PARTNERING ACROSS OCEANS

United through Oceans
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The maritime domain is gaining strategic importance and is becoming an arena of geopolitical power play. Simultaneously, countries are also realizing the importance of a cooperative approach as against a confrontationist stand in the rediscovered salience of the oceans. Undoubtedly, all countries stand to benefit from partnerships across the maritime domain and this notion is reflected in the title of this book—“Partnering Across Oceans”.

The Indian Navy is hosting an International Fleet Review (IFR) from 04 – 08 February 2016, off Visakhapatnam. The theme of IFR 2016 is “United Through Oceans”, which is reflected on the cover page of this publication. Ships from over 50 countries are participating in the event. This is an opportunity to enhance mutual trust and confidence with our maritime partners and an occasion to display India’s maritime capabilities. As a part of the IFR an international conference on ‘Partnering Together for a Secure Maritime Future’ is also being organized by the National Maritime Foundation (NMF) at Vishakhapatnam.

This book derives its inspiration from the theme of the IFR and the underlying thought behind the title of this book is ‘Oceans Connect’. This volume is a compilation of the writings of scholars and researchers at the NMF towards the run up to the IFR. Various aspects such as the history, significance and the importance of the IFR are addressed and perspectives on regional and bilateral maritime cooperation are
presented. Thematic issues include maritime renaissance of the Indian Ocean, migration in the Bay of Bengal, sustainable development of oceans and common public goods at sea. It is hoped that this publication would help in building an academic discourse at the IFR and would trigger thoughts on various ways to implement and sustain partnerships across oceans.

01 February 2016

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International Fleet Reviews: Showcasing India’s Naval Orientation

Shereen Sherif

“From the Arctic to the Antarctic and from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean, the sea is one. Because the sea poses a common challenge, those who traversed it depended on each other and developed a special bond. Seafarers of the world, represented by their Navies, have taken a leading role in bringing nations together and one such occasion is a Fleet Review.”

Admiral Madhvendra Singh (2001)
Former Indian Navy Chief

In 2001, India hosted the first International Fleet Review (IFR) to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Republic of India wherein 29 navies from around the world participated. With the theme of ‘Bridges of Friendship’, IFR 2001 projected “India’s new relevance in the post-Cold War period”. Nearly a decade and a half later, the Indian Navy is hosting the second IFR on the theme of ‘United through Oceans’. The event is scheduled for February 2016 off Visakhapatnam on India’s Eastern seaboard.

It is held that the origin of the Fleet Review stems from the British practice of mobilizing the fleet prior to a war or for a show of strength to discourage potential adversaries. The practice of reviewing the ships by the reigning monarch or the sovereign head dates back to the 15th century. Since the 19th century, there has been a reduction in the hard power connotation attached to fleet reviews as they are often held for
commemorative and celebratory purposes. Most fleet reviews today are occasions that perform the crucial historical function of revisiting certain past events in the history of the country. The 2001 IFR organized by India commemorating the golden jubilee of the republic and the UK commemorating 200 years of the Battle of Trafalgar in 2005 are among the many examples.

Fleet Reviews today are held where military maritime capabilities are paraded to showcase growing sea power. Depending on one’s perception, the IFR is, thus, variously considered as an “exalted mission”, “jingoistic hyperbole”, and a symbol of “proactive pacifism”.

In the past, the Indian Navy (IN) has participated in various fleet reviews around the world as illustrated in figure 1. The IN participated in the first fleet review in June 1953 at Spithead. It was conducted by the UK on the occasion of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Following this, in June 1967, the IN was a part of one of the largest fleet reviews conducted by Canada to mark the 100th anniversary of the Confederation at Halifax. INS Brahmaputra was among 40 warships from 16 countries to participate in the centennial celebrations. The
Indian Navy took part in the commemorative review marking the silver jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 1977, with the participation of frigate INS *Udaygiri*. This was an historic event since it marked the end of the customary practice of holding a review for coronations and royal jubilees. \(^8\) The inability of the British to muster a fleet for the golden and diamond jubilee of the reigning monarch was due to the declining capabilities of the Royal Navy.\(^9\)

India’s participation in IFRs was limited to the commonwealth countries until it was invited by the USA to attend the fleet review conducted in July 1986 on the occasion of the bicentenary celebrations of the Statue of Liberty. This was indicative of global power, especially the USA recognizing India’s emergence as a credible naval power.\(^10\) This was also a sign of rapprochement between the world’s oldest and largest democracies that were then generally referred to as being ‘estranged’.\(^11\)

In the first four decades of India’s independence, the participation in fleet reviews abroad was limited to one per decade. Until the initiation of Look East Policy in 1991, India’s IFR engagements were also limited to the western navies. However, this underwent a change with India’s expanding maritime interests and power.

The 1990s marked the rise of India and China as two economically resurgent nations that gained global attention. Though dubbed as a counterweight to China’s growing strategic influence in the region, the Look East Policy was envisioned to enhance India’s economic cooperation with the Southeast Asian nations. With the shift in India’s strategic focus, there has been a greater involvement with Southeast Asia as attested by India’s participation in the IFR commemorating 50 years of the Royal Malaysian Navy in 1990, followed by the participation in the IFR at Jakarta celebrating 50 years of Indonesian independence in 1995. India was also a participant in the 1998 IFR celebrating the 50\(^{th}\) anniversary of South Korea, and attended the IFR at Sydney in 1988 and 2013.\(^12\)
India and Japan have a long history of security cooperation and defence ties. India has participated twice in IFRs organized by Japan in 2002 and in 2015. Prior to the 2002 IFR conducted in Tokyo, the two countries had established a “Global Partnership in the 21st Century” in 2000 and, in 2001, held the first edition of the ongoing “Comprehensive Security Dialogue”.13

**Capacity and Outreach**

A newly independent India was surrounded by a volatile international political environment in the Cold War era. The need to address socio-economic quotients at home kept India away from joining the conglomeration of states under the leadership of the USA and the USSR. Thus, India’s foreign policy was aimed at fostering friendship with all nations based on the principle of non-alignment. India remained non-aligned despite many of its neighbours joining either of the two superpower blocks.

Military aid in the form of the naval assets of independent India came from the British. The cost cutting in the Royal Navy in the 1970s had its effects on India as demonstrated by a decline in the supply of naval equipment and vessels by Britain. Unable to meet the technological demands of a rapidly growing Indian Navy, British supplies ceded the way for naval acquisition from the erstwhile USSR.14 Growing acquisitions coupled with indigenous capabilities have seen India’s naval capacity grow to reasonable proportions in the 1980s. However, significant price escalations and the international political order due to the disintegration of Soviet Union generated some turmoil for naval acquisitions. Despite a marked reduction in naval buildup with Soviet assistance in the 1980s, this period is epochal as it coincides with the Indian Navy’s rise to an eminent power in South Asia.15 By this time, innovations by indigenous ship designers and builders, along with the ability to integrate technology from diverse origins, put India on a path of greater self-sufficiency in naval capabilities.
There have been instances where more than one vessel has participated in reviews abroad. During the first fleet review attended by India in 1953, IN ships Delhi, Ranjit and Tir participated in the event. INS Godavari and STS Varuna took part in the Australian IFR in 1988. INS Ganga and INS Khukri participated in the 1990 Malaysia IFR; INS Khanjar and INS Saryu in Indonesia in 1995; IN ships Delhi, Jyoti and Khanjar in South Korea in 1998 and IN ships Taragini and Mumbai in UK in 2005.

INS Godavari, the first guided missile frigate with innovations and integrated technology, participated in the 1986 IFR held in the USA. In the post-Cold War period, INS Mysore, a guided missile destroyer, took part in the 2000 IFR at New York. The Delhi-class destroyer INS Mumbai and Rajput class INS Ranvir attended the 2009 review at Qingdao.16 INS Shivalik, a homemade stealth frigate, joined the club of seven ships to attend the IFR at Qingdao in 201417. It is important to note that these vessels are indigenously constructed and symbolized India’s larger quest for self-reliance for defence needs.

IFR and Diplomacy

Invitation and participation in any IFR are symbolic of politico-strategic concerns and the relations among countries. This is evident by the exclusion of Japan by China from the 2014 IFR in Qingdao where the People’s Liberation Army Navy did not extend an invitation to the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. Analysts view that this was due to the row between China and Japan over the sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands, a group of East China Sea Islets.18 US support for Japan was expressed, and it was reported that the USA may not send its ships to participate in the IFR.

The trajectory of IFR engagement between India and the USA, and India and China also support this proposition. Relations between India and the USA had been considered volatile, hostile, and estranged during
the peak of the Cold War, especially following the 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.\textsuperscript{19} The USA was apprehensive of India’s growing military capabilities and, given this background, it is remarkable that India was invited to join its fleet review.

China did not participate in the 2001 IFR, and it is believed that this may have been because India did not invite Pakistan to the event. However, India participated in the first IFR hosted by China in 2009, indicating a growing willingness to cooperate.\textsuperscript{20} The year 2014 was declared as a “Year of Friendly Exchanges” between the two countries, and India took part in the exercise connected to the Qingdao IFR hosted by China to commemorate the 65\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the founding of the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN).\textsuperscript{21} Even though the MH370 crash led to the cancellation of the Qingdao IFR, two maritime events were hosted by China: the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) in which India was an observer member, and elementary passage exercises. India reciprocated by extending an invitation to China to participate in the 2016 IFR. These engagements which have led to China’s participation can be seen as a culmination of cooperative efforts that started in the mid-2000s between the two countries.

Conclusion

While the mechanics of the IFR have remained the same, the rationale behind the practice has undergone a change from being a purely militaristic activity it has become one of symbolism, commemoration, and international cooperation. Departing from the historical objective of mobilizing the fleet for war, building global maritime partnerships has become an important facet of national outreach during the IFR. Such events foster good relations while also serving as a platform for the display of naval might. Emerging defence capabilities and expanding naval aspiration can generate concerns and competition on the maritime military front and the IFR is one tool to allay such concerns and fears, besides promoting cooperation amongst the seafaring community.\textsuperscript{22}
Navies remain an important instrument of diplomacy, and events such as the IFR are reflective of their multidimensional and multi-functional relevance as against a purely military and traditional security orientation.

While nations focus on security driven maritime strategies and while their maritime interests are defined by geography, the IFR goes a step further in exhibiting the vital interests of the nations. Former president K. R. Narayanan remarked on the occasion of 2001 IFR that the Oceans no longer divide the world but unite it. “The concept of indivisible seas is today a political, economic and strategic reality”, and IFRs are the most appropriate events that cement this reality.\(^\text{23}\)

NOTES

2 Ibid, p. 56
3 Ibid, p.17
6 Author’s compilation with inputs provided by the Naval History Division and Captain Raghavendra Mishra
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9 Ibid


11 Ibid, p. xviii


15 Ibid, p. ix, xii


Visakhapatnam and the Indian Navy: An Enduring Relationship

G. Padmaja

The city of Visakhapatnam on India’s east coast in the state of Andhra Pradesh stands on the threshold of history. Its name will be etched forever in golden letters in world maritime history when it hosts the International Fleet Review (IFR) in February 2016. Interestingly, the city and the Indian Navy have always had an enduring relationship. The Eastern Naval Command with its Headquarters located in Visakhapatnam is the symbol of that continuing permanent relationship. This is poised to get stronger with India’s ‘Act East Policy’ and the primacy being given to maritime diplomacy in addressing India’s national interests. In fact the city had its tryst with destiny way back in December 12, 1939 when the first naval establishment on the Eastern seaboard was set up in Visakhapatnam by the colonial British Indian Government. This article revisits some of the naval milestones since then and argues that the city is poised to play a much greater role post IFR 2016.

The Milestones

The first naval establishment on the Eastern seaboard was set up in Visakhapatnam during the British colonial era. This was an assembly point for convoys and was commissioned at Visakhapatnam on December 12, 1939. It was christened as HMIS Circars on April 12, 1942. Realising the strategic importance of this naval establishment, the city was bombed by the Japanese during the Second World War
in 1942. In 1943, a year after the Japanese bombardment, the British colonial government established an ordnance transit depot and a repair yard at Visakhapatnam. Following India’s independence, HMIS Circars was re-christened INS Circars. The Platinum Jubilee of INS Circars was celebrated on December 12, 2014 and was marked by many events and activities in the city.\(^1\) Presently, INS Circars continues to provide administrative and logistics support not only to afloat and shore units but also to all naval personnel and their dependents residing in naval residential colonies stretching from Dolphin Hill to Naval Coast Battery on the Beach Road in Visakhapatnam.\(^2\)

Significantly, the first four submarines of the Indian Navy which arrived between July 1968 and May 1970 were based in Visakhapatnam.\(^3\) INS Kalvari, Navy’s first submarine entered Visakhapatnam on July 6, 1968. It was here that the submarine arm of the Indian Navy was first established along with their support and training infrastructure. The city also has a submarine museum, the first of its kind in South and Southeast Asia. It is named Kurusura Submarine Museum after INS Kurusura, a Soviet built I-641 class submarine which was inducted into the Indian Navy on December 18, 1969. It was one of the first four submarines acquired by Indian Navy and saw action in 1971 war. The same was decommissioned on 28, February 2001 after 31 years of service to the nation. This submarine has been transformed into a museum and is placed on the Beach Road in Visakhapatnam since August 2002.\(^4\)

The Eastern Naval Command (ENC) came into being on March 01, 1968 and its Headquarters is located at Visakhapatnam. This command is responsible for safeguarding India’s interests in the geopolitically strategic eastern seaboard and beyond. The Eastern Naval Command is unique on two counts in that it is the largest geographical command of the Indian armed forces extending from the Sunderbans in the North, to the Gulf of Mannar in the South; and it is the only
command that operates nuclear propelled platforms. The ENC today is characterised by a strong and balanced blue water Eastern Fleet, a modern flotilla for local naval defence, a powerful submarine arm, a formidable air arm, a versatile dockyard and various other outposts spread across the East coast, all operating seamlessly to further India’s maritime interests.5

Visakhapatnam also has the War Memorial at R.K. Beach Road to pay a fitting tribute to mark the supreme sacrifice that led to the ‘Victory at Sea’ during the 1971 Indo-Pak conflict. The Eastern Fleet which was set up barely a month before the war played a key role in the Eastern theatre. This included not only the bombardment of strategic targets in the erstwhile East Pakistan but also amphibious landings, sinking of the submarine PNS Ghazi, blockade of ports and cutting off escape routes for troops that may have fled by sea to the west. Indian naval ships also contributed to minesweeping efforts after the war to keep the ports open for trade. 6

The ENC has always been working for the citizen’s welfare, safety and security in difficult situations faced by the city. On September 14, 1997, a massive ‘open vapour explosion’ and fire at Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Visakhapatnam resulted in flames and toxic smoke that led to a state of emergency at the refinery. The ENC responded immediately and was at the forefront of firefighting operations which helped avert a major calamity. The ENC also played a major role in the relief operations in the city in October 2014, following the widespread devastation caused by super cyclone ‘Hudhud’ where wind speed crossed 235 km per hour.

India’s Maritime Diplomacy and Visakhapatnam

Presently, the Asia–Pacific region is considered as the growth engine of the world. However, this region has many unresolved questions and historical differences regarding maritime boundaries which raise
concerns regarding unhindered access to the seas and oceans. The region is also seeing the emergence of new powers giving it fluidity and leading to instability. India is collaborating with many countries in this region, building strategic partnerships and convergences on the issues of maritime security. Nearly 50% of India’s trade passes through this region, and in a globalised world, India wants to ensure an enabling external environment which is supportive of India’s growth, development and security. India’s ‘Look East’ policy which has been upgraded to ‘Act East’ policy reflects these interests. ASEAN and the East Asia Summit are at the centre of India’s increased engagement with this region. India is part of 26 dialogues mechanisms of ASEAN and India enjoys an irritant free relation with all the 10 ASEAN countries. India maintains that following international laws and norms is important for peace and stability in the maritime domain and the 1982 UN Convention on Law of the Sea, should be the basis for resolving disputes peacefully. Further India was hopeful that the efforts to conclude a Code of Conduct on the South China Sea by a process of consensus would soon be successful.  

In such a scenario, collective and collaborative approaches to respond to maritime challenges have assumed greater importance. The Eastern Naval Command thus has an important role in implementing these collaborative approaches. Consequently the city too has come into limelight and has benefitted from such approaches. Most notable of these been the bilateral exercise named AUSINDEX off Visakhapatnam in September 2015, which saw the participation of Australian surface and submarine combatants for the first time. The Australian warship and submarine also entered harbour for familiarisation, did joint exercise planning ashore and engaged with the Eastern Naval Command shore units, indicating a high level of mutual confidence and bonhomie. Ships of various navies have regularly visited Visakhapatnam. In May 2014, two Chinese Navy ships - the training ship Zeng He and the latest missile frigate Wei Fang – docked at the city and interacted with
the personnel of the Eastern Naval Command. The French navy also showcased its capabilities of amphibious warfare and Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) potential along with a practical demonstration. The Singapore naval landing ship *Endeavour* visited Visakhapatnam in September 2015 and gainfully interacted with the Indian naval professionals. 

**Visakhapatnam - Host City of IFR 2016**

The tradition of fleet review began in the 15th century in Great Britain and has since been followed by many countries. These events are a show of naval strength, an assurance to the supreme commander that the navy will safeguard the security of the country, and in democracies like India they also symbolise that power lies with the people. Traditionally, the President of India reviews the Indian naval fleet once during his tenure in office. For the citizens of the city chosen for such fleet reviews, it is a moment of great pride. So far, India has held 10 Presidential reviews of the fleet. Except the ninth Presidential Fleet Review (FFR) which was held on February 13, 2006 in Visakhapatnam, all have been held on the western coast off Mumbai.

The IFR on the other hand is an international event. It serves to provide a platform for participating navies to interact with each other, strengthen bridges of friendship, discuss the maritime challenges facing them and explore the mechanisms to address them through a united approach. The first International Fleet Review (IFR) in India was held in 2001 in Mumbai. The IFR to be held in Visakhapatnam in February 2016 will be the second such event in India. The theme of the International Fleet Review (IFR) is 'United Through Oceans'. Naval ships of more than 50 countries will be docking in Visakhapatnam. The President and Prime Minister of India, the Governor and Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Central and State ministers, along with innumerable national and international dignitaries will visit the
city. Several events are planned for the general public which include performances by naval bands of various countries at a number of venues in the city. Besides, an IFR village and innovation pavilion at the Andhra University (AU) Engineering grounds, and the operational demonstration and international city parade at Beach Road would be the other highlights. Slated to be the biggest event hosted by the city so far, this international event will boost the city’s tourism and economy and will forever put Visakhapatnam’s name not only in the nation’s maritime history but also in the maritime history of the world.

Conclusion

As India’s maritime diplomacy for cooperative and collaborative approaches in the Asia Pacific increase, ENC will become more active and consequently the city of Visakhapatnam will be hosting international naval delegations. The city will be part of the critical global maritime narratives and debates. It is believed that the city got its name after the ‘God of Valour’, ‘Visakha’, the son of Shiva and Parvati and ruler of the planet Mars and the God of War. The Eastern Naval Command too symbolises, ‘valour’. IFR is the crowning glory which marks a continuum to the spirit of ‘valour’ and a beginning of another glorious chapter for the city and for the Indian Navy.

NOTES

This establishment borrows its unique name from the title of the Nizam of Hyderabad, who ruled this land and were addressed as ‘Circars’ (His Highness). Areas under the Nizam’s jurisdiction were collectively referred to as a Circars or belonging to the ‘Circar’. The first naval establishment on the Eastern Seaboard was named ‘Circars’, a title befitting a depot ship.

2 ‘Eastern Naval Command to Celebrate Platinum Jubilee of INS Circars’, Press

3 The Submarine Arm (chapter 16), in “Transition to Triumph”, Published by Indian Navy, http://indiannavy.nic.in/book/submarine-arm (accessed on November 19, 2015)


6 Commodore Srikant B Kesnur, ‘A Navy that Dares, a Navy that Cares’, The Times of India, December 4, 2015, Visakhapatnam edition, pg 6


Silk, Cotton and Cinnamon: Maritime Renaissance of the Indian Ocean

Adwita Rai

Introduction

The Indian Ocean Region covers an area of 73,556,000 square miles and links the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Being the third largest ocean in the world, it also encompasses many regional seas: the Arabian Sea, the Andaman Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Mannar, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. In addition, it is connected to the Pacific Ocean through the South China Sea and the East China Sea. Under such geographical context, it has been a hub of ancient civilizations, economic and cultural interactions.

With the rise of Asia in the global geopolitics, the region has re-emerged as a vital maritime arena owing to growing trade, interdependence and economic growth. Encompassing vital sea lanes of communication that feed the world’s economies, the Indian Ocean is the world’s link between the East and the West. Around 80 per cent of the world’s sea-borne oil trade passes through the choke points of this ocean. Given its geo-economic importance, the region has become the focus of the emerging world order.

The ‘Indo-Pacific’ has emerged as a critical strategic region, which has merged both the Indian and Pacific Ocean. This new
geopolitical construct tends to integrate the two oceans seamlessly. The U.S. is rebalancing in the region by economic re-engagement and re-deployment of its naval and air forces. In order to secure their commercial interest in the global waterway countries like China, India and even Indonesia are using national approaches and policy initiatives to focus on revitalizing their maritime legacy. These emerging powers are using historical maritime engagements in the region as a mark of their symbolic presence and legacy over the oceanic exchange network. Despite being driven by economic interest, the approach of mutual cooperation and collaboration initiated by these countries provides a platform to various countries across the ocean to revive their ‘forgotten and neglected’ contribution in world history.

**China and the Maritime Silk Road (MSR)**

Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit in Kazakhstan in September 2013 announced an initiative to revive the continental route called ‘Silk Road’. Almost a month later, while addressing the Indonesian parliament during 10th ASEAN-China summit he announced to revive the ancient ‘Maritime Silk Road’ to improve connectivity between China and Southeast Asian countries by building ‘the 21st century Maritime Silk Road’ (MSR).

The terminology ‘Silk Road’ has often been emphasized in Chinese strategy. The major impetus of recalling the past for Chinese is the Silk Road, as they view it as “the world’s oldest, and historically most important route”. The term Silk Road is collectively used to refer to the ancient trade network, which included both overseas as well as overland routes linking China to Central Asia. However, it is ironical that there is no mention of the term called ‘Silk Road’ in any of the ancient sources. In fact the term ‘Silk Road’ was a pre-modern concept, coined by a German geologist Baron Ferdinand von Richthofen in 1877 to depict a route connecting China to Germany which, he
called ‘The Silk Road’. The depiction was driven by his interest in the linkages between Han dynasty and Imperial Rome. Silk, was a textile produced in ancient China around 2,700 BC and was one of the commodities which was traded between the ancient Han dynasty and Imperial Rome. However, silk was not the only commodity that was traded, other commodities such as spices, jade, ivory, glass, silver and cotton were equally significant and often constituted a major share of the trade.

China unveiled details about its ‘Silk Road initiatives’ in a vision document that stated that it would stretch and connect the ancient Chinese port to Europe through South China Sea and Indian Ocean as well as to the South Pacific. More recently, Chinese ambassador Lu Fan in his visit to Spain emphasized that Spain was the western limit for the old Silk Road and one of the ‘creators of the Maritime Silk Road’.

Despite gaining much attention across the globe for the geopolitical ambiguity of the initiative, the question that is often asked with apprehension is why China taking the colossal task of reviving the ancient Silk Road? Chinese government officials have often stated that the initiative is of economic cooperation that aims to form a community of common interest, responsibility and destiny through infrastructural development, uninterrupted trade and people to people exchange. However, the ideological framework of adapting the ‘Silk Road’ is also symbolic and elucidates China’s historical monopoly over trade in the Indian Ocean exchange network in the past. A three day forum was recently organized in China by China National Silk Museum, where it showcased research findings on the reconstruction of pattern looms from the Han Dynasty and discussed the importance of the silk in history of textile and technology. To encourage the vital importance of silk in the exchange network ‘International association for study of Silk Road’ was also initiated during the conference.
The epistemological framework of using the Maritime Silk Route (MSR) to understand maritime past reinforces the connotation of European history, as it overlooks the role and importance of commodities other than silk. It can also be called ‘China’s Maritime Renaissance’ as the attributes and characteristics are indeed Chinese in nature. The way China is expanding its MSR using historical assertions substantiates its claims in the South China Sea and strengthens its economic interest in the region.

**India: Project Mausam, Spice Route, and the Cotton Route**

India under the new leadership has launched various initiatives to affirm its strategic position in the region. Often perceived as an initiative to counter MSR, India’s *Project Mausam* has received much limelight. It is an initiative by the Ministry of Culture to ‘reconnect and reestablish’ maritime routes, culture and trade linkages between various countries of the world.\(^\text{10}\) The word ‘*Mausam*’ was first used by an Arab traveller referring to Arabian Sea, which was later on developed and understood as regular wind system (Monsoon) that facilitated early maritime engagements.\(^\text{11}\) Lately, taking advantage of monsoon winds, Indian naval ship, Tarangini set to sail with Omani ship, Shabab Oman from Muscat to Kochi.\(^\text{12}\) Celebrating diplomatic relations between India and Oman the “togetherness voyage” exemplified their symbolic presence in the overseas network. Furthermore, India has institutionalized naval exercises with Oman, “Sea Breeze” and “Naseem—Bahr” to get some winds back to its geopolitical sails by dovetailing it with Project Mausam.

Another example of India’s proactive involvement to strengthen ties using historical understanding in the oceanic exchange is the ‘Spice Route’. Taking a cue from China’s MSR, the Government of Kerala has signed a MoU with UNESCO to revive and promote two millennia Spice Route.\(^\text{13}\) The initiative aims to connect all 31 countries of Asia
and exemplify the vital role played by Kerala in the historic overseas network.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent visits to Indian Ocean countries (Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles) have provided a new impetus to policy makers. A three day conference on India and Indian Ocean was organized in Bhubaneshwar in March 2015 with the aim to renew the maritime trade and civilizational linkages. The conference highlighted the use of multi-dimensional historical links to strengthen regional cooperation and integration. India’s ancient ‘Cotton Route’ was revived as a medium to rekindle linkages around the Indian Ocean Rim. In the pre-industrial phase Indian cotton was traded on both sides of the Indian Ocean and was used across social and economic hierarchies. As a mark of commemoration and symbolic presence of the 1000 year old cotton trade by the Chola dynasty, a stamp and coin were released in the conference.

At face value these initiatives can be best described as policy initiatives to revive ancient maritime linkages and exemplify India’s involvement. However, as it is unfolding they can also be seen as initiatives to compliment India’s strategic vision from ‘Look East’ to ‘Act East’. India under the new government has been actively pursuing its vision of ‘Act East’ and these initiatives have given robust thrust to its ambition. With the increasing power play and drifting focus to the East, it can be seen as India’s initiatives to strengthen its position by merging strategic, economic and cultural thought.

Indonesia and its Global Maritime Axis

Located strategically, at the geopolitical nexus of the Indian and Pacific Ocean, Indonesia is the world’s largest archipelagic country that shares maritime boundary with ten countries. After a period of relative neglect and internal security threats, Indonesia is now taking policy initiatives to emerge as a regional maritime power. During his inaugural speech
as the President, Joko Widodo stressed on making Indonesia into a maritime power by rebuilding its maritime culture. Using the strategic platform of 9th East Asian Summit in Myanmar he outlined an ambitious vision of transforming Indonesia into a ‘Global Maritime Fulcrum’ (Poros Maritim Dunia). The initiative encompasses five key aspects: maritime culture; marine resources; connectivity; maritime diplomacy and naval development.

In recent times with the emerging world order there is a shift in focus towards East and center of gravity is now drifting towards the Indian and Pacific Ocean. This new vista is witnessing active involvement not just from resident countries like China and India in the region but from extra regional powers like United States. Situated at the center of the major strategic transformation, Indonesia is taking advantage of changing dynamics and is establishing itself as an emerging power. In the vision statement of Global Maritime Fulcrum President Joko Widodo emphasized at portraying Indonesia as an ‘Indo-Pacific’ power.

Highlighting the first and the foremost pillar of the ‘Global Maritime Fulcrum’, the Indonesian government officials have often stressed on Indonesia’s ancient maritime culture and its legacy. Drawing genesis from the ancient cinnamon route that was established much before the silk route, Indonesian Ambassador Arif Havas Oegroseno recently spoke about the maritime engagements of Indonesia during 5th century BC. The ancient maritime routes were used, particularly for transportation of spices, supplying markets across the world with cinnamon, pepper, ginger and cloves. Southeast Asia was regarded as ‘Survarnabhumi’, meaning the ‘real gold’ or maybe it was used as a metaphor to equate the profit earned through the spice trade.

Indonesia was the hub of spices and was known as Spice Island (Malay) back then and the maritime route connecting east to the west was driven by the demands of spices. Spices such as cassia were traded
as early as 2000BC, and were known for its medicinal and ritualistic purpose. The earliest proof of spice trade comes from cloves found in Syria (1721 BC) which were grown in Maluka Islands in Eastern Indonesia. The traders followed the sea route from Indonesia to the island of Madagascar off East Africa.

With the vision of ‘Global Maritime Fulcrum’, Indonesia essentially aims to identify itself as an emerging power in maritime domain and revitalize its legacy. However, the term ‘Cinnamon Route’ is a modern terminology and has a misnomer as cinnamon was native to Sri Lanka. Despite the fact that South East Asia was called the hub of spices, cinnamons were central to Sri Lanka. Indonesia had its monopoly over cassia, which it traded as early as 2nd century BC.

**Conclusion**

Given the rise of Asia with its economic growth and strategic competition in the region, great powers are also initiating their pivot ‘Towards East’. The US is rebalancing in the region by way of deployment of its naval and air forces and with economic re-engagement in the region. The resident countries on the other hand, are taking national and regional approaches to substantiate their geo-strategic and economic claims by acknowledging their presence in the overseas network. The initiative by China, India and Indonesia can be seen in similar light as three of them are engaging in policies to substantiate their historical presence across the maritime routes.

The mechanism of adopting ideological framework of silk, cotton and cinnamon is symbolic and represents a nationalistic identity. With the contemporary power play of geopolitics, the contours of these concepts are still evolving. However, the emerging strategy of cooperation between the countries, not just for economic development but for knowledge sharing is relatively a new concept that acknowledges oceans as a shared space. Making a shift from previous attempt to
explore world history these initiatives offer a holistic understanding of the past.

The approach of using cultural cooperation for tracing maritime linkages ensures partnering amongst various countries across the oceans, providing them a common platform to showcase a connected history. Acknowledging the maritime engagements as one of the earliest means of globalization, it recognizes the vastness and complexity of the oceans, connecting and separating nations and shaping their culture through the movement of goods, people, ideas and religions.

NOTES

8 China’s Initiative on Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st century Maritime Silk Road, International forum on “Silk Road”, on October 12,
Silk, Cotton and Cinnamon: Maritime Renaissance of the Indian Ocean

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17 Lecture by Ambassador Arif Havas Oegroseno on “Maritime Fulcrum: To Build A Maritime Partnership Initiative in the Asia Pacific Region”. The Centre for Chinese & Southeast Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

18 Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Address by Vice President at University of Udayana in Bali, Indonesia 4 November 2015.


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The Indian Navy will be organizing an International Fleet Review (IFR) in February 2016 off Vishakhapatnam. Traditionally, fleet reviews are held by countries to showcase their naval power and foster maritime cooperation with other countries.\(^1\) IFR-2016 may be seen in context of India’s new maritime security strategy titled ‘Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy’ (IMSS-2015). The IMSS-2015 expands India’s primary as well as the secondary areas of maritime interest beyond the traditional Indian Ocean limits. The areas now stretch from the western African littorals to the Western Pacific; thereby, affirming a tack to the ‘Indo-Pacific’ construct. Among the key national objectives stated in the IMSS-2015 is to shape a benign security environment in India’s neighbourhood through engagement with the countries of the region.\(^2\) The IFR-2016 is being conducted in consonance with this aim.

Among the key countries that India seeks to engage with across the oceans are those constituting the European Union (EU). The EU has lately emerged as an important stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific region, as evidenced by the anti-piracy mission of EUNAVFOR Atalanta. In June 2014, the EU promulgated the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSSS), which has become another milestone in the EU’s endeavours towards maritime multilateralism.
Against this backdrop, this article seeks to analyse the maritime cooperative framework developed by the EU, and ‘whether’ and ‘to what extent’ it can be replicated in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

**Evolution of European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS)**

The maritime dimension of the EU may be better understood by examining the EU as a political entity. After the Second World War, six European countries came together and formed European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952. Eventually, it became European Community; and by the end of the Cold War, the European Community transformed itself to create a closer union, which came to be known as the European Union (EU).³

With its policy of enlargement, the EU has enlarged its borders since its inception. Though Europe has always had a maritime element, but since 1999, the EU enlargement, the changing security arrangements and the emergence of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) – later known as Common Security and Defence Policy – imparted greater momentum to its maritime dimension. It was in 2003, that the EU emerged as a security actor with the launch of European Security Strategy (ESS). Later, in 2007, the commission adopted a new Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) for the European Union. Highlighting the importance of the oceans for the EU, this policy articulated an all-round approach to the EU maritime issues but it was observed to be inadequate for the multifaceted marmite challenges. In 2008, the EU launched its first joint naval operation, the EUNAVFOR Somalia-Operation *Atalanta* against piracy, which brought home lessons of an international cooperation and a comprehensive multilateral response to maritime security.⁴

According to the Joint Communication released by the EU in March 2014, there are multifaceted maritime security challenges
including maritime-territorial disputes, proliferation of weapon of mass destruction (WMD), piracy and other maritime crimes, terrorism, marine pollution and natural disasters in the maritime domain. These security imperatives compelled the member states to come together and formulate the EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS). The strategy does not create new frameworks but strives to strengthen existing structures, policies and achievements in the maritime domain. The aim of this strategy is to bring together both internal and external aspects of the EU maritime security for building a coordinated approach, promote effective and credible partnerships in the global maritime domain, cost efficient maritime security initiative, and enhance synergy among member states. It is based on four guiding principles, which are:

a) Cross-Sectoral Approach that includes cooperation from all authorities, both civilian and military, and EU agencies.

b) Functional Integrity in that entails the strategy will advance the maritime response competence of the union and its member states.

c) Respect for Rules and Principles where compliance to the international laws like the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) and applicable bilateral treaties is emphasised.

d) Maritime Multilateralism, which includes cooperation with relevant international partners and organisations especially the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

The EU is a unique example of cooperative multilateralism and the adoption of the EUMSS reiterates this fact. The EUMSS is an appropriate example of cooperation and coordination of internal and external, private and public, besides intergovernmental and
supranational entities through a comprehensive security approach. In December 2014, the EU adopted an action plan, which set out 130 actions, which will translate the objectives of the Strategy into practice. The Action Plan highlights the following facets that are essential for the effectiveness of the strategy:

a) A coordinated approach on maritime security issues in international fora such as Group of 8 (G-8), International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and NATO;

b) A well-integrated and interconnected maritime awareness, surveillance and information sharing system;

c) Cost effective capability development and capacity building through enhanced cooperation by public and private actors including research and industry;

d) A better preparation, anticipation and responsiveness on the part of the member states to prevent criminal activities and protect critical maritime infrastructure.

e) EUMSS provides a platform for the EU and the member states to bring together the innovative technologies for improved efficiency, sustainability and effectiveness of maritime operations.

The successful coordination achieved during Operation Atalanta and the subsequent launch of the EUMSS have facilitated the EU’s second combined naval operation EUNAVFOR Med in response to the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean Sea.

The IOR Context

It may be worth examining whether the EU model can be replicated in the IOR. According to an analysis, “the circumstances of the IOR are in many respects quite different from those of the Atlantic or Pacific.
The concept of regionalism is not well developed.” Geographically, the region is diverse, disparate and disaggregated, and lacks common historical identity. It is also the locus of many fragile states, leading to the phrases - ‘arc of crises and ‘arc of instability’. Further, the maritime response, capabilities, capacities and strategic quotient vary significantly across the region. The other issues relate to the growing naval footprints of China and extensive involvement of non-resident actors in the Indian Ocean, which make the whole equation even more complex.

Nonetheless, the existing economic, environmental and human security challenges in the IOR mandate an exigent need for maritime cooperation. The region faces some common non-traditional maritime security issues such as the vulnerability of International Shipping Lanes (ISL), piracy, maritime terrorism and natural disasters. It is argued that for stability and security within the IOR, efforts to device a regional cooperative framework are a foregone proposition. Among the existing regional forums, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) have some potential to foster maritime security cooperation. However, the aspect of maritime safety and security is relatively nascent in the IORA. Besides, the IONS itself is a new forum, and is likely to address only naval cooperation at the functional-level. It is well known that “the common maritime security strategy (such as the EUMSS) requires active engagement at the highest political levels…” IORA and IONS will take time to develop and set norms of conduct akin to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS).

The existing sub-regional fora such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) do not emphasise on maritime safety and security; and thus, are unlikely to contribute towards the evolution of an IOR-wide maritime security
cooperative architecture. Nonetheless, “...the visionary leaders of these sub-regional groupings could play a critical role in devising a region-wide way ahead”.\textsuperscript{17} However, considering the diverse strategic outlook of countries, forming a common view would be a major challenge.

One of the key constraints for a common maritime response in the IOR is that most of the countries prefer bilateral rather than multilateral solutions. Nonetheless, cooperation could be established through small groupings and ultimately “they may form a connecting chain and hence capable of being integrated in a larger body in the years to come”.\textsuperscript{18} In this regard, a ‘Bay of Bengal Maritime Cooperative Framework’ (BoBMCF), where smaller groupings can work to address non-traditional maritime security threats, would be a viable alternative. With the recent resolution of the maritime disputes between India, Bangladesh and Myanmar, aspirations for smaller trilateral cooperative initiatives similar to the India-Maldives-Sri Lanka ‘trilateral’ have increased. Such initiatives could be expanded beyond the trilateral level to address sub-regional issues, such as through coordinated patrols and cooperative surveillance in the Bay of Bengal.\textsuperscript{19}

**Conclusion**

Each region has their characteristic maritime threats and challenges. Europe too, has had a troubled past with major conflicts and clashes of interests. The post Second World War Europe had to address two immediate challenges: first to rebuild devastated economies; and second, to bring stability and security to the region. These common concerns paved the way for the creation of the EU. Currently, the EU is facing internal challenges such as the Euro crisis, migrant influx from West Asia and North Africa, as well as the possibility of Britain’s exit from the Union. Britain has played a significant role in the EU operations as the UK is one most advanced military power in the EU and hence its exit will affect the effectiveness of the operation\textsuperscript{20}. Further,
as some member states have reduced their defence expenditures, it remains to be seen how they will balance the use of military capacities in civilian-led maritime security activities and respective national, CSDP or NATO initiatives. However, the common interests led the EU to launch a comprehensive response in the form of EUMSS. The EUMSS is an important step towards a pan-regional maritime security cooperative framework.

Unlike the EU, IOR is a disparate and diverse, and it may take much long to create a pan-IOR framework. Nonetheless, the IOR could move towards greater interdependence, and forge cooperative ties at the sub-regional level against common non-traditional maritime threats.

The Bay of Bengal – given its rising strategic salience and the resolution of maritime disputes – is an area with a high potential for maritime security multilateralism. With the IMSS-2015 having charted its maritime strategy to provide ‘net security’ in the Indo-Pacific region, India could facilitate establishing such a structure in the Bay of Bengal sub-region. In this regard, the Indian Navy has proposed an initiative called the “Partnership for Prosperity in the Bay of Bengal”. Further, India could examine the case of EU’s maritime cooperative arrangements, including those for enhancing maritime domain awareness (MDA), and multi-agency and multi-sectoral coordination to replicate the same in India’s sub-regional neighbourhood.

NOTES


11 Ibid, p. 78.


14 Nong Hong, ‘Charting a Maritime Security Cooperation Mechanism in

15 Ibid, p. 81.


17 Ibid, p. 81.


23 Discussion with Captain Gurpreet S. Khurana, 23 December 2015.
India and Indonesia: Translating Strategic Convergence into Maritime Cooperation

Premesha Saha

Geographic proximity, cultural similarities, anti-colonialism and the spirit of Afro-Asian solidarity as was seen in the convening of the first Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung in 1955 by the two countries have been the guiding pillars of India-Indonesia relationship. The similar ideologies of the two countries towards non-alignment, Panchsheel (Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence) led many to name India and Indonesia as ‘natural partners’ from the 1940’s to the early 1950’s period.\(^1\) Though the course of India-Indonesia relations have been seen periods of highs and lows, but the converging interests of both the countries have seen them engaging as strategic partners after the signing of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2005. Therefore both the countries have come a long way from a period of indifference (during much of the cold war) in their relations to now evolving as strategic partners.

After the initiation of the ‘Look East’ policy in 1991 by the then Prime Minister of India, P.V. Narsimha Rao, India-Indonesia relations have been a smooth one. The economic and trade relations of the two countries have been deepening. There has been increase in the number of ministerial and high level visits. Even the defence relationship between India and Indonesia has strengthened, as was seen with the signing of the Defence Cooperation Agreement in 2001.\(^2\) But there is one aspect
in the relations which remains less researched by the scholarly world as well as underexplored by the two countries, that is cooperation in the maritime domain. The tumultuous journey of India-Indonesia relations and Indonesia’s sensitive attitude along with Malaysia and Singapore, towards territorial sovereignty which led to India not being a part of maritime security initiatives in the Strait of Malacca like the MALSINDO (Malaysia Singapore and Indonesia) have acted as stumbling blocks in the road to greater maritime cooperation between Indonesia and India.

Strategically, Indonesia has a common maritime boundary with India. Aceh province of Indonesia is barely 162 kilometres (kms) from Indira Point in the Bay of Bengal. India and Indonesia have also successfully settled their maritime boundary delimitation issue. With the shift of global attention from the West to the East, and with the sea becoming a zone where all the global politics is taking shape in the twenty first century, the security of the Indo-Pacific region, and increasingly the Indian Ocean has become an important concern for the Indian Ocean littorals. When it comes to the Indian Ocean, no other countries are as strategically located as India and Indonesia. Indonesia is located at the cross-roads of the Indian and the Pacific Ocean. The Indonesian archipelagic coastline stretches from the tip of the Andaman Sea, through the Strait of Malacca to the South China Sea, and further, past the Java and Banda Sea to the Pacific Ocean. India’s coastline, beginning in the Arabian Sea, juts out over 1000 miles into the depths of the Indian Ocean, beyond the Bay of Bengal and onto the island chain within the Andaman Sea. Both the countries desire to become credible maritime players in this region. Moreover, being maritime countries, both the countries have for long possessed an ‘inward looking mindset’. Both after independence were engaged in bringing their country out of the shackles of the colonial legacy. In this sense, the ‘mental map’ of the two countries towards maritime security can be said to have been very similar in the past.
Indonesia is bordered by the most strategic and important chokepoints like the Strait of Malacca, Sunda, Lombok and Makassar straits, therefore making it a pivotal state for global shipping. These straits are also the means of entry and exit to the Indian Ocean. The Strait of Malacca is a major transit point between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. The former Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh had commented, “An uninterrupted access to the Malacca Strait and the South China Sea, vital for the economies of the ASEAN region and India, needs to be ensured.” As mentioned earlier, Indonesia’s Aceh province is just 162 kms from Indira Point in the Bay of Bengal, and also lies adjacent to the Strait of Malacca. Aceh till before the 2005 Helsinki Peace Accord was under the grapple hold of extremist elements, also responsible for piracy in the Strait of Malacca. Though after the peace accord this crisis has to some extent been diluted, still both the countries should maintain caution in this region.

India and Indonesia have a similar stand on the South China Sea dispute. China’s nine dashed line map covers Indonesia’s Natuna Islands. Indonesia like India maintains that the freedom of navigation in the South China Sea should not be hindered and the dispute should be settled peacefully in accordance with international law. Indonesia’s maritime diplomacy skill is not unknown and it has been employing this skill through the Indonesian workshops on the South China Sea, which has acted as an enabler in the formulation of the Declaration of the Code of Conduct (DOC) for the South China Sea.

Therefore, it will be in the benefit of both India and Indonesia to identify these converging interests and embark on the road to greater maritime cooperation. In the above context, this article will explore the facet of maritime cooperation in India-Indonesia relations. The article will analyse firstly, the course of India-Indonesia maritime cooperation and will also chalk out other avenues of maritime cooperation between the two countries.
The Course of India-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation

Though India-Indonesia maritime cooperation remains under explored, it will not be fair to say that maritime cooperation between the two has been totally non-existent. The Indian and the Indonesian Navy signed the first security agreement in 1958. “The Naval agreement provided for cross attachment of naval officers, training exercises, and bilateral visits”. The first joint naval exercise of the Indian Navy and the Indonesian navy was held in July 1960.

Through the 1960s and 1970’s India and Indonesia were committed to limit the influence of western powers in the Indian Ocean. This was due to their non-aligned mindset at that time. This had resulted in them co-sponsoring the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace Proposal (IOZOP), though this had not taken shape. Thereafter India and Indonesia undertook bilateral naval exercises off Surabaya in 1989 and in the Andaman Sea, which lies west of the Malay Peninsula and north of Sumatra, in 1991.

The Indian Navy participated in the 1995 Jakarta International Fleet Review, marking fifty years of Indonesian independence. The Indonesian and Indian navies have conducted coordinated maritime patrols at their common maritime border located at the northern entrance of the Strait of Malacca, also known as the ‘Six-Degree Channel’. Beginning in 2002, India-Indonesia has been conducting Coordinated Patrols (Ind-Indo CORPAT) to increase the maritime security situation in the Strait of Malacca. Jakarta also views the establishment of a Joint Command at Port Blair in the Andaman Islands in a positive light, as it could contribute to greater monitoring of the northern approaches to the Strait, providing prompt assistance when needed, as well as increase bilateral cooperative activities, like combined exercises and patrols, with the Indonesian Naval Western Fleet Command. Indonesia also participates in India-led multilateral naval gatherings, such as MILAN and SAREX exercises, and the Indian
Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). In the aftermath of 2004 Tsunami, Jakarta highly appreciated Indian Navy’s Operation Gambhir in January 2005 to send food and medical supplies to Indonesia through its hospital ship INS *Nirupak* and a corvette INS *Khukri*.\(^{14}\)

**The Road Ahead**

Indonesia’s President, Joko Widodo (Jokowi) in his election manifesto unveiled his vision for Indonesia as a “global maritime fulcrum” (GMF). The underlying vision of the GMF is to develop Indonesia as a maritime power in the Indo-Pacific region (PACINDO). Jokowi, promised in his election manifesto in May 2014 to

a) Focus on strengthening Indonesia’s maritime security,

b) Expand the canvas of regional diplomacy to cover the entire region of the Indo-Pacific, and

c) Project the Indonesian navy as a respected regional maritime power in East Asia.\(^ {15}\)

These goals will be achieved through the development of the Indonesian navy and the building of Indonesia’s port infrastructure to facilitate maritime trade and for the overall development of the Indonesian archipelago.\(^{16}\) This provides the opening for India to strengthen its maritime cooperation with Indonesia. India like China can invest in the development of Indonesia’s port infrastructure. The Chinese President, Xi Jinping proposed the concept of the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) in October 2013 in Indonesia.\(^{17}\) China has already through its MSR proposal committed to build two seaports in Kuala Tanjung and Bitung for Indonesia.\(^{18}\)

As mentioned earlier, Jokowi’s vision for Indonesia is not just limited to providing maritime security, but also to transform Indonesia into a maritime power. For achieving this, Jokowi has laid down a two- fold approach- firstly, to increase the domestic defense budget
and to attract foreign investment. He has shown his willingness to work towards strengthening defence cooperation with major powers to procure foreign investment to strengthen Indonesia’s navy. Jokowi also plans to continue with the previous President Susilo Yudhoyono’s initiative of the Minimum Essential Forces (MEF). When it comes to cooperation in naval technology transfer between the two, the progress has been very slow. For instance, Indonesia is still vying to purchase the Indo-Russia jointly developed anti-ship supersonic missile, Brahmos.

India has a huge archipelagic coastline which it needs to patrol, India can help in the capacity building of the Indonesian navy. Indian ship building companies can enter into joint ventures with the Indonesian shipbuilders. According to a recent report in the IHS Jane, India is willing to provide patrol vessels to Indonesia, expanding an existing commercial agreement covering naval systems between Indonesian and Indian shipbuilders PT PAL and Pipavav Defense, and enhancing cooperation in military aerospace programs between PT Dirgantara Indonesia and Hindustan Aeronautics.

The Second Trilateral Dialogue (TDIO) held on the Indian Ocean involving India, Australia and Indonesia took place at Canberra in September 2014. The TDIO dialogue focussed on the theme of ‘Role of Major Powers and Strategic Stability in the Indian Ocean’. All the three countries realised the importance of the Indian Ocean and the need for maintaining stability and “dynamic equilibrium in the region”. India, Australia and Indonesia can also co-opt other countries in this dialogue to meet the goals set forth in this Trilateral Dialogue. Furthermore, India can involve other littorals including Indonesia in the Trilateral on maritime security it conducts with Sri Lanka and Maldives.

Another platform of cooperation is the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Though India, Indonesia and Australia have interacted and cooperated actively through the this platform, but
Indonesia will now look into cooperating more with its maritime neighbours, India and Australia given it has assumed the role of the chair for the next two years. Indonesia will also look to draw lessons from India’s tenure. Maritime security has now been added as one of the six priority areas for the IORA countries after the 11th Council of Ministers Meeting in Bengaluru in 2011\(^2\), and no other country can help better in securing the Indian Ocean and its chokepoints. However, Indonesia alone will not be able to live up to this huge task and will need the support and cooperation of the other littorals, primarily India and Australia.

**Conclusion**

There is still scope and need to further enhance the maritime cooperation between India and Indonesia. It is true that India and Indonesia had some diverging views during much of the Cold War period, but they have shared interests in the Indo-Pacific region. The emergence of the Indo-Pacific as a key geo-strategic construct has given Indonesia increased importance for its strategic location and rising profile. This calls for India to make Indonesia an important quotient in her ‘Act East’ policy. It is time for both the countries to translate their strategic interests into greater maritime cooperation. In this regard, the upcoming International Fleet Review to be held in Vishakhapatnam in February 2016, where the Indonesian navy will also be participating will act as an enabler for greater maritime cooperation.

**NOTES**


Ibid., p.2.


On August 15, 2005, in Helsinki, Finland, representatives of the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka; GAM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aiming to end the conflict in Aceh, Indonesia’s westernmost province and the site of an armed insurgency that has operated at varying levels of intensity since 1976.


Ibid.


Chinyong Liow and Vibhanshu Shekhar, ‘Indonesia as a Maritime Power:
Partnering Across Oceans


20 In 2005, under the presidency of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), the Indonesian government adopted the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) – a twenty-year plan (2005-2024) that sets forth a military modernization agenda, with a special emphasis on the modernization of the Indonesian navy and air force. In the context of naval build up, the MEF goal is to develop by 2020 a five-fleet force totalling 274 ships with striking, patrolling and supporting capabilities. The plan involves weapons procurement, development of an indigenous defense industry and the revamping of defense research facilities.


24 India hosted the third NSA-level Trilateral Meeting on Maritime Security Cooperation between Maldives, Sri Lanka and India on 6 March 2014 in New Delhi. India, Sri Lanka and Maldives launched the Trilateral Cooperation in Maritime Security in October 2011 at the first NSA-level Trilateral Meeting on Maritime Security Cooperation in Maldives. At the second meeting in Colombo in July 2013, the three countries agreed on a roadmap for cooperation in maritime security, comprising the following
three categories of activities:

a) Initiatives to enhance Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) through access to systems run under the aegis of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), such as Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) services and sharing of Automatic Identification System (AIS) data;

b) Training and capacity building initiatives in areas of MDA, Search and Rescue, and Oil Pollution Response; and

c) Joint activities including trilateral exercises, maintaining lines of communication on illegal maritime activities, formulation of marine oil pollution response contingency plans and cooperation in legal and policy issues related to piracy.

(See, http://www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?23037/NSa+level+meeting+on+trilateral+Maritime+Security+Cooperation+between+India+Sri+Lanka+and+Maldives)

Six priority areas were identified at the 11\textsuperscript{th} Council of Ministers Meeting in Bengaluru:

1. Maritime Safety and Security
2. Trade and Investment Facilitation
3. Fisheries Management
4. Disaster Risk Management
5. Academic Science and Technology
6. Tourism and Cultural Exchanges
India and China: Time to Evolve Maritime Confidence Building Measures

Dinesh Yadav

Fleet Reviews – An Enabler for Confidence Building

The Indian Navy, in February 2001, had organized the International Fleet Review (IFR) with the theme, “Bridges of Friendship”, at Mumbai to commemorate India’s fifty years of the Republic. It is of significance that China declined to participate in the event. On the other hand, close on its heels, two PLA Navy warships, including the flag ship, visited Karachi in connection with the 50th anniversary celebrations of Pakistan-China relations, in the process, sending out a clear message to New Delhi.

However, much has changed since 2011. Indian Naval Ships Mumbai and Ranvir participated in PLA Navy’s IFR at Qingdao in 2009. INS Shivalik was also scheduled to represent the Indian Navy in IFR at Qingdao in April 2014. However, the fleet review was cancelled citing the ‘special situation’ over the missing Malaysian airliner. The ship, however, participated in the PASSEX post Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS). On the other hand, China has confirmed its participation in the Indian IFR scheduled to be held in Visakhapatnam in February 2016. This would, therefore, be the first time that the PLA Navy will take part in the event.

Participation in fleet reviews is one of the numerous ways in which the maritime Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) could
be strengthened between the two navies. This article highlights the imperatives of evolving credible maritime CBMs between India and China. It also makes recommendations on the possible CBMs that can be evolved between the two navies towards enabling better operating mechanisms in the Indian Ocean Region and the South China Sea.

**India and China – An Uneasy Relationship**

India and China share a 4057 km border along the Himalayas and have a legacy of border dispute, which remains unresolved till date. Both countries have differing interpretations of history and geography in support of their respective positions.

India’s claim to the barren and windswept Aksai Chin plateau rests on what the Chinese term an arbitrary extension of the border by the British in 1939, a move largely made to create a buffer between Xinjiang, which had turned into a Soviet protectorate, and British India. On the other hand, in China, the obsequious courtiers of the Qing (Manchu) dynasty were not averse to some cartographic innovativeness of their own. Further, the present Dalai Lama formally staked a claim in 1947 over Tawang in the newly independent India.

From India’s point of view, China continues to be in occupation of large areas of sovereign Indian territory. In Aksai Chin, China is in control of approximately 38,000 sq. km. of Indian territory since the mid-1950s. In addition, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq. km. of Indian territory in the Shaksgam Valley of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, north of the Siachin Glacier, to China in 1963 under a boundary agreement that India does not recognize. Further, China continues to stake its claim to about 96,000 sq. km. of Indian territory in Arunachal Pradesh.

Post 1962 war, thaw at the political level came starting with the 1979 visit by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, India’s Foreign Minister. The visit of
Rajiv Gandhi to China in December 1988 marked the resumption of political dialogue at the highest level. A Joint Working Group (JWG) was established on the boundary issue, to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution; as also a Joint Economic Group (JEG) on economic and commercial issues.\(^4\)

The Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA) inked between India and China on 23 Oct 2013 facilitates establishment of a hotline between the military headquarters of the two countries, besides border personnel in all sectors receiving a broad directive not to tail each other’s patrols along the disputed borders.\(^5\) This and other CBMs, mostly in the terrestrial domain, instituted over time, have ensured relative peace and tranquillity along the border.

The land border dispute, however, remains unresolved, due to competing claims and counterclaims by the two countries, despite eighteen rounds of talks, last of which were concluded at New Delhi in March 2015. During the talks, India and China discussed putting in place additional CBMs.\(^6\)

**Enhanced Maritime Interaction of the Indian Navy and the PLA Navy**

In 2011, an Indian Naval Warship (INS *Airavat*), sailing from Vietnamese port of Nha Trang towards Hai Phong, at a distance of 45 nautical miles from the Vietnamese coast in the South China Sea, was contacted on open radio channel by a caller identifying himself as the ‘Chinese Navy’ stating that ”you are entering Chinese waters”.\(^7\) Even though the veracity of the radio call could not be established, it is the hype that the minor incident created, which is of significance. On the other hand, a visit by a Chinese submarine to Sri Lanka in 2014, followed by Karachi in May 2015, also set the bells ringing in the Indian media. Further, Indian and foreign media are extensively reporting on ‘the increased tempo of Chinese submarines operating
close to the Ten Degree channel, which separates the Andaman from the Nicobar group of islands.  

In broader terms, the two sets of Chinese submarine forays into the Indian Ocean (Colombo and Karachi) are likely to be ‘trial balloons’ for regular operational deployments of Chinese submarines in the region. On a similar note, China feels that the Indian warships are expected to be deployed in the South China Sea on a regular basis.

China has been steadily building strategic relationships from Middle East to Southern China with investment initiatives at Gwadar (Pakistan), Chittagong (Bangladesh), Sittwe (Myanmar), and Hambantota (Sri Lanka). On the other hand, India has legitimate stakes for protecting its trade to and from Russia, Japan, China, South Korea, and Southeast Asian nations and energy flow from Sakhalin (Russia) and Vietnam. Enhanced economic interests in East and Southeast Asia, are also pushing India for greater engagement with these nations. In this context, India’s ‘Act East Policy’ appears to be meeting China’s ‘Maritime Silk Road’ in the South China Sea.

Presence of Chinese Navy in the Indian Ocean and the Indian Navy in the South China Sea is, therefore, a foregone conclusion. The economic and security imperatives further mandate that such presence would increase in the near future. This interaction of the two navies, as the trends indicate, would be competitive. Each navy, must therefore, get accustomed to the other’s presence in their ‘supposed backyard’. Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the Indian Ocean Region and South China Sea would, therefore, be in order.

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent visit to China, both nations agreed on increasing bilateral naval cooperation. “The two sides will exchange visits of naval ships and hold PASSEX (passing exercises) and SAR (search and rescue) exercises,” said the joint statement issued during the visit.
The Need for Maritime CBMs

The need for maritime CBMs cannot be over emphasized. The collision of US EP-3 Reconnaissance plane and Chinese F-8 fighter jet near Hainan Island in April 2001 and collision of a Chinese submarine with a US Destroyer’s towed array sonar in June 2009 are cases which point towards the potential risks involved when the two navies operate in close vicinity. A miscalculation or misunderstanding in such cases could also result in a deadly exchange of fire, leading to further military escalation precipitating a major political crisis.13

Whilst a number of CBMs have been established between India and China since 1988, these mostly pertain to the contested terrestrial domain only. This was reasonably justified as two navies hardly encountered each other on the high seas. However, with increased Chinese and Indian deployments in the Indian Ocean and South/East China Seas respectively, there is an accentuated need to evolve Maritime CBMs to address the situation arising out of increased encounters between the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) and the Indian Navy.

Recommendations – Evolving Maritime CBMs

Both the navies could establish a formal consultation mechanism comprising annual meetings and working groups to strengthen maritime safety and cooperation in the region. Such mechanism would aid in promoting common understanding regarding activities undertaken by their respective maritime forces when operating in accordance with international law. The Joint Working Groups could discuss agenda items, as agreed upon by consensus, such as measures to promote safe maritime practices and establish mutual trust as search and rescue, communications procedures when ships encounter each other, interpretation of the rules of the nautical road and avoidance of accidents-at-sea.
The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for unexpected encounters at sea has been adopted between US, China, Japan and about 20 other countries (including India) under the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES). Both the navies could evolve mutual understanding to follow these SOPs, especially those governing situations arising out of unexpected encounters between ships, submarines and aircraft and also regulations regarding tracking of warships, submarines and aircraft.

India and China could establish a mechanism of prior notification/intimation of maritime research activities. This would enhance transparency regarding naval presence in the region. Accidental use of weapons at sea could often lead to escalation of such incidents beyond proportions. Implementation of reporting processes of such incidents and formulation of requisite procedures to avoid escalation of conflicts arising out of accidental/unintended/unauthorized use of weapons would, therefore, be in order and may be implemented between the two navies.

A visit by an Indian ship in South China Sea creates enormous buzz in the Chinese media and likewise, visit by Chinese ships in the Indian Ocean leads to unnecessary speculations in the Indian media. Prior notification of maritime exercises in East/South China Sea and Indian Ocean by the Indian Navy and PLA Navy respectively would go a long way in building trust between the two navies.

Often, most small incidents, that have potential to flare up in due course, could easily be addressed if naval commanders could exchange information over telephone. Establishment of hotline between the two navies, over dedicated INMARSAT lines, would be a simple, yet an extremely effective step towards preventing escalation of conflicts at sea.

The Indian Navy and PLA Navy, being credible maritime powers in the region, could contribute through collaborative efforts in combating
piracy and maritime terrorism. Also, cooperative engagements towards provisioning of Common Goods at Sea, such as Human Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Search and Rescue (SAR), drug and human trafficking, illegal immigration and environment protection, would be of immense value for the entire region.

Each time India participates in bilateral maritime exercises with countries such as the US, Japan or Australia, there are concerns flagged by Beijing over the issue. On the contrary, Indian Navy and PLA Navy should regularly participate in bilateral exercises with each other for better coordination and understanding. Conduct of combined maritime exercises on an annual basis between the two navies would, therefore, be a positive step towards building confidence.

Port visits by PLA Navy ships in the Indian Ocean littorals and by Indian Navy ships in South East/East Asia are often viewed with suspicion by the two countries. Regular visits by ships and submarines in each other’s port on a regular basis would preclude such skepticism. For instance, the PLA Navy submarines that visited Sri Lanka and later Karachi, wouldn’t have created a flutter if they had also visited an Indian port. On the other hand, Indian ships and submarines visiting Vietnam or Japan would not raise many eyebrows, if they visit the Chinese ports also.

NOTES

2 Guruswamy, M (2011), ‘India and China - Is This Just Rivalry As Usual?’, China – Threat or Friend, Center for Policy Analysis, Vol 9
South Asia Analysis Group Paper No 2019,


11 Yadav, Dinesh, ‘Look East’ to ‘Act East’; India’s Policy Shift Or ‘Old Wine’?, 2nd NMF-AWW Conference, accessed at


India and China: Redefining Security and Emerging Synergy

Antara Ghosal Singh

An impending strategic contest between China and India in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) where both the Asian behemoths jostle for power and influence, in ways reminiscent of the US-Soviet rivalry of the cold war days, is well discussed in existing literature. Bearing two-thirds of the world’s oil shipments, one-third of its bulk cargo, and half of its container traffic, IOR has, in recent years, become the busiest trade route of the world. No wonder, the region has captured the imagination of China, the largest trading nation in the world, which now wants to strengthen its foothold in the region on an unprecedented scale.

On the other hand, with the beginning of the new century, India has also realized the geo-strategic significance of the Indian Ocean Region and is striving to take advantage of its “geography of opportunity”\(^1\). As both the countries embark on ambitious foreign policies in the IOR in order to maximize their strategic interests, cataclysmic projections of an imminent Sino-Indian fall out in the IOR is gaining currency.

However, a closer look at the ongoing strategic dynamics between India and China under the present leadership reveals a counter current of growing cooperation rather than competition at the defence/security realm, including the maritime domain. For instance, the joint statement issued during Chinese president’s visit to India in September 2014, for the first time mentioned about agreements on holding joint exercises beyond the army – involving the navy and air-force of either
side and to strengthen cooperation in areas such as peace-keeping, counter-terrorism, naval escort, maritime security, humanitarian rescue, disaster mitigation, personnel training, and communication between think-tanks. Decisions were also taken to hold the first round of maritime cooperation dialogue on maritime affairs and security, including anti-piracy, freedom of navigation and cooperation between maritime agencies of both countries, and to carry out consultations on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Again during PM Modi’s visit to China in May 2015, the two sides agreed to carry out frequent high level exchanges including exchange visits of naval ships and to hold PASSEX and SAR exercises.

Under the new leadership, both sides have made substantial progress in establishing and expanding defence exchanges. The year 2015 witnessed major breakthroughs in high-level mutual visits between officials of the defence ministry and personnel from armed forces. China’s CMC Vice Chairman Fan Changlong led a military delegation to India which is one of the highest-level visits to India in the past decade. Later on, home minister Rajnath Singh visited China - a first by a home minister in a decade. Besides, the two militaries carried out the "Join Hands-2015" joint anti-terrorism training in Kunming and organised the 7th China-India defense and security consultation in Beijing. The missile destroyer Jinan of the 20th Chinese naval escort taskforce also visited Mumbai for a four day friendly visit. On the other hand, in a novel effort, Indian military colleges like the Army War College and the National Defence College extended a red carpet to Chinese officials to share their security perspectives and to discuss the possibilities of dispatching cadets to study in each other’s military academies and for undertaking joint research programs.

At the core of this growing intimacy between China and India in the strategic space, lies the synchronized strategic thinking of the present leadership in both the countries. As is pointed out in this article, there exists a striking resemblance in either sides’ effort to redefine the concept
of “security” commensurate to the evolution of global security scenario. While, a part of this conformity in thoughts and actions between China and India is due to the common security threats emanating from the evolving geopolitical developments in the world, the other reason is the inherent synergies between the two civilizations, the roots of which runs deep. No wonder, some of India’s core strategic philosophies like that of “non-violence” and “the whole world is a family” find resonance in Chinese equivalents of “peace is of paramount importance”, “seek harmony without uniformity” and “unity of the world”.

The key purpose of this article is to highlight the common threads that exist in China and India’s contemporary strategic thinking. It pitches the idea that the more India and China explore and identify their inherent synergies, better will be the mutual understanding, and easier it will be for both the countries to cooperate and coordinate at the global level.

**India’s Evolving Concept of Security**

Early last year when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Seychelles, Mauritius and Sri Lanka, as a part of his three nation tour in the Indian Ocean Region, he unveiled a novel concept in the realm of India’s maritime security strategy - the vision of ‘SAGAR’ - “Security and Growth for All in the Region.”

The vision is unique because it is not just limited to the idea of India taking the lead in its neighbourhood as a net security provider, offering its own capabilities for the benefit of all. Rather it conveys a greater message of universality, equality and mutual respect between India and its neighbours. In other words, PM Modi’s Mauritius message exhibited a distinct regional/collective/common undertone, emphasising on the need for a seamless, holistic approach to ensure peace and stability in India’s neighbourhood. No wonder, throughout his speech, he repeatedly stressed on ideas like “shared commitment to
peace and security”, “collective responsibility/action towards common goal”, “strengthening collective ability - economic and security” and “taking integrated measures for sustainable development of the region” which he termed as the “maritime home” for all Indian Ocean nations⁷.

This vision of “security for all, to all, by all”, as proposed by PM Modi in Mauritius, has been further explored and institutionalised through India’s maritime strategy⁸, released last year. Unlike last time when India published a maritime ‘military’ strategy, focusing on “the freedom to use the seas”, this time India has carefully crafted a maritime ‘security’ strategy, aiming to “ensure secure seas”. Furthermore, the last maritime strategy focused solely on strategies for conflict, deterrence and capability development, while in the current version, ‘shaping a favourable and positive maritime environment’ has been highlighted as one of the key objectives of India’s naval forces. The document highlights that the recent revision in strategy has been carried out to address two key aspects of changing security scenario

a) Blurring of traditional and non-traditional threats and

b) Growing realisation that the freedom to use the seas for India’s national interest is of no avail without a safe and secure sea.

The strategy document mentions that although traditional threats continue to exist, there has been a sharp rise in recent years in non-traditional threats like piracy, armed robbery at sea, higher instances of natural disasters and regional instabilities which pose a stumbling block in maintaining freedom of navigation at sea and thereby open up avenues for simultaneous cooperation among nations, even amidst competition. To promote this cooperation through maritime effort has been a focus area in India’s revised strategy.

To increase the scope and value of cooperation and coordination between India and various other countries against common threats at sea, the policy document highlights three key areas of action –
a) Increasing Indian Navy’s contribution as a net security provider,

b) Expansion in the Navy’s maritime operational engagements – exercise with foreign navies, enhanced training, technical and hydrographic operation and

c) Continued development and promotion of regional cooperative frameworks like ‘Milan’, ‘IORA’ and ‘IONS’.

China Relooks at Security

Le Yucheng, Chinese ambassador to India, in one of his speeches at the National Defense College of India, presented a succinct description of how the world security paradigm has been undergoing astonishing changes in recent years and how China has been responding. He observed that in today’s world the scope of security has expanded, the contours have blurred and the security challenges have become more complex. In other words, security has become mutual, common, collective and inter-dependent where the Cold War era ideas of zero-sum game, gunboat policy, arms race, military confrontation, power politics and group confrontation are fast becoming redundant.

China’s answer to the evolving security paradigm, he mentioned, is threefold- cooperation, development and innovation. China is striving to build a new, “common, comprehensive and cooperative security” outlook which has sustainable security at its core and which is based on the spirit of mutual respect, equal negotiation, transparency and win-win cooperation. This new concept of “common, comprehensive, and sustainable security’ which is also an extrapolation of president Xi Jinping’s doctrine of “community of common destiny”, has since been the recurrent theme of all international communications/initiatives unveiled by China in the recent past.

China’s redefined security narrative found an elaborate mention in its defence white paper especially with respect to its maritime military
strategy. Chinese armed forces pledged to apply their cooperative security concept by taking part in bilateral and multilateral joint exercises and training, enhancing exchanges and cooperation with naval task forces of other countries, actively participating in international maritime security dialogues and cooperation, fulfilling international responsibilities and obligations like UN peacekeeping missions, international disaster rescue and humanitarian assistance, carry out escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and other sea areas and jointly securing international SLOCs. It also stated that with the growth of national strength, China's armed forces will gradually intensify their participation in such operations as international peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance, and would do their utmost to shoulder more international responsibilities and obligations, provide more public security goods, and contribute more to world peace and common development.

Other than this, China also proposed to ‘jointly’ build the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road.”11 The vision statement issued by the Chinese government further stated that win-win cooperation remains at the core of the initiative, aimed at “building a community of shared interests, destiny and responsibility featuring mutual political trust, economic integration and cultural inclusiveness”. In similar vein, at the Shangri la Summit12 China proposed to “Jointly” safeguard peace and build a secure Asia-Pacific region while actively fulfilling its international responsibilities and obligations, safeguarding regional and international security and stability and making greater contribution to common security.

At the recently concluded, Xiangshan Forum, China once again put forward the Asian Security Concept13 based on common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. It was noted that security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific has long lagged behind economic cooperation in the region. Therefore, China proposed to bolster pragmatic cooperation among nations in non-traditional
security areas and give more substance to regional security architecture by enhancing efforts for institution building for cooperation in various areas.

Taking the concept of “common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security” a step further, Chinese President Xi Jinping, while speaking at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly, introduced “a new type of international relations” focusing on common development and shared security. He highlighted five key points for this new theory: (a) building a partnership of equality, mutual consultations and mutual understanding, (b) forging a security pattern of fairness, justice, broad participation and sharing, (c) seeking open, innovative, inclusive and mutually beneficial development, (d) promoting harmonious but differentiated and inclusive exchanges among civilizations, (e) fostering an ecosystem of respecting nature and green development. This, he called, a “five-in-one” blueprint for China’s future effort to build a “community of common future” for mankind.

Emerging Synergy

As is evident from the above sections, the theory of “common, comprehensive, and sustainable security” has decisively united China and India in the seas and beyond. It is interesting to observe that both the countries have risen to the evolving global security mandate which requires concerted effort from every stake holder rather than actions driven by self-interest. Even in their immediate neighbourhood, both China and India are no longer restricting themselves to the role of being net security providers, but are seeking to engage with powers, big or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, on equal footing, with mutual respect, ensuring mutual benefit. This is a welcome approach as it will not just create an overall favourable and positive regional security environment but will also help to build trust between China and India themselves, especially in the IOR, by dispelling of conspiracy theories.
like “Indian Ocean being India’s ocean” or “China’s string of pearls in the IOR”. Hence, as China and India redefine their narrative on security and discover synergies between their thoughts, the world is set to move a step closer to the idea of Asian concert of power.

NOTES

1 David Scott, The India Ocean as India’s Ocean, *The Oxford handbook of Indian Foreign Policy*, David M. Malone, C Raja Mohan and Srinath Raghavan (eds.) Pp:466-478


7 Ibid

8 Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian maritime security Strategy


The concept of ‘Common Public Good(s) at Sea’ has lately gained much traction in the context of maritime safety and security in the Afro-Asian swath of the Indo-Pacific region. As the centre-of-gravity of world’s economic power shifts eastwards, the salience of this predominantly maritime-configured region is increasing, and the attendant emphasis on security and stability in its maritime domain.

One does not recall coming across a precise definition of the phrase ‘Common Public Good(s) at Sea’ (CPGS). The closest one gets is to define it is through exemplification of a navy’s ‘constabulary’ and ‘benign’ tasks at sea, ranging from counter-piracy and counter-terrorism to search and rescue (SAR), and humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief (HADR). This essay attempts to understand CPGS as a concept, examine the regional trends, and extrapolate the emerging CGPS architecture in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Concept

Most of us are familiar to the term ‘public good(s)’ used in the economic context. It draws its genesis from the renowned economist Paul Samuelson, who defined it in his 1954 paper as:
“[goods] which all enjoy in common in the sense that each individual’s consumption of such a good leads to no subtractions from any other individual’s consumption of that good.”

A ‘public good’ is, therefore, something that is a collective good sans exclusions. Further, it is not amount to a ‘zero-sum’ reckoning; in a sense that its consumption by one entity does not reduce its availability to other entities. In the maritime domain, a public good are best represented by ‘lighthouses’ that beacon weather-beaten seafarers to the ports and safe waters.

Much of the world’s ocean realm wherein humans undertake multifarious maritime activities is ‘international medium’ not subject to the laws of any single country. The delivery of safety and security in such space of global commons thus becomes a logical extension of ‘public good’. Further, such ‘good’ could be extrapolated to the littoral. The watery medium provides transnational access to maritime security forces to undertake humanitarian missions during adverse contingencies on and off foreign shores. It is pertinent to note that while undertaking such benign tasks – whether at high seas or in the foreign littoral – the maritime forces perform a valuable function for their respective governments as ‘instruments of foreign policy’. Given the above, in the contemporary context, CPGS may be defined as:

‘measures taken by the maritime security forces to meet their respective States’ international commitments towards facilitating good and lawful order in the maritime global commons, while also meeting their respective foreign policy objectives’.

It is necessary to note, however, that the maritime domain – represented by the seas and oceans of the world – constitutes the most unregulated and treacherous realm on Earth. To develop situational awareness in this domain, deliver safety and regulate activities therein presents a formidable challenge for maritime forces, including those belonging to major naval powers.
The Regional Context

In geographical terms, the Indo-Pacific region has a predominant maritime configuration. While geography has been a ‘constant’ in history, the so-called ‘rise of Asia’ and the attendant maritime-economic activity in the region has made the CPGS concept highly relevant to the regional countries and the extra-regional stakeholders. Traditionally – or at least in more recent times since the beginning of the post Cold War era – CPGS across the globe, and particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, has been provided by the maritime forces of the United States (US); at times, assisted by the forces of what the US calls, its “allies and partners”.

The regional countries, beset by the lack of adequate capacity – besides limited national objectives in terms of geographical scope – have been largely content with the arrangement, and have adopted a ‘free-rider’ approach to security. However, clearly, such a measure is not sustainable, neither for the regional countries, not for the global stakeholders. It is not easy – even for a superpower like the US – to deliver CPGS incessantly in the nearly ‘endless’ stretch of the world’s maritime realm. The military/naval resources of the US have been increasingly stretched since the end of Cold War due to its increasing military-strategic commitments overseas. The geopolitical challenges added to the US resource ‘overstretch’, best exemplified by the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)\(^3\) and the Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI)\(^4\). This led to the US Navy Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) propound the concept of ‘Thousand-Ship Navy’ (TSN)\(^5\) concept propounded in 2005.

Seeking support of the allies and partners to partake the responsibility of CPGS, the TSN concept continued well into the later years, even though ‘TSN’ concept was later rephrased as the ‘Global Maritime Partnership’ (GMP) initiative, and the same was highlighted in the US Maritime Strategy document of 2007.\(^6\)
In the long run, however, the reliance of the Indo-Pacific region on a single power (or even on a group of ‘monolithic’ western powers) for providing CPGS may not be in the interest of the regional countries and global stakeholders alike, including for the US itself. There are nascent indicators of a change, which augurs well for both categories of nations!

Emerging CPGAS Architecture

Tier One

For the US, since the beginning of the current decade, delivery of CPXS in the Indo-Pacific has assumed greater salience than ever before in consonance with its national-strategic concept of ‘Rebalance to Asia’. Strategy-2015 furthers the appeal for the partnership, with the ‘Global Maritime Partnership’ (GMP) – of the 2007 Maritime Strategy document – now rephrased as a “global network of navies” in the 2015 Maritime Strategy. The 2015 document effectively communicates to the potential partners the rationale for such “plug and play” cooperation with the US forces sans “commitment”.7

While the US has been a ‘constant’ in terms of delivery of CPXS in the region, and it may continue to be the ‘lead actor’ for some time, it is unlikely to be the ‘only’ provider of ‘net security’8 in the longer run. The Indo-Pacific is witness to the emergence of new major and middle powers with increasing geopolitical, economic and military stakes in the entire Indo-Pacific region. For geopolitical and military-strategic reasons, China is likely to contest the primacy of the US in delivery of CPXS. Notably, however, the Chinese refer to CPXS differently, as ‘Military Operations Other than War’ (MOOTW), as indicated in China’s Defence White Papers since the 2012 document titled ‘The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces’.9
**Tier Two**

While the US-China dialectic may soon emerge as the first tier of the regional CPGS arrangement, other medium powers are likely supplement it and form the second tier. These include Australia, India and Japan: middle powers, all of whom have gained considerably from their alliance/partnership with the US, but would like to form a concert to hedge against being entangled in the US-China tussle. Towards this end, analysts are increasingly promoting the idea of “middle power coalitions” to offset big-power rivalry in the Indo-Pacific.¹⁰

Australia’s strategic focus has traditionally been on its eastern seaboard facing the Pacific. Lately, however, Canberra is increasingly looking westwards, akin to a “pivot to the Indian Ocean”,¹¹ and reminiscent of events of the 1970s leading to Australia’s ‘Two-Ocean Navy’ policy enunciated in 1986.¹² Sam Bateman writes, “Australia’s approach to the Indian Ocean in recent decades might appear to have waxed and waned (but) it never withered away...I don’t see any prospect of the current 'pivot' withering away!”¹³

India’s new maritime strategy released in October 2015 indicates its intention to be a provider of ‘net security’ in its areas of maritime interest, which have been significantly expanded within the Indo-Pacific region, and even beyond. Such enunciation is in consonance with the Indian Prime Minister’s vision of “SAGAR” (hindi word for ‘Ocean’ and an acronym for ‘Security and Growth for All in the Region’).¹⁴ Furthermore, the role emerges not only from India’s normative responsibility as a regional power, but is also closely interwoven with its own economic growth and prosperity.¹⁵

The Japanese maritime forces have played an active role in maintaining good maritime order in the western Pacific and the Indian Ocean despite the constraints imposed by their national Constitution, specifically relating to the concept of ‘collective security’. Notably, in
June 2011, Japan established a forward operating base at Djibouti to facilitate its counter-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden. As Japan’s only military facility on foreign soil, the new base is being reinforced with more resources and accorded added responsibilities. The base would enable the Japanese Self Defence Forces (JSDF) to respond to any contingency involving humanitarian and good order missions in the area. With the constraints of domestic law eroding, Japan’s CPGS role – in concert with other countries – is likely to increase in the coming years.

The tier two is likely to be reinforced by the European Union (EU). Through the EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) Operation Atalanta, the has already proved itself to be a reckonable actor in the Indian Ocean, and the EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) promulgated in June 2014 is likely synergise the role of EU navies to provide CPGS – and least in the IOR, if not further eastwards – through its “integrated approach to global maritime security”. The Strategy would support the role of France – the only major power besides the US that has maintained a continuous naval presence in the Indian Ocean – and would draw support from the re-establishment of the Royal Navy’s permanent presence east of the Suez after a hiatus of nearly 45 years.

**Tier Three**

In due course, some other medium powers and other relevant countries are likely to share the stage by taking on the gauntlet of CPGS in the Indo-Pacific, forming the third tier of the regional CPGS architecture. The potential medium powers include Indonesia and Iran. Indonesia has enunciated for itself the sobriquet of “Porus Maritim Dunia” (global maritime axis) that envisions developing of the maritime power of the archipelagic nation to its full potential. Further, in consonance with its geo-strategic centrality, it seeks to shape events in the maritime space of the Indo-Pacific region. Although Jakarta has accorded priority to internal consolidation, it is likely to play a significant CPGS role in the region.
Iran could be an effective counter to the global threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and bears a high potential of contributing to stability in West Asia and maritime security in the western Indian Ocean. The international community needs to realize the potential of ISIS to disrupt the West Asian international shipping lanes (ISL) by targeting oil and gas tankers, particularly in the maritime choke-points. The Iranian Navy may be a bulwark against the ISIS in securing the global energy trade sourced from the Persian/Arabian Gulf. The positive trends in P+1 negotiations with Iran over its nuclear programme represents an opportunity for the stakeholders to engage with Iran.

The other relevant powers that could potentially contribute to CPGS in the region are South Africa, Pakistan and a cohesive group of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Their highly capable and professional maritime forces could contribute significantly to regional CPGS effort. However, the political leaderships in Islamabad and the GCC capitals need to realize the emerging imperative to look beyond their respective sub-regional rivalries.

Conclusion

The postulated CPGS architecture for the Indo-Pacific region conforms to the so-called “inclusive approach to maritime security”, which has been the ‘mantra’ of all the multilateral security institutions of the region: the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting - Plus (ADMM+), the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). However, in the longer term, a formulation of regional security and stability architecture on a select group of regional countries and non-resident powers does not auger well for regional and global security.

The CPGS effort would need to be pan-Indo Pacific and collective, and enmesh the IOR and Western Pacific spheres of multilateralism.
While it may be too ambitious and unrealistic to expect ‘all’ regional countries to acquire ‘surplus’ capacity for CPGS, even if the smaller countries develop adequate capacity to police their respective maritime zones and areas of SAR responsibility, they could contribute significantly to the collective regional CPGS effort. The efforts of multilateral institutions, and major and middle powers would need to be directed towards such ‘capacity-building’.

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8 The concept of ‘net security’ is defined as “…the state of actual security available in an area, upon balancing prevailing threats, inherent risks
and rising challenges in the maritime environment, against the ability to monitor, contain and counter all of these”. ‘Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy’, Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (Navy), 2015, New Delhi.


12 In the 1970s, Australia was wary of Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean, which led to the establishment of its lone naval base in west (HMAS Sterling) in 1978 and enunciation of ‘Two Ocean Policy’ in 1986, through which Canberra intended to relocate half of the Navy’s fleet to the Indian Ocean seaboard.

13 E-mail communication with Commodore Sam Bateman (Retd.), Royal Australian Navy (RAN), 24 October 2015.


Cooperating for Sustainable Development of the Oceans

Kapil Narula

The United Nations Sustainable Development Summit held on 25 September 2015 formally adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets. The agreement signed by all 193 member countries of the UN General Assembly to approve the final document titled ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ is unique as it applies to all countries. These goals and targets are ambitious, indivisible and interlinked and focus on all three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for Oceans

“Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” has been accepted as SDG 14 and have ten clearly identified targets. The sub-goals of this SDG are briefly enumerated below:

- **14.1** By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

- **14.2** By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for
their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.

- 14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.

- 14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible.

- 14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law.

- 14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies.

- 14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

- 14.a Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular SIDS and LDCs.

- 14.b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.

- 14.c Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS.
While the objectives are unambiguous and time bound, the indicators for measuring specific targets and the mechanisms for monitoring the progress in attaining the SDGs are currently being evolved.

**Challenges**

Considering that oceans for long have been neglected and abused, there are many challenges facing the international community in attaining SDG 14. The first challenge is the issue of ocean governance at ‘high seas’. It is a matter of concern that the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) does not spell out the responsibility of nation states or any other agency for protection of biodiversity in ‘Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction’. The existing governance mechanisms and their implementation at the ‘high seas’ are sectoral based and are compartmentalized into fishing, shipping and sea bed mining. This leaves large gaps in ocean governance due to presence of a multitude of agencies with overlapping areas of responsibility. Although countries have agreed to progress with further negotiations on an internationally binding instrument for protection of Biological Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) under the UNCLOS, the legally binding treaty is still a couple of years away.

Secondly, there are no centralized monitoring agencies and international organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and International Maritime Organisation (IMO) rely on different countries for monitoring and implementation of laws in the EEZ and on the ‘high seas’. In the absence of political will, poor infrastructure and weak institutions there is inconsistent and poor enforcement of the existing laws on conservation of the oceans. This overall lack of capability is a major challenge for enforcement of SDG 14 for a large number of countries.

Thirdly, fragmented ocean governance also leads to lack of accountability amongst national and international agencies. Conflicting
interests, lack of coordination and cooperation amongst different government agencies and their counterparts in other countries also add to the list of challenges. While action to prevent pollution from industrial activities on land and overflow of untreated waste into sea is a matter of stricter environmental compliance at the local level, the issue of limiting Green House Gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere calls for global action. Surmounting these challenges require a major shift in the approach and attitude of the governments.

The Need for Collective Action

Marine pollution, dwindling fish stocks, ocean acidification and other degradation are all trans-boundary issues which demand collective action. The ocean is also a public good and hence all countries are obliged to protect the oceans. It is in this spirit that all governments have reached a universal agreement and are signatories to SDG 14 as part of the global development agenda. However, it must be remembered that SDGs are non-binding and voluntary in nature and considering that countries are at various stages of development, it is important that adequate support is provided to countries by providing finance, transfer of technology, development of scientific knowhow, capacity building and sharing of best practices for action on SDG 14. A joint call for action at the global and regional level led by existing international organizations such as the IMO, or other regional groupings such as the SAARC, BIMSTEC, APEC, ASEAN, IORA etc. may give impetus to the push for collective action on SDG 14.

Civil society has an important role to play along with NGOs in implementing the SDGs. Global Oceans Commission¹, Oceans Action Network², Oceans Sanctuary Alliance³, and Global Oceans Forum⁴ are few of the agencies which are playing an active role in the restoration of oceans and the technical expertise of these organisations can be tapped for developing specific programs for implementing,
monitoring and reporting on SDG 14. Think tanks such as National Maritime Foundation along with its regional chapters at Chennai and Vishakhapatnam can also play an important role in raising the awareness on SDG 14 and for promoting healthy oceans around the Indian Ocean while collaborating with other maritime think tanks in different countries.

Newer organisations such as the ‘Global Partnerships for Oceans’ (GPO), which is supported by the World Bank, can also become a lead international agency to coordinate global action for implementing SDG 14. The GPO has over 150 partners representing governments, international organizations, civil society groups, and the private sector which addresses the threats to the health, productivity and resilience of the ocean by tackling problems of overfishing, pollution, and habitat loss. The global network also mobilizes finance and knowledge to implement solutions for the benefit of communities in pursuit of sustainable development of the oceans.

From Collective to Multi-Level Action

Although the SDGs are global, their implementation has to be undertaken at the regional, national and sub-national level. At the regional level, cross-boundary cooperation is vital as seas and oceans transcend political boundaries. The Regional Seas Programme (RSP) is a good example of what can be achieved at a regional level. The programme under the guidance of the UNEP aims to reverse the degradation of the world’s oceans and coastal areas through the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environment. The programme engages neighbouring countries in a comprehensive manner by undertaking specific actions to protect the marine environment through a regional convention and associated protocols. These are backed by a strong legal framework and are coordinated and implemented by member countries at the regional level. There are currently 13 such RSPs that are administered in different parts of the world including the South
Asian Seas Action Plan (SASAP). The overarching program focuses on coastal management, oil-spill contingency planning, human resource development and the environmental effects of land-based activities on oceans. Although there is no regional convention, the SASAP draws from the existing global environmental and maritime conventions and contributes to regional action for maritime conservation.

At the national level, countries need to draw out their action plans for achieving the sub-targets and need to assign responsibilities to relevant agencies for achieving results in a time bound manner. The actions under the RSP and the legal framework for its implementation may serve as an example for the governments which can adapt the program to suit the respective domestic institutions and existing national laws.

At the sub-national level, the detailed plans need to be drawn and implemented by respective states or agencies which can be undertaken under the program. These actions have to be coordinated centrally at the national level by a dedicated organization. Financing for undertaking the projects, technical knowhow and scientific expertise needs to be provided centrally to these agencies and clear accountability needs to be established before commencement of the program. Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), domestic financing through national action plan on climate change and development of other innovative ways to tap into international public and private financing mechanisms is also required to ensure a steady supply of funds for undertaking the activities under the program.

Success Stories

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is a good example of coordinating efforts for coastal and marine management and has been successfully implemented in the Mediterranean, Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Apart from conserving the oceans, it addresses the ‘stressors’ on oceans and targets human activity in coastal areas. The plan includes
safeguarding marine protected areas, implementing development activities that takes land-sea interactions into account, conduct of Environmental Impact Assessments (EAI) for coastal projects, measures for pollution control based on a monitoring and assessment programme which are supported by legislation, public education and the involvement of coastal communities. These cross-sectoral linkages at the national as well as at the local level are an important reason for the success of the program.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF & CC), Government of India has initiated the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project in three states of West Bengal, Orissa and Gujarat. The World Bank assisted project which was approved in 2010, has a budget outlay of Rs.1155.63 crores (US$262 million) and includes a National Coastal Management Programme. Under the project, a National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM) has been established in the Anna University, Chennai and it will be linked to eleven collaborating regional centers in each of the coastal States/Union territories. Further, the Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) has been set up for the implementation of the project. At the national level, the MoEF & CC is the lead agency and the Departments of Forests and Environment (DoFE) are partners at the state level. National Project Management Units (NPMUs) and State Project Management Units (SPMUs) have also been set up as registered societies to manage the project and to achieve the Project Development Objectives (PDOs). These entities coordinate project activities on a full-time basis and directly execute some of the relevant project’s sub components. In addition, Steering Committees (SCs) at the national and the state levels have been set up for inter-sectoral coordination.

Conclusion

Any effort for conservation and sustainable use of the oceans demands universal action. Similar to the vexing issue of climate change, global
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governance of oceans is challenging and requires that all parties agree to a common framework for implementation and monitoring. International cooperation is inbuilt in the SDGs framework, given that the goals are universal and have been arrived at by a rigorous intergovernmental process. These also promise long term benefits to all countries. The objectives having been defined and its implementation agreed to in a time bound manner, the focus must now shift to the processes for the implementation and monitoring to achieve the targets. Although there are many success stories which could serve as models for the implementation of SDG 14 for oceans, shared responsibility, global commitments, collective and multi-level actions which are built on broad, multi-stakeholder participation and accountability are essential for achieving the SDG for oceans.

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Global discourse on climate change has come a long way: from its credibility of being hotly contested to becoming a priority in international cooperation for states, primarily under the umbrella of United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC). The recently concluded Conference of the Parties (CoP) 21 meeting in Paris in November-December 2015 is reflective of international willingness to cooperate on climate change.

In its landmark 2007 report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) cautioned about the intense and varied impact of climate change on human migration.\(^1\) Approximately, 20 million people are being displaced every year due to climate change\(^2\) including displacement triggered by natural disasters as well as through the effects of slow onset processes.\(^3\) Despite such statistics, remedial efforts remain below par. While the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention) provides asylum rights to those affected by political persecution, there is no international legal or institutional provision to address people displaced by climate change.

One major determinant in the inaction is the non-traditional and non-military nature of the problem, as the effects are not directly visible. Rather, they become evident over a period of time. Hence, in the absence of visible trends, there is a general lack of interest from policymakers on this issue. The existing narrative also discusses the
trend along two broad categories: on the one hand, many scholars argue for adding provisions in the existing Refugee Convention for those displaced due to climate change, as it is an external stimuli, compelling people to emigrate; on the other, there is also a push for accommodating ‘climate refugees’ and climate change induced migration to existing frameworks for a cooperative response. Further, the CoP 21 in Paris reveals the relative disinterest among states to place climate change induced migration as a priority agenda item for discussion.

Rising sea levels render coastal populations extremely vulnerable. Many factors directly affect their livelihoods that compel them to either adapt or migrate. The 2014 IPCC Working Group II report states:

*Important direct effects of climate change on coastal settlements include dry-land loss due to erosion and submergence, damage of extreme events (such as wind storms, storm surges, floods, heat extremes, and droughts) on built environments, effects on health (food- and water-borne disease), effects on energy use, effects on water availability and resources, and loss of cultural heritage.*

The coastal areas of states surrounding the Bay of Bengal are densely populated. Added to that, there is also an overlay of economic, social and political stressors. Large coastal metropolises as well as small subsistence communities are all prone to sea-borne natural disasters and to rising sea levels. The impact of climate change and natural disasters varies due to a range of social, political and economic factors. For instance, the responses are primarily dedicated to urban areas; and added to that are the existing rural-urban migration patterns that are exacerbated during natural disasters. Low-lying coastal states are at threat across the world. The impact is also underlined by the varying ability of developed and developing states to cope with its effects. Pacific island states such as Tuvalu and Kiribati are trying to garner attention towards the existential impact of climate change on small island states through the UNFCCC CoP forum. The threat of submergence and the scarcity of resources
results in further economic stagnation and create stimuli for migration towards economically attractive and politically stable places.\textsuperscript{9}

**Climate Change in the Bay of Bengal and its Impact on Migration**

While global solutions and international legal frameworks form the backbone of policy responses, many effects of climate change are also manifested regionally. These are determined largely by geographical conditions, spilling across man-made national boundaries.

The Bay of Bengal is one region where the effects of climate change, both slow and sudden, can be observed at great cost to life and the environment.\textsuperscript{11} “Globally, eight of the ten countries with the greatest number of people living in low-elevation coastal zones are located in South and South East Asia,”\textsuperscript{12} making it the most vulnerable zone.\textsuperscript{13} (Fig. 1) Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2015 showed
that Bangladesh is ‘most at risk,’ while states like India and Myanmar feature in the ‘extreme risk’ category.

States like Bangladesh and parts of Myanmar, India, Vietnam and Indonesia are inherently volatile and prone to natural disasters such as flooding, drought, cyclones, which severely handicap the primarily agro-based economies. These, combined with socio-political structures that are not well-adapted for providing immediate relief and security, compel internal and cross border migration as a survival strategy. These effects are compounded by climate change: both slow onset processes as well as due to the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters.¹⁴

Additionally, states tend to focus on large projects, and analyse success on the basis of narrow indices such as economic growth instead of economic and sustainable development¹⁵. For instance, the lure of profits in the palm oil industry in Indonesia has led big corporations as well as smaller farmers to burn forests and natural vegetation, particularly in parts of Sumatra and Kalimantan. This has both immediate as well as long term consequences, affecting air quality, threatening the natural habitat of flora and fauna, as well as gravely disturbing the ecological balance.¹⁶ Resultantly, environmental concerns are side-lined, and ecologically sustainable livelihoods of indigenous and coastal communities are disrupted.

The densely populated littorals experience frequent cyclones and flooding which, coupled with dearth of economic opportunities and lack of effective infrastructure in disaster management (preventive and response) along with the backdrop of political instability and conflict, provide conducive push factors for migration.¹⁷ Citing the example of Bangladesh, one analyst makes an interesting link, where it is stated:

Underdeveloped societies are at high risk…. …particularly if they depend on the environment for livelihood……..Such societies are relatively more likely than developed societies to exit the affected area, particularly when their loyalty is low.¹⁸
This is particularly important in an Asian context as migration patterns are often significantly determined by existing socio-cultural similarities and kinship networks, apart from economic determinants.¹⁹

Bangladesh, a lower riparian state, experiences frequent flooding. “Migration, both internal and international labour migration of unskilled workers, has increasingly become a coping mechanism in the face of environmental and economic challenges.”²⁰

Furthermore, rising sea levels and slow and sudden impacts of climate change are also intricately linked to food security. People living in coastal areas of the Bay of Bengal littoral are heavily dependent on natural monsoon patterns. Sudden and seasonal natural disasters cripple the food security of the respective economies, further triggering the need to look for alternative options. Myanmar, with a vulnerable coast, experienced one of the world’s most devastating cyclones in the recent past: in 2008, Cyclone Nargis killed more than 100,000 people and severely impacted food security.

Adding to the environmental stressors are political and economic factors. The region is home to some of world’s poorest people, and is marked by rapid urbanization. These factors tend to overlap and steer climate change induced migration, hence accelerating human mobility towards pockets of development. The region produces a large number of international migrants to neighbouring states as well as to developed economies, (both skilled and unskilled), especially through linkages of diaspora. South Asia has one of the largest global diaspora, and India is both a source and destination for migration.²¹ In South East Asia, Thailand is one of the immigrant states while Indonesia produces emigrants, due to its large population.
Existing Mechanisms for Co-Operation

The Bay of Bengal littoral states straddle the South Asian Association for Regional Corporation (SAARC) on one side and the Association for South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the other. There have been efforts to create a regional consciousness towards co-operation in the Bay of Bengal, especially through the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). While there are provisions for co-operation in climate change and disaster management, no concrete steps have been taken towards addressing climate induced migration, despite 18 years since its establishment. Additionally, BIMSTEC is yet to fulfil its existing potential of its economic-centric mandate.

SAARC has a Disaster Management Centre (SDMC) in New Delhi, which has “never been considered a particularly effective institution,” and is subject to lukewarm progress. SDMC has not played any significant role in mitigating or managing the many disasters hitting the region in the recent past.

On the other hand, focused international initiatives backed by non-resident institutions have proven to be more successful. Initiatives to achieve food security and sustainable development in the Bay of Bengal can help reduce drivers for migration in the long term. Adaptation is also a key long term measure, to avoid flight altogether. A notable example is the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) project that focuses on the sustainable use of marine resources for development, involving various stakeholders including local communities. This is backed by key international organizations such as Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO); Global Environment Facility (GEF), Norway; the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDCA) as also from participating governments and the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA). This initiative includes Thailand, Malaysia and Myanmar apart from
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India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. It has achieved success in fostering co-operation at the regional, sub-regional and national levels to leverage resources, and reaching food security and sustainable development while empowering a range of stakeholders, including vulnerable coastal communities that are worst hit by the impacts of climate change. Another key initiative is the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), funded by the UN Environmental Program that addresses a range of issues such as adaptation and awareness, and has an environment and natural resources information centre.

The Way Ahead

An international framework on climate change induced migration may take some time, since it remains a background issue, as is evident from the recent CoP Summit in Paris. Effective regional co-operation could provide a model and impetus towards outlining a global framework. Globally, there are both regional (in Latin America and Africa) and national (such as Temporary Protection Status in USA, and the national laws of Sweden and Finland) structures that provide short term protection to environmental migrants. This is a useful legal provision to accommodate those affected by unpredictable effects of climate change, to provide relief temporarily till they can return to a stable homeland.

Despite the slow progress and poor public awareness, there have been some international efforts in this direction. The Government of Norway convened the Nansen Conference in 2011 to explore possible responses to linkages between climate change and mobility, and came out with a “set of ten overarching principles designed to shape and inform further action on addressing the linkages between climate change and mobility, both normatively and practically.”

These principles focused on addressing the potential concerns of those most vulnerable to “climate change and environmental hazards,”
and emphasized the building of local and national capacities, and the need to engage with “local governments and communities, civil society and private sector”. It also directed states to look for regional and international solutions, pertaining to development and displacement, particularly if “national capacity [was] limited.”

Given the significant impact of climate change on the large populations in this region, the absence of a regional initiative or framework to address climate change induced migration is considered a critical imperative. As discussed earlier, it is not the availability of institutions or frameworks but more a question of developing a holistic outlook on this issue. This is a challenge that demands urgent attention from policymakers on two counts: firstly, there are visible effects and credible challenges due to the impact of climate change on human populations; and secondly, climate induced migration feeds into the existing overlaying patterns of economic migration in the region, including rural-urban migration networks, and kinship. The existing migration networks such as Bangladesh to India or emigrants from Indonesia and Myanmar to Thailand, Malaysia and other economically better-off states may be fed intensely by climate change induced displacement, and it can often be difficult to segregate the two.

According to an ADB report, climate change migrants also need to be studied in sync with existing channels of migration, to better understand patterns. “The sending of remittances by migrants should also be facilitated, as it can greatly reduce the vulnerability of families and communities living in regions at risk.” Further, “addressing this phenomenon today will minimize forced displacement and make the most of migration for development.”

Thus, a multidimensional response mechanism addressing different sectors such as food security, fisheries, and livelihoods can not only facilitate co-operation but also mitigate potential areas of interstate discord on aspects of human mobility and resource sharing. Instead
of remedial responses, proactive long term policies are better suited to address this issue. It is imperative to foster bonhomie, and avoid geo-political discord in the region. The international nature of climate change gives states immense scope for co-operation, particularly over common challenges such as rising sea levels, increase in flooding, droughts and cyclones.

The foremost step towards addressing this issue, therefore, is generating a comprehensive dialogue as climate change induced migration and the contentious terminology of ‘climate refugees’ still do not figure in most of bilateral and regional Track 1 agendas. Despite the presence of several mechanisms for cooperation in the region, there is a need for publicity and awareness, particularly among those coastal communities as also the states as a whole that will be affected the most by these challenges. Finally, existing mechanisms for co-operation such as SDMC and BIMSTEC, must be strengthened through more robust interactions, and by formulating implementation protocols.

NOTES


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Beyond Altruism: The ‘Unstated’ Signals during Fleet Reviews

Raghavendra Mishra

The Indian Navy will be holding its second International Fleet Review (IFR) in February 2016 and this important event showcasing India’s global maritime outreach is being held at Visakhapatnam, the headquarters of Eastern Naval Command. As is the case with similar international maritime engagements, the theme of this event ‘United through the Oceans’ is predicated on fostering global cooperation and synergistic collaboration. Such themes are the norm for similar events being organized by other countries that are usually celebratory or commemorative in nature. To cite, the first IFR by the Indian Navy in 2001 at Mumbai on the theme of ‘Bridges of Friendship’ was a celebration of 50 years of India as a republic.

Traditionally, assemblage of warships for ‘fleet reviews’ - where the majority of the navy takes part or ‘review of the fleet’ when the naval power of specific geography is on display, were a prelude to war or an explicit show of force to deter adventurism by a potential adversary. Despite emphasizing historical recall or global cooperation in contemporary context, such displays of naval (or sea power) are also meant to convey strategic signals, politico-diplomatic intent and military posture that transcends mere symbolism and cooperative postulations. The reason for such ‘implied’ signalling arise from the proposition of a relatively ‘permissive’ regime that prevails in the world’s oldest commons where power, politics, force, technology and, not in the least, the geography remain an integral part of the larger logic of the seas.
This article examines some of these ‘covert’ pointers that remain ‘below the horizon’ during international fleet reviews which are meant for both internal and external audiences.

The first important signal that the host nation wishes to put across through IFR is the importance of naval and maritime context in national strategic calculus. More often than not, events at sea especially those far from home waters are not given due weight as compared to continental issues. Such a trend is not unusual since land-centric interests come with the quantifiable and emotive ‘home and hearth’ connotations whereas the seas in general, make ‘esoteric contribution’ to national well-being and uninterrupted progress of multifarious national activities, well beyond the perceptible horizon.¹ This historical trend is of particular relevance for India where its relations with two of the largest territorial neighbours, China and Pakistan, remains complex whereas it enjoys a favourable maritime neighbourhood facilitated by a balanced and strong navy. Events such as IFR help in reinforcing the military maritime narrative to national security discourse by bringing home the ‘opportunity costs’ of multidimensional naval capacity and capabilities. Recent emphasis on maritime themes by the national leadership and strategic community is also a sign of an emerging ‘globalist approach’ to international relations where India is seen a key player. For the domestic audience, IFR is a platform to display the extended reach and capabilities of ‘maritime military forces’ besides a message to the international community that ‘use or threat of force’ remains an option for safeguarding national interests, however far flung these maybe.

Another important message through IFRs is to reiterate the host nation’s ‘arrival’ on the maritime stage and by extension, an indirect signal that it is no longer a ‘rule follower’ but aspires to be a ‘rule maker and shaper’ of the security environment at sea. The IFR in 2016 is meant to emphasize that India is an important stakeholder in the sub-regional, regional and, global maritime dynamics. This is evident
from Indian Navy’s recently released Maritime Security Strategy (MSS) titled ‘Ensuring Secure Seas’ where it is stated that one of the key result area is to “…contribute to shaping a favourable and positive maritime environment, to enhance security therein….promote security and stability at sea, and enhance cooperation, mutual understanding and interoperability…”. This indicates that India and the Indian Navy is ready to assume a lead role in the emerging global maritime security architecture, regime building and ocean governance efforts. This axiom is further amplified where the strategy document brings out the tenets of “peace, stability and security” undergirding the net maritime security paradigm, an aspect to which the Indian Navy attaches pronounced importance, in the times to come.

A further signal meant to be conveyed through the February 2016 IFR is about the geography of strategic salience. More often than not, extant and rising powers have attempted an alignment between their geo-political and geo-strategic imperatives to critical geographies in question by focussing strategic capital through politico-diplomatic engagements, enhanced economic linkages and military potential, either to retain status quo or seek more space for manoeuvre. As mentioned earlier, the 2001 IFR was held at Mumbai on India’s western seaboard whereas the second IFR will be held on the east coast. The geographies of both the IFRs are evidence of a ‘balanced posture and equal importance’ that the Indian Navy attaches to the Indian Ocean and beyond and its ‘primary and secondary areas of interest’ that have expanded significantly since the 2007 Maritime Military Strategy. In the 2015 strategy document, these ‘areas of interest’ encompass the entire seascape from the West African littoral to the Central Pacific in the East. This is suggestive of a tack to the emerging construct of Indo-Pacific from the hitherto traditional primacy accorded to the Indian Ocean. In equal measure, the holding of IFR on eastern seaboard reinforces the transition from ‘Look East’ to ‘Act East’ policy where the content of such engagements have now acquired ‘strategic undertones’ from the earlier economic orientation of mid-1990s.
Beyond Altruism: The ‘Unstated’ Signals during Fleet Reviews

Fleet reviews serve as a platform for demonstrating national and not just naval technology quotients. The proposition by a British historian, chronicling the rise of Royal Navy, that an ocean going ship, be it of commercial or military character, represents the epitome of human imagination and diverse technologies still holds true.\(^8\) The diversity in hull forms ranging from traditional to novel and exotic, means of propulsion from sail to nuclear, platform management techniques that are becoming increasingly networked with the variety, range and effects of naval weapons and sensors are a few important areas representing disparate technologies for creating operationally relevant capabilities at sea. The IFR will also be an occasion to demonstrate Indian Navy’s mantra of a builder’s navy. The Navy has used such occasions to display indigenous warship-building capabilities in distant waters while participating in such events abroad. To cite, INS Shayadri, the latest indigenous multi-mission frigate with advanced stealth features participated in the October 2015 IFR at Sagami Bay, Japan.\(^9\) This trend is particularly visible since the mid-1980s when INS Godavari participated in 1984 IFR at the US. This warship was truly the first indigenously designed warship where an interesting mix of western and eastern origin technologies were integrated. The significant improvements in naval design and construction were used to symbolise national technological advancements when the ship graced the cover of *The Time* magazine in April 1989, on the theme of “Super India: The Next Military Power”.

IFR is also an event to symbolise changes in politico-diplomatic relationships. The participation of INS Godavari in the 1984 IFR at New York mentioned earlier, was a sign of emerging rapprochement in the Indo-US relationship which had remained adversarial and ‘estranged’ during the Cold War era especially after the 1971 India-Pakistan conflict.\(^10\) The participation or non-participation in fleet reviews can also be a useful bellwether for measuring the current trajectory of international relationships. For example, China did not
invite Japan for the 2014 IFR at Qingdao (later cancelled due to MH 370 crash) due to the ongoing tensions over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. The media reports at that time had suggested that the US would not participate on such selectivity by the Chinese side. The fact that People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) did not take part in the October 2015 IFR at Tokyo indicates that the Sino-Japanese relations continue to remain constrained. While the Chinese Navy was not represented at the 2001 IFR at Mumbai, it would be participating in the 2016 edition at Visakhapatnam. It is pertinent to mention that the Indian Navy had participated in the 2009 and 2014 International Fleet Reviews hosted by China. Further, both countries are part of independent grouping engaged in anti-piracy patrols off the Horn of Africa (HoA). These trends are suggestive of Beijing’s perception that the Indian Ocean is a strategically relevant maritime space and India is an important stakeholder in the region that it needs to engage. The participation of other major naval powers in the 2016 IFR like Australia, France, Japan, Russia, South Africa, UK and the US in addition to the majority of Indian Ocean navies is proof that these nations find favour with India’s maritime strategic outreach efforts and consider the Indian Ocean as an important maritime space.

Empirically, all the great and rising powers have an oceanic outlook or at least have attempted to be one. This can be seen from the Greek Thalassocracies, Phoenicians and the Romans in the ancient times to the Portugal, Spain, Dutch and the British thereafter. The rise of the US and the erstwhile Soviet Navy in the post-Cold War context and the recent significant naval capability accretion by China as well as India point to the proposition that all players with rising strategic aspirations have paid close attention to the maritime dimension of international security. As argued elsewhere, the maritime domain provides for demonstration of technology, reach, capability, capacity and intent by the permissive character of oceanic commons. The multidimensional and cross-domain options afforded by the seas have
been historically used to convey strategic signals about the politico-diplomatic and military-security posture through outreaches such as the IFR. While the overt message during such events has invariably remained about fostering cooperation and providing global goods, the ‘not so obvious’ aspects of power, geo-politics, shared maritime interests but different approaches and, geography would remain irrevocably linked. This axiom is a rhythm of history and is not likely to change in the foreseeable future.

NOTES

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