to have been instrumental in moving their long-standing issue toward a settlement.

UNITED STATE OF AMERICA: The primary of US interest that has determined US policies in the Indian Ocean from the relevance of resources and geopolitics of the region to the worldwide balance of power. In this sense US interests in this area are directly linked with her security interest in Europe and East Asia because of the dependence of her allies on the Persian Gulf oil. But the pursuit of secure and uninterrupted oil supplies to the blast has increasingly required an integrated policy approach which envisions essential linkage between economic, political and security objectives. It is, in part, the volatile nature of the regional geopolitics which has generally been influenced by domestic turmoils, intra-regional conflicts and the spectre of Soviet intervention that has necessitated the balancing of varying but integrated US policy objectives. In this aspect, the political dimension of US policy can not be

isolated from the economic and security interest that it attempts to maintain secure or promote. Likewise, security policy, whether it takes the form of commitments arms sales or power projection capabilities would not be affected without a parallel political and diplomatic. In the Indian Ocean region, the US policy encompasses a wider range of interactions because of the complex geopolitical milieu involving a great variety of threats both indigenous and external US interest in that region may be stated as follows 1. to ensure access to secure oil supplies at reasonable prices 2. to balance Soviet presence and if possible reduce Soviet influence 3. to promote stability and peaceful change on the domestic political and regional level and 4. to pursue regional security and advance the Middle East peace process, while generating the security of Israel. An analysis of various US objectives their linkage and their perception is in order.

Diego Garcia currently is the primary naval and air base of the United States in the Indian Ocean. It has become one of America's operational plans to deal with any future crises in the Middle East and Persian Gulf area. The lagoon of the island can accommodate seventeen stages of the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) fully loaded with sufficient military equipment, supplies, fuel,

lubricants, and water to meet the combat requirements of one marine brigade of eighteen thousand men. Diego Garcia's airfield has undergone expansion and strengthening so that B-52's can land and take off on a regular basis, thus facilitating US. air surveillance of southwest Asia and eliminating the need for in-flight refueling. An expanded tank farm, a highly sophisticated communication center, enlarged warehouse, new barracks and improved recreational facilities for military personnel all point to the importance the Pentagon accords the base. Diego Garcia's is not a secondary temporary military installation. It is as fundamental and indispensable to America military posture throughout the Indian Ocean as is Subic Bay to the deployment of ship and aircraft in the Caribbean from a strategic perspective. Diego Garcia is ideal. It provides a self-sustained facility in a central region of the Indian Ocean which gives both naval and air access to most portions of South, Southeast and West Asia. It is Diego Garcia's location and its self-sustained quality, independent of local cultural and political domination which gives the United States a foothold and more, in a region in which it had nothing very satisfactory.

In December 1966 Britain signed a defence deal with the United States leasing the BIOT for 50 years.

with the option of a further 20 years extension⁷. In 1970 the United States Congress passed \$5.4 million for building a communication base in Diego Garcia on the Chagos Archipelago in the Indian Ocean. The construction began in 1971 and with the an agreement concluded in 1967 with Britain the United States. The US already obtained the right to use the island of Mahe in the Seychelles group for satellite tracking and telemetry facilities. The British-American agreement regarding Diego Garcia was concluded on October 1972. By this time, the island was being designated as a "limited naval communication facility", the upgrading being a consequence of Washington's greater involvement in the Middle East and Persian Gulf and South Asia region. Again on February 1976 a third Anglo-American agreement was signed under this one Washington was authorized to upgrade Diego Garcia from "a limited naval communication facility to support facility of the United States navy", the latter phrase being a diplomatic emphasis for a full-scale American naval and air base.

In early 1980, the US administration began to plan significant expansion of military facilities on Diego

7. Exchange of notes Concerning the Availability of the British Indian ocean Territory for Defence Purposes, pp.3.11.

Garcia. The main factor behind this US decision was the loss of American access to the Iranian ports of Bandar - Abbas and Chah Bhar. Again during the Reagan administration considerably enhanced US involvement in the region by launching a multi-billion dollar facilities has been improved, like runways, providing navigation aids and communication to take 52 bombers allow the Us Air Force shorter striking range of the Persian Gulf. The improvement in refuelling facilities and the construction of storage space would further increases Diego Garcia's a marine amphibious brigade of about 12000 men etc⁸.

Diego Garcia offers increased and flexible options to the US naval deployment in the Indian Ocean however, Diego Garcia cannot support US military operations in the region because of its limited capacity and distance from potential area of conflict. Also the base is not without a political liability. It continues to be a source of regional opposition to US naval strategy in the Indian ocean⁹. Recognising the limitations of Diego Garcia, the United States has signed base access agreement with Egypt, Kenya, Oman and Somalia in order

8. Washington post 7 March 1981 p.46.

9. The Times, 9 March 1983.

to facilitate pre-position and be closer to the points of tension. Apart from the Diego Garcia the island of Masirah also one of the most significance to the US strategy in the Persian Gulf. In 1978, the US has gradually acquired an extensive rang of facilities from the Oman which was immense strategic value to the US rapid deployment forces in the area. Other facilities in Oman that are available to the US includes Tuff on the Gulf of Oman, Seeb airport, Salalah (airfield and port) Khasab (airfield) and port of Qaboos. The Omani facilities have provide for US forces the capability of sea control and marine air operations in proximity to a major regional Choke-point the Strait of Hormuz. After requisite improvements and installation of modern gear, some Omani facilities would also support tactical air operations and staging of combat units. The US Defence Departments set up a brigade staging facility at Kuwait which would be operational toward the end of the current decade.

In August 1980, US and Somila intiated an agreement that provides for US use of Somlia ports and airfields at Mogadishu and Berbera. The US access to Berbera would support sea control and maritime air operation close to the trait of Ban el Bandeb. Somalian facilities have considerable significance for the US Middle East

strategy primarily in a rear stage support role. As a part of "Operation Bright Star" military manoeuvres in the region in November-December 1981 the United States integrated Somalia into her overall exercise plan at the same time the US substantially increased the number of servicemen in Somalia¹⁰

The US signed an agreement with Kenya on 27 June 1980, which allows US forces access to the air and naval facilities at Mombasa, Nanyuki and Nairobi. Mombasa has become a frequent port of call since the exposure of the US naval presence in the area. The largest ships such as U.S. midway, an aircraft carrier with more than 5,000 men, and the helicopter carrier Tarawa with a total complement of 4,000 troops have visited this port.¹¹ Since Mombasa is the major developed harbour and airfield accessible to Americans on Africa's east coast, it provides sufficient fleet support for the US deployed Indian Ocean naval units and assists sea control operations.

The US also selected Ras Banas at the tip of the Red Sea because of its control location for supporting a

10. New York Times, 16 April 1983 pp.1.23.

11. Jay Ross, 'Navy flotilla setting into the Indian Ocean Role' Washington Post, 3 February 1981, pp.A21-2.

wide range of contingencies that might requires US forces. Ras Banas, when fully developed will provides for staging logistics activity fighter and bomber support.¹² All the beginning Egypt's refused to sign the agreement and again 1985 the US and Egypt broke off talks on final agreement on the use of Ras Banas. Both the US and Egypt come to agreed that permit the US to improve and expand Ras Banas for joint use. In recent years Egypt has emerged as the second largest recipient of US aid after Israel. Egypt played host to "Operation Bright Star" in 1981, which was meant to familiarise US troops with desert combat conditions. Since then Egypt has periodically engaged in military exercise with US forces in the region.

One of the main strategic made by the United States of the Indian Ocean countries and the islands states is due to the Soviet Naval deployment following the British decision on a total withdrawal from the region, the Soviet and Cuban involvement in Africa and the repercussions of the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1973 and the ensuring oil embargo significantly sharpened growing threat perception in the American defense community. It promoted and intensified efforts in the

12. George Wilson, 'Panel Balks of financing Red Sea Military Base', Washington post, 3 June 1982. p.A26.

United States regarding future security policies in the area and establishment of a credible deterrent posture. The current US strategy in the region recognised naval deployment as an essential element in the defence of US security interests. The navy presents means of positioning American force near enough to crisis zones to be able to respond quickly and to the exact degree dictated by the circumstances.¹³ In this regard, sufficient sea control capability ability to put forces ashore and extensive use of air power to defend those forces are required in order to meet new challenges in the area.

SOVIET UNION (RUSSIA): The Soviet Union policy in the Indian Ocean reflects a combination of political, economic and strategic interest. In addition to national security consideration, Soviet naval units also serve certain political objectives. In showing the play the Soviet navy has been boasting the morale of its clients and arousing the anxiety of pro-Western states. The Soviet presence is also designed strategically and tactically to outflame the Chinese. The politics of competitions interests in the Middle East, Western moves

13. Stansfield Turner, 'Thinking about the future of the Navy.' US Naval Institute proceedings, 98 (August 1980) pp.67-8.

in the arc of crises' instability in the Gulf and the quest for strategic parity have oil determined Soviet calculations of her interests in the Indian Ocean region.

The Soviet naval power began to develop substantially after 1960. The urgency was felt by the Soviet Union to enhance its naval capabilities, not only to maintain a balance between the three wings of its armed forces, but also to counter the accelerated naval programme launched by the USA. The USSR entered the Indian Ocean only in the first half of 1968, when a small task - force consisting of one Sverdlov - class cruiser accompanied by one guided - missile destroyer one submarine and one pevek - class oiler, visited port in Aden, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) India, Pakistan, the Persian Gulf and Somalia, since then the Soviet Union has maintained a naval presence in the Indian Ocean region. The number of vessels of the Soviet fleet in the region varies between twelve to twenty. It includes surface vessels (fighting ships).

The Soviet Union developed its first significant naval presence at the southern end of the Red Sea in the Gulf of Aden. The Soviet gained access to the port at Berbera in 1974 and converted it into major naval base

in a relatively short period of time. In addition to a naval communication station the facility provided an expanded airstrip, POL storage tanks, repair workshop and missiles storage and handling sites. In 1974 the Soviet leaders to accumulate political gains in Ethiopia as well. The Soviet began to supply Ethiopia with the same type of arms they had previously supplied to her rival, Somalia. The situation changed during the Ogaden war of 1977-8 when the Soviet Union backed Ethiopian at the expense of her pre-eminent position in Somalia.¹⁴ As a consequence, base rights of the Soviet Union in Berbera were terminated by Somalia and the Soviet left behind their extensive investment in port facilities. The loss of the most important supply base in Berbera (1977) was a second serious setback to the Soviet Union after her expulsion from Egypt in 1974. However, access to the Ethiopia ports of Assals and Massawa on the western side of the southern entrance to the Red Sea has greatly compensated for the Soviet losses in Somalia. The Soviets are also preparing to establish a naval base on the Eritrean Red Sea island of Dahalak, after reaching on agreement with Ethiopia President Mengisto Haile Mariam and the Soviet leaders

14. Daniel S. Papp, 'The Soviet Union and Cuba in Ethiopia; current History (March 1979) pp.110-13,

during Mariam's 1980 visit to Moscow.¹⁵ In the western Indian Ocean, the Horn of Africa has become the focus to strategic rivalry in recent years. The Horn has a considerable geopolitical importance in the context of the Arab Israeli disputes and the Persian Gulf oil resources. Any power dominating one side of the Red Sea would have the potential to influence the use of the Suez Canal. American acquisition of base rights in Berbera (1980) and a substantial French presence in Djibouti might balance Soviet strategic gains in Ethiopia. In recent years Soviet naval deployment in the Horn and access to port facilities have gained considerable importance in light of their impact on regional alliance and liberation movements in Southern Africa.

The Soviet Union has also broadened her naval activities at Aden, in South Yemen, after her expulsion from Berbera. Aden has become a base for 74-16 bombers and for the Soviet surveillance of the Arabian sea. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) has been a primary recipient of substantial Soviet and Cuban military assistance, molding military personnel. The first Soviet carrier task force to be deployed in the

15. Dawse, 7 November 1980

Indian Ocean, consisting of the carrier Minsk with its VTOL jets, and the new amphibious warfare ship Ivan Rogov, visited Aden in May 1980 to demonstrate Soviet interest in and support for PDRY.¹⁶ With the expanded facilities at Aden, and the development of Socotra into a major naval base, would greatly enhance Soviet sea power along with the Arabian Peninsula.

In the context of Indian Ocean development or its strategic, the Soviet have substantially built up the major Vietnam military base of Cam Rash Bay for use by their naval and air forces in South East coast of Vietnam, Cam Rank Bay had become Moscow's most important supply base for Pacific fleet warships halfway between Vladivostoc and the Indian Ocean. Recently, Soviet Union built piers and other facilities to service nuclear submarines at Cam Rank¹⁷ such an installation would greatly facilitate a Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean. The airport adjacent has also been expanded to take large transport aircraft. Soviet aircraft taking off from there can be over the Malacca Straits within two hours. These straits, within Sumatra and the west coast

16 William F. Hickman, Soviet Naval Policy in Indian Ocean: US Naval Institute Proceeding 105 (August 1979) pp. 92-3.

17. Newsweek, 16 February 1981, p.19.

of Malaysia, have gained military and strategic importance as the oil tanker route from the Persian Gulf to the countries of South East Asia and Japan.

The Soviet have also established an impressive chain of deep sea mooring buoys off the islands of Socotra at the north of the Gulf of Aden near the Seychelles, West-North West of Diego Garcia, east of Madagascar. In this island the Soviet installed a radio communication station and also constructed gangs were working there and ships using the island as a base. The Soviet Union has established a radar station in Diego Suarez and has acquired air and naval facilities in Toamasina, where a limited number of Soviet reconnaissance planes are stationed.¹⁸ The present government of the Seychelles island has warmed ups to the Soviet Union, which supplies the island with advisers, arms and oil. In June 1987 Soviet Union strengthened its sea defence and installed a radar detection system a missiles batteries. The Seychelles accepting military supplies in the form of donations. The Soviet Union made a friendship with Sri Lanka and made an agreement in 1969 to provide technical assistance to Sri Lanka. The present, Sri Lanka

18. Newsweek, 17 December, 1984.

receiving substantial aid from Soviet Union. Soviet also maintained diplomatic relationship with Madagascar island. The Soviet have a limited naval access to India, Singapore and Mozambique.

At present Soviet naval facilities are neither substantial nor comparable to those of American deployments. Moscow has apparently preferred to keep its presence in the Indian Ocean minimal following the loss of Berbera. It would takes a Soviet naval presence navy times its present size to pose a serious challenge to US and western security interests. The objective of the Soviet Union for their strengthening position in the Indian Ocean can be describe as follows, to increase Soviet prestige and influence in both littoral and island states, to countering imperialist aggression¹⁹ and to obtain political and strategic goals, meant to achieve of a 'blue-water capability'.²⁰ But the role of a Soviet military presence in support of overseas objectives has emerged as important in low-risk areas. On this regard the employment of Soviet warships to ensure the safe arrival of logistical support and their

19. Glorshkov, The Sea Power of The States, p.301.

20. Stephen, S.Rokerts, 'Superpower, Naval Conformation,' Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York; Pergamose Press, 1979) p.166.

employment to prevent western intervention against a client state are important factors in such a policy.

CHINA: The Chinese objectives in the Indian Ocean area were not clearly defined in the 1940's and 50's. Their strategic interest military speaking, were defined by their armed strength and national defence policy which was, primarily land based. Only with the advent of a Communist Government and the formation of the Peoples' Republic in 1949 was there a revival of China's interest in the Indian Ocean and become more active role of an earlier era.

In 1960, Chinese interest in the Asian littoral of the Indian Ocean were more or less defined, China also attempted to get some advantage, by supporting one littoral state against another, in the regional conflicts. It supported Indonesia in its confrontation with Malaysia, Pakistan against India and Yemen against Saudi Arabia. Africa on the other hand was still largely an unexplored field for many big powers but China got an entry into Africa via Egypt in 1960's. China and Egypt become close ties during banding conference in 1955 and enabled it to break through into wider Afro-Asian and later participated in SEATO at Bangladesh pact in 1956.

Several African states become independence during the first half of the 1960's. The Chinese were interested in coming recognition from as many newly independence African countries as was possible. Among the Sub-Saharan countries, Guinea was the first to grant recognition by China and in 1959 Mali. October 1960 and offered economic and technical aid to Guinea and Mali. Ghana and China develop diplomatic relationship in 1960 and a cultural agreement and a friendship treaty were signed. China tried to cultivate good relations with Somalia after its independence and offered a loan 1.05 million Pounds as a gift. In the East Africa the Chinese policy penetrated to Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda following their independence in 1969. The Chinese sought to influence the local population in Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa and Rhodesia and later poured in massive economic and military aid in those countries. Even in the West Asia, the Chinese have been active in supporting the around struggle for the Palestanions. The growing Chinese ideological influence in the peoples front for the Liberation of the occpied Arab Guld and the democtratic national front for the liberation of Oman and Arabian Gulf, caused concern to the Soviet leaders.

The Chinese have realised that the influence of littoral states is not enough for her military position. Therefore, enter into the Indian Ocean islands. The first island the Chinese had concentrated were Zanzibar and called it "Chinese Cuba." Later the Chinese policy of economic penetration of the area of Ceylon (Sri Lanka). The Chinese and Sri Lankan make a strong friendship in 1970 and thereafter Chinese poured out economic and military aid. Chinese was one of the first countries to recognise the new nation of Mauritius independence in 1968 and aid has been offered by China. In 1972 an agreement was signed the two states under which China to provide an interest-free loan of 13.5 million Pounds. In 1992 the President of Chinese Jeaig Ze Min visited the Port Louis and made an agreement to strengthening these military relationship between China and Mauritius.²¹ The Seychelles groups and the Chinese had developed substantial relationship in 1974 and since then Chinese offered economic and technical eooperation. The island of Madagascar and Chinese became an active in the development fields. In 1984 a new agreement was signed between them that Chinese medical mission team will visit Madagascar for two years. Chinese President

21. News Review on South Asia/Indian Ocean, IDSA (New Delhi) September '92. Vol.No.24/9. p.675.

Xi Xiannian visited Tananarive in 1986, and a large number of sum of money giving to the Madagascar government.²²

China is improving relations with the developing countries, that is, littoral states as well as island republics states. The main thrust of the Chinese policy in the Indian Ocean region is to compete, not so much with the West, as with the Soviet Union. The Chinese have already achieved a fair amount of success in this field and have neutralized the earlier exclusive Soviet presence in many of the countries in the region. Even in the naval power the Chinese had already operating with half of the island like Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Madagascar and Burma. It is predicatable that the Chinese have more advantages as influence in the future and there is a clear picture that to dominate the Indian Ocean.

JAPAN:- Japan is another power which can play a significance role in the politics of the Indian Ocean. It has vital economic stakes in the region and is capable of projection a naval image to protect them. Several littoral states and all the big powers, cannot

22. The Indian Ocean Newsletter, (Paris) No.223 March 16. 1986, p.3.

forget those crucial, during the Second World War, when Japan established its naval supremacy over the Western Pacific Ocean, and dominated the Far East and Southeast Asia. The post-war economic reconstruction of Japan and major advances made by it in the technological field have once again projected that country as a potential big power whose policies can affect the Indian Ocean region.

After the visit Defence Minister Nakasone to Washington in the autumn of 1970, stated that the role of the Japanese "self defence" forces should also include an ability to protect Japan's trade routes and overseas investments. hereafter, the level of defence expenditure increased and become a significant military power.²³

Japan has a vital interest in the Indian Ocean region. She depends on the Indian Ocean sea-lanes for one-third of her overseas trade, and the Persian Gulf supplier 90 percent of the oil required by her economy.

Japanese monopoly capital in infiltrating into the countries of south East Asia in a big way. The Japanese

23. The Military Balance 1982-83, London 1982, p.87.

navy appeared in the Indian Ocean on a flag-showing mission in September 1969 when a squadron of four Japanese destroyers visited Malaysia, the same year in October it visited 12 Pacific and Asian countries in the course of training cruise and goodwill tour.²⁴

Japanese retains with the two developed Indian Ocean littoral status. Australia and South Africa developed in a rather different fashion with Australia grew up a symbiotic relationship characterised by a high level of interdependence. Thereafter, both the countries had exchanged export market and supplies of raw materials. Hence the link between Japan and Australia is of even more significance in the political and economic context of the Pacific region. Relations with South Africa are becoming ever more highly and both the countries strong interest in continued trade relations. South Africa is the third biggest export market and fourth largest importer of Japanese goods.

South East Asia is of especially significance for Japan, first because of its position between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean and secondly, as a source of raw materials, as well as increasingly as a market.

24. Annual Review, 1969-70, New Delhi, April 1970, p.267.

therefore Japan maintain diplomatic relations with the ASEAN in both economic as well as in politics in the Indian Ocean.

Soviet and American policy makers apparently viewed the Indian Ocean a 'vacuum' area after the British withdrawal and decided to move in to provide security and stability in the absence of mobile regional arrangement. But the deployment of naval forces was more in line with the self-defined national interests than the desire to promote peace many local government leaders rejected the vacuum theory and denounced attempt to preplace British influence in the area.

The transformation of the Indian Ocean region into another zone of superpower naval deployments has acquired greater significance in light of the fact that many regional and islands states had tempted to seek close military collaboration with them. The superpower direct or indirect involved themselves into the local disputes. In conflicts situation, the superpowers supplied their military assistance to clients states, the US presence to augment Israeli capabilities during the 1973 war and the Soviet sea and airlift during 1977-78 to bolster Ethiopian defence are case in point.

At the same time, the lack of regional unity and the absence of a community of interest have presented the primation of a unified political front to thwart the designs of the external powers.²⁵

Despite unanimous calls for 'a zone of peace' there are serious policy difference among the littoral states over the strategic implications of superpowers naval policies in them. For example, the Iraq and India how argued that the removal of the superpower presence would facilitate their legitimate aspirations in the region others have feared that the complete withdrawal of external forces would lead to the intensification of regional conflict.

Obviously, the nature of the threat perception, the self-determination of national priorities and the degree of patron-client relationship with the external powers have determined each country's response to the superpowers' presence in the Indian Ocean. The important regional powers like most of the intermediate powers have tended to formulate their responses to the political and military developments in the region in terms of their aspiration to play a greater security and strategic role.

25. K.P. Misra, 'International Politics and Security of the Indian Ocean Area', International Studies, 12 (January-March 1973) p.191.

CHAPTER - VI

CONCLUSION

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Today, the Indian Ocean island states have expressed great concern about the superpowers naval competition. The opponents of external forces allege that the growing naval presence of the superpowers poses a grave threat to local peace and security. The past colonial experiences and the constant projection of maritime power to influence political events in this region have added to apprehensions about the superpowers. And what fuels suspicion is that the use of seapower to attain political and economic strategy in the Indian Ocean has never been contested by the superpowers. For instances, the United States has clearly emphasised the need to intervene in the event of a serious threat to the economic and security interests of the Western alliance. Soviet forces have already occupied one hinderland Indian Ocean state under the guise of protection against imperialism. After the consolidation of power in Afghanistan, further incursions into adjacent islands would be much easier and already some islands states had incursions by the Soviet Union. This was the scanaria before 1991. The island states had already projected that the external power would certainly be detrimental to the independence and security interests in the near future.

The interest of the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, in the Indian Ocean islands is motivated by a combination of political and strategy considerations. The British withdrawal from the region resulting in a vacuum in the Indian Ocean corresponded to the development of long range missiles technology by the United States and Soviet Union. Political development and naval technological advances have virtually gone hand in-hand in making the Indian ocean sensitive for the powers.

There are many factors that have motivated by the superpowers interests in the Indian Ocean. Among them, the expansion of political influence in the littoral and island states ranks high in the Soviet policy, access to the raw material of the region has become a major concern of the United States and its allies. The energy dependence of Western Europe and Japan, the regions which form the core of the industrialized world, is central to US security policies in the Indian Ocean. In this respect, the US objective in the Indian region overlap with her security interests in strategically more important regions of Western Europe and the Far East. The US and her allies have began to recognise the Western security would require more than the defense of the NATO area. The security of Persian Gulf oil and

the political stability of this and adjacent region are important to the economics, trade relations and security arrangements of the Western powers.

In recent years, the United States has considerably enhanced its naval capability in the Indian Ocean in terms of local facilities and deployment of vessels, including a carrier battle group considering tonnage and ship days. The collective naval power of the US and her allies far exceeds the Soviet (Russian) naval strength. The US strategists, particularly under the Reagan administration, consider maritime superiority fundamental to a credible conventional naval deterrence in world oceans. The United States achieved a clear margin of maritime superiority which might be regarded as preponderant in its power projection capabilities. The military components of US deterrence in the Indian Ocean include also the creation of Central command, substantial expansion and modernisation of the armed forces of regional allies and allocation of significant forces capable of rapid deployment, which would sustain and reinforce the operation of US forces present in the area.

The Soviet Union were neither motivated by a desire to establish naval hegemony nor designed to fill

the 'power vacuum' left by the British withdrawal. It was more, and still is, the reflection of the Soviet Union's attainment of blue-water naval capability and an assertive third world diplomacy. Soviet naval deployment in remote areas such as the Indian Ocean have been intended South to counter balance the political effects of the US naval and extend Soviet influence. The role of the navy in Soviet third world policies is important only to the extent of supporting threatened allies and delivering them equipment in crises or establishing a protective ring on the outer fringes. But making such commitments credible has required local facilities for supplying and basing Soviet forces. At present, Soviet naval powers is neither as formidable as the US network of military installation nor is it designed to pose a serious challenge to American or Western interests. Soviet Union concentrated more on the hinterland European landmass because it has a definite geographical advantage of littoral and Indian Ocean States. One of the great significance is the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. The integration of certain bases in Afghanistan with Soviet military installation and communication networks in Central Asia. So, the main idea for the Soviet Union is land power to compete against the United States sea power, With Soviet breakdown the position has diluted in real

terms, putting Soviet Union nowhere in the arm-race in the Indian Ocean.

Great Britain was known one of the largest possession of littoral and island states in the Indian Ocean in 1950, but today she possess only one island of Chagos Archipelago. In 1971 London gave up most of its Asian and African continental possessions and islands. Britain created, British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) in 1965 and the islands included are Aldabra, Farquhar and Derroches for her defence facilities within the geographically and strategically important area of Indian Ocean. But later British handed over to the US with the agreement for fifty years, with the British housing joint access to the facilities. After the Second World War France came back into the region again. Paris established control over the large island of Madagascar Channel and the Comoros islands also set up a colony in the Gulf of Djibouti. Further more she strengthen her position in the Southern and Western Indian Ocean. In the Southern Western of the Indian Ocean has become the permanent strategy posts to the France.

The other superpowers like China and Japan also showing their interest on the politics of the Indian

Ocean island states for their military position. They are, as yet not strong enough to play an independent superpower role but their interests and presence will influence the region in the near future.

Concerning the future perspectives in the Indian Ocean Island States are complex with regards to the contemporary situation in the region. As a matter of fact, that most of the nascent island nations do not have sufficient and adequately equipped armed force to defend against possible threats from radical, fascist and mercenary militants well-armed groups. The island states like Seychelles, Mauritius, Maldives, Bahrain etc. had often experient in collusion, with dissident internal fraction or hostile forces. Sometimes supported overtly or covertly by a big power of even a neighbour states like India, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia etc. They have to depend on the goodwill of the great powers or seek assistance from friendly neighbor. Their apprehension have increased since the coups in the Seychelles and the Comoros. They are deeply concerned about their future sovereignty, at the same time worried on account of worsening security environment.

Most of the island states have no defence army of their own. The islands like Maldives, formed 'Maldivan

Regiment' based on the capital island of Mahe, the main task of this regiment is to look after internal security, but is hardly adequate in an archipelago comprising upto 2000 coral islands. They also covered sea patrol solely meant for domestic security. Mauritius defence were looked after by its police and a small band of well trained and equipped armed men to counter fascist and mercenaries. The Seychelles has a volunteer People's Militia improved in 1977 with Tanzanian adviser. The police force was mainly by active but they are inadequate and ill-equipped to meet challenge from mercenaries, radical or fascist groups armed with modern weapons. Only Sri Lanka had it own defence force and received lots of military aid from the Britain, Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Pakistan, China, India and United State. The forces well equipped with modern weapons and really to face any circumstance. On the other hand, the islands like Madagasy, Reunion, Comoros , Moyyete, Crozet Kerguleen and Isle Amsterdam are the under French overseas territories. France maintains a continuous military presence in these islands for defence security.

A certain pattern of external involvement is discernible from the series of coups and counter-coups which moved the politics of some of these island

matched in the socio-economic spheres.

The islands are originated from coral reefs, extinct volcano, oval atoll, rocky reefs, oceanic mountains etc. as a result, there is very little fertile soil and the weather is not suitable for production system. The principle occupations of the peoples are fishing, coconut plantation, sugar and rubber plantation etc. For instances, the islands of Mauritius has sugar as the primary industry and together with its by products constitute the islands main source of wealth and employment. The number of tourists has grown very rapidly since the opening of the international airport in Seychelles, Reunion, Mauritius, Maldives, Comoros and Chagos Archipelago. Tourism contribute 9 percent of the gross domestic products and led to a boom in the construction industry and related infrastructural development. The other basic problems of its backwardness are overpopulation severe unemployments, poor harvest, landlessness, subsistence farming, lack of natural resources and absence of educated class. Some of them have accepted offers of military aid to strengthen their defence infrastructure and equiped their ill equipped armed forces. Gaining political influence and military facilities are prerequisites for perpetuating the big powers intervention postures. Most of the island

republics in the past few years. Most of them namely the Comoros, Seychelles, Bahrain and the Maldives are visibly afraid of destabilisation. They have already experience, for instance, the Maldives 1978, the government foiled a coup attempt allegedly masterminded by certain opposition politicians and former President Ibrahim Nasir, who lives in exile in Colombo or Singapore. Nine European mercenaries who were hired to execute the plot reportedly received large sum of money from abroad. A British national led the gang and Colombo was its launching pad. In 1981 Seychelles a band of about 50 white mercenaries who originated from South Africa attempted were failed. The independent nation of the impoverished Comoros has seen a number of coups and counter coups. One of the main reason why this island states have so much troubles is that their strategic location and their vulnerability has enhanced their importance in the context of big-power rivalry in the Indian Ocean. While all these nations are members of the nonaligned movements, some continue to provide facilities to naval vessels and military aircraft by the big powers. The external powers have made tempting offers of economic and military aid as well as grants in exchange for facilities. The island states are compelled to accept foreign aid because the physical geographic and the political strategic realms is not equally

states received sizable economic aid and budgetary support from big powers like, United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France, West Germany, China and Japan. They also have received from neighbour States from India, Pakistan, South Africa, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The island states also feel insecure in the future because of ongoing regional conflicts around the Indian Ocean, some relatively quiescent, other have already erupted into fighting or threaten to do so imminently. In east and southern African continue to live in the shadow of persisting conflicts territorial disputes, periodically punctuated by regime instabilities and interfering by superpowers as these things also found in East Africa and Horn of Africa. In the Persian Gulf region Iraq-Iran war and intervention by both Soviet Union and United States influence them. The Chinese active search for ports facilities in the Myanmar islands.

The region and the littoral states keen to create the Indian Ocean as a peace zone. Most of the littoral states are in favour to keep Indian Ocean safe and sound from the nuclear activity. The island states, indeed, cooperate in this regards like Mauritius is committed to the complete demilitarization of the

Indian Ocean, and still fighting their right to retain Diego Garcia from Britain and the United States. A member of the non-aligned group, the Maldives has consistently supported the moves for making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, in the face of considerable pressure from some of the big powers to give them access to the Gan island base vacated by Britain in 1976. During the Second UN Conference on disarmament January 9, 1982, the Maldives representative members expressed that the Maldives' desire to see the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and the whole of Asia to become a nuclear weapon free zone, and particularly, the Indian Ocean. The Maldives would not allow nuclear weapons to be stationed or brought in its territory, even on a temporary transit basis. More than 25 years have passed since Mrs. S. Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka Prime Minister raised the questions of peace zone in the Indian Ocean at the Non-Aligned Conference at Cairo in 1964. Even today, the stand of Sri Lanka has not changed. Sri Lanka's criticism of the expansion of Diego Garcia was muted and has tried its advocacy of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The President Albert Rene of Seychelles sees no contradiction in the existence of the station and the demand for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the Indian Ocean. The station is used for peaceful and not military purpose. The Indian Ocean being

converted into zone of peace is not so easy because of indifferent attitudes of the big powers to the proposal and the cold war between them and their rivalry for strategic gains in the Indian ocean. Besides this the regional powers also lack consensus on the issue of demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean. Failure to convince a much delayed conference for the consideration of Indian Ocean Zone of Peace proposal due to the deadlock in the ad hoc committees of the Indian Ocean, clearly explains limitation of the of regional powers. For all practical purposes, diplomatic pressures and initiatives at international forums such as the non-aligned movement (NAM) have utterly failed to influence the Indian Ocean policies of the superpowers. The regional states have wide differences of opinion on security issues, including the presence of the superpowers forces in one or another form.

Therefore the superpowers perceive their economic and strategy interest in the Indian Ocean states to be vital and it seem unrealistic to expect them to agree to total demilitarisation. Nor is there for any substance to the arguments that once superpowers relinquish their facilities and withdraw, their navies, the Indian Ocean region would instantly become a zone of peace. The regional power politics, rivalries and

militarisation of littoral states is, of course as menacing to peace. The geopolitics of the Indian Ocean islands has increasingly grown more complex both on account of power ambitions of regional states and significant additions to the US and Soviet naval capabilities in recent years. In such a diverse and vast region as the Indian Ocean, where the conflict of interests and the propensity to use force are so great, the militarisation of regional and external varieties poses serious challenge to peace and stability. Perhaps the dialogue among the regional states to reduce tensions would be a prerequisite to restoring peace and stability in the Indian Ocean Island States.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

[Documents and other reference material]

1. Australian Government Publishing Service, 'Indian Ocean', Hemisphere, vol.23, no.3 (May/June 1979).
2. Central Intelligence Agency. Indian Ocean Atlas, Washington DC 1976.
3. Committee and Armed Services, US House of Representatives, Report of the delegation to the Indian Ocean Area, Washington DC 1980.
4. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Soviet Policy and United States Response to the Third World, US Government Printing Office, Washington DC 1981.
5. House of Commons, Foreign Affairs Committee, 5th Report, Afghanistan: the Soviet Invasion and its Consequences for British Policy, London, July 1980.
6. Spiers, R., 'US National Security Policy and the Indian Ocean Area', Department of State Bulletin, vol.64, no.1678 (August 1971).

7. UN, General Report of the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean, General Assembly, Official Records, 34th Session, Supplement no.45 (A/34/45), New York 1979).

Secondary Sources

Books:

- Adie, W.A.C. Oil Politics and Seapower The Indian Ocean Vortex, New York; Crane, Russak & Co., 1975
- Amirie, Abbas, Ed., Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics, Tehran; Institute for International Political & Economics Studies. 1975.
- Anand J.P. "China and the Indian Ocean Area" in China's Nuclear and Political Strategy, Ed., by S.K. Ghosh & Sreedhar. New Delhi; Young Asia Publication, 1975.

- Australia, Report from the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs on the Indian Ocean Region, Canberra; Government of Australia, 1975.
- Beazly, Kim C. and Ian Clark, Politics of intrusion-The Super Powers and the Indian Ocean, Sydney, 1979.
- Bezborush, Manoranjan, US Strategy in the Indian Ocean: The International Response. New York; Praeger, 1977
- Brawn, Dieter, Indian Ocean: Region of Conflict or Peace Zone? Tr from the German by Card Goldart and Kathleen Slanwarne. Delhi; Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Collins, John M., US-Soviet Military Balance, Concepts and Capabilities 1960-1980, New York, 1980.
- Christopher Lec, Seychelles Political Castaways, London; Ehn Tree Books Publication, 1976.

Dowdy William L. and Trood Russell B. Ed. Indian Ocean: Perspectives on a strategy Arena. New Delhi; Himalaya Books, 1987.

Gupta, Rajan, The Indian Ocean : A Political Geography. New Delhi Marwah Pub. 1979.

Indian Council of World Affairs, Defence and Securities the Indian Ocean Area; New Delhi;; ICWA. 1958.

Kapur, Ashok, Indian Ocean: Regional and International Powers Politics. New York, Praeger, 1983.

Kaushik, Devendra, Indian Ocean-Towards a Peace Zone. Delhi; Vlkas, 1972.

Kohil, S.N. Sea Powerr and the Indian Ocean with Special Reference to India. New Delhi, Tata McGraw Hill, 1973.

Leifer, Michael, 'Conflit and Regional Order in Southeast Asia.' London, 1980.

- Malyn Newitt, The Comoros Islands Struggle Against Dependency in the Indian Ocean, London, Westview Press, 1984.
- Millar, T.B., Indian and Pacific Oceans: Some Strategic Consideration, London; The Institute for Strategic Studies, 1969.
- Namboodira P.KS., Anand J.P., Sreedhar, Intervention in the Indian Ocean, New Delhi, A.B.C. Pub,. 1982.
- Nambiar, O.K., Our Seafaring in the Indian Ocean, Banglore; Jeevan Publications, 1975.
- Ostheimer, John M., Ed, Politics of the Western Indian Ocean Islands, New York; Praeger, 1975.
- Pattabhi Rama Rao P. Deigo Garcia Towards a Zone of Peace New Stearling Publications Privite Ltd. 1985.

- Patra, Saral, Ed. Indian Ocean and Great Powers, New Delhi; Sterling Pub. 1979.
- Poulose, T.T., Ed. Indian Ocean Power Rivalry., New Delhi; Young Asia, Pub. 1974.
- Rajandra Singh, K, Politics of the Indian Ocean, Delhi, Thompson Press, 1974.
- Sadiq Ali S., and Ramchandani, R.R., India and the Western Indian Ocean States: Towards Regional Cooperation in Development, New Delhi: Alhid, 1981.
- Sengupta, Bhabani, Poulose T.T., Hemlata Bhatia, The Malacca Straits and the Indian Ocean, New Delhi, 1974.
- Sharma, K.R., Indian Ocean as a Factor in Soviet Policy Toward India, 1971-1981, New Delhi, JNU., 1982.
- Singh K.R., Indian Ocean : Big Power Presence and Local Response New Delhi, Monohart, 1977.

Tahtinen, Dale R., and Lenezowski, John: Arms in the Indian Ocean: Intrests and Challenges, Washington; American Enterprises Institute for Pubic Policy Research, 1977.

Towle Philip, Noval Power in the Indian Ocean-Threats, Bluffs and Fountasies, Camberra, 1979. .

United States, Commerce (Deptt of) US Ocean Policy In the 1970's Status and Issues, US Govt. Publications, 1978.

Vali, Ference A., Politics in the Indian Ocean Region-The Balances of Power, New York, 1976

Vibhakar, Jagdish, Afro-Asian Security and Indian Ocean New Delhi, steerling 1974

Wall, Patrick, Ed. Indian Ocean and the Threat to the West for Studies in Global Strategy, London; Stacey International, 1975.

Willrich, Mason and John B. Phrnclander (Eds), SALT- The
Moscow Agreement and Beyond, New
York, 1974.

World Focus, "Indian Ocean" January 1981.

ARTICLES:

Adhikari Sudiputa, Geopolitics of Indian Ocean: A Struggle of Space and Power. Indian Geographical Studies, (New Delhi) No. 9, September 1977, pp 18-30.

Anadkat, Nalin, Indian Ocean: The Changing Geopolitical Perspective. Journal of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vol.33-34 No.2, 1989-1985, pp. 81-86.

Anand, J.P. Indian Ocean: Strategic Significance of Island Republics and Territories, IDSA Journal (New Delhi) Vol.15, No.4, April - June 1985; pp.543-79.

Indian Ocean: French Military Presence and Strategic Interests, Strategic Analysis, (New Delhi) Vol.11 No.12; March 1988;pp.1457-71.

- Indian Ocean Islands: Bahrain, Masirah and Socrota, IDSA Journal (New Delhi) Vol.13 No.4; April-June 1981;pp.537-58.
- Alexeyer. A. and Flalkorsky A., "China and the Indian Ocean", IDSA Journal (London) Vol.6 No.2; Oct.'73; pp.342-67.
- Bars, Emery, "Russia's Growing influence in Indian Ocean," Mirror, Vol.18 No.33, Aug. 16, 1976; pp.4-5.
- Banerjee, D., Geopolitics of Peace in the Indian Ocean region., Strategic Analysis, (New Delhi) Vol.12 No.1 April 1988; pp.17-30.
- "Beijing's Designs in Indian Ocean", Soviet review, (Moscow) Vol.18 No.16; April.6, 1981; pp.31-2.
- Chalfont's Russia and the Indian Ocean: "New Attitude to Sea Power", New Middle East, (44); May 1972; pp.4-6.

- Chatterjee, A.K., "American Military Presence in the Indian Ocean" Sainik Samachar, (New Delhi) Vol.28 No.8, January 25, 1981; pp.6-11.
- Das, Tapan, Threat from Diego Garcia, Mainstreams, (New Delhi) Vol.15 No.7; Oct. 16, 1976; pp.27-31.
- Deshpande, G.P. "Importance of Diego Garcia", Economic and Political weekly Vol.9, No.13; March, 30, 1974; 505-6.
- Eliminating Indian Ocean bases:, Indian Backgrounder, (New Delhi) Vol.2, No.3, Oct. 31, 1977; pp.875-85.
- Fuller, Jack, Dateline Diego Garcia Paved-over Paradise. Foreign Policy, (New York) No.28, Feb. 1977, pp.175 - 86
- Ghosh, S.K., Diego Garcia and Areas race in the Indian Ocean, Australian Outlook, (Sendney) Vol.31, No.2, Aug. 1977; pp.253-60.

Gurnam Singh, China and the Indian Ocean region. China Reports, (New Delhi) Vol.20, No.3; May-June 1984; pp.15-24.

Haoss, Richard N, Arms control at Sea: The United States and the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean, 1977-78, Journal of Strategic studies, (New Delhi) Vol.10, No.2; Jun 1987; pp.231-47.

Hassan, A.D., "Big power rivalry in Indian Ocean: A Tanzania view", Africa Quarterly, (New Delhi), Vol.15, No.3; Jan 1976; pp.80-86.

Indian Ocean: An Area of Potential Crisis:, Vikrant, (NewDelhi) Vol.10, No.12; Sept. 1980; pp.11-17.

Jarjit Singh, Indian Ocean: Geopoliltics and Superpower Rivalry: Mainstream (New Delhi), Vol.23, No.10,11; Nov. 3-10; 1984; pp.10-4.

----- Indian Ocean in global strategics:
Some Perspectives, IDSA Journal,
(New Delhi) Vol.17, No.4; Apr-Jan.
1985; pp.450-79.

Jhaveri Satyavati'S and Kala A.S., Islands of the South
West Indian Ocean: Finding their
identity, Africa quarterly (New
Delhi) Vol.19, No.2; July-Sept.
1979; pp.182-200.

Jone, Rodney W., Ballistic Missile Submarines and
Arms Control in the Indian Ocean,
Asian Survey, (London) Vol.20,
No.3; March 1980; pp.299-79.

Kapur, Ashok, Militarization of the Indian Ocean
Littoral and Hinterland areas; =
Nonaligned World; (NewDelhi) Vol.2,
No.1; June-March 1984; pp.41-64.

Kelly, James F. Naval Deployments in the Indian
Ocean, US Naval Institute
Proceedings, (New York) May 1983;
pp.174-86.

- Lamballe, Alain, France and the Indian Ocean, Vikrants, (New Delhi) Vol.11, No.9; June. 1981; pp.6-10.
- Larus, Joel, End of Naval Detentes in the Indian Ocean, World Todays, (London) Vol. 36, No.4; April 1980; pp.126-32.
- Madelay, John, Diego Garcia: An Indian Ocean storm-center, Round Table, (London) No.283; July 1981; pp.253-57.
- Menon, Rajan, Soviet Policy in the Indian Ocean region, Current History, (Philadelphia) Vol.76, No.446, April 1976; pp.176-9.
- Mullin, Dennis, Seychelles: "New outpost in Russia", US News and world report, (New York) Vol.88, No.11; March 24, 1980; pp.36.
- Narasimha Murthy P.A.,: Japan and the Indian Ocean Basis, Indian Quarterly, (New Delhi) Vol.37, No.1, January 1982, pp.104-20.

- Ogunbadejo, Oye, Diego Garcia and African's security, Third World Quarterly; (London) Vol.4, No.1; January 1982; pp.104-20.
- Poulose, T.T., India and the Indian Ocean Changing Strategic Perspectives, Asia Pacific Community. (Tokyo) No.29; Summer,1985; pp.131-39.
- Rais, Rural B., Appraisal of US Strategy in the Indian Ocean. Asian survey, (London) Vol.23, No.9; Sept. 1983; pp.1043-51.
- Sengar, S.K.Singh, U.S.A., U.K. Global Rivalries in Indian Ocean. Vikrant. (New Delhi) Vol.7, No.4; January 1977; pp.27-9.
- Sherij Aziz, US Arms Build-up in Indian Ocean and Gulf, New Perspectives, (Japan) Vol. 10, No5, 1980; pp.26-7.
- Terfloth Klaus, Future of the Indian Ocean. Strategic Digest (New Delhi) Vol. 6(6), June 1976 pp.13-8.

- Tow. William T. ANZUS: A Strategic Role in the Indian Ocean, World Today. (London) Vol. 34 No. 10. Oct. 1976 pp.101-8.
- Vinogrador, Yuri, Indian Ocean: The problem of Demilitarisation, International Affairs, (London) No.7, July 1987 pp.58-64.
- Volrky Dmitry, Strategy Without a Future, New Times (Moscow) No.3, August 1978, pp.4-5.
- Weiss, Seymour, "US Interests and Activities in the Indian Ocean Area", US. Dept. of state Bulletin, (New York) Vol. 70(1815) Apr. 1974: pp.371-75.
- Whecler, Geoffrey, "Indian Ocean Area: Soviet Aims and Interests", Asian Affairs, Vol. 59 (Pt.3) October 1972, pp.270-4.
- Yadav.R.S., Pakistan's attitude towards Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean, Journal of Political Studies. (New York) Vol.16 No.2, September 1983, pp.48-57.

Young, P. Lewis, France in the Indian Ocean: Decolonization Without disengaging, Round Table. (London) No.248, April. 1986, pp.145-66.

Soviet Naval Activity in the Indian Ocean; 1980 - 1985. Strategic Digests. (New Delhi) Vol.9, No.16(3), March 1986, pp.293-303.

Zafar Iman, Indian Ocean and Decolonization, Social Scientists (New Delhi) Vol.9(516), December 1980, January 1981, pp.36-42.

Zakhem, Dov.S., Towards a Western Approach to the Indian Ocean, Survival. (London), Vol.22 No.11, January-February 1980, pp.7-14.

2207