

INDIA'S MARITIME STRATEGY AND IT'S IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN

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Abstract

This study highlights the changing dimensions of power in the Indo-Pacific region. A paradigm shift in India's maritime strategy is shaping the balance of power in the region. The regional balance has shifted in favor of India due to the new Indo-Pacific policy of the United States. A major shift in US policy has strengthened India's maritime security and blue economy in the region. However, India's maritime strategy has far-reaching implications for Pakistan's security and economy. This article examines India's maritime strategy in the 21st century and the development of partnerships with Western powers to contain China in the region. The article analyzes the change in India's maritime strategy and the expansion of its role in the Indo-Pacific region due to the availability of new technologies.

Keywords: *Indo-Pacific Region, Indian Maritime Strategy, Maritime Security, Blue Economy, US Indo-Pacific Policy*

Introduction

All the oceans and seas of the world are important, but the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR) is crucial among all the parts and oceans of the world due to the hot water theory, and it is rich in natural resources. The world's economy is mainly conducted through the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The maritime race in these oceans started with the disturbance of the balance of power in the region and a shift in the maritime policies of major states. This region has gained world attention due to its strategic significance, which has become the core of the global economy. New partnerships emerged in the region, and all the regional and major powers wanted to control it. India has the closest association with this region due to its long-term interests and geostrategic closeness

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with the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Moreover, India has become the 5th largest economy in the world, modernizing its naval forces and becoming one of the leading navies in the world. India now claims to be the region's net security provider and is trying to hold the role of the regional hegemon.¹

The Indian government has changed its maritime strategies in the 21st century. There was little focus on the changing regional dynamics and geo-political environment of the IOR in the Indian maritime strategy of 2007. However, in its new maritime doctrine of 2015, India has focused on the needs and concerns of the Indian navy in the changing security environment of IOR.² Subsequently, India is increasing its technological developments in the maritime domain to counter the threats and dominate the region.

In addition, India has shifted its focus to collective security by having partnership with major powers such as the US, France, Australia, and Japan. India is actively participating in combat operations to counter security threats such as piracy, cybercrime, and environmental disasters in the Indian and Pacific Oceans with and without allied countries. India is also trying to secure its sea lines of communication in the region through the direct deployment of forces, military assistance, military diplomacy, and capacity building. Therefore, India is attempting to increase its power and become a regional hegemon.³ India has also shaped the maritime doctrine, which is vital to the blue economy. For instance, India currently has 4% of the blue economy of its total GDP. In the financial year 2021-22, India's blue economy was about US \$7.2 billion. With its constant economic growth, the Indian government focuses on various maritime strategies to achieve its interests in the ocean.⁴

India's growing power in the IOR has created an imbalance in South Asia. Pakistan has shown concerns over India's increasing role with the support of the US.⁵ Pakistan is trying to partner with China to counter

¹ A. L. Sindhu, "Pakistan and Maritime Competition," *The Nation*, August 30, 2020, <https://www.nation.com.pk/30-Aug-2020/pakistan-and-maritime-competition>.

² D. M. Baruah, "India's Evolving Maritime Strategy," *The Diplomat*, December 3, 2015, <https://thediplomat.com/2015/12/indias-evolving-maritime-strategy/>

³ Anit Mukherjee, *India as a Net Security Provider: Concept and Impediments*. S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2014, <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/>

⁴ Sitara Fernando, "India's Strategy in the Indian Ocean and South Asia: Implications for Sri Lanka's National Security," *Proceedings in Defense Strategic Studies*, 9th International Research Conference-KDU, Sri Lanka-2016, <http://ir.kdu.ac.lk/bitstream/handle/>

⁵ HV Pant, "India in the Indian Ocean: Growing Mismatch between Ambitions and Capabilities," *Pacific Affairs* 82(2), (2009):279-297, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25608866>.

Indian hegemony and create a balance of power in the region.⁶ India worries about China's growing maritime powers by building different fleets, using satellite communication grids, and developing underwater listening devices.⁷

In order to understand the discussion, the theory of Neo-realism is applied. In the frame of reference of neo-realism, the offensive realism and defensive realism are used as its variants. In the theory of neo-realism, the major proponent is Kenneth Waltz. Within the working framework of this proponent, the international system is anarchic in nature. The international actors are relying on "self-help system." The unit of analysis is state. State is the sovereign actor and has the authority to legitimize the use of force and is a primary actor in international world politics. States strengthen their capabilities to ensure their survival. States focus more on the security and survival. According to Kenneth Waltz, in the anarchic world the states make partnerships to deal with the potential threat from rival states. Within the frame of reference of neo-realists, the national interest of the state varies according to the capabilities of the state.⁸

The conceptual framework of neo realism has two major variations i.e., offensive realism and defensive realism. The major proponents of defensive realism are Kenneth Waltz and Robert Jackson. According to the theory of defensive realism, the most crucial factor for states is their security. Waltz stated that sovereign states try to maximize their security through balance of power. Defensive realists ensure their survival and security and act as expansionists only in certain conditions, they are the preventionists and do not try to neutralize the enemy. The further variation in defensive realism is offense-defense military balance. According to Van Evera, states are opportunity and threat variants. If there are more chances of winning, then state will go for offense, but if there are chances of threat then state will go for defense. For defensive realists, the advantages of offense are exceedingly rare, so they go for the defense. The defensive realism has major contribution in international world politics, but it is highly criticized by offensive realists and other scholars.

John Mearsheimer has mainly criticized defensive realism and came up with the theory of offensive realism because states think rationally and strategically to survive in this anarchic world rather than relying at a chance.⁹ The prominent proponent of offensive realism is John J. Mearsheimer and Robert Gilpin. Within the conceptual framework of

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Luis Simón, "Neorealism, Security Cooperation, and Europe's Relative Gains Dilemma," *Security Studies* 26, no. 2 (2017): 185-212.

⁹ Steven E Lobell, "Structural Realism/Offensive and Defensive Realism," In Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies, 2010, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.304>

offensive realism, sovereign state is a primary actor in international world and the urge for security and survival make it power maximizer. States only cooperate in temporary partnerships, but it always tries to neutralize their enemy and enhance their own power. Mearsheimer has the basic assumptions about this theory that international world is anarchic in nature, all sovereign states have certain military capabilities, and they can go beyond the borders to achieve their national interests. The extreme level of offensive realists is hegemonic stability, state try to achieve the maximum power and to become the only hegemon.¹⁰ The offensive realists are not always offensive but sometimes they act as the defensive when the major powers try to gain interest at the expense of them, so to deter that state they must choose between balancing the power or buck passing. Buck passing means to take no action but relaying on the ally or some other to resist the enemy, but its major drawback is that the ally state might fail to resist the enemy state.¹¹ The offensive realism has major contribution in world politics to understand the behavior of different states and run the affairs of the world. But there are certain criticisms on offensive realism by different scholars that if the states wage the war to achieve their interests, then why certain expensive wars occur against the interests of the state that had started it? The second criticism is that offensive realists counter the democratic peace of the world. The third criticism is that there is cooperation in anarchic world against the interests of the offensive realists.¹²

Theoretically the maritime security has the neorealist approach in which the states are power seekers, and they project hard and soft power in the ocean to get hegemony in the world. But the goal of the states is to get security and safety. As the maritime theatre of the threats whether they are conventional or non-conventional, and becoming a core concern for the safety of the states. The security of the state and the maritime security are interlinked to each other. In the 21st century all the states have major focus on the maritime security because their economy and security are linked to maritime theater. Now the world has entered to the maritime competition to get more resources and to increase their trade through the sea routes and sea lines of communication. The world has made many technological developments in the oceans, and they are investing more in the maritime security. For the maritime security, the

¹⁰ A. Munro, "John J. Mearsheimer | Biography, Books, & Facts," Britannica- 2020, December 10, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Mearsheimer>.

¹¹ Glenn H. Synder "Mearsheimer's World-Offensive Realism and Struggle for Security: A Review Essay," *International Security* 27, no. 1 (2002) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3092155>.

¹² Dominic DP Johnson, and Bradley A. Thayer, "The Evolution of Offensive Realism: Survival under Anarchy from the Pleistocene to the Present," *Politics and the Life Sciences* 35, no. 1 (2016): 1-26.

states are taking collaborative measures and making partnerships to make this area secure. The international organizations like IMO have been created, the regional organizations are focusing on it too. States are developing their own maritime forces and strengthening it to attain more power and security. If we look at the Indian Ocean, the regional powers are developing partnerships to secure their maritime borders, like China and Pakistan have developed strong partnership and started the CPEC project, which is of immense importance. This project is helping both China and Pakistan to increase their economy as well as their power. On the other hand, India and USA are developing strong bonds to maritime security and maritime power. For this purpose, they are conducting different naval exercises and signing agreements. Other countries are also becoming part of their partnership. Hence, the state security and the maritime security are inter-linked to each other.

This paper explores the shift in Indian maritime strategy and the ways it is creating challenges for Pakistan in Indian Ocean. The first part describes the evolution of the Indian maritime security strategy. And Indian maritime partnership with Western powers to counter the new emerging powers in the region. The second part explores security perspectives on Indian maritime strategy in the context of US Indo-Pacific strategy. The third part analyzes the implication of the US Indo-Pacific and Indian blue economy on Pakistan. This paper is examining the only two factors of security and economy in Indian Ocean because these are the two most important factors in this anarchic world to show the power of the state and to dominate other states through it.

The Evolution of the Indian Maritime Security Strategy

India is pivotal in the IOR and has brought many changes to its maritime strategy to enhance its power capabilities. However, China has remained a significant threat to India in the region due to its massive progress in the maritime domain. India has been transforming its maritime strategy to meet its geo-political needs and counter any potential threat in the IPR. Indira Gandhi played a pivotal role in modernizing India's naval power, but the major shift came in the post-Cold War era when India developed its submarines, cruise missiles, patrolling stations, naval bases, and other maritime equipment.¹³

The 2007 maritime strategy emphasized the freedom of using the seas, but it had not considered the changing geo-political environment of the IPR. The 2015 maritime strategy has given its utmost focus to the changing dimensions of the region and reflected the robust version of the

¹³ Gurpreet S. Khurana, "India's Maritime Strategy: Context and Subtext," *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India* 13, no. 1 (2017): 14-26.

Indian navy with further developments. The Indian chief of Naval Staff, RK Dhowan, has explained the need to revise the 2007 maritime strategy that in recent decades the world has shifted its focus from Euro-Atlantic to IPR.¹⁴ More specifically, the shift of world economic and military powers towards Asia has made many regional changes and has more significant implications for the power trajectory of India in the region and beyond. Therefore, India has expanded its areas of naval interests to a more considerable extent in the new maritime strategy, including the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Red Sea, the South-west Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, the Southeast Indian Ocean, West Coast of Africa, East China Sea, Western Pacific Ocean, and their surrounding regions. More importantly, India has described itself as the "Net Security Provider" in the IPR.¹⁵

In 2009, the term 'Net Security Provider' was first coined by America for India in the Shangri-La Dialogue by US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. He said, "we look to India to be a partner and net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond." Then it became a colloquial term used by Indian leaders. Indian Premier Manmohan Singh said India is the 'Net Security Provider' in the Indian Ocean. He came up with the statement that India is a strong naval power in the Indian Ocean and can quickly respond. India can also provide security to the region's littoral states.¹⁶

The external powers play a crucial role in evolving the maritime order in IOR. For example, China has adopted various maritime strategies, such as the String of Pearls, labelled by US but nothing as such described by China, to encircle India in the maritime domain. China has also invested in the countries of IOR under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project, which has great strategic importance. More specifically, China has surrounded India by establishing partnership with Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Bangladesh, and other littoral states.¹⁷ Consequently, India is concerned about China's growing role in the IOR and developing partnerships with major powers. Such partnerships enabled India to access ports like Djibouti in Africa, Islands near Madagascar, and Diego Garcia in the Southern Indian Ocean. These strategic partners conduct joint navy trainings and exercises with India and provide re-fueling stations for its naval fleets and ships.¹⁸ Since 1992,

¹⁴ K. Mathur, *"Challenges and Prospects for India-Australia Maritime Cooperation," Australian Institute of International Affairs*, 2019.

¹⁵ *Ensuring Secure Seas : Indian Maritime Security Strategy*.

¹⁶ Anit Mukherjee, *India as a Net Security Provider*.

¹⁷ Lavina Lee, *"Assessing the Quad: Prospects and Limitations of Quadrilateral Cooperation for Advancing Australia's Interests," Lowy Institute for International Policy*, 2020.

¹⁸ Vivek Mishra, *"Consolidating India's Indian Ocean Strategy," The Diplomat* (2019).

India and the US have been conducting bilateral naval exercises at the Malabar coast, 'Malabar Naval Exercises,' to increase their power projection. Japan also joined these exercises in 2015 and invited Australia to participate in them in the Indian maritime arena. These quadrilateral naval exercises have sent shivers down the spine of China and isolated them. These exercises have expanded the Indian maritime domain and its sea power.¹⁹

Additionally, India became part of the QUAD, a group of four democratic countries: the US, Japan, Australia, and India. In 2007, the group agreed to increase their security and economic ties in the IPR. ²⁰ It was revised in 2017 due to the growing significance of the Indo-Pacific. The QUAD has provided a platform for coordination and diplomatic meetings to discuss different issues of their interests regarding the Indo-Pacific's openness and the region's security.²¹ The primary purpose of QUAD is to ensure the economic and security interests of the partners, protect the trade routes, and contain China. Furthermore, the closed-door meetings of the 'U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue,' are taking place regularly, empowering India's security domain and increasing its maritime power.²² The new partnerships and alignments helped India to become a dominant actor in the region.²³ Thus, India has been trying to modernize and improve its maritime capabilities in the post-Cold War era. There are three aspects of modernizing India's naval capabilities in post-cold war era that India is developing naval capabilities, partnerships with big extra-Indian Ocean states (e.g. the US), and helping junior partners in the region. These developments are up-lifting the Indian maritime power.

Besides making partnerships with major powers, India has also developed regional maritime partnerships with neighbouring countries to increase its power in the IPR. India has focused on the 'Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectorial Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to improve its relations with Nepal, Bhutan, Thailand, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar. India also implemented Maritime Capability Perspective Plan (MCP) to improve the relations with all the other countries. It is also considered a grand regional plan to increase India's power and naval capabilities by installing submarines, aircraft, and

¹⁹ Roy Chaudhury, Rahul, and Kate Sullivan de Estrada. "India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad," *Survival* 60, no. 3 (2018): 181-194.

²⁰ Roy-Chaudhury, Rahul, and Kate Sullivan de Estrada, "India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad."

²¹ Lavina Lee, "Assessing the Quad: Prospects and Limitations of Quadrilateral.

²² Roy-Chaudhury, "India, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad."

²³ D. M. Baruah, "India in the Indo-Pacific: New Delhi's Theater of Opportunity," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2020, https://carnegieendowment.org/files/Baruah_UnderstandingIndia_final1.pdf

nuclear submarines.²⁴ India has given the humanitarian posture to have more political influence in the region and to encircle and counter the rival nations in the region.²⁵ This has increased the Indian influence in the regional maritime zone and has become a significant player in the IPR.

In addition, the critical driving force of India's maritime strategy is its geo-strategic position and geo-strategic environment in the IPR. India is in a significant maritime position with several small Islands across the IOR. It provides India with the Sea lines of communication (SLOCs) to become a maritime power. There are both traditional and non-traditional threats and challenges to India's SLOCs. The location of Andaman and Nicobar Islands (ANI) provides India with a tremendous strategic advantage in its east to counter the increasing Chinese footprints in Indian Ocean Region. Therefore, India is considering ANI as the principal factor to enhance the maritime power projection capabilities to secure its role as a 'net security provider in the region and establish political connectivity with the states in the east.'²⁶

In 2001, India upgraded the ANI and established Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) and it was helping India to monitor India's Exclusive economic zones. It also provides logistic support to its ships deployed from East and South East Asia to monitor the busiest shipping lanes of Six Degree and Ten Degree Channels and the Strait of Malacca. It also acts as the base for India's coordinated patrols with Thailand, Indonesia, and the MILAN (military exercises). Furthermore, India has started projects to assist the weaker states of IOR in providing training, equipment, and advisors. It cooperated with Mauritius, Mozambique, Madagascar, Maldives, and Seychelles to monitor its maritime environments.²⁷ India's strategic location in the maritime domain provides India with an excellent opportunity to become a regional power.

Under the new maritime strategy of India, the national strategists have emphasized the blue economy, as India carries 90% of its trade through sea routes. India is a technologically advanced state, but still, there is a need to change maritime policies regarding the maximization of the blue economy. Different expert committees are established to cope with challenges faced in the development of the blue economy.²⁸

²⁴ Rajeev Ranjan Chaturvedy, "The Indian Ocean Policy of the Modi Government," In *Modi and the World: (Re) Constructing Indian Foreign Policy*, 163-184. 2017.

²⁵ Vivek Mishra, "Consolidating India's Indian Ocean Strategy."

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Priyanjoli Ghosh, "India's Indian Ocean Region Strategy," *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs Article Display*, [https://www. Air University, af. edu/JIPA/Article-Display/Article/](https://www.AirUniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Article-Display/Article/)

²⁸ Michelle Voyer, Dominique Benzaken, and Constance Rambourg, "Institutionalizing the Blue Economy: an Examination of Variations and

Thus, the dependency on India on maritime has increased rapidly due to its military, economic, and technological interests. India finds IPR the most appropriate way of increasing its connectivity with the outside world to speed up economic growth and protect the SLOCs, and overseas strategic interests.²⁹ Subsequently, Indian foreign policy has made a notable change towards the IPR by shifting its focus from land security to maritime security for the first time in its history. Powerful countries such as Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom and the US consider India, a key factor in the security of this region. Partnerships in the Indo-Pacific are at the core of Indian interests to expand its regional diplomatic relationships and enhance its security.³⁰ Thus, the dependency of India on maritime has increased rapidly due to its military, economic, and technological interests. India finds IPR the most appropriate way of increasing its connectivity with the outside world to speed up economic growth and protect the SLOCs, and overseas strategic interests.³¹ Subsequently, Indian foreign policy has made a notable change towards the IPR by shifting its focus from land security to maritime security for the first time in history. Powerful countries such as Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom and the US consider India, a key actor in the security of this region. Partnerships in the Indo-Pacific are at the core of Indian interests to expand its regional diplomatic relationships and enhance its security.³²

Security Perspectives in Indian Maritime Strategy

In the 21st century, the world started looking into Asia Pacific as IPR. This major shift occurred as the US started using Indo-Pacific to clarify its Indian-centric policies in IOR. The US wanted India to dominate the IPR to contain the Chinese in the maritime domain. Subsequently, India became a key partner with the US in multilateral maritime alignments, evident in its new Indo-Pacific policies.

The US Indo-Pacific Policy

The Indo-Pacific region is essential for the world, especially for the major powers to maintain status quo. Nicholas Spykman believed the US had already dominated the western hemisphere by controlling the Greater Caribbean. Using those resources could affect the balance of power in the

Consistencies among Commonwealth Countries," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 377, no. 1854 (2022): 20210125.

²⁹ *Ensuring Secure Seas : Indian Maritime Security Strategy*, 185.

³⁰ Sharifah M. Alatas, "India's Maritime Strategy in the Indian Ocean Region: Issues of Strategic Culture," *Journal of South Asian Studies* 3, no. 3 (2015): 397-406.

³¹ *Ensuring Secure Seas : Indian Maritime Security Strategy*.

³² Sharifah M. Alatas, "India's Maritime Strategy in the Indian Ocean Region."

eastern hemisphere.³³ However, China is a great continental power and holds a strong position in IPR, a significant threat to the US hegemony. The rise of China is reshaping power politics through economic alignments with regional countries and by increasing its maritime power. US has shown concerns about the rise of China and made a shift in its Indo-Pacific policies to counter China's growing influence in the IPR.

When President Donald Trump came into power in 2017, the US administration and its allies were concerned about the security commitments and role of the US in IPR. The regional anxieties were high due to the increasing role of China from Asia to Africa, Europe and the Pacific, which is changing the maritime realities for the concerned states. Consequently, President Trump adopted a new Indo-Pacific strategy to increase regional security and power. For this purpose, the US viewed India as a counterbalancing state to China and the preserver of the US interests in the IPR. So the US played a prominent role in India's Indo-Pacific security strategy. Under this policy, the US will provide economic and security assistance to India, which will help them to become a dominant regional player in the IPR.³⁴

Under the previous US administrations, Asia-Pacific terminology was used for the Indian and Pacific oceans. However, the Trump administration used the word "Indo-Pacific" considering the more significant role of India in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This policy shift in the US means that India will be a maritime power to compete with China. In 2017, at the meeting of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) which was held in Vietnam, President Trump talked about the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP), which was a clear indication that in future, the policies would be shifted to counter the ambitions of China to get strategic hegemonic control over the 'South China Sea' and the whole region. He talked about free and open trade in the IPR, which is in the interest of all the eastern and western states.³⁵

In the published US Indo-Pacific policies in 2017, the US mentioned that new geo-political competition is emerging in the Indo-Pacific region between the region's openness and repressiveness. In the National Security Strategy of December 2017, the US used the term "revisionist power" for China because China is trying to replace the US hegemonic role and using different economic strategies to get control over this region. However, the "Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships and Promoting a Networked Region," which was published by the

³³ Robert D Kaplan, *Earning the Rockies: How Geography Shapes America's Role in the World*, 2017.

³⁴ Sobia Hanif, and Muhammad Khan, "US Security Strategy for Asia Pacific and India's Role," *Strategic Studies* 38, no. 1 (2018): 1-20.

³⁵ A J Blinken, *"A Free and Open Indo-Pacific,"* (United States Department of State, December 14, 2021)

Department of Defense in June 2019, emphasized the defence of the Indo-Pacific region by claiming that Chinese communist leadership is reshaping the power in the region by increasing its influence in the region through economic alignment and militarization.³⁶

To counter Chinese dominance, the US has attempted to reinforce its ties with regional partners and allies. Interestingly, the US changed the US Pacific Command (USPACOM) to the US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), which indicated India's increasing role in the IPR. Moreover, the Department of State published the third official document of Indo-Pacific policy in November 2019, named "Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a shared vision." In this policy, the US desired to work with its partners to promote peace and prosperity in the IPR and highlighted India as its strategic partner as they shared the same vision and interests. Moreover, many infrastructure projects with the partners were proposed to counter the Chinese BRI.³⁷ Later, the Biden administration continued with the same Indo-Pacific policy and took new initiatives to work with the allies in this region. Biden's multilateral meeting with the QUAD leaders resulted in several initiatives through which they can get more roles in the IPR and US called Asian NATO.³⁸

Thus, the new US Indo-Pacific policy strongly influences India because it holds a more significant power role in the IPR. More importantly, India has also considered China a threat to the region's security and wanted to change its foreign policy in the IPR. Therefore, India adopted the Indo-Pacific policy of partners like the US, Japan, and Australia to counter the Chinese security threat in the region. The Indo-Pacific policy is an opportunity for India to increase its influence and presence in the region, get the advantage of strong partnerships, and remove the constraints in achieving the state's security interests. This policy also allows New Delhi to expand its diplomatic and strategic footprints in the IOR through the new partnerships and initiatives adopted by the US under its new Indo-Pacific policy. But here the turning point in India-US relations is that since Russia's unprovoked and illegal war in Ukraine, India has demonstrated much independence from the US, and this might create tensions between the two in future. This could affect the bilateral relations of US and India and it could change dimensions in Indo-Pacific region.

³⁶ Cleo Paskal, "Indo-Pacific Strategies, Perceptions and Partnerships," Chatham House 23 ,(2021)

³⁷ Cleo Paskal, "Indo-Pacific Strategies, Perceptions And Partnerships."

³⁸ Ashley Townshend, Susannah Patton, Tom Corben, and Toby Warden, "Correcting the Course: How the Biden Administration should Compete for Influence in the Indo-Pacific," United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, 2021.

In addition, the Indo-Pacific policy will help India to increase its investments in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, increasing India's influence over the maritime domain and the region's littoral states. Initially, India was reluctant to join the strategic Western alignments to contain China. However, the aggressive stance of China on different issues like the South China Sea and Southeast Asia became of particular concern for India due to its proximity to Indian Ocean security.³⁹

Indian Maritime Strategy and its Blue Economy

The geographic location of India also provides numerous opportunities in the blue economy domain in the IPR. In 2012, first time the term "Blue Economy," coined from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro. Blue economy is a term generally means usage of sea resources to enhance the GDP of the state. The integration of energy production, conservation, marine transport, bio-prospecting, ocean resource extraction is considered as the state development in the blue economy domain. To achieve this development, the national and international organizations should maintain ocean resources, respectively. The purpose of the blue economy is to restore the health of ocean lives and encourage coastal economies so that people can earn more and make their better living standards. Blue economy plays leading role in the economic growth of the state, it provides vast opportunities for employment, and achieves fundamental objectives of sustainable development. To build better ocean economy, it is essential to properly maintain global marine ecosystems, and to improve the natural resource extraction from the oceans. Different marine resources which are in depth are still unexplored by the powerful states through the technology is advanced to higher levels in contemporary world.⁴⁰

India has developed its extended coastal areas surrounded by the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal, and the Arabian Sea, which increases its geo-economic position in the region. Developing sustainable coastal zones is an essential aspect of the Indian Maritime Strategy. In coastal economic zones, India has engaged the local communities in tourism, fisheries, and other activities related to marine aquaculture. Recognizing the importance of the blue economy, India is taking different initiatives to develop the infrastructure of coastal areas. In 2020, the SAGAR-MALA program proposed an investment of US \$120 billion, including more than 600 projects.

³⁹ Harsh V Pant, and Abhijnan Rej, "Is India Ready for the Indo-Pacific?" *The Washington Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (2018): 47-61.

⁴⁰ Rosa María Martínez-Vázquez, Juan Milán-García, and Jaime de Pablo Valenciano, "Challenges of the Blue Economy: Evidence and Research Trends," *Environmental Sciences Europe* 33, no. 1 (2021): 61.

Similarly, for the development of the Coastal economic zones, an investment of US \$150 million is provided.⁴¹ In his speech, Prime Minister Modi said, "The blue economy must act as a catalyst in improving India's progress." In the coastal zones of Tamil Nadu and Gujrat, offshore renewable energy projects are also started by India, besides the fisheries and coastal zone activities. Promoting new offshore projects would benefit India to raise its economy and power status globally and support the 2030 SGDs.⁴²

In this scenario, India has almost 13 ports for trading purposes, which can significantly boost its blue economy. At the Shangri La Dialogue of 2018, Modi stated that the Indian Ocean had played a prime role in India's foreign policy by strengthening its relations with IOR, building economic partnerships, and improving maritime security for regional states. India is a vocal supporter of freedom of navigation and developing multilateral cooperation in various sectors such as sharing of assets, technology transfer, blue economic growth, and development of ports. India has expanded its cooperation in marine technology, tourism, infrastructure development, trade, investments, and marine or ocean environment protection to maximize the blue economy. India is intensifying its bilateral and multilateral cooperation across the globe, including Africa, Europe, South Asia and nations of the Pacific Ocean.⁴³

Additionally, India is expanding its cooperation with European states to raise its blue economy. India has established a joint task force on the blue economy with Norway during the ocean dialogue. Prime Minister of Norway gave his points of view that Indian Prime Minister Modi has a definite vision of sustainability of economic growth for all the states in the region. He added more by saying that his government focuses more on creating ocean-based employment for his Norwegian people. In the bilateral initiatives of India and Norway, several maritime projects started and some are already being implemented.

Moreover, at the 14th India-EU summit held in 2017, the emphasis was given to cooperation in different sectors to promote the blue economy. During this summit, it was mentioned that both European Union and India intended to improve the ocean's connectivity, security, stability, and sustainability to shoot up their blue economy. Germany and France have a significant role in developing blue economy cooperation with India in 2019 and 2020, respectively. India has also developed such kind of

⁴¹ A Ninawe,, and S. T. Indulkar, "Blue Economy Mission: India's Focus," *Journal of Aquaculture & Fisheries* 3, no. 1 (2019): 17.

⁴² Deepika Manoharan, and Stella James, "Cruise Tourism in India: Sailing into Troubled Waters," (2021).

⁴³ Dinoj K., Upadhyay, and Mishra Manoranjan, "Blue Economy: Emerging Global Trends and India's Multilateral Cooperation," *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India* 16, no. 1 (2020): 30-45.

cooperation regarding the blue economy with different continental and regional states, which is expanding the blue economy of India and, eventually, its national economy to a more significant level.⁴⁴

India's blue economy strategy can be seen as a strategy to oppose China's BRI project in the region. India is increasing its investments in the region and specially in the blue economic domain to influence the other states of the region. Through the blue economic strategy, India is trying to counter the dominance of China in region which was strengthened by the huge BRI project. As the realistic state and to create balance of power in the region India is modernizing its strategies to oppose Chinese dominance in IPR.

Indian Maritime Strategy: Implications for Pakistan

Pakistan is closely located in IOR and is developing different strategies to secure itself from external threats. Pakistan has a longer coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone along the Indian Ocean. Due to Indian growing influence in the IPR, Pakistan has shifted its focus to develop solid maritime policies to enhance its blue economy and, eventually, national economy. However, India is trying to get the role of regional hegemon with the support of the major powers, which has more significant implications for Pakistan's security and economy.⁴⁵ For example, India launched its nuclear-powered submarines, which completed its first patrolling in 2018. However, Pakistan still needs to catch up to India in developing its submarines. In addition, India came up with nuclear submarines in 2019, showing its superiority over Pakistan in the region. During Trump's visit to India in February 2020, a \$20 billion contract was signed between the two countries through which India's anti-submarine warfare capabilities would be increased. These continuous developments in Indian maritime capabilities are disturbing the region's balance of power (BOP). Pakistan has serious concerns over these developments and the disturbance of BOP in IPR, which can lead to war.⁴⁶

Furthermore, India is focusing on developing Chabahar port near Gwadar because India is highly interested in the natural resources of Afghanistan. With the help of Chabahar port, India will try to accomplish

⁴⁴ Neil Winn, "Between Competition and Cooperation: The EU Global Strategy as Means to Reinvigorate EU-Indian Cooperation?" *EU-India Relations: The Strategic Partnership in the Light of the European Union Global Strategy*, (2021): 291-307.

⁴⁵ A Mahmood, D M Kasi, & D A Q Mengal, "US-India Strategic Partnership and Implications for Pakistan," *The Dialogue*, 16(2), (2021): 131-146. <http://prrr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/handle/>

⁴⁶ Rahat Shah, "Pakistan's Quest for Balance in the Context of the Indo-Pacific Strategy," *Australian Journal of Maritime & Ocean Affairs* 14, no. 1 (2022): 39-52.

all its interests in IOR. Through these developments and partnerships, India poses severe threats to CPEC and Pakistan's naval force in the IOR.

In addition, the US Indo-Pacific policy is Indian-centric, posing a severe threat to the security of Pakistan. Under this policy, the US will help India to boost its defence, economy and military, enabling India to counterbalance China in the region. This is a direct threat to Pakistan's security as India takes Centre stage in the region, shifting the power balance in favour of India. Therefore, it has long-lasting implications for the security of Pakistan in the IPR. It would affect Pakistan's maritime position and power in IOR, which are directly linked to national security.⁴⁷

In addition, the US also classified in the policy framework that India would be provided with the military, intelligence, and diplomatic channels to counter the Chinese power projection and resolve the Indian dispute with China. Furthermore, the US wanted to challenge the BRI and CPEC projects by strengthening India's military and power capabilities, providing economic aid to different states and developing economic interdependence.⁴⁸ Thus, the US Indo-Pacific policy has significant implications for Pakistan's security because Pakistan's economy is highly dependent upon the future of the CPEC project. If there is a threat to CPEC, then automatically, it is a direct threat to the security and interests of Pakistan. Furthermore, there was a time when the US was the central balancer in South Asia to avoid any conflict between Pakistan and India.⁴⁹ However, the US has completely shifted its policy towards India to counterbalance China, primarily undermining Pakistan's regional strategic interests.⁵⁰

With the help of the US Indo-Pacific strategy, India's increasing maritime capabilities are compelling Pakistan to spend more on maritime and air defence capabilities, making Pakistan spend less on other major issues. Supplying the latest technology and nuclear submarines to India and Australia under QUAD and AUKUS will have a domino effect on the region's littoral states. It will affect the whole ASEAN states. Furthermore, it will enhance several nuclear submarines, naval fleets and cruise ships, which will increase worries of Pakistan. India can use these assets against

⁴⁷ Maira Afzazze Saeed, and Umbreen Javaid, "India's Naval Expansion and Strategic Partnership with the Us In The Indian Ocean Region: Implications For Pakistan," *Margalla Papers* 24, no. 1 (2020): 67-80.

⁴⁸ A L Kurian, & C Vinodan, "India and China in the Indian Ocean: Changing Dimensions of Maritime Strategy," *Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, 8(1), (2021)

⁴⁹ Fakhar Hussain, Saadat Nawaz D. Ahmad, S. Haider, and Muhammad Atif, "Challenges to China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC): The Indian Perspective," *Elementary Education Online* 20, no. 5 (2021): 3764-3770.

⁵⁰ Damiya Saghir, and Dr Khushboo Ejaz, "A Comparative Analysis of India and Pakistan's Naval Strategy:(2001-2019)," *South Asian Studies* 2, no. 35 (2021)

Pakistan anytime, threatening its security, sovereignty and survival in the region.⁵¹ This is because the two countries have a long history of strategic opposition and conflicts, thus they perceive each other as a threat. Increase in Indian maritime power is perceived as a threat by Pakistan.

In the context of increasing ties between India and US which are becoming the reason of raising challenges for Pakistan. India's new US Indo-Pacific policy and blue economic policies have increased Pakistan's security concerns. Though the US policy of "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" aims to counter China, it has more significant implications for the stability and security of Pakistan. This policy is developing a zero-sum game for Pakistan, where Pakistan is now looking towards China and Russia to balance Indian growing power in the region. However, Pakistan needs help to create a balance of power both internally and externally. Let us look at the internal struggles of Pakistan to create a balance of power. It focuses on technological advancements in its maritime spheres, modernizing its navy, and acquiring more advanced weapons, submarines, and cruise missiles. Pakistan is also developing its nuclear technology in the Indian Ocean and developing strategic ties to enhance maritime security.⁵²

Externally, Pakistan is a strong ally of China, and they have helped each other in crucial circumstances. China understands Pakistan's need to increase its defence and economy and provides economic and military assistance and technologically advanced equipment. According to the realist approach, China is helping Pakistan in order to balance India in the region. To maintain the balance of power in the region, Pakistan is participating in joint naval exercises in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, importing modern technology, increasing strategic partnerships, exchanging officials to deal with threats in Indo-Pacific and enhancing military cooperation.⁵³

Additionally, Pakistan is reaching out to different countries to gain economic stability and increase its defence. Pakistan is developing bilateral relations and trade agreements with Middle eastern countries, Southeast asian states, and the Central asia States. Pakistan is also moving towards Russia to seek security cooperation. Pakistan is trying to improve its bilateral relationship with the US. The US is a superpower, and no country can afford to have broken ties. So, Pakistan is shifting its foreign policy to have better relations with all the states and a better economy. Pakistan is focusing on improving its Indian and Pacific Ocean defensive systems. The geo-strategic position of Pakistan demands to create a

⁵¹ Reema Shaukat, "The U.S.' Indo-Pacific Strategy and its Implications for Pakistan," *Hilal*, <https://www.hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/>.

⁵² Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, "India's Development Of Sea-Based Nuclear Capabilities," *Strategic Studies* 38, no. 1 (2018): 34-47.

⁵³ Hussain, D. Ahmad, S. Haider, and Muhammad Atif, "Challenges to China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC): The Indian Perspective."

balance of power in the region. Because there is a continuous threat coming to Pakistan from Indian domination in the region. India is trying to engage Pakistan in an arms race in the Indian Ocean, which is a severe threat to the region's security as India is an emerging power and is a serious threat to Pakistan's security and regional security. India and Pakistan must avoid indulging in an arms race because it threatens regional peace. India is uprising as a continental threat in South Asia.

Conclusion

The Indian and Pacific Oceans are essential for the power determination of the states. In the changing international environment, the oceans are more critical to getting power and becoming a global hegemon. In this anarchic world, different powerful states try to achieve the role of global hegemon by projecting their continental and sea power. The naval patrols of different states are making their bases in the Indian and Pacific Oceans through technological advancements. India is the most preeminent actor in this region, and it has adopted the offensive realist approach and emerged as the most powerful state in the region. Through the lens of realistic approach, maritime power rivalry between the super power and emerging powers can be analyzed thoroughly. It will reveal the broader sides of rivalries in Indo-Pacific.

India's new comprehensive maritime doctrine has emphasized the security and the blue economy of the state. In this regard, the powerful state of the US has shifted its focus to the Indo-Pacific region to counter the Chinese power in this region. Increasing Chinese power is a threat to the hegemonic power of the US, for which they came up with the Indo-Pacific Policy, which is Indian-centric. This policy aims to develop India as vital to counter China in the region and act as a US interest preserver. US-backed Indians have developed underwater listening devices and communication grids using satellites. India is enjoying the support of the US and enhancing its power and security in the region. India is also signing cooperative agreements with different states to promote its blue economy and ocean-based activities, which will play a crucial role in lifting the economy of India.

The maritime strategy of India in IPR has far-reaching implications for the security of Pakistan because India is enjoying the role of a US strategic partner, enhancing India's military capability and economic power. With the rise of Indian power, Pakistan is concerned about its regional security and balance of power. To seek security, Pakistan is reaching out to different states to develop mutual defense and economic pacts. Pakistan wants to counterbalance India and secure its national interests. So, Pakistan's maritime and foreign policy should be not only comprehensive but also avoid an arms race with India in IOR while emphasizing a more blue economy.

Pakistan and India should shift their traditional realistic approach to the human centric and economic-centric approach. This will help the regional nations to get out the trap of balance of power and work more on the development of state structure and human societies. Both states should move towards increase of trade and economic dependence on each other. It will create economic and social prosperity in the region. This will also stop both states from entering into traditional conflicts. They should look more on the non-traditional security environments. In 21st century the critical situation's also emerge due to non-traditional threats. So, both India and Pakistan should collaborate to counter these threats in the region. They should adopt different approach than that of the traditional conflict causing approach. This will flourish the societies economically.

