

**INDIAN OCEAN STRATEGY OF CHINA:
IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA'S SECURITY**



RESEARCHER
Hajra BiBi
209-FSS/MSIR/F22

SUPERVISOR
Prof. Dr Asma Rashid

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
(2024)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي وَاخْلُكْ عُقْدَةً مِّن لِّسَانِي يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

SUPERVISOR CERTIFICATE

This is clarify that the thesis entitled "Indian Ocean Strategy of China: Implications For India's Security" is the original work submitted by Ms. Hajra BiBi, a student of MS in International Relations in the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences. This research work has been successfully done under my guidance and supervision. She has fulfilled all the requirements for the award for the MS degree ordinance at the University. It is important to certify that this thesis has not been submitted for attainment of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, or Fellowship from any other university.

Dr Asma Rashid

DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation, I declare that this thesis entitled " **INDIAN OCEAN STRATEGY OF CHINA: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA'S SECURITY**" is my original work. This research work was completed under the supervision of Dr. Asma Rashid submitted to the Department of International Relations as satisfying the requirements for the degree of master's in international relations. I have properly referenced and cited the sources of information in my thesis. This dissertation has not been submitted before for any degree.

Hajra BiBi

209-FSS/MSIR/F22

Dated : _____

Dedication

This research work is wholeheartedly dedicated to my respective parents. I dedicate this research to my father Muhammad Nisar Ahmed Khan for being a great mentor who worked hard for my better education and life. I also dedicate this work to my lovely mother for being a source of motivation for me. For your unwavering love, support, and encouragement, I dedicate this work to you. Your belief in me has been my greatest motivation.

Lastly, I would like to thank my supportive supervisor Dr Asma Rashid. She gave me unconditional support and her words of encouragement helped me to complete my work.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

IOR	Indian Ocean Region
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
IORA	Indian Ocean Regional Association
IONS	Indian Ocean Naval Symposium
SLOCs	Sea Line of Communication
MSR	Maritime Silk Road
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
PLAN	People Liberation Army Navy
A2AD	Anti Access Anti Denial
SRBM	Short Range Ballistic Missile
ASBM	Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile
EEZs	Exclusive Economic Zones
CIDCA	China International Development Cooperation Agency

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to begin my gratitude by praising the Almighty Allah for all the blessings He has bestowed upon me in life. It would never have been possible without guidance from Allah Almighty that made me come across instances that shaped my success. This research is one of the few things that I hold close to my heart and I would like to thank Him for giving me the strength and courage to pursue this. It is indeed He who at every step gave patience and confidence to pursue MS in my choice of stream.

I extend my sincere regards to my great supervisor, Prof Dr. Asma Rashid for providing me with encouragement throughout the degree. I am also grateful to the IR faculty honourable members who helped me during my coursework and research and provided motivation to complete my thesis. I am grateful for the much-needed support and insight all my professors have shared with me. Their kind words and fruitful discussions have helped me shape my study.

I sincerely thank my kind family who did not leave me alone during this time and helped me with their comprehensive support. I feel deeply indebted with their silent but constant efforts for me to continue my hard work and surpass any hurdles that tried to become a problem. My parents have been the best support and I will never forget the attention and love I received from my siblings, especially my brothers which helped me the most during my studies. I will always be grateful to them for making this possible.

Lastly, I want to thank all my acquaintances at International Islamic University Islamabad, who helped me academically and professionally towards my degree and never let my morale down. I feel fortunate to have distinguished faculty members who provided me with professional training and helped me complete my thesis and degree requirements.

Abstract

This Research delves into China's strategies toward the Indian Ocean, identifying factors that shape India's perception of China as a threat, and analysing the factors influencing India's strategic choices, particularly its preference for competition over cooperation with China in the maritime domain are the three primary goals of this research into the complex dynamics of Sino-Indian relations in the Indian Ocean. By consolidating Alfred Thayer Mahan's hypothesis of ocean power, this study gives a far reaching structure to inspecting the sea techniques and international moves of the two countries. China's methodologies toward the Indian Sea are complex and include a few key parts. One of the main components of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Maritime Silk Road Initiative aims to improve connectivity and trade routes across the Indian Ocean. In order to secure strategic footholds in the region, this initiative involves significant investments in port infrastructure in countries like Pakistan (Gwadar), Sri Lanka (Hambantota), and Myanmar (Kyaukpyu). The expansion of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) presence in the Indian Ocean through the establishment of logistics facilities like the one in Djibouti and increased naval patrols also reflect China's ambition to project power and secure vital sea lanes. In addition, China's economic aid, military assistance, and diplomatic initiatives with Indian Ocean littoral states aim to strengthen bilateral ties and expand its influence in the region. A combination of historical, strategic, and economic factors influences India's perception of China as a threat. Periodic skirmishes and a deep-seated mistrust between the two nations have resulted from historical border conflicts, particularly in the Ladakh region. The "Pearl necklace" system, seen as an enclosure procedure by China, includes the improvement of military and business foundations in South Asia, further fueling India's security concerns. Furthermore, developing Chinese influence in South Asia through the BRI presents monetary and vital difficulties to India. China's fast military modernization, remembering the extension of its maritime capacities for the Indian Sea, further increases India's view of an essential danger. India's strategic decisions are influenced by a number of factors in response to these perceived threats, resulting in a preference for competition over cooperation with China in the maritime domain. India's plan to counter China's influence is heavily reliant on geopolitical alliances. India's security and geopolitical leverage in the region are improved by strengthening the

strategic partnerships with nations like the United States, Japan, and Australia, as demonstrated by the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad). India's commitment to enhancing its presence and deterrence in the Indian Ocean is reflected in its naval modernization efforts, which aim to upgrade and expand its capabilities. Countermeasures to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) include economic initiatives like the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), which aim to establish alternative trade routes and regional connectivity. India engages Indian Ocean littoral states through bilateral and multilateral frameworks to build cooperative security arrangements and strengthen economic ties. Diplomatic strategies also play a crucial role. Integrating Alfred Thayer Mahan's hypothesis of ocean power into this exploration gives a hearty insightful structure to figuring out the sea methodologies of China and India. In order to achieve national power and influence, Mahan's theory places an emphasis on naval power, control of sea lanes, and strategic maritime chokepoints. Applying Mahan's standards, this examination looks at how both China and India try to upgrade their ocean ability to get their public advantages in the Indian Sea district. Mahan's emphasis on the necessity of a powerful navy and control of crucial maritime chokepoints is consistent with China's investments in port infrastructure, naval modernization, and strategic alliances. Likewise, India's endeavours to modernise its naval force, reinforce international collisions, and advance local financial drives reflect Mahanian standards of ocean power and the essential significance of sea strength. This study emphasises the competitive nature of Sino-Indian relations in this crucial region by highlighting the strategic calculations and geopolitical manoeuvres that support the evolving maritime security landscape in the Indian Ocean. By coordinating Mahan's hypothesis of ocean power, this study gives a more profound comprehension of the sea techniques utilised by the two countries and the more extensive ramifications for local and worldwide security. The findings emphasise the significance of economic initiatives, strategic alliances, and naval power in shaping Sino-Indian relations in the Indian Ocean in the future. This exploration adds to the current group of information on sea security and international affairs, offering important experiences for policymakers, researchers, and experts keen on the elements of Sino-Indian relations and the essential meaning of the Indian Sea district.

Table Of Content

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Statement of The Problem.....	3
1.2 Significance Of the Study.....	4
1.3 Research Objectives.....	4
1.4 Research Question.....	4
1.5 Delimitation Of the Study.....	5
1.7 Literature Review.....	6
1.8 Theoretical Framework.....	15
1.9 Research Methodology.....	18
1.9.1 Research Design.....	18
1.9.2 Data Collection.....	19
CHAPTER 2	21
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	21
2.1 Pancheel Agreement.....	22
2.2 Bandung Conference.....	23
2.3 Origin Of Border Dispute.....	24
CHAPTER 3	33
MAIN COMPONENTS OF CHINA’S INDIAN OCEAN STRATEGY.....	33
3.1 Economic Strategies.....	35
3.2 Military Strategies.....	43
3.3 Maritime Security Operation.....	47
3.4 Protection Of China’s Interest.....	48
CHAPTER 4	51
INDIA’S PERCEPTION ABOUT CHINA AS A SECURITY THREAT IN IOR:	
KEY FACTORS.....	51
4.1 Indian Ocean Significance.....	52
4.2 China’s Investment In Indian Ocean Port.....	56
4.3 Debt Diplomacy.....	58
4.4 China’s Military Presence And Strategic Movements.....	60
4.5 Dismissal From the Forum and The China Indian-Ocean.....	62
4.6 International Minimization.....	63
4.7 India Perceives China’s Relation With Other States As Threat.....	64
4.8 Historical Memories and Geopolitical Proximity.....	68
CHAPTER 5	70
INDIA’S PREFERENCE OF COMPETITION OVER COOPERATION	
TOWARDS CHIN: KEY FACTORS.....	70
5.1 Historical Conflicts.....	70
5.2 Port Growth And Strategic Presence.....	78
5.3 India’s Competitive Response	80

5.4 Economic Leverage And Debt Dependency.....	81
5.5 Geopolitical Concerns.....	82
5.6 India Civilizational Strength And Strategi Autonomy.....	83
5.7 China’s Perception On India’s Rivalry	85
5.8 Maritime Security And India’s Interest.....	90
5.9 India’s Response Towards These Strategies.....	94
CHAPTER 6	96
CONCLUSION.....	96
6.1 Analysis.....	96
6.2 Major Findings.....	98
6.3 Conclusion.....	99
6.4 Recommandation.....	102
6.5 References.....	104

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Indian Ocean, as the world's third-largest ocean, has seen its strategic importance grow significantly over the past three decades. Its unique geographical location made it a critical region for global affairs. Control of its numerous access points translates into control of vital shipping lanes, facilitating the movement of essential cargo across its vast expanse. Additionally, the Indian Ocean is a hub for offshore petroleum production, contributing over 40 percent of the world's output, and it hosts rapidly emerging economies, placing it at the centre of global geopolitics. However, the region also faces challenges, including unstable states and issues such as piracy and fundamentalist terrorism. China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region has raised economic and security concerns for India.

Even though there is a dearth of concrete data, it is crucial to analyse China's goals in the Indian Ocean and the implications for global security, especially for India and other superpowers. In order to comprehend China's strategy, goals, and probable security repercussions for India, this research seeks to derive insights from the material at hand. China began cooperating with the IOR in the 1960s, when it gave financial support and military equipment to Afro-Asian republics. China has refocused on the IOR in recent years due to its economic stakes, with a sizable percentage of its sea trade and energy imports passing via the IOR. The availability of minerals, raw resources, and potential markets further drives China's interest in the region. China's military-strategic goals in the Indian Ocean have been reported since the 1990s, including efforts to consolidate control and build long-range naval capabilities. (Gopal,2017)

The "String of Pearls" plan attempts to establish a credible naval presence by developing ports and shipping facilities in strategically positioned littoral countries. China, on the other hand, contends that these advancements are simply commercial in nature. This research tries to examine the "String of Pearls" strategy in depth, taking into account both military facilities and other infrastructure, in order to determine whether China has military-strategic motivations in the Indian Ocean. It also tries to examine the potential security repercussions for India by focusing on the 2010-2015 era. This research provides a concentrated assessment on China's ambitions and their ramifications in the Indian Ocean by excluding uncertainties and assuming the formation of military-strategic responses by India and other significant powers. (Khurana, 2008)

China's brisk economic growth has resulted in an insatiable appetite for energy, creating a tangle of difficulties and geopolitical complications. As it grapples with the ramifications of growing domestic energy consumption, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) acknowledges the crucial relationship between energy security and national security imperatives. This research dives into the deep dynamics of China's energy landscape, focusing on the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) plan and its repercussions. Rapidly rising oil consumption has resulted in considerable reliance on oil imports, posing a serious barrier to the CCP's goal of sustained economic growth. As a result, ensuring energy security has become a top priority, influencing China's geopolitical calculations. While the Malacca issue has been described as a motivating cause behind China's hunt for other routes, this essay explores the complications that surround its portrayal critically.

It calls into question the myth that the Malacca Strait is the only route to the IOR, providing light on alternate routes and investigating claimed security issues. Further delves into China's entire "Two Oceans" policy in the IOR, which includes economic, military, and

diplomatic components. China has engaged IOR nations economically through programs such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), while also increasing its naval presence and diplomatic influence. However, as China's footprint in the IOR grows, so do the problems and possible instabilities. The article emphasises the Indo-US security problem, as well as concerns over China's encroachment on India's sphere of influence, as well as the negative consequences of Chinese investments and projects in the region. This essay tries to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ramifications of China's pursuit of energy security and regional influence by unravelling the complexities of China's energy landscape and its larger IOR policy. (Chaudry, 2013)

1.1 Statement of the Problem

China's strategy toward the Indian Ocean and its potential threat to Indian Security and to analyse the evolving geopolitics dynamic in the region.. The Indian Ocean region is a critical area for global trade and security. It provides insight into the complex interplay of regional and international factors that are shaping the strategic landscape of the Indian Ocean region. This study attempts to examine that China's growing presence and influence in the Indian Ocean including its Road and Belt initiative and naval deployment could potentially challenge India's strategic interest and destabilise the region, leading to a significant security threat to India. The aim of this study is to explain the nature of China's strategy in the Indian Ocean and analyse its potential impact on India's strategic interest, including a significant threat to the security of India as well as the stability of the region

1.1 Significance Of The Study

The research carries substantial significance in shedding light on the evolving dynamics in the Indian Ocean region, particularly China's growing presence and its potential

impact on India's security and regional stability. By examining China's strategy and its implications, the research aims to provide valuable insights into the multifaceted challenges faced by India and the strategic choices it must make to safeguard its interests. Additionally, the study contributes to the broader field of international relations by applying theories of realism and Mahan's sea power to analyse great power competition and maritime security in a crucial political theatre, offering a deeper understanding of global power dynamics in the 11st century.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To examine the main components of China's Indian Ocean strategy.
1. To analyse the key factors have shaped India's perception of China as a security threat in the Indian Ocean Region
3. To explore these factors influence India's strategic choices, including its preference for competition over cooperation with China in the maritime domain.

1.4 Research questions

1. What are the main components of China's Indian Ocean Strategy?
1. What are the key factors that shaped India's perception of China as a security threat in the Indian Ocean region?
3. How do these factors influence India's strategic choices, including its preference for competition over cooperation with China in the maritime domain?

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The delimitation of this study lies in its focus on China's evolving strategy and activities in the Indian Ocean region and their potential implications for India's security and regional stability. While the study provides valuable insights into these specific aspects, it does not delve into the broader global implications of China's actions or explore alternative scenarios that may arise. Additionally, the research primarily adopts a qualitative content analysis approach, which may limit the depth of quantitative data analysis. Furthermore, the study does not extensively investigate the perspectives and responses of other key regional actors apart from India. These limitations are important to consider when interpreting the study's findings and their broader applicability to the complex dynamics of the Indian Ocean region

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the book 'China's Expanding Military Maritime Footprints in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) India's Response' the writer explains growing Chinese activity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a subject of increasing interest in international relations. China's agreements, such as the one with Djibouti for constructing military facilities, reflect its expanding naval presence and engagement in the IOR. Chinese naval vessels participating in anti-piracy missions have become regular visitors to regional ports, engaging in exercises and evacuation missions. Beyond military activities, China has forged strategic partnerships with countries in different parts of the IOR, aiming to shape an international order aligning with its long-term interests. China's interest in the region extends to deep-sea exploration and the acquisition of marine data, emphasising the importance of oceanic resources.

China's involvement in the IOR has implications for regional security, maritime cooperation, and the evolving security architecture in the region, where organisations like the Indian Ocean Regional Association (IORA) and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) seek to address maritime security challenges. China's efforts to position itself as a stakeholder in the IOR's security framework, as advocated through concepts like "4Cs" (Common, Cooperative, Comprehensive, and Continuous Security), have met with mixed responses, including concerns from India about Chinese intentions. As China continues to assert its presence and interests in the IOR, understanding its multifaceted engagement in the region becomes crucial. (Gopal,2017)

In "The Costliest Pearl," Bertil Lintner meticulously examines China's strategic endeavours across the Indian Ocean region, focusing on the 'string of pearls' concept. His comprehensive analysis delves into the historical and contemporary dynamics of nations like Myanmar, Djibouti, Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives, Australia's islands, and Indian island

groups. Lintner elucidates China's multifaceted engagements, from the Belt and Road Initiative to infrastructural projects like the Myanmar Corridor. He navigates the geopolitical significance of key locations, emphasising Djibouti's role in securing trade routes and China's economic influences in Mauritius, Seychelles, and Madagascar. Additionally, the book highlights the evolving diplomatic alignments of regions like the Maldives and Australia's territories, offering a balanced and insightful view into China's intricate strategies, making it an indispensable resource for understanding the Indo-Pacific's political complexities. (Lintner, 2019)

The "String of Pearls" strategy, which refers to China's development of a network of commercial and military bases along the Indian Ocean to secure its trade routes and expand its strategic reach, is frequently used to describe China's strategic ambitions in the Indian Ocean (Holmes & Yoshihara, 2008). Ports and facilities in Gwadar (Pakistan), Hambantota (Sri Lanka), Kyaukpyu (Myanmar), and Djibouti, which serve as logistical hubs and potential military bases, are key developments in this strategy (Pehrson, 2006). Moreover, the Oceanic Silk Street, a part of the BRI, expects to upgrade the sea network and framework improvement across the IOR, connecting China with Europe, Africa, and the Middle East (Rolland, 2017). This drive looks to get China's energy supplies, work with exchange, and broaden its international impact. (Blanchard, 2017)

China's technique in the Indian Sea unmistakably includes a broad port turn of events, making an organisation frequently named the "Pearl necklace." This remembers critical speculations for vital ports like Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, and Kyaukpyu in Myanmar. These ports fill double needs: improving China's exchange and asset transportation effectiveness while likewise giving a basic foundation that can uphold its maritime tasks. This organisation is seen as an essential exertion by China to project its

power, secure its sea advantages, and lay out major areas of strength for an in the locale, subsequently shielding its financial and international targets in the Indian Sea.(Cordner, 2010)

China has essentially extended its maritime presence in the Indian Sea, with the foundation of its most memorable abroad army installation in Djibouti filling in as a basic achievement. This base not just offers calculated help for Chinese maritime tasks yet additionally highlights China's essential obligation to keeping a drawn out presence in the locale. By getting a super durable traction, China plans to safeguard its sea advantages, support its enemy of theft and peacekeeping missions, and improve its capacity to answer local possibilities. This move is an obvious sign of China's goal to reinforce its impact and defend its growing financial and international stakes in the Indian Sea.

China's essential targets in the Indian Sea are basically determined by its need to get fundamental oceanic shipping lanes, access normal assets, and support its international impact. Since China's energy imports and exports pass through the Indian Ocean, ensuring the safety of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) is a top priority. Guaranteeing a continuous exchange stream is fundamental for China's monetary soundness and development. Furthermore, the locale is plentiful in normal assets, including hydrocarbons and minerals, which are fundamental for China's energy security and modern requests. By laying out a presence in the Indian Sea, China means to safeguard its monetary advantages and broaden its asset supply chains, relieving gambles related with overreliance on any single course or provider. The Sea Silk Street (MSR), a critical part of the Belt and Street Drive (BRI), is fundamental to China's system in the Indian Sea. The MSR centres around creating foundations, like ports and strategies centres, in key sea nations. This organisation of ports, frequently alluded to as the "Pearl necklace," remembers huge ventures for Gwadar

(Pakistan), Hambantota (Sri Lanka), and Kyaukpyu (Myanmar), among others. These speculations work with smoother exchange and asset stream as well as improve China's essential traction in the locale. By growing its impact through financial means, China plans to establish an ideal climate for its international desires, guaranteeing its drawn out presence and influence in the Indian Sea. (*Chatzky, A., & McBride, J. (2010, January 18). China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative. Council on Foreign Relations. - References, n.d.*)

In this article the writer talks about India's worries because of China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean. With notable significance for both China and India, the Indian Ocean has developed into a crucial maritime region for trade, energy supply, and marine security. China has deliberately increased its influence in the region using economic and military methods like port building, anti-piracy operations, and infrastructure development, driven by economic stakes and energy security. India, meanwhile, views the Indian Ocean as its natural area of influence and seeks to preserve its hegemony in order to protect its economic and national security interests. India, however, is concerned about China's expanding naval deployments, infrastructural initiatives, and potential risks to its maritime communication lines. China's initiatives to expand its influence (Rather, M.A,2010)

The growing engagements of China in the Indian Ocean region over the past three decades are examined in this literature study. Strategists in the United States and India have expressed concern about China's expanding naval presence and the possible military advantages it could acquire through "debt-trap diplomacy" and infrastructure projects. The analysis looks at five mission goals that China might pursue in the area, ranging from positive actions to those that might worry US and Indian policymakers. Although there are legitimate reasons for concern about China's dual use capabilities, the analysis suggests that policymakers should be wary of thinking that China can simply use its "debt-trap diplomacy"

investments to gain a large military advantage in the Indian Ocean. According to the study, higher-end missions require military skills that can't be obtained through traditional methods.

The evaluation also notes that some of China's investments may hint to its plans and capacity to carry out sophisticated military operations that could endanger US and Indian interests. Policymakers are urged to keep an eye out for early warning signs that China may be attempting to carry out such missions, such as naval deployments that go above and beyond what is necessary for humanitarian or counter piracy missions, new platforms for maritime-based intelligence gathering against state adversaries, and initiatives to strengthen logistics network resilience, which is essential for maintaining operations in a conflict environment. Overall, this article sheds light on China's expanding naval presence in the Indian Ocean, lays out mission goals, evaluates the military utility of China's commercial activities, and highlights the significance of tracking indicators that might point to China's intentions for high-end military operations in the area (Mengal and Mirza, 2011)

This research focuses on two main aspects: the threat of radicalization particularly among Muslim youth for national security and China's expanding influence in India's immediate neighbourhood. In a security meeting attended by senior Indian officials, papers supplied by Indian Police Service (IPS) officers were analysed. The papers emphasise China's policy of granting significant loans under the pretence of development projects throughout Southeast and South Asia in relation to its influence. China wants to lessen India's power in the Indian Ocean region and compel bilateral disputes to be settled on its terms. Beijing is said to have successfully used Chinese programs like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as well as infrastructural investments in the region.

The article underlines how China's involvement in the area has multiple facets, going beyond only economic participation to include political, governmental, and interpersonal facets. The documents acknowledge the threat that radicalization poses a threat to national security, with a particular emphasis on Muslim youth. Increased degrees of indoctrination, the ease with which modern communication tools, including encrypted channels, are accessible, cross-border terrorism and Pakistan's support for radical organisations are some of the reasons cited for the growth in religious fundamentalism. The papers list a number of radical Muslim organisations operating in India that engage in organised radicalization, support violence, and undermine democracy and secularism.

The most powerful radical group, the Popular Front of India (PFI), is highlighted. Overall study clarifies China's strategic goals in the region around India, the methods it uses to increase its influence, and the difficulties presented by radicalism, particularly among Muslim youth. The findings emphasise the necessity for comprehensive strategies to address these problems, protect national security, and promote social peace. (Siddique,2011)

The historical perspective of India on maritime security and its changing policy in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) are both thoroughly examined in this section. The value of the sea was first overlooked by Indian kings, which delayed the focus on maritime security. Highlighted are the obstacles India experienced after gaining independence, such as aggressive neighbours and financial restraints, as well as the impact of the British and the United States during the post World War II era. The passage highlights India's marine mindset shift from a navy that primarily operates in coastal areas to one that operates in blue waters. With the end of the Cold War. A secure maritime environment was the goal of India's policy. Improved relationships between India and the US resulted from efforts to balance vulnerabilities in a unipolar world dominated by the United States and to advance a

multipolar world. India's strategic importance in the IOR is emphasised due to its geographic centre and closeness to important choke points. The paragraph also highlights India's attempts to strengthen military capabilities, improve interoperability with the US, and increase its acquisition of American weapons through exercises like Malabar. Ongoing talks with the US over new military equipment are highlighted. Overall, for research purposes, this report offers insightful information about India's approach to maritime security and its goals in the Indian Ocean. (Parmar, 2014)

The scholarly discourse on China's expanding influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) reveals a complex geopolitical landscape. China's ambitious programs to fortify its presence in the IOR, integral to its global power aspirations, have prompted concerns and raised significant implications for regional and global dynamics. India, in particular, apprehends China's growing strategic foothold, as evidenced by the establishment of military bases and the execution of ambitious infrastructure projects in the region. The context is further shaped by historical geopolitical theories, notably Mackinder's Heartland Theory and Spykman's Rimland concept, indicating the critical significance of controlling the Indian Ocean for global power. China's multifaceted strategies encompass diplomatic engagements, military expansion, and economic initiatives, underscoring its intent to solidify its position as a major global power in the maritime domain. These pursuits have sparked a complex reconfiguration of geopolitical relationships among major world powers, setting the stage for an intricate interplay of interests and strategic alignments in the Indian Ocean's evolving landscape. (But & Siddique, 2011)

This research delves deeply into the geopolitical landscape and power struggles within the Indian Ocean Region, underscoring the multifaceted dimensions of maritime competition, strategic ambitions, and regional interests. It thoroughly examines the forecasts

and observations made by influential geopolitical scholars and strategists, such as Swaran Singh, Robert Kaplan, and John Mearsheimer, regarding the Indian Ocean's prominence in global conflicts and the shifting balance of power among key players, particularly China, India, and the United States. The paper encompasses an extensive review of scholarly literature, integrating the insights of various experts, including Cao, McDevitt, and Li, who have contributed significantly to understanding China's evolving maritime policies and its growing influence in the Indian Ocean.

From the historical context of China's maritime aspirations to its comprehensive Belt and Road Initiative and the string of pearls strategy, this paper showcases a well-rounded overview of China's strategic trajectory in the region. Moreover, it explores the concerns and strategic calculations made by India, emphasising its concerns about China's expanding footprint and the evolving power dynamics in the Indian Ocean. Your research effectively weaves together multiple dimensions of strategic thought and regional dynamics to present a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between major powers in the Indian Ocean, serving as a strong foundation for further exploration and analysis in this arena. (Bukhari,2011)

India wants to build strong bilateral relationships with countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) in order to counterbalance China's growing economic and strategic influence. This commitment includes discretionary endeavours, financial associations, and security collaboration with nations in the area. By encouraging these connections, India tries to make an organisation of cordial countries that can on the whole oppose Chinese strength and keep an overall influence in the IOR. The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), which encourages economic cooperation, maritime security, and sustainable development among its member states, is one component of India's strategy. India strengthens regional solidarity

against China's potential coercive actions by promoting cooperative security measures and shared interests through IORA and similar platforms. As an alternative to Chinese investments as part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), India also makes investments in infrastructure projects in these nations. India helps these nations develop their economies independently of Chinese influence by providing financial assistance, technological assistance, and expertise, thereby reducing their susceptibility to Beijing's economic and political pressure. On the security front, India conducts joint military activities, shares knowledge, and takes part in sea watches with IOR nations. These activities build trust between navies, make it easier for them to work together, and make sure that everyone is ready to face common security problems like piracy, terrorism, and illegal fishing.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

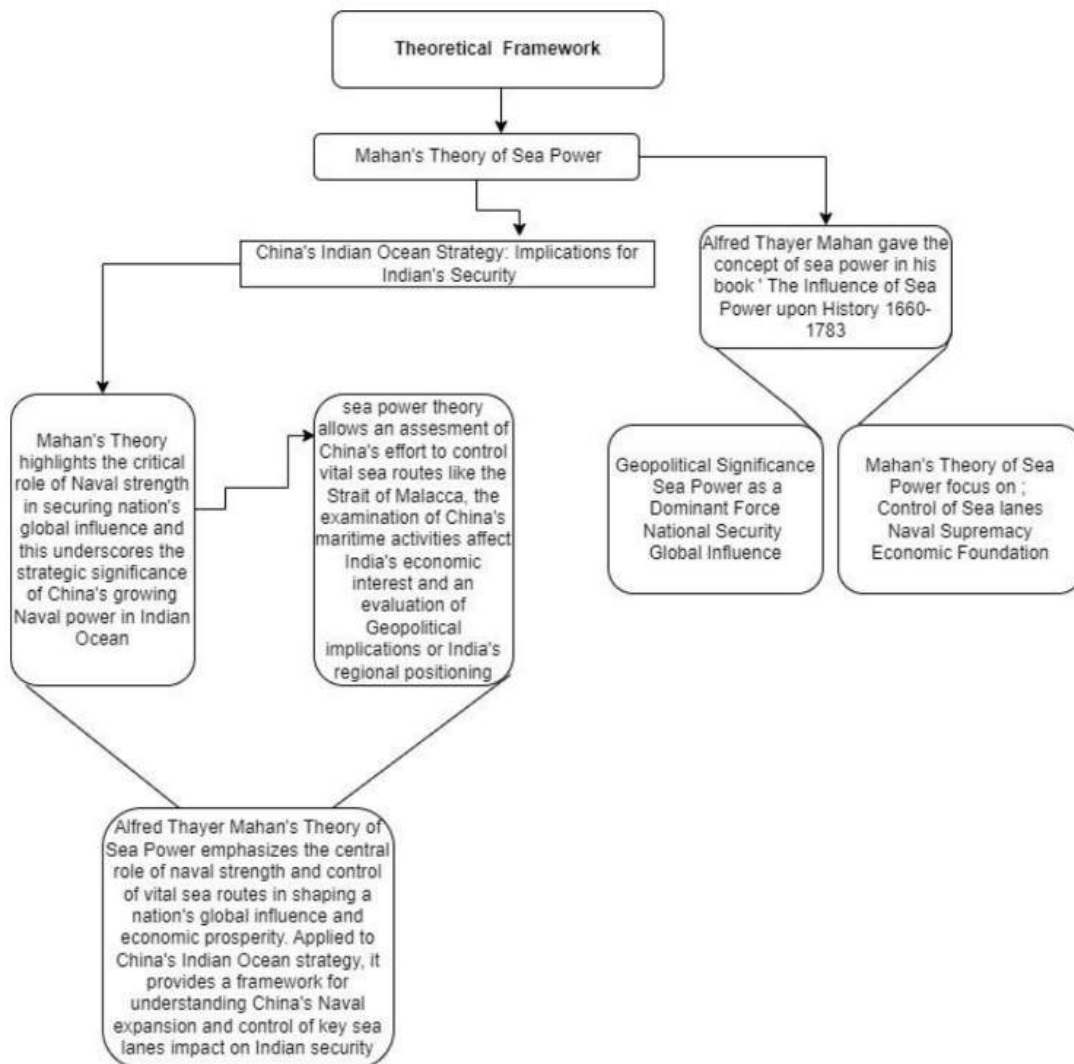
A theoretical framework is like a set of glasses through which researchers view and interpret their study's subject matter. It's the foundation that guides how researchers approach analysing and understanding a particular phenomenon. Just as a pair of glasses helps focus vision For theoretical explanation the study is based on Mahan's Theory of Sea Power. This Theory of Sea Power offers fundamental principles that direct analysis of the importance of naval strength, control of key sea routes, and the relationship between maritime dominance and a nation's global influence. Similar to how glasses bring clarity to vision, the theoretical framework sharpens the researcher's interpretation of events and actions related to China's presence in the Indian Ocean. It allows for a structured understanding of China's naval activities, strategic investments, and geopolitical manoeuvres in the region. Much like glasses organise and filter light for clearer vision, the theoretical framework organises information. It helps structure the analysis of China's military, economic, and geopolitical engagements in the Indian Ocean and their potential implications for India.

3.1 Mahan's Theory of Sea Power

The Influence of Sea Power upon History 1660–1783 is a history of naval warfare published in 1890 by the American naval officer and historian Alfred Thayer Mahan. His Theory of Sea Power is a strategic concept developed in the late 19th century that highlights the critical role of naval strength and control of key sea routes in securing a nation's global influence and economic prosperity. Mahan's theory emphasises the significance of a strong navy, control of strategic maritime passages, and the protection and expansion of maritime trade as essential elements for a nation's power and security in the international arena. It has had a lasting impact on naval strategy and geopolitics and continues to be relevant in the study of maritime security and global politics. The relationship between Mahan's sea power

theory and China's Indian Ocean strategy is characterised by a convergence of key principles.

Mahan's theory highlights the importance of a strong navy and control of critical sea routes for a nation's global influence and economic well-being. China's strategy aligns with these principles, as it emphasises naval strength, seeks to control strategic sea lanes like the Strait of Malacca, and invests in maritime infrastructure. This connection extends to the economic impact, where Mahan links naval power with economic prosperity through the protection and expansion of maritime trade, aligning with China's investments in Indian Ocean ports. Geopolitically, the theory underscores the implications for regional positioning and relationships, echoing the broader consequence of China's actions in the Indian Ocean.



Source: Mahan's Theory of Sea Power Framed By Scholar

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study is grounded in a qualitative research approach with a specific focus on thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a systematic and flexible method that enables researchers to examine, uncover, and report underlying patterns, or themes, within qualitative data. In the context of this research, which explores the concerns related to China's expanding presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and its potential consequences for India's security, thematic analysis is chosen due to its effectiveness in dealing with multifaceted and nuanced issues within geopolitical studies. The qualitative research approach is well-suited for this study because it allows for an in-depth exploration of complex and multifaceted phenomena, such as China's evolving strategy in the IOR and its implications for India. The data utilised in this analysis encompasses a wide range of sources, including books, articles, journals, and official reports. This diversity of sources ensures a comprehensive examination of the subject matter, drawing from both academic and policy-oriented perspectives, as well as primary data sources from official reports.

Research Design

The research design for this study appears to be primarily qualitative and exploratory in nature, focusing on the analysis of existing literature and documents to examine China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and its potential implications for India's security and regional stability. Overall, the research design adopts a qualitative approach, utilising thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involves a systematic process that begins with the collection of relevant textual data. Subsequently, this data is subjected to a process of coding, where in specific sections of the text are assigned codes or labels, categorising them based on their relevance to the research questions. These initial codes are then grouped into broader themes, revealing patterns and connections within the data. Thematic analysis is an

iterative process, allowing for continuous refinement of themes and codes as more data is analysed. The significance of thematic analysis lies in its ability to distil complex and diverse textual data into coherent and meaningful patterns. This approach not only helps in organising the information but also allows for a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Furthermore, it facilitates the interpretation of the implications of these themes, which, in this context, are essential for comprehending China's evolving strategy in the IOR and its potential impacts on India's security.

Themes

Here are some possible themes to consider for this study thematic analysis:

- **Naval Activities and Military Strategy:**

This theme explores China's military-strategic goals in the Indian Ocean, including its efforts to consolidate control and build long-range naval capabilities. It can also address India's response to China's naval activities.

- **China's Growing Presence in the Indian Ocean:**

This theme can encompass China's motivations, strategies, and activities in the Indian Ocean, such as its economic interests, energy security concerns, and historical engagement in the region.

- **Energy Security and the Indian Ocean Region:**

This theme can focus on China's growing energy needs and the challenges posed by its reliance on energy imports through the Indian Ocean. Explore the implications of China's energy security policy for the region.

- **Alternative Maritime Routes and Malacca Strait:**

Investigate the complexities of China's energy landscape and its quest for alternative routes, challenging the conventional view of the Malacca Strait as the sole passage to the Indian Ocean. Assess the perceived security concerns related to alternative routes.

- **China's Two Oceans Policy:**

Analyse China's comprehensive "Two Oceans" policy, covering economic, military, and diplomatic aspects. Consider the impact of China's economic engagement in the Indian Ocean, as well as the challenges and instabilities it may create.

1.91 Data Collection

Qualitative methods, particularly thematic analysis methods will be used in this research. We collect data from different documents, agreements, treaties, and acts. Researchers gather official documents, international agreements, treaties, and legislative acts relevant to China's engagements in the Indian Ocean. These texts provide foundational information and formal perspectives. Secondary Sources (Books, Journals, Newspapers, Magazines) Academic books, scholarly articles, newspaper reports, and magazine publications are sourced to gather diverse viewpoints, analyses, and expert opinions on China's actions in the Indian Ocean. These sources offer a wide range of perspectives and interpretations.

Chapter 2

Historical Background

Until 1700, the Indian Ocean facilitated the world's biggest flourishing seaborne trade, with Muslim, Indian and Chinese dealers cruising its waters. A critical authentic scene happened within the early 1400s, which clarifies modern Chinese logic and its approach to the Indian Sea. China dispatched seven expansive discretionary maritime undertakings to the Indian Sea driven by the amazing Chief of naval operations Zhang He, who cruised as distant as the Persian Inlet, the Ruddy Ocean and East Africa. So also, the Ottomans, Persians and Mughals moreover created naval forces in their individual locales, which were dependable for ensuring the east-west exchange course over the Indian Sea region. European dominance taken after this period, before British domination, and after that Cold War powers expected control, though in competition. As Indian control also rises, its strategic traction in the region.

The Second World War finished colonialism and the European nations ceased to be the rulers of this sea. The United States and the Soviet Union got to be the modern included parties. In any case, indeed in spite of the fact that the Cold War isolated the world into two alliances, both the U.S. and USSR did not truly endeavour to fill the vacuum cleared out by the British in this range. Presently within the Post-Cold War time, agreeing to Ashwani Sharma, “the domain of world legislative issues had changed past all acknowledgment, as was the Indian Sea in its appearance and part, verifiably and unequivocally due to the transforms of the world.” Amid that period, the geo-strategic undercurrents of the Indian Sea had changed altogether due to the energetic struggles of unused players within the locale, especially China and India, to attain key aims within the IOR.

In spite of the fact that the United States still holds an amazing locus within the Indo-Pacific, the complex changes amid the final century permitted them to rebuild their

methodology to genuinely maintain its dominance within the zone only The first few years following China's independence on October 1, 1949, and India's independence on August 15, 1947, were marked by cooperation between the two newly independent states. On April 1, 1950, diplomatic ties were officially established, making India the first non-socialist nation to acknowledge the People's Republic of China (PRC). High-level visits and exchanges aimed at fostering cooperation and goodwill marked this early relationship. A significant act of support, India's support for China's membership in the UN Security Council reflects the favourable relations between the two countries at the time recently.

2.1 Origin And Escalation of Border Dispute (1914)

The 1914 Simla Convention, a tripartite agreement between British India, Tibet, and China, established the McMahon Line. China, however, did not acknowledge the validity of this boundary because it believed Tibet to be under Chinese sovereignty and lacked the authority to negotiate borders on its own. China and India have been at odds for years due to their inability to reach an agreement on the McMahon Line. (Maxwell, 1970) China began building a road through the Aksai Chin region in the middle of the 1950s. This strategically important region connects Tibet and Xinjiang. The discovery of the road in 1957 by India, which claimed Aksai Chin as a part of Ladakh, resulted in a significant escalation of the border dispute. India was alarmed by this development because it saw it as a direct threat to its territorial integrity. (Hoffmann, 1990)

The circumstance was additionally convoluted by occasions in Tibet. The Dalai Lama fled to India, where he was granted asylum, following the Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule in 1959. India's response to China's actions in Tibet significantly heightened bilateral tensions. India viewed China's repression in Tibet as aggressive and expansionist, while China viewed India's offer of asylum to the Dalai Lama as an insult and an intrusion into its internal affairs. (Garver, 2001) Both nations began militarising their border regions in

response to these rising tensions. The risk of conflict was further elevated by both sides' expanding military presence and defences. A series of border skirmishes resulted from the mutual distrust and the absence of a clearly defined boundary, which eventually culminated in the Sino-Indian War in 1961.(Swamy, 2019)

India and China's unresolved border disputes reached their zenith in a brief but intense conflict in 1961. As a result of escalating tensions and long-standing territorial disputes, the Sino-Indian War broke out in October 1961. As Chinese forces advanced into Indian-held territory in both the western (Aksai Chin) and eastern (Arunachal Pradesh) sectors, war broke out. China sought to consolidate its control over Aksai Chin in the western sector, a region it regarded as essential for maintaining connectivity between Tibet and Xinjiang. In the eastern area, the contention zeroed in on the contested area of Arunachal Pradesh, which China alluded to as South Tibet.

(Garver, 2001, 85-95)

2.2 Panchsheel Agreement (1954)

The Agreement on Trade and Interaction between India and China's Tibet Region was signed in 1954. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, also known as the Panchsheel principles, were officially adopted as part of this agreement through an Exchange of Notes. The Panchsheel Standards were enunciated in the preface to the 1954 Understanding and filled in as an establishment for Sino-Indian relations during the early long periods of their collaboration post-freedom. The principles were also emphasised at the 1955 Bandung Conference, a pivotal event in the Non-Aligned Movement that demonstrated a common vision for peaceful and cooperative international relations among newly independent states. As a result of the agreement, India effectively gave up its privileges in Tibet that it had inherited from earlier agreements with the British colonial administration.

Five Principle of 1954 Agreement

1. Recognizing that each nation has the right to its own territory and governance without interference from outsiders, this principle stresses the significance of respecting each state's sovereign rights and geographical boundaries.
2. The two nations made a deal to avoid turning to the utilisation of power or the danger of power against one another. The goal of this principle is to ensure that conflicts are settled peacefully rather than through military conflict.
3. This guideline focuses on the significance of non-obstruction in the homegrown issues of the other country. Every country ought to permit the other to deal with its own inward matters without outside mediation or impact.
4. Relations between the two nations ought to be founded on equity, guaranteeing that the two sides benefit from their communications. This standard advances reasonableness and correspondence in respective dealings, guaranteeing that neither one of the nations takes advantage of the other.
5. This guideline underlines the obligation to keep up with tranquil and agreeable relations. In order to foster a stable and cooperative regional environment, both nations should endeavour to live in peace with one another.

2.3 Mile-Stone in Sino-Indian Cooperation (The Bandung Conference Of 1955)

A significant event in the development of international relations was the Bandung Conference, which took place in Bandung, Indonesia, from April 18 to April 14, 1955. It denoted the primary enormous scope of social occasion of Asian and African states, a large portion of which had as of late acquired freedom from provincial rule. The gathering was attended by agents from 19 nations, and its essential goals were to advance financial and social participation, oppose imperialism, and backing the yearnings of recently free countries. Peace and security among the newly independent nations were the goals of the conference. It

tried to make a stage for these nations to examine and address normal security worries without being brought into the Virus War elements between the US and the Soviet Association

The main topics were economic development and cooperation, and how Asian and African nations could work together to improve their economies and achieve sustainable development were discussed. This included sharing innovative skills, exchange relations, and common help. One of the preeminent objectives was to speed up the decolonization cycle. The members swore support for freedom developments in regions still under frontier rule and denounced expansionism in the entirety of its structures. The gathering highlighted the significance of non-arrangement, upholding that Asian and African countries shouldn't line up with both of the two superpowers (the U.S. or on the other hand the Soviet Association) however rather seek after an autonomous international strategy in view of common regard and serene concurrence. (Athwal, 2008)

Shared Vision for Post-Provincial Request India and China, as two of the biggest and most persuasive countries in Asia, assumed critical parts at the Bandung Meeting. Reflecting the Panchsheel Principles they had agreed upon in 1954, both nations shared a vision for a post-colonial world order based on mutual respect, equality, and peaceful coexistence.

At the conference, influential figures like Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai emphasised the significance of Asian and African nations working together to achieve common objectives. The participation among India and China embodied the "Bandung Spirit" which underscored fortitude, aggregate confidence, and a unified position against expansionism and dominion. Their fruitful cooperation at Bandung filled in as a model for different countries.

The Bandung Conference's outcomes

A final communiqué, echoing the Panchsheel Principles, outlined ten principles of international relations at the conference's conclusion. These included regard for basic freedoms, power, non-mediation, and the advancement of world harmony and participation. The foundation for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which was officially established in 1961, was laid by the Bandung Conference. By advocating for a third option in the Cold War and representing the needs of developing nations, NAM established itself as a significant player in international politics. The meeting reinforced ties between taking part in nations, encouraging a feeling of solidarity and common perspective. Additionally, it elevated China and India's international standing as developing world leaders. (Eslava et al., 2017,) In spite of these early helpful endeavours, tremendous contrasts started to surface by the last part of the 1950s. The undemarcated border between China and India sparked the most debate. The line, especially in the Aksai Jaw district and Arunachal Pradesh (alluded to by China as South Tibet), was inadequately characterised and a tradition of English pilgrim map making.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Indian Ocean was seen as a special region that should not become a hotbed of war between the superpowers, especially the United States and the Soviet Union. This trend has led to the emergence of a proposal for an "Indian Ocean Peace Zone" that is regularly discussed at the United Nations. The idea behind this proposal was to keep the Indian Ocean free from conflict and conflict associated with the Cold War superpowers, thus preserving it as a zone of peace. There is currently little interest compared to the major powers in the Indian Ocean. This lack of focus provided an opportunity where the concept of peace had a real chance of becoming real. The superpowers did not invest much in the region, which allowed for a neutral and peaceful environment. However, the situation changed dramatically after the 1973 oil crisis. This crisis revealed the importance of energy resources, especially oil, for the world economy and national security.

As a result, the interests of the superpowers have changed their access to energy resources in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea, the regions closest to the Indian Ocean. With the renewed focus on these areas, the idea of preserving the Indian Ocean as a peace zone became overshadowed by the geopolitical and economic interests of the superpowers. The urgency to control and manage energy security has led to increased military and strategic activities in and around the Indian Ocean, making the desire for peace impossible. The superpowers, who increased their interventions in the region for energy security reasons, undermined efforts to maintain it as a neutral, conflict-free region. Following the end of the Cold War, the United States continued and expanded its naval and military activities around the world, including in the Indian Ocean region.

However, the US's emphasis is mainly on counterterrorism and combating groups such as Al Qaeda. This preoccupation led the Americans to other major events in the Indian Ocean region. During this period of American distraction, major geopolitical changes occurred. China and India, two rising superpowers, began to assert their power in the Indian Ocean. Both countries have experienced significant economic growth and increased energy demand, leading to significant regional interests. Since China's economy is heavily dependent on maritime trade routes, especially the import of energy resources such as oil and gas from the Middle East, the security of this sea becomes a major concern. To safeguard its energy supply chain, China has invested heavily in the development of ports and maritime infrastructure through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which has created a network of ports across the Indian Ocean commonly known as the 'String of Pearls'. In addition to this infrastructure, China has strengthened its naval power in the region to protect its water and energy interests, as evidenced by the establishment of the first foreign military base in Djibouti. (hatcher, 2013)

The new communist government led by Mao Zedong faced the daunting task of

consolidating its control over a vast and diverse nation after the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established in 1949. During this time, a number of important internal priorities were the primary focus: One of the primary major activities was arrival change, pointed at redistributing arrival from proprietors to labourers. This was aiming to break the conventional mediaeval structures, diminish rustic disparity, and pick up the back of the lower class, which was a foundation of communist philosophy. Taking after the arrival changes, the government moved towards collectivising horticulture. This included blending little labourer property into expansive collective ranches to extend rural efficiency and guarantee state control over nourishment generation.

In any case, this arrangement confronted noteworthy challenges and frequently came about in diminished efficiency and broad starvation, most eminently amid the Incredible Jump Forward (1958-1961) The government too centred on nationalising industry, changing privately-owned businesses into state-owned endeavours. This was pointed at quickening industrialization and decreasing dependence on remote substances, in this manner cultivating financial self-sufficiency. Politically, the government worked to solidify its control through different campaigns pointed at killing resistance and guaranteeing dependability to the communist administration. This included cleanses of seen foes, building up a one-party state, and executing strict ideological control. China confronted noteworthy outside dangers and clashes within the early a long time of the PRC, which requested significant military assets and a strategic focus on arrival instead of sea extension.

The PRC confronted continuous pressures with the Republic of China (ROC) government, which had withdrawn to Taiwan after losing the war. The Taiwan Strait emergencies within the 1950s highlighted the danger posed by the ROC and its partners, requiring a solid military nearness along the southeastern coast. China locked in in a border war with India in 1961 over debated regions within the Himalayas. This struggle highlighted

the need for considerable ground strengths to secure China's southwestern borders.

This locale, the Indo-Pacific, is at show one of the speediest creating districts of the world, showing unmatched vigour in socio-political, financial, and geo-security terms. Robert Kaplan has appropriately expressed that “the 11st-century control elements will be uncovered within the background of sharp intrigued and impact of three key players, i.e., China, India, and the United States and their interface may be a few sort of a cover and intersection.” In brief, the Indo-Pacific has properly emerged as the financial and geopolitical centre of gravity of the world within the 11st century. China opened its economy within the year 1978 and finished around a rate of 10 percent development for three decades. China has lifted millions of people out of destitution through an orderly development design. China has presently risen to be the biggest economy within the world. (Dravid, 2018)

The 'Open Door Policy' checked the turning point within the history of the financial improvement of China as the nation opened for remote speculation Xiaoping's deliberate was to spread trade of Chinese ventures abroad Since defence was one of the Xiaoping's Four Modernizations (other three incorporate horticulture, industry, and science and innovation), change of the People's Freedom Armed force (PLA) was essential consequently was started in early 1980s (Artisan, 1984). Common Liu Huaqing, who was the third commander of The Arrange between 1981 and 1988, played a significant part within the Chinese defence changes. He imagined a three-step handle by which Beijing would have a naval force of worldwide reach by the half of the 11st century. The primary arrangement (2000–2010) involved China creating a maritime drive that might work up to the primary island chain. This step moreover included faculty and arrangement preparing, remodel and overhauling of ships. Arrange would become a territorial constraint table of anticipating drive to the moment island chain This organisation makes strides the combat capabilities of Chinese naval force within the close oceans by building light aeroplane carriers and buying extra carrier armadas. On the

other hand, at the third arrange China would have a blue-water naval force with aeroplane carriers as its centrepiece

In 1999, under the authority of President Jiang Zemin, Go-Out Approach (the Going Worldwide Procedure) was started to advance Chinese ventures overseas. Be that as it may, the approach was successful after Beijing's passage into the World Exchange Organization (WTO) in 2001. To begin with, China allowed state-owned enterprises to contribute overseas. In 2003, Chinese private companies were too allowed to contribute abroad. China's integration into the worldwide economy and abroad speculation have formed Beijing's outside arrangements particularly with respects to worldwide sea exchange courses, vitality security, universal markets and protection of Chinese citizens and enterprises abroad.

Common Huaqing was majorly impacted by the American maritime officer and student of history Alfred Thayer Mahan. Mahan's centre precepts around maritime control were tied down on the control of oceans which he saw as basic since they acted as sea 'highway' for commerce and were a common asset for all states. Moreover, the control of oceans within the modern world legislative issues is basic for worldwide and territorial powers in extending their control and riches by utilising exchange courses amid peacetime and misusing the oceans for military targets amid times of war. In this manner, China's two sea (Pacific and Indian) methodology can be clarified and caught on from the country's development direction; the ought to secure exchange courses and SLOCs projection of sea control to address territorial and universal dangers; and the ought to misuse vitality saves and normal assets that lie within the littoral states of IOR.

China's engagement with the Indian Sea remained fringe amid the Cold War, with the country to a great extent prioritising its mainland defence and concentrating on territorial elements in East Asia. Be that as it may, as China experienced clearing financial changes and grasped globalisation within the post-Cold War period, Beijing came to recognize the Indian

Ocean's vital centrality. This tremendous oceanic region changed from a far off skyline into a basic conduit for China's vitality supplies. Persuaded by the objectives of financial development and vitality security, China extended its financial impression, sea interests, and vital activities within the Indian Sea Locale (IOR). This move signalled a significant altar in China's geopolitical procedure, because it deliberately explored the waters of the Indian Sea to capitalise on its financial potential and protect its oceanic interface in the midst of evolving global dynamics. (Odhiambo, 2010)

China has always viewed India through the lens of its own relations with the Soviet Union and the United States, rather than assessing it on its own terms or acknowledging its agency. After the Sino-Soviet split and its non-aligned stance, China perceived India as an unequal and untrustworthy player during the Cold War. China's diplomatic and strategic decisions were often seen as a secondary actor whose actions were interpreted in the context of the broader superpower rivalry. This perception was evident in India's diplomatic and strategic decisions, where India was often seen as a secondary actor whose actions were interpreted in the As a result, China's approach to India lacked mutual respect and was marred by suspicion, contributing to strained bilateral relations.

From 1949 to 1961, China saw the United States as its principal adversary and sought to keep India neutral to avoid joining the US in Cold War dynamics. China's primary objective was to avoid India becoming a part of the American strategy to contain communism in Asia. The Panchsheel Agreement of 1954 and the Bandung Conference of 1955 were used to foster cooperation and build Asian solidarity. China hoped to counter Western, particularly American, inroads into Asia and promote a unified Asian stance in international affairs by aligning with India, a leader in the Non-Aligned Movement. By aligning with India, China hoped to leverage India's influence to counter Western Border disputes and strategic differences gradually eroded this cooperation. The unresolved territorial disputes between

Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh intensified hostilities, culminating in the Sino-Indian War of 1961. The conflict shifted India closer to the Soviet Union and altered regional dynamics. The conflict revealed the limitations of China's initial approach and led to a persistent distrust, fundamentally altering Sino-Indian relations and demonstrating the difficulties associated with balancing regional power during the Cold War. (Gokhale, 2011)

Chapter 3

The Main Components Of Indian Ocean Strategy Of China

China has a complex approach to promoting its diplomatic, strategic, and economic interests in the Indian Ocean region through its multifaceted strategy. Fundamental to China's engagement with Indian Ocean nations as well as its larger geopolitical goals are a number of important elements that make up this strategy. China has been a leader in infrastructure projects, economic initiatives, and large investments to secure access to vital resources and markets. Economic engagement is a cornerstone of these efforts. Meanwhile, as demonstrated by the creation, deployment, and operations of its naval forces in the Indian Ocean, China's naval expansion highlights its dedication to defending its maritime interests.

Developing partnerships, alliances, and diplomatic ties with Indian Ocean nations is another crucial aspect of China's diplomatic outreach, which it uses to promote cooperation and increase its influence. China acts in a way that is motivated by geostrategic concerns, which include securing energy resources, defending its maritime trade routes, and neutralising rivals in the area. With military collaboration, defence relationships, and security measures targeted at improving maritime security and stability in the area, security cooperation further solidifies China's influence. To strengthen its influence, China uses media outreach, educational exchanges, and cultural diplomacy as part of its soft power strategy, which supports these initiatives.

In addition to drastically altering China's economic environment, Deng Xiaoping's "open up" policy of 1978 also had a significant impact on the country's maritime strategy. As China transitioned towards market-oriented reforms and embraced globalisation, its economy experienced unprecedented growth, leading to a significant increase in maritime trade and economic activity. In terms of trade routes and energy security, in particular, this economic boom highlighted the Pacific Ocean's strategic importance in defending China's maritime

interests. Aiming to modernise and enlarge China's naval capabilities in response to the changing needs of securing access to essential resources and protecting maritime trade routes, the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) was reorganised under Liu Huaqing in the 1980s. China's maritime strategy evolved to include a wider zone of operations and a greater role for the PLAN, as a result of the historical economic pressures.

China's maritime strategy in the Pacific and beyond has been shaped by its economic initiatives, which have been further strengthened by initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative and were prompted by Deng's reforms. These initiatives have highlighted the indivisible connection between economic prosperity and maritime security. China is expanding its influence in the Indian Ocean region by implementing a strategy of Strategic Encirclement. According to its growing economic engagements and strategic interests in the region, China has in fact increased its military presence in the Indian Ocean region significantly in recent years. China's commitment to strengthening its maritime capabilities and projecting power beyond its immediate shores is marked by the establishment of a military facility in Djibouti. Furthermore, China wants to improve interoperability and fortify military-to-military ties with its regional allies, as evidenced by its involvement in cooperative military drills with those partners. In the Indian Ocean region, major military powers are becoming more cooperative, as evidenced by the joint military exercises that China, Russia, and South Africa conducted along South Africa's coast.

These drills reveal a deeper strategic alignment intended to protect shared interests and fend off possible security threats in the area, in addition to showcasing military capabilities. China is also demonstrating its commitment to upholding maritime security and stability in vital sea lanes by deploying the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy to the Horn of Africa to assist in anti-piracy operations. China aims to convey its readiness to support global endeavours to counter maritime piracy and preserve the liberty of navigation

in the Indian Ocean by means of these deployments and interactions. In addition to military exercises and deployments, China's role as a major. In addition, China has demonstrated its commitment to upholding maritime security and stability in vital sea lanes by sending the People's Liberation Army(PLA) Navy to support anti-piracy missions in the Horn of Africa. By means of these deployments and engagements, China aims to exhibit its readiness to partake in global endeavours to counter maritime piracy and preserve the liberty of navigation in the Indian Ocean.

China's military power is further increased by its major arms supply to nations in the Indian Ocean region, in addition to its military drills and deployments. China's arms sales to Egypt, Pakistan,Indonesia, Myanmar, Somalia, Tanzania, and Thailand not only deepen relations between the two countries, but also help to shape the security and military landscape of the region. China's increasing military build-up, joint exercises, and arms sales in the Indian Ocean region are indicative of its aspirations to become a maritime power and its strategic need to protect its maritime interests and maintain stability in the region. China is likely to keep using its military actions and alliances in the Indian Ocean as important parts of its larger strategic calculations as long as it maintains its position as a major player in the region. The Indian Ocean strategy of China encircles with different modules that work toward cultivating their economic, strategic and geo-political interests. These major components of China's strategy can be summarised as follows:

3.1 Economic Strategies

In order to increase its economic influence and gain access to essential resources and markets, China engages in a variety of economic activities, investments, and infrastructure projects. Developing ports, railroads, highways, and energy pipelines is part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to improve trade, investment, and economic cooperation throughout the Indian Ocean region.

Country	Active Naval Vessels Of China	Port Infrastructure Developed By China	Status Of Free Trade Agreement With China	Chinese Investment (2005-2017)
Bangladesh	46	Chittagong port	Biggest Trading Partner (2016)	14.1
Maldives	0	Ihavan Port	Signed in 2017	N.A
Pakistan	15	Gwadar Port	Signed in 2007	50.6
Sri Lanka	17	Hambantota Port	Signed in 2014	14.7
Mayanmar	17	Kyaukpyu Port	ASEAN-CHINA 2010	7.4

(Palmer et al., 2024) Framed By Scholar

Because of the enormous amount of trade that flows through the Indian Ocean (IO), China has a strategic imperative to protect its interests there. Ensuring the security of maritime trade routes becomes increasingly important as China's economy grows and its global economic stature strengthens. In order to preserve its economic interests and vital sea lanes, China has therefore attempted to increase its presence and power projection capabilities in the IO. Increased financial investments in the region, especially in nations like those in East Africa, have coincided with China's growing economic influence in the IO. China's willingness to engage with challenging environments to secure its economic interests is demonstrated by the fact that these investments are frequently made in countries that are experiencing political instability or difficulties in conducting business abroad.

Future collaboration between the African Union and the Chinese government must prioritise security and cooperation, according to Liu Hongwu, Director of Zhejiang Traditional University's College of African Studies. In order to safeguard Chinese investments and maintain regional stability, many African nations have realised that stronger security measures are required. This emphasises how important security cooperation is becoming between China and African countries, as well as the larger Indian Ocean region. Overall, China's efforts to cooperate and ensure security in the Indian Ocean are a reflection of its strategic importance. Belt and Road Initiative The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China is also known as the New Silk Road. The original Silk Road emerged during the Han Dynasty (106 BCE–110CE) in China, which expanded westward and created trade networks across what are now modern-day Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan in Central Asia, as well as modern-day India and Pakistan to the south. The distance over four thousand miles to Europe was covered by those routes. As a result, Central Asia served as the hub for one of the first waves of globalisation, which linked markets in the east and west, generated enormous wealth, and mixed religious and cultural

traditions. China received gold and other precious metals, ivory, glass goods, and other commodities while valuable Chinese silk, spices, jade, and other goods were moved west. Under the direction of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE) in China and the Roman and Byzantine Empires, use of the route peaked during the first millennium.

Belt And Road Initiative

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is one of the most ambitious infrastructure initiatives ever imagined. President Xi Jinping introduced an extensive set of investment and development programs in 2013. Their original goal was to build physical infrastructure that would connect East Asia and Europe. Since then, the project has spread to South America, Africa, and Oceania, greatly increasing China's political and economic clout. As the costs of Many of the projects have skyrocketed, opposition has grown in some countries, with some analysts viewing the project as an unsettling extension of China's rising power. In the meantime, the US is worried, as are some Asians, that the BRI might serve as a front for regional development and military build-up spearheaded by China.

President Joe Biden has continued to view Beijing's actions with the scepticism of his predecessors, but Washington has found it difficult to present participating governments with a more compelling economic Vision. The theory of sea power proposed by Alfred Thayer Mahan states that a nation's global influence and prosperity are directly linked to its control of maritime trade routes and access to strategic ports. China's economic strategies in the Indian Ocean are exemplified by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). By putting resources into foundation and encouraging financial ties, China plans to get its ocean lines of correspondence and improve its key and monetary impact in the area, mirroring Mahan's accentuation on the significance of maritime power and business intrigues in accomplishing public significance. (Zeng et al., 2019)

Port Infrastructure Development And Investment

An important position in China's Maritime Silk Road initiative is the Indian Ocean region (IOR). Strategically and economically significant, the IOR is responsible for 80% of China's energy imports and is vital to China's trade. China's construction and investment activities in the IOR have grown during the last three decades. In light of this, ports have grown to be significant locations for Chinese strategic, commercial, and political initiatives. Seventeen ports in the IOR have some Chinese involvement, as can be seen. Massive undertakings like the deepwater ports and terminals at Gwadar and Lamu, as well as smaller terminals like the Livestock Terminal at Port Sudan, are examples of this involvement. Through Chinese companies hired to build the ports and associated infrastructure, China is directly involved in the construction of 13 of them. From \$78 million for Djibouti to \$1.16 billion for Gwadar in Pakistan, the project's costs range from moderate to extravagant.

Chinese enterprises are directly involved financially in eight projects as debt or equity holders in addition to being port contractors. For example, the Hong Kong-based CMPorts has invested in the management of ports such as the Doraleh Multipurpose Port in Djibouti, and other Chinese enterprises have agreements in place to lease ports or terminals in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Australia, and the United Arab Emirates. Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are the main players in the maritime construction and investment sector. Giant Chinese SOEs like CMPorts and China Communication Construction Company are involved in all but one of the 17 port projects in the IOR. One example of this is the CSP Terminal at the Khalifa Port, which is close to Abu Dhabi. The Chinese shipping behemoth COSCO invested \$300 million in the terminal, and it is currently a significant hub for trade along the Maritime Silk Road. China has already established ports in a number of these nations. Large amounts of debt to China are owed by Kenya, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Djibouti; in fact, more than 17% of Pakistan's total external debt is secured by Chinese

debt. It's no secret that there are worries that they could turn into debt traps. In exchange for debt, Chinese companies can lease ports, as demonstrated by CMPorts' acquisition of an 85% stake and 99-year port lease in Hambantota. This represents a trade-off for China. (Mações, 2018)

Details Of Ports

Country	Status	Port	Funder	Contracter	Cost Of Project
Kenya	Under-Construction	Lamu-Port	World-Bank	China Communication Construction Company	689 \$
Kenya	Under-Construction	Mombasa-Port	Kenya-Government	China-Communication Construction Company	400\$
U.A.E	Completed	CSP Terminal Khalifa Terminal	400\$ investment from Costco 35 years Concession Agreement	China Ocean Shipping Company	300\$
Djibouti	Completed	Doraleh Multi-purpose Port	Financed by loan from China Exim Bank. 13.5% stake in port operation	China State Construction Engineering Corporation	590\$
Egypt	Completed	Sokhna Port	NA	China Harbour Engineering Company	510\$
Tanzania	Stalled	Bagamoyo port	NA	-	10000\$
Tanzania	Under Construction	Dar-Es-Salam Port	World Bank	China Harbour Engineering Company	154\$
Sudan	Completed	Sudan Port	-	China Harbour Engineering Company	100\$

Sri Lanka	Completed	Hambantota Port	99-year Concession agreement for \$1.11 billion. 85% ownership share	China Merchants Port Holdings	1500\$
Sri Lanka	Completed	CICT Terminal Colombo	35-year concession agreement	China Merchants Port Holdings	500\$
Mayanmar	Planned	Kyaukpyu Port	NA	China Power	1300\$
Malaysia	Cancelled	Malacca Port	NA	NA	10500\$
Australia	Completed	Darwin Port	99-year lease for \$390 million	NA	390\$
Bangladesh	NA	Chittagong Port	NA	China Communications Construction Company	NA
Bangladesh	Planned	Payra Port	NA	China Harbour Engineering Company	600\$
Pakistan	Completed	Karachi DeepWater port	NA	China Harbour Engineering Company	500\$

Framed By Scholar

Dept-Trap Policy

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and China's "debt trap" policy have raised concerns about the possibility of unmanageable debt loads and weakened sovereignty in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Large-scale transportation, energy, port, and rail projects are all part of this initiative, which is funded in part by Chinese loans. Although economic development and connectivity are potential benefits of these projects, borrowing nations face substantial financial risks. Many IOR nations look to China for funding because they lack the financial wherewithal to support these initiatives on their own. But because the terms of these loans are frequently unclear and come with high interest rates, there may be a significant build-up of debt. When nations find it difficult to reap enough benefits from their projects, it becomes more difficult to meet their debt obligations and pay interest.

This makes the debt burden especially worrisome. China may use its position to pressure borrowing nations into making concessions or cede control of strategic assets if they are having trouble repaying their debts. Acquiring ownership interests in infrastructure projects, obtaining long-term leases on land or ports, or gaining first dibs on natural resources are some examples of this. Concerns about sovereignty are raised by such arrangements since they might make it more difficult for borrowing countries to pursue independent foreign policies and make decisions. Mahan's theory of sea power, which emphasises the significance of securing key maritime positions and infrastructure to enhance national influence and control over global trade routes, aligns with the potential for China to gain control over strategic assets in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) through its "debt trap" policy. (Hurley, n.d.)

3.2 Military Strategies

In the twenty-first century, China is becoming a maritime great power (MGP) under President Xi Jinping. It is constructing an Indian Ocean fleet as well as a Pacific Ocean fleet. The Pacific fleet assumes a central role in China's naval strategy due to its status as an East

Asian power and the potential threat it faces from the region. Despite being China's second choice, the Indian Ocean is increasingly important to the country's expanding naval power. The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLA Navy/PLAN), which mainly serves the Indian Ocean region (IOR), has adopted "open seas protection" as a new naval strategy, according to China's 2015 Defence White Paper. China has made significant investments in the Indian Ocean region through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which can be interpreted as an attempt to both project its power throughout maritime Asia and safeguard its economic interests.

The aircraft carrier will serve as the cornerstone of China's fleet in the Indian Ocean, despite the country having recently begun to deploy submarines and platform ships there. China has been characterised as a "maritime power" that will "firmly uphold its maritime rights and interests" in the Eighteenth Party Congress Work Report, for the first time. In order to become a blue-water naval force, the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is starting a significant modernization program. Its goal for the twenty-first century is to emerge as a new, elite Pacific power. PLAN might be seeking a large role in the Indo-Pacific maritime region. It seems that China will need to secure its energy resources as it moves east, and this will involve the Indo-Pacific Sea lanes. Notably, China is constructing the Anti Access Area Denial strategy (A1AD) in response to the US's attempt to project power into the Western Pacific, and this effort has accelerated as a result of the US's "pivot" to Asia.

The A1AD is contextualised in relation to China's military modernization in this article. In order to preserve maritime trade routes, defend its maritime interests, and promote regional stability, China has made maritime security operations in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) a major part of its overall strategy. The principal goals of these operations are to combat transnational threats to maritime trade and security in the IOR, such as smuggling and piracy. In order to improve military cooperation, gain access to key facilities, and fortify

intelligence-sharing capabilities, China has been cultivating strategic partnerships and alliances with nations in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). In order to strengthen military-to-military relations and advance shared security interests, these partnerships and alliances engage in a variety of activities, such as joint exercises, training courses, and plans for defence cooperation.

China's efforts to alleviate challenges to mutual security and support stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) are contingent upon cooperation in counterterrorism and maritime security. Together, these initiatives aim to counter transnational threats that jeopardise maritime safety and regional peace, such as piracy, terrorism, smuggling, and other problems. China hopes to support a safe maritime environment, protect important sea lanes, and advance prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region (IOR) by cooperating on cooperative projects, exchanging intelligence, carrying out coordinated operations, and building the capacity of regional partners. China has larger geopolitical goals of defending its maritime interests, expanding its influence, and promoting security and stability in the region, all of which inform its military policies in the Indian Ocean region. China is expected to influence regional geopolitics and shape the strategic dynamics of the IOR through its military presence and activities as its naval capabilities increase. (Lim, 2014)

Anti-Access Area-Denial Strategy

The term refers to the ability of a state to invest in alternatives that limit the US's ability to use its advantages, even if it cannot defeat the US in a conventional war. China is employing this idea to make sense of its growing defence purchases and port infrastructure in the Indian Ocean region. The US still has maritime superiority, so on the other hand, it is not a capability that can win a war. Furthermore, it is not a very new tactic. Yes, its origins can be found in the post-Cold War period, specifically in the Gulf War of 1991 and the Afghanistan War of 2003. The US's ability to quickly and easily deploy forces in the area contributed to its

success. Since then, this tactic has gained attention as China and other countries have begun to use a variety of weapon systems designed to prevent a technologically advanced power from entering a contested area or conflict zone during times of hostility.

Building up its capacity to carry out Anti-Access Area Denial is the main goal of China's military modernization. Among China's many ballistic missile forces aimed at attacking targets like air bases and naval installations is its anti-access capability. Advanced counter-air and counter-maritime systems are part of China's area denial capabilities. The short- and medium-range ballistic missile (SRBM/MRBM) is another thing it possesses. The anti-ship ballistic and cruise missile (ASBM/ASCM) arsenal of China is capable of being launched from the air, land, or sea. An additional plausible A1AD threat is the submarine fleet.

A further addition to the nation's growing military might is the recent acquisition of China Dong Feng 11 D (carrier killer), the most advanced anti-ship missile in the world. Reportedly assigned the duty of developing an anti-area access denial strategy is the Second Artillery Corps, which is thought to be the repository of China's nuclear deterrent. It possesses conventionally armed missiles that it can use to strike targets on land and ships. Therefore, China is able to launch an attack across the Bay of Bengal and the SCS. But using force means going to war, and right now it doesn't want to rile up the US. For this reason, China is constructing ports throughout South Asia, particularly in the Indian Ocean region, to protect its energy interests. China wants to obtain energy without being overly dependent on any one source, but this could be hampered by an unforeseen bilateral crisis. Beijing is therefore forced to keep a watchful eye on the sea lines of communication due to energy security (SLOC). By using the "Access Denial strategy," it is also lessening the effort required to secure SLOC.

Although it is not a South Asian power, it has been working to establish a significant South Asian presence that would eventually be able to meet its strategic demands. It is promoting good neighbourliness with other nations and has constructed deepwater ports in Bangladesh (Chittagong), Sri Lanka (Hambantota), Myanmar (Sittwe), and Pakistan (Gwadar) because it understands that the 1100 km-long Strait of Malacca serves as a complete choke point and is traversed by 4/5 of its oil imports. In summary, China's A1/AD strategy in the IOR is a crucial component of its military posture, which aims to strengthen maritime security, safeguard strategic sea lanes, and project regional dominance. However, the application of this strategy also prompts worries about possible conflicts and security threats in the disputed waters of the Indian Ocean among surrounding nations and maritime powers.

3.3 Maritime Security Operations

China conducts maritime security operations in the IOR to combat piracy, smuggling, and other transnational threats that could disrupt maritime trade and stability. This includes deploying naval task forces, conducting patrols, and participating in multinational anti-piracy operations to safeguard shipping lanes and protect Chinese interests. Here is an explanation of China's Maritime security operation.

Counter Piracy Efforts

In the Horn of Africa (IOR), where piracy poses a serious threat to maritime trade, China actively engages in international efforts to combat piracy, especially in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. To protect commercial shipping and thwart pirate attacks, China has sent out naval task forces comprising warships and support vessels to undertake patrols and escort missions.

Anti-Smuggling Operations

China fights smuggling in the Indo-Pacific region (IOR), including the illegal trafficking of drugs, weapons, and contraband goods, by conducting maritime security operations. Chinese naval ships and maritime patrol planes are stationed to keep an eye on maritime traffic, carry out surveillance, and stop smuggling vessels in order to stop illegal activity and preserve maritime security.

Multinational Cooperation

China works with regional nations and international organisations to improve coordination and cooperation in the IOR for maritime security. In order to address shared security challenges and advance maritime stability, this involves taking part in cooperative patrols, information-sharing programs, and capacity-building initiatives with the navies and coast guards of IOR countries.

3.4 Protection Of Shipping Lanes

China's efforts to protect maritime shipping lanes and guarantee the uninterrupted passage of maritime commerce through vital IOR sea routes—the Straits of Malacca, Hormuz, and Bab el-Mandeb, among others—are part of its maritime security operations. To ward off possible threats and reassure commercial shipping, Chinese naval vessels regularly patrol and engage in presence operations.

Protection of Chinese Interests

In order to improve military cooperation, gain access to key facilities, and fortify intelligence-sharing capabilities, China has been cultivating strategic partnerships and alliances with nations in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). In order to strengthen military-to-military relations and advance shared security interests, these partnerships and alliances engage in a variety of activities, such as joint exercises, training courses, and plans for defence cooperation. China has established strategic partnerships and alliances in the

Indo-Pacific region. These include close military ties and a long-standing partnership. Together, they share defence technology, collaborate on defence production, and hold combined military drills. China is one of the countries that has given Pakistan military support, including weaponry and help modernising Pakistan's military.

In the fields of defence and security cooperation, China and Myanmar have fostered a strategic partnership. Along with sharing intelligence and working together to secure their borders, the two nations hold combined military drills. Additionally, China has given Myanmar's armed forces military guidance and training. Close ties between China and Sri Lanka have been established, including military cooperation and support. China has helped Sri Lanka develop and has given the country military hardware, including naval vessels. In the Indian Ocean Region, China's strategies aim to protect its economic interests, expand its strategic influence, and secure its maritime routes. Through drives like the "Pearl necklace," broad ventures added to the Repertoire and Street Drive, and maritime modernization, China looks to lay out a predominant presence in the IOR. These efforts not only help the development of the region, but they also present strategic challenges to other players in the region, especially India, which leads to a dynamic exchange of power and influence in the Indian Ocean.

Alfred Thayer Mahan's theory of sea power is closely aligned with China's strategies in the Indian Ocean, including its investments in infrastructure through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), naval expansion, and economic engagements. According to Mahan, a nation's influence and prosperity are closely linked to its control of important ports and strategic maritime routes. By financing huge scope transportation, energy, port, and rail projects, and improving its maritime presence in the district, China means to get essential ocean paths and key positions. Mahan's emphasis on the crucial role of naval power and control of commerce in achieving global supremacy is reflected in this, which not only

increases its economic influence but also ensures maritime dominance. The potential "Debt trap" strategy, where countries face critical obligation troubles, further permits China to oversee key resources, subsequently reinforcing its international influence and lining up with Mahan's standards of ocean power. (Mahan, 1890)

Chapter 4

India Perception of China as a Security Threat in Indian Ocean Region:

Key Factors

In this chapter we examine the many factors that influence India's perception of China as a security threat in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). This investigation begins with an examination of the strategic significance of the Indian Ocean, focusing specifically on its function as a crucial conduit for global trade and energy supplies. We then, at that point, examine China's "Pearl necklace" technique, which has prompted the foundation of an organisation of business and army installations across the district. India sees these bases as strategic encirclement tools that could harm its trade routes and strategic interests. Moreover, we examine the monetary and security ramifications of China's developing sea presence, including the potential for interruptions to urgent ocean paths. This chapter also examines how China's investments and military expansions in these areas have intensified India's security concerns, highlighting the strategic significance of ports like Gwadar, Hambantota, and those in the Maldives. In conclusion, we investigate India's response to these developments, including its efforts to modernise its military and strategic alliances designed to counter China's influence in the Indian Ocean region. China's efforts to reduce India's influence in the region and the growing geopolitical tensions underscored by India's exclusion from the China-Indian Ocean Region Forum. Accordingly, India should upgrade its maritime capacities and seek after

essential organisations to keep an overall influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). This setting is basic for grasping the mind boggling elements among China and India and the more extensive ramifications for local security and global exchange.

4.1 Indian Ocean Strategic Significance

The strategic significance of the Indian Sea was underlined by A.T. Mahan's analysis of maritime power. Mahan contended that command over key sea courses in the Indian Sea would be basic for strength in Asia. Over 80% of the world's maritime oil trade passes through the Indian Ocean, primarily through crucial chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz, the Strait of Malacca, and the Bab el-Mandeb. This makes the Indian Ocean a major conduit for global trade. These courses are indispensable for the monetary soundness and security of numerous countries, including India and China. (Kaplan, 2011,17-11)

The String of Pearls Strategy : China's Expanding Influence

China began to expand its influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) following the Sino-Indian War in 1961. This expansion, which involves constructing a network of commercial and military bases from the South China Sea to the coast of Africa, is frequently referred to as the "String of Pearls" strategy. China's "String of Pearls" strategy is seen by India as a form of strategic encirclement with the goal of increasing Chinese influence and presence in the IOR. This discernment depends on the double use nature of these ports, which can uphold both business and military tasks. China is able to secure its maritime trade routes, safeguard its interests, and potentially exert influence over crucial maritime chokepoints by establishing these bases. (Homes & Yoshihara, 2008)

Security And Economic Implications

For global trade, particularly for energy supplies, the Indian Ocean is a crucial route. The economic impact of disruption in this region could be significant. There are potential threats to India's trade routes and strategic interests that are linked to its concerns about China's growing maritime presence. India's position could be challenged by China's naval patrols and support facilities in the region, which are seen as moves to assert dominance and protect its own maritime interests.

Crucial Route for International Trade

One of the most important maritime trade routes in the world is through the Indian Ocean. It fills in as a conductor for roughly 80% of the world's oceanic oil exchange, basically from the Middle East to Asia, Europe, and the Americas. The global economy depends on the continual flow of energy supplies through this region. The global oil prices and the supply chains for a variety of goods can be impacted by any disruption in these sea lanes, which can have severe economic consequences. (Kaplan, 2011)

Concerns from India About China's Growing Maritime Presence

China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a source of concern for India because of the potential threats to its trade routes and strategic interests. India's economy is heavily dependent on maritime trade, and the Indian Ocean is where a lot of its energy imports come from. It is thought that China is trying to take control of these important maritime routes by building ports and naval facilities in strategic locations like Gwadar (Pakistan), Hambantota (Sri Lanka), and Kyaukpyu (Myanmar). (Brewster, 2015)

Threats to the Trade Routes

India sees China's expanded IOR support facilities and increased naval patrols as part of a larger strategy to control key maritime chokepoints. This control might actually empower China to impact or try and upset exchange streams during seasons of contention or uplifted

pressures. Concerns about the safety of India's maritime trade routes are raised by the presence of Chinese military assets near important sea lanes. (Kaplan, 2011)

Dominance in the Region and Strategic Interests

China's "Pearl necklace" procedure includes laying out an organisation of business and army installations across the Indian Sea, expanding its scope from the South China Ocean to the shoreline of Africa. China can use these bases to support naval operations and project power across the IOR. India's position as the region's dominant naval power is put in jeopardy by this strategic presence, which also raises concerns about possible encirclement and the loss of its strategic influence. (Brewster, 2015)

Key Factors That have Shaped India's Perception About China As A Security Threat.

India sees China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) as a major threat due to Beijing's strategic military and economic initiatives. Improving China's naval capabilities and setting up military bases, such as in Djibouti, shows China's intention to secure sea lanes and strengthen regional governance. The introduction of advanced military technology, including aircraft carriers, submarines and anti-ship missiles, gives China a significant regional advantage. In addition, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has led to significant economic investment in South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and development of Gwadar port in Pakistan, infrastructure projects in Nepal and Hambantota port in Sri Lanka have deepened China's influence in India's immediate neighbourhood. These economic ties not only strengthen China's regional presence, but also offer potential military and strategic leverage, adding to India's security concerns. (Lock,2013)

In response to this development, India has adopted a comprehensive strategy to strengthen its military capabilities and forge strategic alliances with major regional powers such as the United States and Japan. India's increased defence budget and focus on military

modernization efforts to counter China's technological advances and naval expansion. Acquisition of advanced weapons, development of indigenous defence technology and modernization of military infrastructure are important parts of India's strategy. Additionally, India has actively participated in initiatives such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which includes the United States, Japan, India and Australia, to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region. These alliances are based on shared strategic interests and aim to balance China's influence in the IOR. India's efforts to strengthen its military capabilities and forge strategic partnerships reflect its determination to protect its security and strategic interests in the face of China's growing regional footprint. (Lock, 2013)

China's goal to protect important water lanes and increase its influence in the region includes a strategic extension into the Indian Ocean. Through programmes like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which provides funding for infrastructure projects with the potential for dual use, including as ports and logistics hubs in nations like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Djibouti, the Chinese government has been stepping up its military presence. (Green, 2018) Concerns have been raised by China's deployment of survey and research vessels in the Indian Ocean. These vessels undertake oceanographic studies for military purposes, such as submarine operations and underwater warfare, frequently operating into other nations' exclusive economic zones (EEZs) without prior authorization. This action is believed to be a prelude to any military conflicts in the future as well as an attempt to secure other submarine routes that avoid more closely watched locations, such as the Malacca Strait. (Funaiole, 2014)

The expansion of China's maritime capacities, including the sending of atomic submarines and potential transporter strike gatherings, connotes a developing sea power that can extend force a long ways past its nearby area. This expanded maritime presence could be utilised to apply impact over key sea chokepoints and disturb shipping lanes basic to India's economy.(Cooper, 2018)

India perceives China as a security threat in the region; this perception is moulded by complex interplay combining tactical, geopolitical, and historical elements. These worries stem from long-standing disagreements as well as more recent events that have raised hostilities between the two Asian heavyweights. India sees China's efforts more and more as a strategic competitor and possible encirclement as China increases its military might and influence in the area. This research looks at the main causes of India's concerns over China's actions and intentions in the IOR.

4.2 China's Investment In Indian Ocean Ports

Encirclement and strategic Concerns

India sees China's significant investments in ports and infrastructure in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), particularly in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, as a serious security risk. India sees these investments as part of China's larger "String of Pearls" strategy, which aims to encircle India and increase its own geopolitical influence, and this perception is based on the strategic implications of these investments.

Pakistani port of Gwadar

Strategic Location: The Gwadar Port, which was built with money from China, is close to the Strait of Hormuz, which is a crucial chokepoint for shipping oil around the world. India's security concerns are heightened by its proximity to India's western coastline and the possibility of its use as a naval base.

Military Implications: China can monitor maritime traffic through the Arabian Sea and potentially project military power, challenging India's naval dominance in the region, thanks to the port's strategic location.

The Sri Lankan port of Hambantota

Economic and military dual use: The Hambantota Port was officially a commercial port, but China leased it for 99 years because Sri Lanka had trouble repaying its debts. India is

concerned that the port might become a military base, giving China a strategic foothold close to important Indian maritime routes.

Proximity to India: The port's proximity to India's southern tip raises concerns about increased Chinese influence and surveillance in the Indian Ocean, harming India's maritime interests and regional security. (Panda, 2017)

The Maldives Infrastructure

Strategic Partnerships: Significant infrastructure projects like the construction of ports and airports are part of the Chinese investments in the Maldives. China's strategic presence in the central Indian Ocean, directly south of India, could grow as a result of these investments.

Political Influence: India is wary of China's growing influence over the Maldivian government because it is concerned that China's growing political and economic reliance on China might result in the establishment of Chinese military facilities in the Maldives, which would encircle India even more.

Trade Routes and Safety at Sea

China's investments in these ports not only affect maritime security and trade routes that are important to India's economy, but they also pose potential military threats.

Sea Lane Safety: The Indian Ocean is a crucial route for international trade, particularly in the supply of energy. India's trade security may be compromised if Chinese ports along these routes allow China to disrupt maritime traffic.

Naval Dominance: India's traditional naval dominance in the IOR is challenged by enhanced Chinese naval capabilities supported by these ports, forcing India to invest heavily in its own naval modernization and strategic partnerships.

Geopolitics Responses

Because of China's developing impact India has been strengthening its naval capabilities in the IOR, including the creation of indigenous aircraft carriers and submarines.

Forged Alliances: In order to counter China's influence, India has strengthened strategic alliances with other regional and extra-regional powers like the United States, Japan, and Australia through initiatives like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). (Menon, 1011)

4.3 Debt Diplomacy

A strategy known as debt diplomacy where a nation gives critical credits to one more country for foundation improvement, with the comprehension that the debt holder nation could confront troubles in reimbursement. This could prompt the loan boss nation acquiring political influence or command over key resources in the debt holder country. As part of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has been accused of using debt diplomacy, particularly in strategically important areas like the Indian Ocean.

The Belt And Road Initiative (BRI)

The vast infrastructure and economic development project known as the Belt and Road Initiative by China aims to improve global trade routes and encourage economic growth in Europe, Africa, and Asia. Many of the infrastructure projects included in the BRI are located in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), including roads, ports, and railways. Many nations, including India, view this ambitious initiative with suspicion because it could result in an excessive reliance on Chinese loans and economic influence.

Debt Diplomacy Key Examples In IOR

Hambantota Port And Sri Lanka

China supported the development of the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, a task that cost more than \$1 billion. Sri Lanka had a difficult time repaying the loans, which led to a debt crisis. In 2017 in order to pay off its debt, Sri Lanka leased the port to China Merchants Port Holdings Company for 99 years. Concerns have been raised regarding Chinese control over a crucial Indian Ocean port as a result of this move.

Gwadar Port And Pakistan

Another significant BRI project is the Gwadar Port in Pakistan. Because it saw the port as a crucial link in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), China made significant investments in its development. Concerns about Islamabad's economic sovereignty and China's potential for undue influence over Pakistan's strategic assets have been raised by Pakistan's growing debt to China.

Infrastructure Project And Maldives

China has provided the Maldives with substantial loans for a variety of infrastructure projects, including housing developments and bridges. With a little economy, the Maldives faces difficulties in reimbursing these credits, prompting fears of Chinese influence over its essential choices, especially in sea undertakings

India's View on Chinese Control Over Indian Ocean Ports

China's control of important ports in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is seen by India as a possibility for strategic encirclement. This idea suggests that India's strategic and operational freedom in its own maritime neighbourhood could be restricted by China's network of commercial and military bases encircling India.

Military Infrastructure: Ports like Hambantota in Sri Lanka and Gwadar in Pakistan, albeit apparently business, have the potential for double use applications. They may be able to facilitate naval patrols and possibly even military operations in the region by acting as logistical hubs for Chinese naval forces.

Presence of the PLA Navy (PLAN): India's naval dominance could be effectively challenged by the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) presence in these ports, which could improve China's ability to project power and sustain longer naval operations far from its shores.

India's Maritime Dominance Challenges

Operational Restrictions: The Indian Navy's freedom of movement may be restricted if China constructs significant military infrastructure at these ports. India's ability to respond to regional crises, protect its sea lanes, and conduct maritime operations would be hampered as a result.

Observation and Knowledge: Chinese command over these essential ports empowers better sea reconnaissance capacities, permitting China to intently screen Indian maritime developments more. India's strategic and tactical operations in the region could be jeopardised as a result of this.

Effects on India's Strategic

Goals Security of Energy: A significant amount of oil and gas are shipped through the Indian Ocean, which serves as an important conduit for India's energy imports. India's energy security may be jeopardised if China disrupts or exerts control over important chokepoints in the maritime system.

Routes for Trade: India's trade is also facilitated in large part by the Indian Ocean. India's economic stability may be impacted by China's ability to influence or disrupt these trade routes through its dominance in this region. (Pant & Joashi, 2017)

4.4 China's Military Presence and Strategic Moves in IOR

Deployments of the Navy in the Gulf of Aden

Under the guise of anti-piracy operations, China has regularly sent naval warships to the Gulf of Aden since 2008. Even though these missions are supposed to protect commercial ships from pirate attacks, they have also helped the Chinese Navy (PLAN) gain more operational experience and set up a continuous naval presence far from Chinese shores. Over the long run, these organisations have developed to incorporate more refined vessels, for

example, destroyers and supply ships, mirroring a more extensive vital goal to project power and secure Chinese sea intrigues in the Indian Sea.

Operational Experience: The deployments have given the PLAN valuable experience in long-range operations and sustained naval presence, both of which are necessary for any blue-water navy that wants to reach the world.

Local Presence: The nonstop presence of Chinese maritime vessels in this decisively significant region highlights China's developing sea abilities and its obligation to safeguarding its ocean paths of correspondence (SLOCs).

The Djibouti Military Base

Djibouti was the site of China's first military base outside of China in 2017, and it was strategically placed near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which is a crucial chokepoint that connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. This base serves as a logistical hub for China's naval operations in the region, marking a significant shift in the country's military posture and goals. China is able to maintain a permanent military presence close to one of the world's most important maritime chokepoints thanks to the base in Djibouti. This choke point is where a significant portion of global trade, including oil shipments, passes.

Operational Support:

In addition to supporting China's anti-piracy missions, humanitarian aid, and peacekeeping efforts in Africa, the facility also improves China's surveillance capabilities and raises the possibility that it will project power throughout the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). These developments are seen by India as a part of a larger strategy called the "String of Pearls." This procedure includes China laying out an organisation of business and military offices along key oceanic courses. The ports and bases in Djibouti, Pakistan (Gwadar), Sri Lanka (Hambantota), and Pakistan (Gwadar) are seen as attempts to physically encircle India.

This enclosure could restrict India's impact and functional opportunity in the Indian Sea, convincing India to reconsider its own vital and military stance .

Through facilities like the Djibouti base, China's ability to maintain long-term naval operations in the Indian Ocean is seen as a direct threat to India's traditional maritime dominance. China can use this capability to project power and potentially interfere with India's maritime operations and influence. India must improve its naval capabilities and look for strategic alliances to counterbalance China's growing presence in the region, which is supported by a powerful Chinese military force. The Indian Ocean is important for international trade, including energy supplies that India's economy relies on. China's command over key ports and key sea choke points represents a danger to the security of these shipping lanes. Any likely disturbance or control applied by China could have extreme monetary repercussions for India. India's security concerns are exacerbated by this possibility of economic leverage, which has the potential to affect both India's economic stability and its strategic autonomy.

China's military presence in the Indian Ocean Region poses a variety of security risks to India. A robust response from India is required because of the strategic encirclement, enhanced military capabilities, potential for economic disruption, and challenge to regional dominance. India is likely to maintain its naval capabilities and forge strategic partnerships with other major powers in order to mitigate these threats and maintain a power balance in the region.

4.5 Dismissal from the Forum on the China-Indian Ocean

The exclusion of India from the China-Indian Ocean Region Forum has brought attention to the region's geopolitical tensions and raised significant concerns. 19 nations and three international organisations, including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka, attended the forum in November 2011. India, a major player in the Indian Ocean Region

(IOR), was deliberately left out, highlighting the intricate strategic dynamics between China and India. (Krishnan, 2011) The purpose of the China-Indian Ocean Region Forum is to improve cooperation and talk about development plans between countries in the Indian Ocean Region. The forum, which was held in conjunction with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and was hosted by the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), aimed to promote infrastructure development, economic growth, and maritime security. (Iyp, 2011)

4.6 International Minimization

China sees India's exclusion as a strategic move to reduce India's influence in the IOR. India's absence from the forum raises concerns about being left out of regional decision-making processes and initiatives aimed at enhancing connectivity and economic integration because of its significant naval capabilities and strategic interests in the region.

Fortifying China's Impact

China's intention to increase its influence in the region is exemplified by the inclusion of BRI participants Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. By encouraging nearer attaches with these nations through gatherings like this, China expects to reinforce its essential traction and offset India's local strength. (*Meeting of China-Indian Ocean Region Forum, 2011*)

Animate China's Impact

China's intention to increase its influence in the region is exemplified by the inclusion of BRI participants Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Through forums like this, China aims to strengthen its strategic foothold and counter India's regional dominance by fostering closer ties with these nations.

Implications for Regional Cooperation and Security

The exclusion of India may also have an effect on regional cooperation and security. A vital maritime route for global trade and energy supplies is the Indian Ocean. For these sea lanes to remain stable, collaborative security measures and economic cooperation are necessary. China may be perceived as undermining efforts to maintain regional security in favour of its strategic interests by excluding India, which has a stake in this. (*China to Hold Ind Indian Ocean Region Forum to Firm up Influence in India's Backyard*, 2013)

4.7 India Perceive China's Relations With Other Countries As A Threat

India sees a potential threat to its own strategic interests in China's close ties with major powers like the United States, Russia, and other influential nations. This insight is formed by different elements, including international arrangements, financial associations, and military collaboration, which could affect India's local impact and security.

Relations With United States

India's strategic decisions are significantly influenced by China's multifaceted relationship with the United States. While the U.S. furthermore, China has areas of dispute, especially in exchange and territorial security issues, their financial relationship and periodic key participation should be visible as possibly sidelining India's inclinations. The extensive trade and investment ties and significant economic relationship between China and the United States sometimes lead to policies that place economic stability ahead of regional security concerns, possibly at the expense of Indian interests. (*Meeting of China-Indian Ocean Region Forum*, 2011)

Cooperation And Competition

India's position in the Indo-Pacific could be undermined by any shift toward strategic cooperation between the United States and China, despite the fact that the United States increasingly views India as a crucial strategic partner to counter China's rise. (Doshi, 2013)

Strategic Partnership Of Russia And China

India, which has traditionally maintained strong defence and diplomatic ties with Russia, is also concerned by the growing strategic partnership between China and Russia.

Military Cooperation: India is wary of Russia and China's growing military cooperation, which includes arms sales and joint exercises. This participation could upgrade China's tactical capacities, representing an immediate danger to India.

Territorial Impact: Russia's turn towards China in the midst of stressed relations with the West has prompted expanded coordinated effort on provincial security and monetary issues, possibly minimising India's impact in Eurasia and Focal Asia.

China's Influence In South Asia

China's nearby ties with Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and other South Asian nations are especially alarming for India, as they straightforwardly influence its local security and key interests.

China's Friendly Ties With Pakistan

The flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has significantly enhanced China's economic ties with Pakistan. A network of highways, railways, and pipelines is part of CPEC, which aims to improve Pakistan's infrastructure and energy resources. It is estimated to cost \$61 billion. Pakistan's economic stability and development are improved as a result of this economic cooperation, which indirectly strengthens the country's strategic capabilities. (Rolland, 2017) Collaboration between the military Pakistan has relied heavily on China for its supply of advanced weaponry, fighter jets, submarines, and other defence equipment. This tactical participation altogether improves Pakistan's protection capacities against India. The two

nations' military ties are further strengthened by joint military exercises and training programs. (Malik, 2011)

China's Nuclear Cooperation

China plays had a vital impact in the improvement of Pakistan's atomic capacities. This collaboration incorporates the arrangement of atomic innovation and materials, which has supported Pakistan's essential prevention against India. The essential organisation in the atomic space guarantees a power balance in the locale, which China uses to counter India's impact (National Academy of Sciences & Committee on International Security and Arms Control, 1997) China has leverage over India's regional ambitions because of its close relationship with Pakistan, which gives it a strategic foothold in South Asia. The Gwadar Port, created with Chinese help, is a critical resource in such a manner. Not only does it benefit the economy, but it also has strategic military implications, opening the door for China to establish a naval presence in the Arabian Sea, which is close to the western coast of India. (Brewster, 2015)

India's strategic environment is directly impacted by China's economic, military, and nuclear cooperation with Pakistan. Pakistan's capabilities are bolstered by this partnership, and China is able to expand its influence in South Asia, challenging India's regional dominance and strategic interests. As part of the Belt and Road Initiative, China's investments and infrastructure projects in Myanmar and Sri Lanka are seen as efforts to encircle India and protect important maritime routes. China's military might be able to operate in India's maritime neighbourhood if these countries build ports and other strategic infrastructure. (Panda, 2017)

Nuclear Program Of India And Deterrence

India's choice to direct atomic tests in May 1998, known as Activity Shakti, was driven by a few vital contemplations, including the need to discourage possible military hostility from China. The tests were a significant step in India's effort to become a nuclear-armed nation in order to ensure its own safety and preserve regional stability.

Protection from China's Nuclear Power

China's sophisticated nuclear arsenal posed a significant threat to India's strategic interests by the 1990s. As a response to China's nuclear capabilities, India conducted nuclear tests with the intention of establishing a credible deterrent. (Perkovich, 1999)

Provincial Security Elements

In addition, Pakistan's perceived nuclear threat, bolstered by its close military and nuclear cooperation with China, was a factor in the wider security situation in South Asia that prompted the nuclear tests.

Nuclear Doctrine and Strategy for Deterrence

No First Use Strategy Following the 1998 tests, India embraced a No First Use (NFU) atomic strategy, resolving to utilise atomic weapons just in counter to an atomic assault. By demonstrating that India's nuclear weapons are solely designed for defensive purposes, this policy aims to maintain a stable deterrence posture. (Pant & Joshi, 2018)

Minimum Credible Deterrence

Solid Least Prevention Maintaining a "credible minimum deterrence"—having enough nuclear weapons to inflict unacceptable damage on an adversary in the event of a nuclear attack—is emphasised in India's nuclear doctrine. This methodology guarantees a hindrance impact without taking part in a weapons contest.

Effect on Security in the Region and Balancing China's Impact

China's influence in the region has been balanced by India's nuclear tests and subsequent development of a nuclear arsenal. India wants to counterbalance China's strategic partnerships and influence in South Asia by becoming a nuclear power and deterring direct military aggression. (Brewster, 2015)

India's atomic tests in 1998 were an essential move to guarantee public safety by dissuading possible hostility from China. The advancement of India's atomic regulation, including the No First Use strategy and believable least discouragement, has been vital to its procedure of keeping up with local security and offsetting's impact. These actions have had huge ramifications for provincial security elements and global strategy.

4.8 Historical Memories And Geographical Proximity

Geographical Proximity

Geographical Closeness Vital Boundary Locales India and China share a 3,488-kilometre border that is contentious and long. It includes the Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh regions. Conflicts have occurred in these areas in the past, and tensions persist there.

Historical Memories

Vital Significance of Line Regions Both nations place a high strategic value on the Himalayas, which serve as their natural border. For military and geopolitical leverage, having control over these areas is essential. Due to China's expanding naval presence and infrastructure development in the region, India perceives China as a significant security threat in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). China's "String of Pearls" strategy, which entails establishing a network of commercial and military bases and relationships along its sea communication lines, is the source of this perception. The development of ports and bases in countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar are important parts of this strategy. India

sees these actions as Chinese attempts to encircle it and gain strategic dominance in the IOR, posing a threat to India's economic and maritime security.

China's investments in the ports of Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, and Kyaukpyu in Myanmar are of particular concern to India. China could project its power into the IOR by using these ports for both commercial and military purposes. India has also been alarmed by the presence of Chinese warships and submarines in the area, which has led to increased naval exercises and collaborations with other major powers like the United States, Japan, and Australia. India's response includes strengthening strategic partnerships, increasing maritime domain awareness, and enhancing its own naval capabilities and infrastructure. India has used a variety of strategies to reduce the perceived threat. This includes participating in joint maritime exercises, expanding its naval presence, and forging strategic partnerships with the United States, Japan, and Australia through programs like the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue). In addition, India is supporting regional cooperation through organisations like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and investing in the development of infrastructure in its neighbours to counterbalance China's influence. India's strategic goal of preserving its national security interests and maintaining a favourable power balance in the IOR is reflected in these efforts.

The Middle East, Africa, and East Asia are connected to the rest of the world by the Indian Ocean, a vital maritime highway. Global trade and energy supplies depend on crucial chokepoints like the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, the Suez Canal, and the Strait of Malacca. India sees China's growing presence and power in these strategic areas as a potential threat to its economic and maritime interests. Mahan's emphasis on a strong naval presence is echoed in China's naval modernization and expansion, which includes the creation of aircraft carriers and blue-water naval capabilities. Mahan's principle of overseas bases for sustained naval operations is reflected in the establishment of Chinese bases and logistical support facilities

in the IOR, such as the base in Djibouti and infrastructure projects in Pakistan (Gwadar), Sri Lanka (Hambantota), and the Maldives. India sees these developments as Chinese attempts to encircle it and exert power in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Chapter 5

Factors that influence India's strategic choices, including its preference for competition over cooperation with China in the maritime domain.

.India's strategic decisions in the maritime domain are significantly influenced by its historical conflicts, border disputes, economic interests, security concerns, and strategic alliances. This chapter delves into the multifaceted dynamics that drive India's preference for competition over cooperation with China in the Indian Ocean is examined in depth in this chapter. The Sino-Indian War of 1961 and the Doklam standoff in 2017 highlight the ongoing tensions and strategic mistrust between the two countries. Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin are two examples of regions where border disputes have exacerbated tensions. The competitive landscape is heightened by India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean and China's growing maritime presence and investments in infrastructure. India's drives, like the SAGAR strategy and maritime modernization endeavours, are intended to counter China's essential circle and declare its job as a net security supplier in the locale. In-depth examination of these aspects in this chapter highlights the delicate balance between competition and potential for cooperation in shaping the Indian Ocean region's future.

5.1 Protracted Disputes

(1961 Sino-Indian War)

The main authentic struggle among India and China is the Sino-Indian Conflict of 1961. The conflict ejected over the contested Himalayan boundary, especially in the areas of Aksai Jaw (constrained by China however guaranteed by India) and Arunachal Pradesh (constrained by India yet asserted by China). This brief however extraordinary struggle brought about a definitive Chinese triumph and left an enduring effect on two-sided relations. (Hassan, 2016)

Border Conflicts

(Arunachal Pradesh And Aksai Chin)

Conflicts at the border Both Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin: Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh are the two regions that are the primary focus of the border disputes. India claims Aksai Chin, which China controls, as part of its Ladakh union territory. China, on the other hand, claims India's Arunachal Pradesh as part of its territory and refers to it as "South Tibet." India sees the Indian Ocean as a crucial economic and strategic zone that is essential to its security and engagement in the region. Notwithstanding its essential significance, India's way to deal with the Indian Sea was moderately detached after the Virus Battle as of not long ago, basically because of an absence of contest in the locale. The Indian Ocean was historically a significant area of competition during the Cold War, but the United States shifted its focus elsewhere after the war, making it less prominent in strategic discussions.

India is a key regional player because of its strategic location in the Indian Ocean. The Indian Navy has been active in the region and stressed how crucial it is to keep the Indian Ocean safe and stable for trade and energy security. The objectives to improve security in India's maritime interests, which extend from the eastern coast of Africa to the Lombok Straits and include the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, and Persian Gulf, are outlined in the Navy's 2015 Maritime Security Strategy. India has traditionally focused its political engagement in the Indian Ocean on the eastern part of the region, giving priority to immediate maritime neighbours like Sri Lanka and the Maldives, followed by Mauritius and the Seychelles. The "Security and Growth for All in the Region" (SAGAR) initiative exemplifies India's regional policy.

India's recent policies and initiatives aim to consolidate its position as a key security player in response to China's growing competition. These include establishing a division for the Indian Ocean within the Ministry of External Affairs, establishing coastal radar systems with nations nearby, and leading initiatives for maritime partnerships and disaster resilience.

The Indian Naval force keeps on driving helpful and catastrophe aid projects and has expanded its presence through drives like the Mission Based Organization. China has been expanding its presence, as evidenced by its military base in Djibouti, as it is aware of the strategic significance of the Indian Ocean for its energy routes. China's involvement is extensive and encompasses diplomatic, political, and military facets. Chinese exercises in the district are viewed as a feature of its more extensive technique to get Ocean Lines of Correspondences (SLOCs) and lay down a good foundation for itself as a security entertainer. The United States of America backs India's role as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean, but its strategic focus is more dispersed, with different combatant commands (INDOPACOM, CENTCOM, AFRICOM) covering the region. The United States must devise a comprehensive Indian Ocean strategy that recognizes the region's significance within the larger Indo-Pacific framework in order to foster productive collaboration. Guidelines for the United States Congress remember starting hearings for the Indian Sea, ordering an Indian Sea system, making a devoted division inside the Public safety Gathering, and cultivating further military and maritime commitment with India and other territorial players. All in all, while India is reasserting its impact in the Indian Sea, it faces difficulties from China's developing presence and the requirement for more grounded vital organisations to keep up with local strength and security. (Baruah, 2011)

LOC (Line Of Control)

The Indian Ocean is an important part of the world. It is important for international trade and is becoming a place where major powers like China and India compete and work together. It supports significant energy transport and resource extraction, underscoring its economic significance, and it spans strategic chokepoints and hosts crucial sea lanes. However, it requires multilateral cooperation due to a variety of security issues, including piracy and natural disasters. In addition to fostering economic ties, China's "One Belt, One

Road" initiative has prompted extensive infrastructure investments across the region, raising concerns about strategic influence. In the meantime, India states its authority through political, financial, and security drives, planning to upgrade territorial dependability and offset China's developing presence.

Both nations participate in anti-piracy operations and disaster relief efforts despite geopolitical tensions, demonstrating potential for cooperation amid competition. Overfishing and environmental degradation are two examples of problems that call for enhanced institutional frameworks similar to those found in other oceanic regions. Generally speaking, while rivalry exists, open doors for joint effort in security, catastrophe reaction, and financial improvement recommend a nuanced connection among China and India in moulding the fate of the Indian Sea district. (Hassan, 2016)

2017 Doklam Standoff

In 2017, India and China engaged in a significant diplomatic and military standoff in the Doklam plateau, a disputed region claimed by Bhutan and China. At the tri-junction of Bhutan, India, and China is the plateau known as Doklam. Due to its proximity to India's Siliguri Corridor, also known as "Chicken's Neck," it holds strategic significance. This thin piece of land associates the northeastern territories of India to the remainder of the country. Any danger to this hall might actually remove India's northeastern states from the central area, making it a basic security worry for India. The Indian Army intervened in June 2017 to stop the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) from building a road in Doklam. This marked the beginning of the conflict. Bhutan, with whom India has close diplomatic and security ties, viewed China's road-building activity as a violation of its territorial integrity and had objected.

India's Concerns

India's Concern was related to two aspects:

Strategic Security Concern Of India

The street development by China was seen as an endeavour to modify business as usual in Doklam, possibly permitting simpler access for Chinese military exercises close to the Siliguri Hill. India's strategic interests were seen as being directly threatened by this.

Sovereignty Of Bhutan

India's mediation in the Doklam deadlock was intently attached to its obligation to safeguard Bhutan's sway and regional trustworthiness.

Contractual Requirements:

India and Bhutan signed the 1949 Treaty of Friendship, which stipulated that they would cooperate with one another and refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs. Additionally, it stipulated that India would direct Bhutan's external relations.

(2007 Treaty)

The 2007 treaty replaces the 1949 agreement and places an emphasis on Bhutan's sovereignty while maintaining a spirit of cooperation and support. The deal highlights common regard for one another's freedom, sway, and regional trustworthiness. (*INDIA-BHUTAN FRIENDSHIP TREATY, 2007*, n.d.)

Assistance Requested by Bhutan:

In times of crisis, Bhutan relies on its diplomatic and security ties with India for support because its military is smaller and less capable than that of its neighbours. Bhutan saw China's construction of a road in the disputed Doklam region as an attack on its territorial integrity. Invoking the spirit of their bilateral treaties and the strong defence ties that exist between the two nations, Bhutan made a formal request for India's assistance in stopping the Chinese road construction. (*India Bhutan Relations: A Comprehensive Study*)

Diplomatic And Strategic Commitment Of India

Assistance Requested by Bhutan: In times of crisis, Bhutan relies on its diplomatic and security ties with India for support because its military is smaller and less capable than that of its neighbours. Bhutan saw China's construction of a road in the disputed Doklam region as an attack on its territorial integrity. Invoking the spirit of their bilateral treaties and the strong defence ties that exist between the two nations, Bhutan made a formal request for India's assistance in stopping the Chinese road construction. (Pant, 2017)

Dialogues And Diplomatic Efforts

During the stalemate, India participated in serious discretionary discourse with China, stressing the need to regard Bhutan's power and resolve the issue through serene talks. In addition to its military actions, India also engaged in significant diplomatic manoeuvres to calm the situation and reach a peaceful resolution. (*All You Need to Know About Doklam and the India-China Border Standoff*, 2017)

Stability In The Region

Maintaining regional stability was another objective of India's intervention. An adjustment of the norm at the tri-intersection could have more extensive ramifications for local security elements, possibly uplifting more forceful regional statements by China in other questioned regions. By standing firm on the side of Bhutan, India sent a reasonable message to its other more modest neighbours about its obligation to their power and regional honesty, supporting its job as a settling force in South Asia. At Bhutan's request, India intervened in the Doklam standoff, highlighting the strong defence and diplomatic ties between the two nations. It highlights India's obligation to safeguard Bhutan's sway and regional uprightness, while likewise shielding its own essential advantages in the district. The mediation exhibited India's preparation to help its neighbours against outer tensions and supported the significance of discretionary and military participation in keeping up with local soundness.

China's Perspective

During the 2017 Doklam stalemate, China saw the development of a street in Doklam as a real piece of its foundation improvement inside what it thought about its own region. Doklam is considered a part of China's southern Tibet region, and as a result, China argued that it was entitled to carry out such activities within its borders. As indicated by the Chinese viewpoint, Doklam has generally been important for China's region and under its compelling ward. In support of their claim, they cited historical records like receipts for grass taxes paid by Bhutanese herders to Chinese authorities. (“India-China Standoff: All You Need to Know About Doklam Dispute,” 2017)

According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, the trijunction boundary point is Mount Gipmochi, south of the disputed area where the road construction was taking place, according to the 1890 Calcutta Convention between Britain and China. Beijing contended that India had consented to this limit translation through verifiable correspondence, outstandingly a 1959 letter from that point Indian Head of the state Jawaharlal Nehru to Chinese Chief Zhou Enlai, which China battles confirmed this limit arrangement. (*How India, China Compromise: A Look at How Standoffs Before Doklam Were Resolved*, 2017)

Moreover, China saw the Indian military presence in Doklam as an infringement of its power and blamed India for involving Bhutan as a guise to meddle. Beijing declared that its exercises were completely inside its own area, and it called for India to pull out its soldiers genuinely to determine the stalemate. (“India-China Standoff: All You Need to Know About Doklam Dispute,” 2017)

The Resolution

The Dokhlam Standoff Resolution came in late august 2017 after 73 days of diplomatic negotiation between China and India.

Diplomatic Arrangements:

Undeniable Level Commitment: India and China maintained active diplomatic channels throughout the standoff. Numerous high-level discussions were held by both sides, including meetings between their respective foreign ministers and national security advisors. Ajit Doval, the National Security Advisor, played a crucial role by having conversations with Chinese officials. He met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in July 2017 while he was in Beijing for the meeting of the BRICS National Security Advisors. (*How India, China Compromise: A Look at How Standoffs Before Doklam Were Resolved*, 2017)

Strategic And Patience

India exhibited strategic patience and placed an emphasis on dialogue and peaceful resolution. India's Ministry of External Affairs consistently communicated India's position on respecting the 2011 border dispute agreement and maintaining the status quo. China also engaged in backchannel diplomacy to de-escalate tensions prior to the BRICS summit scheduled for September 2017 in Xiamen, China, while demanding the unconditional withdrawal of Indian troops.

International Context

Both countries were given a significant push by the upcoming BRICS summit to come to an amicable agreement. A prolonged standoff could have overshadowed the summit and further strained their bilateral relations because India and China are major BRICS players.

Mutual Withdrawal

On August 18, 2017, India and China reported a consent to withdraw their soldiers from the Doklam level. Both India and China ended their road construction projects and

withdrew their troops from the face-off site, respectively, as part of the resolution. The separation cycle was directed in a staged and facilitated way to guarantee that pressures didn't rise during the withdrawal.

Preserving the Status Quo:

The situation on the ground reverted to what it was before the standoff began in June 2017, as the agreement to disengage was essentially a return to the status quo ante. This result was regarded as India's diplomatic victory because it had sought to prevent China from unilaterally altering the status quo.

Implications

Strategic Achievement:

Diplomacy and high-level dialogue are crucial in resolving complex border disputes, as the Doklam standoff demonstrated. It exhibited the capacity of the two India and China to deal with their disparities through serene talks.

Key Ramifications:

The successful disengagement strengthened India's role in regional security and established it as a trustworthy security partner for Bhutan. It also showed India's commitment to safeguarding their sovereignty and territorial integrity against external pressures to India's neighbours. Strategic patience, high-level diplomacy, and the impetus provided by the upcoming BRICS summit all contributed to the resolution of the Doklam standoff, which resulted in a mutual disengagement and a return to the previous state. (*How India, China Compromise: A Look at How Standoffs Before Doklam Were Resolved*, 2017)

5.2 Port Growth and Strategic Presence:

India sees China's construction of deep-water ports like Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, and Kyaukpyu in Myanmar as part of a strategic encirclement

around India. As part of the "String of Pearls" strategy, these ports are thought to be potential naval bases that could support Chinese military operations in the area, putting India's strategic interests in danger. (Brewster, 2015)

Maritime Modernization and Development:

China's ability to project power in the Indian Ocean is improved by modernising its navy by building aircraft carriers, advanced submarines, and destroyers. India has responded by accelerating its own naval modernization efforts because it sees this naval buildup as a direct threat to its maritime dominance. (Erickson et al., 2009)

Military Activities And Counter Piracy

China's growing naval capabilities and strategic interest in the Indian Ocean are demonstrated by its participation in counter piracy operations and joint military exercises. India considers these exercises to be defences for an extremely durable Chinese maritime presence and has answered by expanding its own maritime activities and joint efforts with other provincial powers. (Garver, 2001)

Deployment Of Submarine

The arrangement of Chinese submarines to ports in the Indian Sea, like those in Sri Lanka and Pakistan, is viewed as especially provocative. These organisations signal China's goal to lay out a super durable maritime presence, testing India's oceanic security.

5.3 India's Competitive Response

India is making significant investments in its naval capabilities, including the creation of submarines, aircraft carriers, and assets for anti-submarine warfare. India will be able to maintain a credible deterrent against Chinese naval power with this modernization. (*INDIAN MARITIME DOCTRINE Indian Navy Naval Strategic Publication 1.1*)

Strategic alliances:

India is extending its essential organisations with other provincial powers like the US, Japan, and Australia. India's broader strategy to ensure regional stability and security includes these alliances, which are seen as a counterbalance to China's growing influence. (*INDIA-US STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: A STUDY FROM THE LENS OF REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX*). The need to protect India's strategic interests and maintain its regional dominance is the driving force behind India's competitive stance toward China in the Indian Ocean. While there are open doors for participation on modern security issues, the hidden vital contention keeps on moulding their communications in the locale.

China's Infrastructure And Development In The Region

India's anxiety about China's broad interests in foundation projects in adjoining nations comes from a few key factors, all of which highlight an apparent development of Chinese impact in the locale. These speculations are viewed as a feature of a more extensive vital move by China, which has critical ramifications for India's territorial security and monetary interests. The primary areas of concern, supported by pertinent references, are as follows:

5.4 Economic Leverage And Debt Dependency

Due to the substantial loans that accompany China's investments in infrastructure projects, debt dependence is a common outcome. Concerns about their ability to repay these debts and the potential for Chinese leverage over their policies have arisen as a result of countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and the Maldives taking significant loans from China to fund large infrastructure projects. (Hillman, 2018)

Strategic Infrastructure Projects

Asia-wide pipelines, highways, ports, and other infrastructure will be built as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Although these initiatives are purportedly intended for economic growth, they also have significant strategic ramifications. For instance, the

Gwadar port in Pakistan and the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka are decisively found and might possibly fill double regular citizen and military needs. (Garver, 2001)

5.5 Geopolitical Concerns

String Of Pearl (Encirclement Strategy)

The strategic community in India sees China's investments in countries nearby as part of an encirclement strategy known as the "String of Pearls." China's ability to project power in the Indian Ocean will be bolstered by the development of a network of commercial and military bases around India as part of this strategy. (Erickson et al., 2009)

Impact Over Neighbouring Nations:

The political and economic influence that China has over its neighbours is frequently enhanced as a result of its investments. Pakistan's reliance on China has grown significantly as a result of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and similar investments in Nepal, Bangladesh, and the Maldives have increased Chinese influence, reducing India's traditional influence in South Asia. (Small, 2015)

Implications Of Military

Dual Use Facilities

Many of China's infrastructure projects have the potential for dual use, which means they can be used for both military and civilian purposes. Ports like Gwadar and Hambantota can act as maritime bases, furnishing China with the ability to help and support maritime tasks a long way from its shores.

Armed Forces Present: China's rising military presence in the Indian Sea, working with these framework projects, permits it to direct broadened maritime tasks, safeguard its ocean lines of correspondence, and upgrade its power projection abilities. India's strategic dominance in the region is seen as directly threatened by this expanded presence. India sees China's substantial infrastructure investments in its neighbours as part of a larger plan to

increase its strategic reach and influence in the Indian Ocean. While these investments are beneficial to the countries receiving them economically, they also have significant geopolitical and military repercussions that challenge India's traditional dominance and pose a strategic threat. To counter these moves, India has been improving its own foundation, developing vital associations, and modernising its tactical capacities. India hopes to mitigate the strategic risks posed by China's growing influence and safeguard its own economic and security interests in the region by comprehending these dynamics.

India's Perception Of China

India sees China's aims as expansionist because of a few key elements, especially concerning the Tibet question and China's cosy relationship with Pakistan. This discernment is established in verifiable encounters, international moves, and key competitions.

Tibet

The extension of Tibet by China in 1950-51 is a vital occasion that changed the international scene for India. Tibet filled in as a cradle zone among India and China, and its extension by China brought the Chinese military presence straightforwardly to India's boundaries, prompting critical security concerns. A constant source of tension is the Sino-Indian border conflict, particularly the unresolved disputes in Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin. The 1961 Sino-Indian Conflict, which brought about a conclusive Chinese triumph, actually influences Indian key reasoning. The progress with Chinese framework improvement in these contested locales is seen by India as a statement of regional cases and an immediate danger to its power. (Pant, 2017)

Pakistan-China Relations China's solid relationship with Pakistan, frequently depicted as "all-weather," is a significant vital worry for India. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and other economic investments are part of the collaboration, as is

significant military assistance. India sees these moves as a component of a more extensive methodology to decisively circle and contain India. (Small, 2015)

Military And Economic Assistance

Pakistan's military capabilities and economic infrastructure are bolstered by China's economic projects and military support for Pakistan, possibly to India's detriment. The Gwadar port, created under CPEC, is seen by India as an expected Chinese army installation, which could upgrade China's power projection capacities in the Indian Sea. (Brewster, 2015)

Geopolitical Strategy (String Of Pearl)

The establishment of a network of commercial and military bases across the Indian Ocean is part of China's strategy, which is sometimes referred to as the "String of Pearls." India considers Pakistan's Gwadar, Sri Lanka's Hambantota, and Myanmar's Kyaukpyu ports to be dual-use facilities that could support Chinese military operations and encircle India.

Naval Modernization And Naval Expansion

Modernization and expansion of the navy China's fast military modernization, especially its maritime extension, empowers it to extend power into the Indian Sea, straightforwardly testing India's essential advantages. China is able to maintain a persistent naval presence, which India views with suspicion, thanks to the development of aircraft carriers, submarines, and advanced missile systems.

5.6 India Civilizational Strength And Strategic Autonomy

India's essential organisation with the US fills in as a critical component in its quest for keeping up with vital independence and safeguarding its civilizational strength, especially with regards to China's rising impact. This organisation isn't simply about lining up with a strong partner yet rather about utilising the relationship to reinforce India's free dynamic limit on the worldwide stage. India wants to strengthen its economic, technological, and military capabilities by working with the United States. This will make it capable of independently

navigating complicated international dynamics. In addition, this partnership positions India as a significant, sovereign player in the Indo-Pacific region and reinforces its cultural and civilizational narrative.

India is able to counterbalance China's assertiveness through collaboration with the United States, preventing external pressures from having an excessive impact on India's strategic choices and growth. As a result, the partnership between the United States and India is a strategic move to preserve India's long-standing civilizational ethos and preserve India's autonomy in a world that is changing quickly.

5.7 China's Perception On India's Rivalry

Particularly in relation to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China sees India as a rival and a significant threat to its regional dominance. China's ambitious infrastructure and economic development project known as the BRI aims to improve global trade routes and increase China's influence throughout Asia, Africa, and beyond. However, China's ambitions are hindered by India's large economy, strategic location, and expanding geopolitical influence. India's resistance to the BRI, particularly its lead project, the China-Pakistan Monetary Hallway (CPEC), which goes through a questioned area in Kashmir, highlights the strain. China's concerns are exacerbated by India's proactive engagement with regional initiatives like the Quad, which includes the United States, Japan, Australia, and India. China sees this grouping, which wants to make the Indo-Pacific free and open, as a threat to its own regional ambitions.

Also, India's essential organisations, safeguard modernization, and framework projects in adjoining nations and the Indian Sea locale are viewed as immediate endeavours to restrict China's impact. Thus, China's impression of India as an opponent is established in these covering vital interests and the opposition for provincial matchless quality.

Competition in the economy:

Both nations have significant economies and have competing interests in global markets. China's status as the world's factory is put in jeopardy by India's economic policies, which aim to make the country a manufacturing hub and attract foreign investment. Also, India's foundation projects in adjoining nations, similar to the Chabahar Port in Iran, are viewed as endeavours to counter Chinese ventures and impact.

Military Modernization and Boundary Debates:

The longstanding line questions among China and India, particularly the combative regions along the Line of Genuine Control (LAC), fuel the competition. Episodes like the 2010 Galwan Valley conflict highlight the potential for struggle. India is focusing on improving its capabilities to prevent Chinese aggression, while both countries are making significant investments in military modernization.

Local Impact in South Asia

China's extending attachments with India's neighbours, like Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, are seen with doubt in New Delhi. India views these relationships as attempts to encircle and reduce its influence in the region because they frequently involve significant economic investments and infrastructure projects.

Diplomatic Initiative And Soft Power

India's efforts to promote its democratic values, cultural heritage, and diplomatic initiatives in international organisations like the United Nations and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) also contribute to the competition. China's endeavours to project its own delicate power and administration in worldwide administration are frequently viewed as contradictions to India's drives. China sees India as an opponent and danger because of their contending vital interests, financial desires, military capacities, and endeavours to impact territorial elements. This competition is formed by verifiable pressures

and contemporary international turns of events, making it a focal part of Asia's complicated security scene.

India's Trade Relation With China

India's trade and economic relations with China are described by a huge exchange and worries about the effect of Chinese financial strategies on its homegrown economy, adding to continuous pressures between the two nations.

Imbalance Trade

India has a significant import/export imbalance with China, which has been a constant issue. In 2011, the import/export imbalance came to roughly \$70 billion, with India bringing in products worth more than \$90 billion while sending out just around \$10 billion to China. India's heavy reliance on Chinese imports for electronics, machinery, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals is primarily to blame for this imbalance. India's concerns about economic dependence and the manufacturing sector's long-term viability have been stoked by the trade deficit.

Domestic Industries

Several Indian industries have suffered as a result of the influx of cheaper Chinese goods. For instance, India's electronics and toy manufacturing industries are unable to compete with China's cheap, mass-produced goods. India's efforts to boost domestic manufacturing through programs like "Make in India" are hampered by this situation. Furthermore, Chinese strength in basic areas like drugs (where India imports unrefined substances known as dynamic drug fixings, or APIs) presents dangers to India's medical care industry and store network versatility .

Strategic Concerns And Economic Policies

Trade tensions have been further exacerbated by China's economic policies, which include imposing non-tariff barriers and providing substantial subsidies to exporters. In stark

contrast to the relatively open Indian market for Chinese goods, Indian businesses frequently encounter regulatory obstacles and lack of market access when attempting to access the Chinese market. As a result of these practices, there are calls in India for more protectionism and policies to reduce dependence on Chinese imports.

Security And Geopolitical Implications

Geopolitical tensions also strain the economic relationship. Episodes along the India-China line, for example, the 2010 Galwan Valley conflict, have uplifted public safety concerns in regards to monetary ties with China. India has responded by increasing its scrutiny of Chinese investments and banning a number of Chinese apps, citing data sovereignty and security concerns.

Efforts To Reduce And Diversify Dependence

To address these worries, India is effectively looking to enhance its exchange accomplices and diminish reliance on Chinese imports. This incorporates fortifying monetary ties with nations like the US, Japan, and Australia, and taking part in provincial economic deals like the Quad. Through policies like the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, which aims to improve production in sectors like electronics, textiles, and pharmaceuticals, India is also investing in enhancing its domestic manufacturing capabilities.

Geographical Propinquity

India and China share a 3,488-kilometre border that is both long and contentious. For decades, this border has been a source of conflict because of the difficult and frequently inhospitable terrain it consists of. The absence of an obviously divided limit has prompted different debates, most remarkably in districts like Aksai Jawline and Arunachal Pradesh. The de facto border, the Line of Actual Control (LAC), is frequently contested, resulting in frequent standoffs and skirmishes between the two armies. Because of their close proximity,

one nation's military buildup or infrastructure development is closely watched and frequently countered by the other, fostering mutual suspicion and rivalry. (Ayres, 2010)

Historical Context

The authentic setting of India-China relations further intensifies pressures. The Sino-Indian War of 1961, which resulted in a decisive Chinese victory and a profound sense of mistrust and animosity in India, is the most significant event in their shared history. This conflict, which was brought about by territorial disputes, had a long-lasting impact on bilateral relations. The memory of this war actually impacts India's essential estimations and safeguard strategies. These historical grievances have also been bolstered by subsequent conflicts, such as the Nathu La and Cho La incidents in the 1960s, the Doklam standoff in 2017 and the Galwan Valley conflict in 2020. These events are frequently recalled in the political and military histories of both nations, fostering nationalistic sentiments and a cautious, if not hostile, approach to bilateral relations. (*India-China Dispute: The Border Row Explained in 400 Words*)

Persistent Rivalry

Rivalry that persists The mix of topographical nearness and verifiable recollections makes an industrious feeling of competition. Both nations see themselves as rivals competing for global influence and regional dominance. India sees China's strategic investments in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region as intrusions into its sphere of influence as part of initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China, on the other hand, views India's active participation in regional groups like the Quad and strategic partnerships with nations like the United States, Japan, and Australia as efforts to counterbalance its rise.

Strategic Implications Their positions on defence and strategy are influenced by their ongoing rivalry and historical animosity. Along the border, both nations are making significant investments in infrastructure development and the modernization of their military.

The regular military activities and watches in the boundary regions are pointed toward affirming regional cases and exhibiting military status, frequently prompting elevated pressures and the gamble of heightening. India and China's relationship is shaped in large part by their proximity to each other and by their shared history of conflict. A competitive and frequently tense dynamic is aided by the ongoing border disputes and mistrust from past conflicts. There is a constant cycle of suspicion and rivalry between the two countries as a result of their keen awareness of each other's actions and strategies, which makes bilateral relations more difficult.

5.8 Maritime Security And Interest Of India

India's essential advantages in the Indian Sea are fundamental to its public safety, driven by the need to safeguard ocean lines of correspondence (SLOCs) and protect its monetary and energy security. There are a number of important reasons for this focus on the sea:

SLOCs Protection

The Indian Sea is a vital course for global exchange and energy streams. This region is traversed by significant SLOCs, which make it easier for goods to move between the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere. These sea routes are India's economy's lifelines. The maritime routes account for over 95% of India's trade volume and 70% of its trade value. The Indian Ocean also plays a significant role in India's energy imports, which include liquefied natural gas and oil. India's economic growth and stability depend heavily on these routes' safety and uninterrupted flow.

Defend Energy Security And Economic

Oil and gas imports are crucial to India's economic expansion and energy requirements. The Indian Ocean is used to transport the majority of these imports, which originate from the Middle East. India's energy security and economic performance could be

severely impacted by any disruption in these SLOCs, whether caused by piracy, geopolitical tensions, or conflicts. In this manner, keeping a solid oceanic climate is vital for guaranteeing a consistent stockpile of energy assets.

Maritime Strategic Initiatives

To get its oceanic advantages, India has attempted a few vital drives:

Modernization of the Navy: India has made significant investments in modernising its navy, enhancing its blue-water power projection capabilities, and protecting its maritime domain. This incorporates obtaining advanced submarines, plane carrying warships, and maritime aeroplanes, guaranteeing areas of strength for a presence. India has established strategic maritime partnerships with the United States, Japan, Australia, and France, among others. India's ability to deal with regional threats and maintain maritime stability is enhanced by these partnerships, which include joint naval exercises, the sharing of intelligence, and cooperation in maritime security.

Sea Framework Advancement: India is creating basic foundations in the Indian Sea locale, for example, the Andaman and Nicobar Order and vital ports like Chabahar in Iran. India's logistical capabilities will be strengthened and strategic depth in the region will be provided by these developments.

Regional Engagements: India actively participates in multilateral naval exercises like Malabar and interacts with regional organisations like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). These commitments advance helpful safety efforts and encourage strength in the Indian Sea.

Defeating External Factors Countering external influences, particularly China's expanding presence in the Indian Ocean, is another goal of India's maritime strategy. China's Belt and Street Drive (BRI) and its "Pearl necklace" procedure, which includes creating ports and bases around the Indian Sea, are seen as endeavours to surround India and challenge Chinese

power in the district. India wants to counterbalance China's influence and guarantee its strategic autonomy by enhancing its own maritime capabilities and alliances. India's strategic security is dependent on its strategic interests in the Indian Ocean. India's maritime strategy centres on safeguarding SLOCs, ensuring economic and energy security, and countering external influences. India wants to protect its maritime domain and ensure economic stability and prosperity through naval modernization, strategic partnerships, infrastructure development, and regional engagements.

String Of Pearls China's Maritime Strategy

China's effort to establish a network of naval bases and infrastructure projects throughout the Indian Ocean is referred to as its "String of Pearls" strategy. China's maritime trade routes are the focus of this strategy, which also aims to increase its geopolitical influence and project its power beyond its borders. India, on the other hand, sees this as an attempt to encircle it and a direct threat to its strategic interests.

Main Elements Of "String Of Pearls Strategy"

Infrastructure Projects Of This Strategy

China has been making significant investments in important infrastructure projects in the Indian Ocean. The construction of ports, airports, and other logistical hubs are frequently included in these projects. China has direct access to the Arabian Sea through Pakistan's Gwadar Port, a deep-water port that avoids the Malacca Strait.

Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka: Rented to China for quite a long time, this port is decisively situated close to the primary delivery course from Asia to Europe.

Myanmar's Kyaukpyu Port: This port is a part of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor and gives China a way to get to the Indian Ocean, reducing its dependence on the Malacca Strait. China's first overseas military base is Djibouti Naval Base, which is at a strategic chokepoint at the Red Sea and Suez Canal entrances.

Economic Investments:

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) involves significant financial investments in a number of Indian Ocean nations. These speculations frequently accompany great advances and support for foundation projects, restricting the beneficiary nations nearer to China monetarily and strategically.

Maritime Presence:

China has increased its naval presence in the Indian Ocean alongside infrastructure projects. This includes carrying out joint naval exercises with nations in the region and deploying naval vessels for anti-piracy operations. The presence of Chinese submarines and warships in these waters is especially disturbing for India.

India's Concern Over "String Of Pearls Strategy"

China's "Pearl Necklace" strategy is seen by India as an effort to encircle it with a network of friendly ports and military installations, limiting India's strategic autonomy and influence in the region. India's aspirations to be the most powerful nation in the Indian Ocean are directly harmed by this perceived encirclement. Concerns regarding the security of India's maritime trade routes are raised by the growing Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean. A significant Chinese presence could potentially disrupt these essential sea lines of communication (SLOCs), putting India's economic and energy security in jeopardy. The Indian Ocean is crucial to India's trade and energy imports. Additionally, China's significant economic investments in the region frequently result in significant influence over the policies of the recipients. This economic leverage could be used to oppose India's interests, thereby expanding China's and reducing India's influence. China's ability to project its military power is further enhanced by the establishment of Chinese military bases and logistical hubs in the Indian Ocean. This could pose a threat to India's maritime capabilities and its capacity to maintain a safe maritime environment. The blend of financial, vital, and military drives by

China in the Indian Sea district presents a complex test to India's situation and desires in this urgent sea space

5.9 India's Response Toward These Strategies

India is effectively countering China's impact in the Indian Sea Locale (IOR) through a few vital measures. First, through initiatives like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), India is strengthening its strategic partnerships with major powers like the United States, Japan, and Australia to strengthen coalitions. These organisations include joint maritime activities and participation in oceanic security, upgrading India's capacity to offset China's developing presence. In addition, India is modernising its navy in order to enhance its blue-water capabilities. This includes purchasing brand-new submarines, aircraft carriers, and cutting-edge naval aircraft to guarantee a substantial maritime presence. India's strategy also includes the development of infrastructure.

India is investing in Iranian ports like Chabahar and developing its own strategic ports and bases in the region, like the Andaman and Nicobar Command. India will be able to better project power and maintain a presence in the region as a result of these efforts, which aim to expand the country's strategic reach and logistical capabilities. Through initiatives and organisations like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), India is simultaneously engaging in regional diplomacy to promote cooperative security measures and counter China's influence. By effectively captivating with countries in the Indian Sea district, India plans to fortify its borders and construct an offset to China's developing financial and vital impression. India's strategic independence and influence are directly threatened by China's "String of Pearls" strategy, which has significantly altered the Indian Ocean's geopolitical landscape.

As rising powers, India and China's ongoing rivalry in this region exemplifies their larger strategic competition. India's reaction, portrayed by a mix of key, financial, and

security contemplations, features its assurance to save its predominant position and safeguard its inclinations. Seeing China as a significant international opponent, especially in Asia, India sees China's extending impact through the Belt and Street Drive (BRI) and the foundation of military and calculated bases as endeavours to surround and overwhelm the district. The "String of Pearls" theory, which suggests that China is systematically establishing a network of facilities to expand its strategic reach, reinforces this perception. Accordingly, India has decided on a serious system, zeroing in on improving its own essential capacities, framing coalitions with similar countries, and growing its presence and impact in the IOR to offset China's procedures.

Analysis

Economic, security, and geopolitical considerations all influence China's strategic approach to the Indian Ocean. The Indian Sea is a basic course for China's energy imports, especially oil from the Center East and Africa. China has established a network of ports and bases, which is referred to as the "String of Pearls," in order to safeguard these sea communication lines. Key models remember the improvement of Gwadar Port for Pakistan, Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, and the foundation of an army installation in Djibouti. These drives are essential for China's more extensive Belt and Street Drive (BRI), which means to improve network and shipping lanes across Asia, Africa, and Europe. In addition, China's regular patrols, anti-piracy missions, and participation in joint military exercises have increased its naval presence in the region. In addition to safeguarding China's economic interests, these actions indicate the country's growing influence and strategic ambitions in the Indian Ocean. India's view of China as an essential danger in the Indian Sea is well established in verifiable, international, and security concerns. The 1961 Sino-Indian Conflict left an enduring effect on India's essential mind, with unsettled line debates proceeding to fuel pressures. Also, China's cosy relationship with Pakistan, India's essential territorial foe, compounds these worries. India sees China's infrastructure projects in Pakistan, especially the Gwadar Port expansion, as part of a strategic encirclement.

In addition, China's growing influence in traditionally Indian-ruled South Asian nations like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and the Maldives is seen as a direct threat to India's regional dominance. The rising presence of Chinese maritime powers in the Indian Sea further uplifts these danger discernments, as India sees it as a likely danger to its oceanic security and monetary interests. The desire to maintain regional dominance, safeguard India's maritime interests, and counterbalance China's growing influence shapes India's strategic decisions in the Indian Ocean. India has pursued a naval modernization strategy, expanding

its fleet and improving its power projection capabilities in the Indian Ocean. Submarines, advanced surface vessels, and indigenous aircraft carriers are all examples of this. Through initiatives like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), India has also sought to strengthen its strategic partnerships with other major powers, particularly the United States, Japan, and Australia. These organisations are meant to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific, countering China's confident activities in the district. In order to improve maritime cooperation and interoperability, India also actively participates in regional forums like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and organises joint naval exercises with other nations. The need to assert its strategic autonomy and safeguard its national interests is the driving force behind India's preference for competition over cooperation with China in the maritime sector. While India perceives the financial advantages of drawing in with China, it stays careful about any collaboration that could subvert its essential position. In order to maintain a favourable power balance in the Indian Ocean and deter any aggressive actions, India balances its economic ties with China with a robust security posture.

Chapter 6

6.1 Main Findings

- In order to shape regional narratives and influence public opinion in favour of Chinese interests, China has significantly expanded its cyber and information operations in the Indian Ocean region, targeting both governmental and non-governmental organisations.
- The portrayal of China by Indian media has significantly heightened the perception of China as a threat, particularly following the standoff at Doklam in 2017 and the conflict in the Galwan Valley (2010). Examples of cooperation have been overlooked due to the media's focus on border conflicts and economic competition.
- India and China have significant economic interdependencies in the maritime sector, including shared interests in securing maritime trade routes, despite strategic competition.
- India's strategic choices are complicated by this interdependence, which India's maritime strategies are increasingly influenced by the strategic alliances and partnerships it has formed with third countries like the United States, Japan, and Australia (such as the Quad alliance). India has taken a more aggressive stance toward China in the Indian Ocean as a result of these alliances. balances competition with the need for cooperation for economic stability.

6.2 Conclusion

India's security is profoundly affected by China's strategic initiatives in the Indian Ocean, which significantly alter the geopolitical landscape of the region. As China progresses its presence through the Belt and Street Drive (BRI) and the related Oceanic Silk Street, India ends up in a complicated security climate that requests both key and strategic reactions. A significant shift in the dynamics of the region can be seen in China's infrastructure projects and port developments in the Indian Ocean, such as those in Gwadar (Pakistan), Hambantota (Sri Lanka), and the military base in Djibouti. These drives permit China to lay out a traction in basic sea areas, working with monetary as well as military extension.

For instance, the Gwadar port is crucial to China's energy security because it provides an alternative to the perilous Strait of Malacca for Middle Eastern oil and gas imports. Gwadar, on the other hand, is a strategic encirclement for India, raising security concerns along its western coast. The Oceanic Silk Street, a vital part of the BRI, means to interface China with Africa, Europe, and Southeast Asia through an organisation of ports and shipping lanes. China's economic reach grows, but so does its strategic influence in the Indian Ocean as a result. India's traditional maritime dominance is challenged by the infrastructure investments and subsequent economic dependencies created in littoral states. These advancements could permit China to apply political and military strain on these nations, possibly sabotaging India's impact and key independence in the area. India faces a security challenge as a result of this expansion because it views China's expanding infrastructure and naval capabilities as part of an encirclement strategy known as the "string of pearls."

India is seeking stronger maritime partnerships and bolstering its own naval capabilities as a result of this perception. The Indian Navy is undergoing significant modernization, acquiring sophisticated submarines, aircraft carriers, and maritime surveillance capabilities to expand its operational reach and strengthen its deterrent posture.

Moreover, India is fostering its own framework projects in the district, for example, the Chabahar port in Iran, to offset Chinese impact and secure elective shipping lanes. India has increased its naval cooperation with other major powers, particularly the United States, Japan, and Australia, through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), in response to China's manoeuvres. Countering China's assertiveness, the Quad aims to promote a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

The Quad framework's joint naval exercises, intelligence sharing, and strategic discussions are improving interoperability and collective maritime security. In the face of China's expanding footprint, these partnerships are crucial for India because they provide strategic depth and collective security assurances. In addition to providing economic benefits, China's investments in Indian Ocean littoral states result in significant political leverage. China's ability to influence political decisions in its favour is enhanced by the development of ports, infrastructure, and connectivity projects. Concerns about the possibility of military use and strategic control, for instance, are raised by the Chinese company's 99-year lease of the Sri Lankan port of Hambantota. This could make it easier for Chinese naval operations in the area, which would hurt India's security interests. In an effort to acquire sophisticated platforms to project power and safeguard their maritime interests, China and India are engaged in a naval modernization race.

China's maritime modernization incorporates the organisation of plane carrying warships, atomic and ordinary submarines, and high level surface soldiers. In a similar vein, India is making investments in its naval capabilities, with a primary focus on expanding its blue-water navy in order to guarantee a substantial presence throughout the Indian Ocean. Strong mechanisms for conflict prevention and management are required as a result of this arms race, which raises the likelihood of maritime confrontations and escalation. Global tensions in Asia are exacerbated by China's and India's rivalry in the Indian Ocean. The

essential competition reaches out to different spaces, including the Himalayan line debates and impact in Southeast Asia.

The risk of military conflict is increased and the stability of the region is impacted by this multifaceted competition. The conflict in the Doklam region in 2017 and the conflict in the Galwan Valley region in 2020 serve as examples of how localised conflicts can develop into larger regional crises. India must implement a multifaceted strategy to safeguard its interests in this changing security environment. Strategic commitments are urgent for building local agreements and countering China's impact. Partnerships with ASEAN nations and India's Act East Policy aim to strengthen economic and strategic ties and promote a balanced regional order. To counter China's outreach, economic and security cooperation with African nations, particularly those on the Indian Ocean Rim, is equally important. Improving sea space mindfulness and reconnaissance capacities is essential for India to screen and answer Chinese exercises in the Indian Sea.

Participation in multilateral forums like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and collaboration with regional navies can boost collective security and stability. Moreover, India ought to zero in on limit working in Indian Sea littoral states, giving preparation, gear, and framework backing to improve their oceanic security abilities. India's security is threatened in multiple ways by China's Indian Ocean strategy, requiring a comprehensive and coordinated response. While India's maritime modernization and key associations are vital parts of its security technique, political commitment and local participation are similarly significant. In order for India to effectively protect its maritime interests and maintain regional stability, balancing China's influence necessitates consistent efforts in the military, economic, and diplomatic domains. The strategic landscape of Asia will continue to be shaped by the changing dynamics of the Indian Ocean, with China and India playing key roles in this story.

6.3 Recommendations

Through joint naval exercises with India and confidence-building measures, China should foster transparency and trust. Economic interdependence serves as a deterrent to conflict and can be enhanced through collaborative infrastructure projects and strengthening bilateral trade relations. It is possible to contribute to the stability of the region by participating in multilateral forums like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), collaborating with India on counter-piracy operations, and providing humanitarian assistance. By ensuring that Chinese investments in ports are for commercial purposes and following a non-interference policy, IOR countries' sovereignty can be respected. Lastly, trust can be built and collective security can be enhanced by establishing frameworks for information sharing about cyber threats and a cybersecurity dialogue mechanism. These suggestions can assist China with adding to a steady and secure Indian Sea Locale while tending to India's security concerns and cultivating a helpful connection between the two countries.

Modernising the navy with cutting-edge submarines, aircraft carriers, and surveillance systems should be India's primary focus, as should expanding its naval presence through regular patrols, joint exercises, and strategic bases. Upgrading oceanic organisations with key local players like the US, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN nations through drives like the Quad and directing joint maritime activities can further develop interoperability and aggregate security. Naval operations and logistics will be supported by developing strategic infrastructure, such as improving ports on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and investing in new ports along the Indian coastline. Regional connectivity projects, like the Chabahar Port project in Iran, can counterbalance China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Conciliatory commitment through dynamic support in local multilateral gatherings like the Indian Sea Edge Affiliation (IORA) and the Indian Sea Maritime Conference (Particles) and extending reciprocal ties with Indian Sea littoral states can advance territorial

collaboration and key arrangement. Monitoring of Chinese naval activities and potential threats will be improved with robust intelligence-sharing mechanisms with allies and enhanced maritime surveillance systems, such as satellites, drones, and underwater sensors. In addition, the dangers of cyber espionage and propaganda campaigns will be addressed by improving cybersecurity measures to safeguard military and critical infrastructure. These exhaustive methodologies can assist India with protecting its public safety and keep up with local security notwithstanding China's rising impact in the Indian Sea.

To address the essential difficulties presented by China's rising presence in the Indian Sea, a reasonable and helpful methodology including local and worldwide partners is fundamental. Countries should participate in joint naval exercises, share intelligence, and coordinate patrols to ensure a secure maritime environment by enhancing maritime security through regional cooperation. Political endeavours ought to zero in on reinforcing multilateral gatherings like the Indian Sea Edge Affiliation (IORA) to encourage discourse and cooperation among Indian Sea littoral states. Economic expansion and strategic stability can be aided by infrastructure development, such as modernising ports and expanding maritime connectivity. India and China's mistrust can be reduced and potential conflicts prevented by promoting transparency and confidence-building measures.

Critical infrastructure will be protected and cyber threats will be reduced by investing in cutting-edge surveillance and cybersecurity systems. In the Indian Ocean region, putting an emphasis on sustainable development and protecting the environment can also guarantee long-term prosperity and stability. Regional actors can jointly address security issues and foster cooperation and development in the Indian Ocean by implementing these recommendations.

6.4 References

- Ayres,A.(2010, June 18). The China-India Border Dispute: What to Know. Council on Foreign Relations.
- Aneja,U. (2006). “China-Bangladesh Relations: An Emerging Strategic Partnership.” IPCS
- Athwal, A. (2008). China-India Relations: Contemporary Dynamics. Taylor & Francis.
- Baruah,D. M. (2011, May 11). Maritime Competition in the Indian Ocean. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Brewster,D. (2014).“Beyond the String of Pearls : Is There Really a Sino-Indian Security Dilemma”
- Brewster, D. (2015). India's Ocean: The Story of India's Bid for Regional Leadership. Routledge.
- Bukhari, S. S. (2011, july). Decoding China’s ambitions in the Indian Ocean:analysis
- But, K.M & Siddique, S.J. (2011). Growing Chinese Presence in the Indian Ocean.
- Chabahar Port development to help India expand trade routes; need to ensure necessary infra: GTRI. (2014, May 14). The Economic Times. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/chabahar-port-development-to-help-india-expand-trade-routes-need-to-ensure-necessary-infra-gtri/articleshow/110119116.cms>
- Blanchard,j.M. F. (2017, April 18). The Geopolitics of China’s Maritime Silk Road Initiative.Routledge,11(1)
- Chattaraj,S. (2018). “ The One Belt One Road as a Chinese Vision of Regional Economic Order.”
- Chaudry, M. (2013, February 6). China’s Malacca Bluff: Examining China’s Indian Ocean Strategy
- China to hold the 1st Indian Ocean Region Forum to firm up influence in India's backyard. (2013, December 5). The Economic Times. Retrieved June 15, 2014, from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/china-to-hold-1nd-indian-ocean>

-region-forum-to-firm-up-influence-in-indias-backyard/articleshow/105761741.cms?
from

Cooper,Z. (2018, April 1). Security Implications of China's Military Presence in the Indian Ocean.CSIS.<https://www.csis.org/analysis/security-implications-chinas-military-presence-indian-ocean>

Doshi,R. (2013). *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order*. Oxford University Press.

Dravid, A. (2018, JUNE 16). CHINA'S RISE AND INDIAN OCEAN AMBITIONS. CIMEC.

East Asia Strategic Review: China's Rising Strategic Ambitions in Asia, edited by M.S.

Erickson, A. S., Goldstein, L., & Lord, C. (Eds.). (2009). *China Goes to Sea: Maritime Transformation in Comparative Historical Perspective*. Naval Institute Press.

Erickson, A.S., Goldstein, L., & Lord, C. (Eds.). (2009). *China Goes to Sea: Maritime Transformation in Comparative Historical Perspective*. Naval Institute Press.

Eslava, L., Fakhri, M., & Nesiah, V. (2017). *Bandung, Global History, and International Law Critical Past and Pending Futures*. Cambridge University Press.
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/bandung-global-history-and-international-law/w34136E0CAB3D3F96F715C755879D3BF8>

Funaiolo, M.P. (2014, January 10). China's Dual-Use Research Operations in the Indian Ocean.CSIS.<https://features.csis.org/hiddenreach/china-indian-ocean-research-vessel>

Garver, J. W. (2001). *The protracted contest : Sino-Indian rivalry in the twentieth century*. University of Washington Press.

Gokhale, V. (2011, december 13). A Historical Evaluation of China's India Policy: Lessons for India-China Relations. *carnegieendowment for international peace*.
<https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2011/11/a-historical-evaluation-of-chinas-india-policy-lessons-for-india-china-relations>

Grare, F., & Samaan, J.-L. (2011). *The Indian Ocean as a New Political and Security Region*.

Green, M. J. (2018, April 1). China's Maritime Silk Road: Strategic and Economic Implications for the Indo-Pacific Region. CSIS.

Hassan, A. (2016, May 19). *Competition in the Indian Ocean*. Council on Foreign Relations.

hatcher, j. (n.d.). China's Growing Indian Ocean Maritime Interests: Sowing the Seed of Conflict? *navy victoria network*. <https://navyvict.net/news/documents>

- Hillman, J. E. (2018, January 15). China's Belt and Road Initiative: Five Years Later. CSIS. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/chinas-belt-and-road-initiative-five-years-later>
- Hoffmann, S. A. (1990). *India and the China Crisis*. University of California Press.
- Holmes, James R. Indian naval strategy in 11 century (2010), www.routledge.com
- Holmes, J.R., & Yoshihara, T. (2008). China's Naval Ambitions in the Indian Ocean. *tandfonline*, 31(3), 367-394.
- How India, China compromise: A look at how standoffs before Doklam were resolved. (2017, August 31). India Today.
- India Bhutan Relations: A Comprehensive Study. (n.d.). Social Laws Today.
- INDIA-BHUTAN FRIENDSHIP TREATY, 2007. (n.d.). INSIGHTS IAS. Retrieved June 13 2014
- India-China dispute: The border row explained in 400 words. (n.d.). BBC. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-53061484>
- India-China standoff: All you need to know about the Doklam dispute. (2017, July 7). India Today. <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/10170717-india-china-bhutan-border-dispute-doklam-beijing-siliguri-corridor-1011690-1017-07-07>
- INDIA-US STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: A STUDY FROM THE LENS OF REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX. (n.d.). Margalla Papers. Retrieved June 14, 2014, from <https://margallapapers.ndu.edu.pk/site/issue/download/13/117>
- INDIA-US STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: A STUDY FROM THE LENS OF REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX. (n.d.). Margalla Papers. Retrieved June 14, 2014
- INDIAN MARITIME DOCTRINE Indian Navy Naval Strategic Publication 1.1. (n.d.). Indian Navy Veteran Artificers. Retrieved June 14, 2014, from https://inexartificers.com/public/uploads/ebooks/Ebook_1_07-01-1019_11_36_53.pdf
- Kaplan, R.D. (2011). *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power*. Random House Publishing Group.
- Khurana, G.S. (2008, February 17). China's 'String of Pearls' in the Indian Ocean and Its Security.
- Khurana, Gurpreet. "The Maritime Dimension Of India's Energy Security." *routledge*,
- Khurana, Gurpreets. "China's Maritime Strategy and India Consonance Discord." *routledge*, vol. 7,
- Krishnan, A. (2011, November 17). India is the lone absentee at China's Indian Ocean forum of 19 countries. *The Hindu*.

- Lim, Y.-H. (2014). *China's Naval Power: An Offensive Realist Approach*. Ashgate Pub. Limited
- Lintner, B. (2019). *The Costliest Pearl: China's Struggle for India's Ocean*. Hurst
- Lock, T. M. h. (2013). INDIA'S SECURITY THREATS FROM CHINESE MILITARIES FROM CHINESE MILITARY FUNDING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH ASIA. *Global: Jurnal Politik Internasional*, 15(01), c. (2011, November 30).
- Maçães, B. (2018). *Belt and Road: A Chinese World Order*. Hurst.
- Mahan, A. T. (1890). *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*. S. Low, Marston.
- Malik, M. (2011). *China and India: Great Power Rivals*. FirstForumPress.
- Maxwell, N. (1970). *India's China War*. Pantheon Books.
- Maxwell, N. (1970). *India's China War*. Pantheon Books.
- Meeting of China-Indian Ocean Region Forum. (2011, November 18). Drishti IAS. Retrieved June15,2014
- Meeting of China-Indian Ocean Region Forum. (2011, November 18). Drishti IAS.
- Mengal, J.& Mirza, M.N. (2011,December). <https://www.researchgate.net/publication>
- Menon, S. (2011). *India and Asian Geopolitics: The Past, Present*. Brookings Institution Press.
- National Academy of Sciences & Committee on International Security and Arms Control. (1997). *The Future of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy*. National Academies Press.
- Odhiambo, P. (2010, october no). China's Geostrategic Interests in the Indian Ocean Region: Implications for Kenya. *The African Review*.
<https://thediplomat.com/2017/11/sri-lanka-formally-hands-over-hambantota-port-to-chinese-firms-on-99-year-lease>
- Pant, H. V. (2017, October 15). China and India pull back on Doklam, choosing to fight another day. *ORF*.
- Pant, H. V., & Joashi, Y. (2017). The US Pivot and Indian Foreign Policy: Asia's Evolving Balance of Power. *Jstor*, 37(01), 115-111.
- Pant, H. V., & Joshi, Y. (2018). *Indian Nuclear Policy: Oxford India Short Introductions*. Oxford University Press.
- Parmar, S. (2014, March). Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean: An Indian Perspective. *journal of defence*

- Perkovich, G. (1999). *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation*. University of California Press.
- Prathibha, 73–87. New Delhi: IDSA, Pentagon Press.
- Rather, M. A. (2010). *China's growing presence in the Indian Ocean and India's Concerns*. jcreview, VOL 7 Response'. Pentagon press, (2017)
- Rolland, N. (2017). *China's "Belt and Road Initiative": Underwhelming or Game-Changer?* tandfonline, 40(1), 117-141.
- Small, A. (2015). *The China-Pakistan Axis: Asia's New Geopolitics*. Hurst.
- Smith, Paul J. "The Tilting Triangle: Geopolitics of the China–India–Pakistan Relationship." Springer International Publishing.
- Strategic studies islamabad. <https://issi.org.pk>
- studies, 08, <https://www.academia.edu/5816588/Maritime>
- Suri, Gopal. 'China's Expanding Military Maritime Footprints in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) India's