

Indian Ocean: Global and Regional Strategies

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Abstract

The term Indian Ocean States is applied to both coastal and landlocked states. In the connection total 51 states are remained under discussion in the Indian Ocean strategies. Their issues and problems are diverse. These issues have made the India Ocean an area of conflict. The wealth and the resources of the Indian Oceans have significantly involved the extra regional actors in the ocean. The present study focuses that this involvement of extra regional actors and the competition between the regional powers has shaped the policies and designs of global political settings regarding Indian Ocean. The study concludes that, Politics and strategies are an ongoing phenomena but the reality is that Indian Ocean is having the name of the India but is not totally in Indian control and custody. In this world of power and competition things and patterns keep on changing hence the command of Oceans. The changing power pattern round the globe is affecting the politics of Indian Oceans.

Keywords: Indian Ocean, Strategies, Naval forces, Gwader Port, Strategic depth.

Introduction

The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean on the globe. The ocean is the point of emergence of the famous maritime civilizations. The ocean has remained active in all phases of human history. In the current global and strategic settings this ocean is the center of gravity of the existing and emerging super powers. The words of A.T Mahan seems quite relevant, he was of the view that 'whoever controls the Indian Ocean will dominate Asia....the destiny of the world would be decided on its waters'. These words proved to be prophetic in nature as the waters are the center of attention in the current power politics. Indian Ocean is significant in many ways. Its

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location has made it significant for both regional and global actors (Inderjit, 11990:1).

Location:

Indian Ocean is a vast ocean surrounded by multiple nations. On the West of Indian Ocean is Africa where it stretches till Cape Agulhas, on its North is continental Asia from Suez to Malay Peninsula, Singapore Australia and Tasmania is on the East and while to South this ocean stretches to the latitude 60 S as determined per Antarctic Treaty of 1959. The term Indian Ocean States is applied to both coastal and landlocked states. In this connection total 51 states are remained under discussion in the Indian Ocean strategies. These are 26 Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) states, 5 Red Sea states, 4 Persian Gulf States Saudi Arabia, France and Britain and 13 landlocked states. Most of these states are the former colonies. Their issues and problems are diverse. These issues have made the Indian Ocean an area of conflict. Many a states are regarded as the weak states and in the backdrop of global terrorism they have emerged as crucial actors in the global political settings.

Another striking factor is that this region is rich in energy resources and minerals. The most important are gold, tin, uranium, cobalt, nickel, aluminum and cadmium (Alexander *et al.*, 2012:9). Fishing is not something to be ignored. Traversing of oil and gas is another important feature of Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean region possesses round about 55% of known oil reservoirs and 40% of gas reservoirs. The Gulf States alone possess the 21% of the world oil. The daily export of this oil is conducted through this ocean which is 17,262 million barrels per day which is 43% of the total international trade. These factors significantly contribute in the location of Indian Ocean.

Volume of Trade

The volume of trade conducted in the ocean is also significant. Round 30% of global trade is conducted in the Indian Ocean. There are most significant choke points in this ocean. The most important are Hormuz, Malacca, and Bab el Mandeb. It is because of their trade and strategic importance, there is constant presence of a number of extra-regional states in the Indian Ocean. It is because of excessive economic activity in the ocean and the growing competition for the resources the sea-board of Sub-Saharan Africa has also got prominence. India and China have particularly become the major role players in Africa (Ranasinghe, 2011:1). Beside this major Western super powers are also showing increasing interest in the region. The location and activity taking place in this ocean has made it definite point of gravity both for

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regional and international actors. The wealth and the resources of the Indian oceans have significantly involved the extra regional actors in the ocean. This involvement of extra regional actors and the competition between the regional powers has shaped the policies and designs of global political settings regarding Indian Ocean.

Intra Regional Politics and Strategies in the Indian Ocean

Indian Ocean is significant to all IOR states and the landlocked territories. Within the region of South Asia the most important actor is India. India is more resourceful than all other regional actors. These resources and advancement in technology has set India in the forefront.

Indian Strategic Designs in Indian Ocean

Indian policy and concerns regarding the Indian Ocean strategy are quite vibrant and active. India has great desire to emerge as a world power. That is why India is looking for increasing its strategic space in the Indian Ocean. In current time it is impossible without the help and support of USA but India is drifting towards its goal of attaining re-eminence in the Indian Ocean region. India is expanding its naval capabilities. Its maritime security is relationships are enhancing day by day. The point of concern is India's impression and designs of dominance throughout the region. As per Indian Ocean is concerned, in the words of Indian Foreign Secretary Mr. Rao "India and Indian Ocean are inseparable. In the midst of third largest ocean in the world, India's location is in many ways her destiny. That is just not a statement regarding a fact of geography but of deeper civilizational, historical, cultural, economic and political linkage that have been forged between India and the Ocean bears its name. Apart from the Monsoon, the Indian link, in its broadest sense, is a single common thread that is visible in the Indian Ocean region." (Geraghty, 2012:5) Such narratives seek to explain India as an indispensable unit of the regional equation. This also shows the mindset of the Indian intelligentsia and the administration.

Indian aspirations are high and certain regarding this ocean. Beside these rhetoric and aspiration Indian strategies in the ocean seek to post India at the heart of regional dynamics. In this connection Indian is desirous to play an active role in both regional and sub regional grouping and policies. With regard to the grouping India out rightly rejects the formation of single all encompassing regional forum. In an all encompassing units all stakeholders stand equal and they work on the basis of mutual interest and benefits which is more useful for the development of a region. By rejecting such setting India vividly shows its designs of playing as single dominating unit over other

regional actors. Deep and long lasting strategies in the Indian Ocean region are the indication of such designs and aspirations.

Role of Indian Navy

In order to realize these strategies Indian navy is playing a key role. Indian navy is the key tool to materialize Indian aspirations in the Indian Ocean. Indian leadership emphasizes on the need of constructive engagement of its navy (Ranasinghe, 2011:3). The notion of 'constructive engagement' undermines the Indian claims of benign intentions and presence in the Indian Oceans. India indeed harbors the hegemonic intentions in region. In this connection it is acting as the net security provider in the region and it does not easily allow any sovereign activity in the Indian Ocean by the regional actors. This very feature makes India heart favorite of Washington as it also seeks the partners that could secure and preserve the security measures in the Indian Ocean region. In this encouraging environment provided by the super power Indian policy makers are not just seeking the role of Indian navy restricted valorization in the ocean but also they looking for a more meaningful position of India in the psyche of the regional actors. The objective of the Indian leadership is redefining India's place in mental maps of the regional actors by the virtue of its reengagement with all these nations. India's rising economy and the encouragement of USA has made the public officials to redefine Indian Ocean in the country's strategic environment.

This congenial environment and rising economy help India to emerge on the globe as an important power and it tends to seek the same recognition from other powers in its own right. India's increased commercial activity has made its dependence on the maritime routes. India is struggling to change its identity by virtue of same presence from mere a regional power to the status of growing global power. It is mainly because of this fact that India defies strongly any sort of polarization of the Indian Ocean Region. Such designs of Indian policy makers also tend to resist any sort of security measures applied by the super power in this region. Indian aspirations are unlimited and insatiable. Its policies and planning is to attain the more and more meaningful space and role on the global strategic map. That is there is a visible shift in the Indian policy regarding Indian Ocean Region. In 70s Indian aspiration were to unite regional powers in the Indian Ocean Region and to defy the involvement of the external powers, but now India is looking for a broader involvement in this region along with the super powers on equal basis. It is regularly engaged in annual naval exercises with these powers since decades. VARUNA with France since 2002, MALABAR with USA since 1992 but on regular annual basis since 2002, INDRA with Russia since 2003 and KONKAN with UK since 2004 (Geraghty, 2012:6). These naval exercises with the super powers have

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enhanced Indian policy maker's aspirations in the Indian Ocean region more than ever. Beside this bilateral naval exercise activity India is decisive on the point of the noninvolvement of external power in the Indian Ocean Region on multilateral basis. Indian navy is involved with Japan in naval exercises but they are taking place in the Sea of Japan.

In this connection the obvious example is Indian cooperation and coordination with China and Japan on the piracy issue which is not the actual cooperation on the naval issue but it restricted to the coordination of naval forces escorting commercial ships in the area. This coordination is done in order to ensure maximum efficiency. India, as a matter of fact has intention to cooperate with all but it is aligned to none. In this way India is successfully avoiding the polarization of Indian Ocean Region in order to secure its own primacy and supremacy. India is constantly striving to secure the status of resident power in the Indian Ocean Region by showing its ability in maintaining regional balances by realizing its own strong presence.

China has remained an important factor in the Indian foreign strategy. In the Indian Ocean Region it is not unaware of this vital factor. India on one hand is obsessed with the strategic autonomy and on the other it has a culture of non alignment. In this connection India is cautious of entering into any alliance or partnership with other countries. China at the same place has sufficient leverage in South Asia to prevent India from such sort of adventure that could target Chinese interest even in a slightest ratio. In such a precarious situation India has adopted a strategic counter measure by engaging with Vietnam in the South China Sea. Indian has also tended to maneuver the situation by engaging with Japanese naval forces in the Sea of Japan. Regardless this measures India is not fully successful in keeping china out of the Indian Ocean Region.

Challenges to Indian Navy

IORs (Indian Ocean Rim States) and external power are diverged on the question of India's role in the Indian Ocean. For some states India is a consensual stakeholder. India on its own part has devised any concrete policy to give some solid indication to these states regarding Indian role. On the other hand some states have ruled out India becoming the super policeman of the Indian Ocean region. As far as security of routes is concerned India is keenly involved with IORs. It has developed impressive and workable partnerships with the states. Although there are bureaucratic impediments involved yet Indian Navy intends to broaden the scope of these interactions on bilateral basis. India is expanding and modernizing its Navy at a large scale and naval diplomacy is getting important in the attainment of India's strategic

objectives in the India Ocean region (Nizami, 2012:1). These efforts will make India a major powerbroker in the Indian Ocean and this is in line with Indian policies and strategic objectives. Again, the basic factor behind these arrangements is the growing naval intrusiveness of China in the Indian Ocean. US has also concerns over Chinese activity in the Indian Ocean. It is repositioning and increasing its military assets in the Asia Pacific. In such complex strategic setting there is a lot to do for the Indian navy.

China's Presence in Indian Ocean

Chinese economy has seen a quick rise and with it the significance of Indian Ocean has come be realized by China. China is looking for new pathways and energy source which are safer and beneficial for its economy. In this connection Indian Ocean has become the Frontier Strategy in the Chinese foreign policy. The opening of Southwest China has open up new coastal region. The land link between Myanmar and Yunnan is very important for china to strengthen its trade and solve energy problem. These coastal states have occupied significant place in the strategy of the rising economic powers of this region (Zheng, 2012:3).

China is extending its influence to the small island nations dotting the Indian Ocean. This influence has been made through diplomatic and aid efforts. The rising influence and activity of China has become a serious challenge for India. The same competition and tension is going on among the nations of Southeast Asia. There point of stress is upon the specks of islands and reefs in the East and South China Sea. Maldives is the arena of a hot contest between India and China. This state is very significant because of its geopolitical position. This position astride strategic sea lines of communication which is a big attraction to both India and china and China is doing its best to win over this influence. Many a contracts were cancelled by Maldives that were about to be signed with India and Malaysia. It is said that Chinese companies were behind this move. In the same way agreement with India's GMR infrastructures was also terminated. China is also trying to replace India in many strategic services provided to Maldives by India. For instance the training of People's Defense Force (SPDF) was conducted by India but after the visit of Hu Jintao in 2007 Beijing is now participating in it and it is providing military hardware. China's involvement in strategic and economic activities of Maldives is point of concern for India.

On the other hand the role of China in the Gwadar port of Pakistan is very significant. It is built on the shore of Indian Ocean close to the Iranian border and close to the entrance to the Persian Gulf. Although it has gone behind the scenes due to the Bloch insurgency and security situation but still it has lots to

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do with this project in future. China has also the port of Karachi for an effective use. The significant role of china is about to come on the surface with the pulling off of the US forces from Afghanistan. China intends to open up supply routes connecting Gwadar to central Asia and ultimately to China. This would ease china's dependence on Malacca strait. China is getting well prepared to take up the economic charge and it is already building roads and railways in the Central Asia. Such arrangements clearly demonstrate china's intention of extending its trade activity in the Middle East, South Asia through Karakoram and to Central Asia through Gwadar port. Seychelles is another strategically located island nation in the center of West Indian Ocean. It can serve as a significant base for Chinese economic and energy supply for People's Liberation Army Navy. This island nation is closer enough to provide sufficient energy transiting through Red Sea. It also provides an easy route to homeward from West African coast around the Cape of Good Hope (Agnihotri, 2010:2). There is an immense strategic significance of this island. PLA Navy is intended to set up a base in the Gulf of Aden which is closer to Seychelles. This base would also be closed to the sea routes of US that are located in Diego Garcia. In this way Chinese Naval activity is depending directly or indirectly on the Indian Ocean and there is an immense strategic and political significance of this activity.

Sino Indian Conflicts and Indian Ocean Strategy

Indian Ocean region has been center of political and strategic activity since long. During the cold war era it served as a competitive arena of two super powers, USA and Soviet Union. The political competition die down after the collapse of Soviet Union but another competition has emerged in the second decade of the 21st century which is between India and People republic of China. Both are enhancing their naval capabilities and both are devising plans with a much greater strategic reach. Both seem to be assertive and active in the Indian Ocean region. Their projects are not just economy oriented but more than this there are far reaching strategic and political motives in progress behind the scenes (Michel, Sticklor, 2012:11). As Gulf possess the two third oil reservoirs, this factor has made the activities of both economic competitors more assertive and rather hegemon in their own right. Apart from that both nations have historical reference of glorious epochs and civilization. This perspective is a big incentive and motivation behind both nations' current and prospective competition for greater role in the Indian Ocean region.

China has done a significant investment in order to safe and ensures its economic and strategic interests. It has invested in the Gwadar port in Pakistan, the Sri Lankan port of Hambantota and the mining and energy sector in Myanmar. The purpose behind this investment is to provide security

and back up to the shipping lanes. These lanes are a huge resource of the provision of energy needs which are 65% (80??) of China's oil requirement. India is much concerned over huge Chinese investments. India has border dispute with China and sour memories of 1962 war. China's support for Pakistan especially over Kashmir issue is another point of concern for India (Mukherjee, 2010:1). Beside these issues both Asian economic giants equally advocate the interests of emerging economies and both are vocal on the issue through the forum like Group of 20.

India on the other hand has a great advantage geographically. This state is surrounding the India Ocean. Along with this entrenched historical and ethnic ties have connected India with the regional power in an integrated way. India has played and always looks for the chances to involve in the security needs of the regional actors. It takes it as its obligation. Indian intervention in the civil war of Sri Lanka in 1987 and deployment of its Peace keeping Force, Indian intervention in Maldives following the 1988 coup, in 2004 Indian role in tsunami erupted in Sri Lanka are the impressive examples in this regard. India has enduring military and security relationship with the regional actors. India has notable influence not only in the affairs of South Asian actors but also it has substantial relations with the island nations. In Mauritius Indian deputed navy officer manages the National Coast Guards. The two third population of this island is of Indian origin. The services of Indian National Coast Guards are also extended to Seychelles, Maldives Mauritius. It is not only maintaining security but also it is providing maritime surveillance, Hydrographic surveys, training and maritime military equipment and repair. Although china is providing patrol crafts and training to Seychelles but these services are of no match to the services extended by the India.

India is assuming a greater leadership role in the Indian Ocean institutions like in IOR-ARC (Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation) and in IONS (Indian Ocean Naval Symposium). These are the solid steps towards strong security relationships with Indian Ocean countries. With these parameters India has signed DOSTI exercises with the Maldives and with Sri Lanka which was added later on. India and Sri Lanka are also involved in SLINEX exercises since 2011 (Samaraynke, 2013:1). Indian relations with post war Sri Lanka are cordial and effective in both strategic and political fronts. Amid such congenial scenario any intervention by China is greatly felt by Indian authorities, like Maldives defence ministers' visit to china after the collapse of airport deal and minimal security cooperation deal in 2012. China's defence cooperation with Sri Lanka and provision of critical weapon system during Tamil Tiger insurgency were viewed with great concerns by the Indian authorities. These smaller states are deficient in resources and infrastructure and they readily accept the support and assistance of any country that offer

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them. These countries include Japan, Korea, Iran and China other than India. Both India and china have visible motives of securing their influence in the Indian Ocean Region through assistance and support extended to these countries and the coastal nations. Their activity is point of concern for each other yet neither can prevent the other from doing so.

United States and the Indian Ocean Region

In the unipolar era of 21st century a super power has a lot to do in all regions of the globe. Oceans are not skipped out of its strategy. Indian Ocean occupies a distinct importance due to its location and strategic settings. According to the Robert Kaplan Indian Ocean would become 'center stage' for the 21st century. The India Ocean and the Pacific are two oceans that contain strategic importance and an enormous trade activity. Indian Ocean moreover is around the biggest bulk of Asian population. Indian Ocean has been in vogue in the US strategy but the most ambiguous part is role of India in the US thinking. Keeping in view Indian current position in the US strategy it can be suggested that India has a lot to do in this area in the capacity of US security partner. US biggest concern is WOT in current time, however a coherent strategy in the IORs is also subject of debate. The situation in the Indian Ocean Rim states is not much congenial for US altogether. There is wide range of potential threats present in many of Indian Ocean Rim States (IORs). These are ranging from state based threats to the non-states actors. China and Iran are the state based threats and terrorist organizations are the non state actors. With this the issue of nuclear proliferation in the area is also occupy an important position. These issues are required to be taken up seriously in the US strategy as they have multifarious reactions and responses against and in favor of US security strategy.

China is a serious concern in US strategy in the Indian Ocean and in the entire indo-Pacific. China is not seen as an immediate and short term threat it is rather taken as long term and undefined threat in the US strategy. Although India is dejected due to 'string of pearls' strategy of china but US does not give it much credence and does not look at Chinese policy of establishing its naval bases across the Indian Ocean with big concern. China's growing relations in the region are seen as the issue of future military value. US is comfortable in this region as far as its interests in the Indian Ocean Region are safe and uninterrupted. US is even thinking to cut defense spending and reduction of forces in the Indian Ocean. It seems to be more inclined to East Asia than in Indian Ocean. These cuts and reductions are mainly seen in the ground forces and Air Forces.

These cuts and reductions may cause some visible gaps in the defense capability in the Indian Ocean. US is intended to shift its defense resources from Northward Pacific to Southward Pacific. The focus areas in this strategy would be Australia, Singapore and Guam. These arrangements not only provide security coverage in the Pacific but also they will be available to be deployed in the Indian Ocean. US most probable reliance may be on Diego Garcia to meet expected threats and affective vigilance. As far as security gap created by US shift is concerned there are speculations that this may be filled by the US allies and friends. India occupies more chances but there is probability that Indonesia and Australia may assume greater responsibilities. As India is aligned to US in most of its Indian Ocean Region interests it can be expected that US would choose to rely on India to fill up these security gaps. US for the time being is not in any alliance with India for the purpose of security in the Indian Ocean Region yet there are certain chances that it can engage India in security tasks and projects in this region. US has planned to rely on its own naval forces rather than much reliance on the ground forces. It is much awaited phenomena that how US engage its security partners in a coherent security strategy (Brewster, 2012:2).

US is much inclined to its Pacific Ocean strategy. Although littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region (from India to Indonesia) are looking to Washington for better regional organization but as far as Indian Ocean is concerned India has deliberately excluded US navy from the membership of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). The real factor behind this decision is China. In order to keep chins away India deliberately kept US away. On the other hand it seems very clear in US naval strategy that it is more interested in Pacific where country like Japan is looking to Washington for an indispensable balance of power in East Asia. US can effective mange its Indian Ocean policy right from Pacific. There are significant commercial interests of US pertaining to Indian Ocean that do not allow it to ignore this region out rightly. US needs secure highway for international commerce particularly between oil-rich Gulf States and economically advanced East Asia. Any type of interruption in this highway could cast devastating impact on the US interests. US is beware of Chinese security practices that may be invoked by any transit issue between the East and West Asian states. In order to meet such situation US should be able to swing forces from its Pacific Command through Indian Ocean. Indian Ocean however does not seem threaten by non-state actors. That is why US is keen to maintain freedom of navigation through significant strategic chock points of the Indian Ocean highway. Strait of Hurmuz and Strait of Malacca are significant chock point in the Indian Ocean and South China Sea is on the other. These chick points are source constant US engagement. In future US may face heavy challenges from both China and Iran. In this way Indian Ocean is and may become more important arena for great power strategic

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competition in Asia, particularly between India and China and Washington as always will be the key factor in this activity.

Indo –US Nexus in Indian Ocean

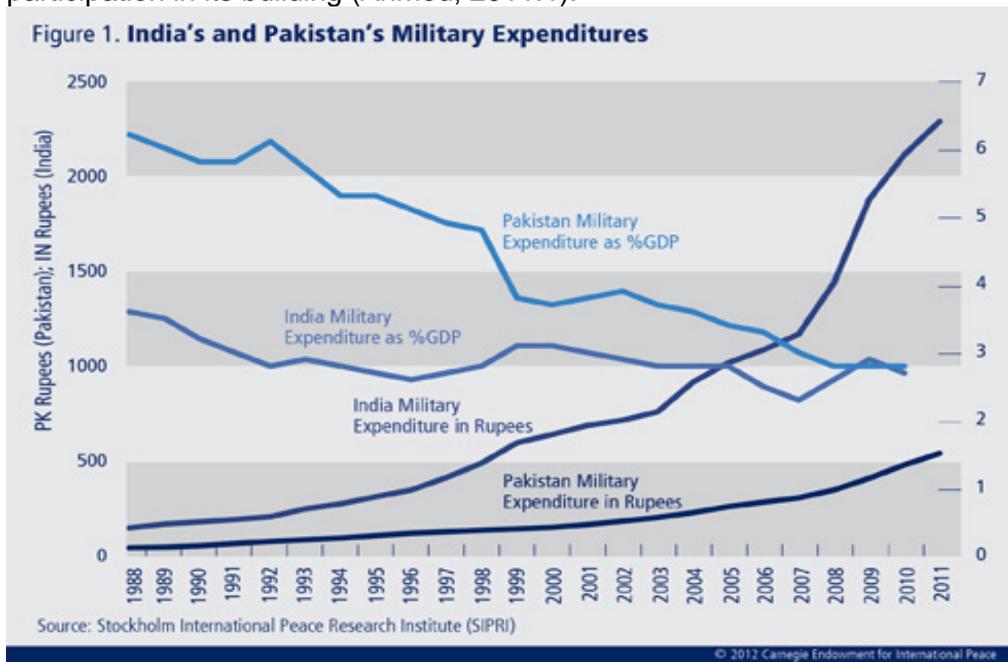
Indian collaboration with the US has served in two ways in the Indian strategy, it has neutralized Indian plans of domination and secondly US plans and strategy has got the center stage in Indian Ocean, South Chinese Sea and the Persian Gulf. US presence along with the Chinese and the Japanese naval forces in the South China Sea which to some analysts is an extension of the Great Indian Ocean has wipe off Indian desires to dominate Malacca Straits (Sufyan, 2011:1). With this it has become rather impossible for India to project its naval forces in South China Sea. If Indian threats to disrupt international SLOCs at all these points it would be resulted in the wrath of all international community. At this time Indian navy is seen as an effective tool for the provision of anti-piracy activity. Indian navy is projected to be the third largest navy in the world by 2015 with two aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines. This is an important factor and a considerable phenomenon for the international community.

On the other hand US has extensively engaged India in enhancing the economic interaction. US is also keen to draw a meaningful strategic partnership with India in order to countervail China's rising economy and trade. India is well aware of these US designs and strategy but it is yet not adopting it openly as it is still avoiding alignment with the superpowers, otherwise India is well in position to reciprocate these strategies in a meaningful ways. In the US future strategy India is openly regarded as an important strategic partner especially in US strategic interests in Asia- Pacific and across the globe. US has shares a common goal with India of global trade and commerce and for this purpose both are keen to have vital sea lanes safe, secure and well in control throughout the globe specially in the Indian Ocean.

Apart from Indian Ocean strategies US supports Indian leadership in the region and regard it fruitful for the regional stability. US security ties with India are strengthening with the passage of time and counter terrorism cooperation has taken it to the unprecedented heights. Indo- US defense cooperation is also flourishing day by day. Strategic Dialogue initiated between two states in 2009 in its third session held in June 2012. Apart from this people to people contacts are also developing between two states. In the scenario of new cooperation and partnership Indian policies and strategies in the Indian Ocean Region are although under the shadow of US but they are in the direction of Indian interests (Fact Sheet, BS&CA).

Role of Pakistan in the Indian Ocean Region

Pakistan's foreign policy has remained under experimental endeavors that are why there has been absence of constant and continuous policy direction towards region and beyond. Beside this country's geographical location has served as major factor behind this situation. Pakistan shares a long border with India and Afghanistan; it is linked to china and the Indian Ocean. On the other hand Pakistan's geographical location offers some opportunities as well. While discussing Pakistan's policy and strategy towards Indian Ocean region, it is important to investigate pros and cons of Gwadar Port and Chinese participation in its building (Ahmed, 2011:1).



Gwadar Port

The agreement of building a port was signed between China and Pakistan in 2002 at the fishing village of Gwadar. It is situated on the Arabian Sea coast of Baluchistan. This village is at the distance of 72 km from Iran and round 400km from the Strait of Hormuz. Strait of Hormuz is important point for the transit traffic for many states of the region. Gwadar port can easily alternate for the transit traffic of ports of Abbas and Chabahar of Iran. At the same time it can make some dent on the economies of UAE and Oman. The construction task of this port started with the cost of \$1.16 billion and its first phase completed in 2005. China has a big share in the building expenditure. This

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port can serve Chinese energy supplies in more safer and secure way. Currently 80% of crude oil China is importing from the gulf states through the Strait of Malacca and Hormuz which is very much under the US and Indian influence. Gwadar can serve as a more secure and transit point (Yousaf, 2005:4).

Pakistan on the other hand also has multiple benefits through this port. Most of all it adds into the strategic depth of Pakistan. The addition distance of 460km puts a considerable distance from India which is important for Pakistan. Gwadar port makes the presence of Pakistan in the Indian Ocean quite meaningful as it can monitor Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs) originating from the Persian Gulf and at the Strait of Hormuz. It can make Pakistan's strategic position stronger because Pakistan with the help of Chinese naval assets can check the Indian activities in the Indian Ocean. Pak-China nexus can impressively check the Indian naval endeavors in the Indian Oceans. In a way Gwadar can serve as gateway to the Strait of Hormuz and it can compete with the UAE ports by improving links to Caspian region.

The other side of the coin is that all these opportunities will serve as the base of multiple conflicts and issues. Gwadar is prone to become a junction of conflicting interests of both regional and extra regional powers like UAE and Iran may have such situation between them. Central Asian Republics (CARs) can cherish their economic interests while US interests and strategies may be divergent in nature as far as China is concern. There will be significant Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs) and Pakistan would have an opportunity to monitor them. It can serve some significant political purposes as well. China can easily check Indian naval activity in the Persian Gulf by establishing its base at Gwadar. For UAE and Iran this port will come as a hurdle in their economic interests as this port will share trade activities which they alone share and enjoy. While US is looking forward the energy resources of Middle East. This port is an opportunity and a source of rivalry at the same time. All these impacts and effects are the direct corollary of globalization. Trivial changes in the economy due to globalization are drifting the world civilization towards a 'Borderless Civilization'.

Pakistan has chosen the location of a port after a lot of toil and consideration. There were eight areas under consideration including Keti Bandar, Sonmiani, Hingol, Ormara, Khor Karmat, Pasni, Gwadar and Jiwani. There were number of advantages that help to finalize this location. This first advantage is that it is closer to SLOCs for trans-shipment facilities. Secondly it is considerably away from India which adds in the security of this location. Thirdly weather conditions are also congenial at this place. Fourthly it offers more strategic opportunities as discussed earlier and lastly it is the gateway to the Persian

Gulf. This location serves multiple economic and strategic interests of Pakistan. This port provides the shortest routes to CARs for both liquid and dry cargo. For example Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan will produce more dry cargo while Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have more liquid cargo and both all these will prefer Gwadar as it is the shortest route. This port also serves as an easy and safe access to the warm waters. All these factors add in the importance of this port (Malik, 2012:60).

Gwadar Port and China

It is very much obvious from the previous discussion that this port is of crucial significance to China both for trade and politico-strategic point of view. Pakistan has keenly involve china in the Gwadar project right from the beginning and the democratic regime from 2008-13 has made significant advancement in this regard. Pakistan has given transfer the port to state-owned China Overseas Port Holding Company and the previous operator PSA (Port of Singapore Authority) has withdrawn as Pakistan refused to provide it large land allotment it demanded for development work. There was a serious hue and cry from the Indian side over this decision which was absolutely dismissed by Pakistan. China has also rejected the Indian objections and concerns as it was totally bilateral decision of the both states which has nothing to jeopardize the interest of any regional and non regional actor.

However, India perceives China as an active threat to its strategic, political and economic interests. With the backing of Washington the situation has become more intensified as it is promoting India to become a world power in order to counter China in the Asia. The competition between India and China with the involvement of US has become quite heavier on the region. US has also have concern over the transfer of Gwadar Port to china. New York time wrote, "Some American strategists have described it as the westernmost link in the 'string of pearls' a line of China friendly ports stretching from mainland China to the Persian Gulf, that could ultimately ease expansion by Chinese navy in the region" (Parera, 2013:1). This statement has fundamentally endorsed the Indian point of view. Indian analysts furthermore, are of the view that it is an attempt of encircling India as China has established friendly ports in the entire South Asian region like Chittagong in Bangladesh, Hambantota in Sri Lanka and Gwadar port in Pakistan (Kaplan, 2013:1-2).

Politics and strategies are an ongoing phenomena but the reality is that Indian Ocean is having the name of India but it is not totally in Indian control and custody. In this world of power and competition things and patterns keep on changing hence the command of Oceans and the regions keep on changing with the changing power pattern round the globe.

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